

June 1st 2017 : homage AF 447
Jean-Marc JANAILLAC (Air France CEO)

Ladies and gentlemen, families and friends,

Eight years ago, on the night of June 1st, 2009, a terrible air disaster took the lives of 228 of your relatives, loved ones and colleagues.

As we commemorate the anniversary of this tragedy, it is with great emotion and sadness that I am talking to you for the first time as Chairman of Air France.

I was not part of the company in 2009, but like you, I remember those terribly long hours waiting for news of the Airbus that had disappeared.

I can imagine your anguish, the slight hope of a miracle, and then your pain when you were told the plane had been lost.

Since that day, I know that the compassion, solidarity and dignity of everyone involved have enabled you to find the consolation and strength required to overcome your grief.

Today, together, we once again gather at the memorial here at Père Lachaise, erected in the heart of Paris to perpetuate and honour the memory of your relatives, loved ones, and our colleagues.

It is with a heavy heart that we will hear, as we do every year, their names read out, which are engraved in the stone.

Your presence here today, despite the passing of time, shows just how well the memory of our loved ones remains intact.

As we do every year, we are sharing this commemoration with the families on the other side of the Atlantic, who are gathered together at the memorial identical to this one, in Rio, on the Two Brothers Hill.

These places of remembrance are united by the memory of those who were traveling between Brazil and France on the night of June 1st 2009.

As for the relatives who could not make the trip to join us today, I am sure that they would have liked to be with us and that they are a part of this ceremony from a distance.

Dear passengers and colleagues of flight Air France 447, we are thinking of you, and you will be in our hearts forever.