

INTRODUCTION OF JEAN-CYRIL SPINETTA

by

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It is a great pleasure to welcome Jean-Cyril Spinetta, the Chairman and CEO of Air France, to the International Aviation Club. It's been a long time since Air France was represented at our podium, and so it is a special pleasure to have him here today.

Born to Corsican parents, but a native Parisian, Mr. Spinetta holds university degrees in public law and political science, and was also graduated from the Ecole Nationale d'Administration.

He entered the French Civil Service as Head of the Investments and Planning Department of the Ministry of Education in 1972, where he remained until 1976. He subsequently held a series of positions including Head of the Information Department for the Prime Minister (1981-83), and Chief of Staff for Michel Delebarre (1984), who was successively Minister of Labor and Vocational Training, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment and Minister of Planning and Development, Housing and Transport.

That's right - I said transport. It was that last position that led to Mr. Spinetta's first adventure in the airline industry, when he joined Air Inter as President and C.E.O. in 1990. He remained there for three years, and then returned to public service. He served as an advisor to the President of France on a range of subjects -- most importantly including industrial matters. After that, in 1995, he was appointed Administrator in charge of Public Service. In January 1996, he joined the staff of Edith Cresson, European Commissioner in charge of science, research and education. And in 1997, Mr. Spinetta was appointed Special Advisor to the Minister of Education and to the Minister of Employment and Solidarity.

He was appointed Chairman and CEO of Air France in September 1997. Anyone who has followed the fortunes of Air France knows that the airline was in a rocky and uncertain period at that time. Air France's financial performance has dramatically improved since Mr. Spinetta took his place at the helm of the company. Its partnership with Delta promises to carry that success to even higher levels in the future.

Mr. Spinetta is a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Officer de l'Ordre National du Mérite and Officer des Palmes académiques. He lives in Paris with his wife and four children.

Please join me in giving Jean-Cyril Spinetta a very warm welcome.