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LONG BEACH, Calif., July 14, 2009 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today delivered the first Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) C-17 Globemaster III during a ceremony at its final assembly facility in Long Beach, paving the way for the advanced airlifter's historic arrival at Pápa Air Base, Hungary, later this month. The SAC's approach to shared use of the strategic airlifter is regarded as a model for the pooled acquisition and management of defense capabilities.

"I salute the 12 nations that have joined together to form the Strategic Airlift Capability," said U.S. Air Force Col. John Zazworsky, the first commander of Pápa Air Base's Heavy Airlift Wing (HAW). "This aircraft, along with the two that will follow, is a direct result of their commitment to giving SAC advanced airlift capabilities that will save lives around the world. We look forward to our first mission." The HAW is the operational unit responsible for conducting airlift missions in support of national requirements.

"We've dreamed about this day for many years, and now it's here," said Gunnar Borch, who serves as General Manager of the NATO Airlift Management Agency (NAMA). "This historic partnership shows how much can be accomplished when nations work together to achieve a common goal." NAMA is responsible for the acquisition, day-to-day management, and support of the C-17 fleet on behalf of NATO and all participating SAC nations.

"What you are doing is being watched and admired around the world," said Jean Chamberlin, Boeing vice president and general manager of Global Mobility Systems. "It is truly remarkable to see 12 great nations working together to secure the world's most advanced airlifter to support military, humanitarian, disaster-relief and peacekeeping missions. We thank you for choosing the C-17 and its unequalled readiness for any mission, anywhere, any time."

The SAC group includes 10 NATO nations -- Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, United States -- and Partnership for Peace members Sweden and Finland. They will share acquisition and operating costs for the eventual fleet of three C-17s over the nearly 30-year agreement.

The first SAC C-17 will arrive at Pápa Air Base just prior to the activation of the HAW on July 27. Boeing will deliver the two remaining C-17s in September and October.

The SAC's first C-17 bears the number 01 on its nose, symbolizing the first aircraft delivered to the SAC group. Because Hungary is the host nation for the HAW, the airlifter's tail is marked with red, white and green stripes. The air base's name, "PAPA," is painted on a blue background that runs across the vertical stabilizer. The HAW will be operated by multinational crews from the 12 participating nations.

A Boeing team will provide support for the SAC C-17s, including material management and depot maintenance support, under Global Services & Support's C-17 Globemaster III Sustainment Partnership program.

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