

China to become largest aircraft market: Airbus



(Xinhua)

LONDON -- China is sure to become the single largest market for aircraft in the world, said John Leahy, chief operating officer-customers at Airbus, at the Farnborough International Airshow which was closed in southwest of London on Sunday.

In an exclusive interview with Xinhua, Leahy, who help Airbus raise market share from 18 percent in 1995 to the present 50 percent, said: "There's no doubt in my mind that China will become the single largest economy in the world and single largest for aircraft in the world. The two goes together."

Speaking of the impact of European debt crisis, he said the crisis is over rated.

"It's a financial crisis, not-necessarily a transportation crisis, we have aircraft that help reduce the crisis to running the airline, make travel less expensive.

He took Airbus' new aircraft A380 as example. It consumes only 2.9 liters per hundred kilometers. "we build a way for more people to fly, more comfortably at lower cost, that's the way for the future."

Commenting on China's domestically designed passenger plane C919, Leahy said C919 will be a very good aeroplane, saying that he had very high respect for the Chinese counterparts.

He believed that China would be among the three large manufacturers in the world, namely Airbus, Boeing and the Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China, which is the producer of the C919 plane.

The C919 is a 150-seat aircraft designed for short-haul commercial use. The project was launched in 2008 by the COMAC, which is a State-owned company.

At the week-long Farnborough Airshow, one of the largest such show in the world, Airbus won about \$16.9 billion worth of business for a total of 115 aircraft, including Memorandum of Understanding for 61 aircraft worth \$5.8 billion and firm purchase orders for 54 aircraft worth around \$11.1 billion.

Leahy said that the important thing is that what you show at the airshow, what you sell in the airshow. "This year we will sell more aircraft. It's the record year in term of quantitative delivery years," he said.

So this will be a very good year for the Airbus and a very good year for our partners buying our products, " he added.