



PRESS RELEASE

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**EUROPEAN PILOTS CALL FOR RESUMPTION OF EU-US
AIR SERVICES TALKS**

- Social Concerns to Be Addressed More Vigorously -

Representing 34.000 European pilots, the European Cockpit Association fully backs Commissioner Barrot's effort to kick-start transatlantic talks on an Open Aviation Area (OAA).

To succeed, negotiators will have to address the social consequences of an OAA – an aspect that has been largely ignored until now.

Cheap labour substitution or the emergence of "flags of convenience", exploiting low labour and safety standards in certain regions of the OAA, should not be the outcome of the OAA. Instead, it should ensure the long-term competitive positioning of both the European aviation industry and their employees, based on high safety, social and environmental standards.

The resumption of negotiations will provide **an opportunity to obtain a fair and more balanced deal** than the June 2004 draft Agreement. Its implementation would have consolidated and even expanded the existing unlevel playing field – largely created by the Member States bilateral Open Skies Agreements. It would have offered the US additional access to the EU market, while getting relatively little in return.

*"As a long-standing supporter of the OAA initiative, we are confident that the EU negotiators will **strive for a re-balanced first-stage Agreement**" says ECA Chairman, Teppo Tyrmi. "Continued involvement of industry and employee stakeholders will help achieve this aim. Also, it is time for **the US to accept the EU as an equal and full partner** in international air services negotiations. Such recognition should be part of any first-stage Agreement."*

Regarding the Commission's new focus on achieving full **Ownership & Control**, ECA stresses that any such moves need to be **preceded by** an in-depth analysis of the possible social consequences and the identification and **implementation of adequate social safeguards**.

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