



March 14, 2016

Dear Minister,

The undersigned, representing the European air transport industry's main actors – airspace users, airports, air navigation service providers, and manufacturers - would like to draw your attention to the following.

The air transport industry is a major contributor to the European economy, employment, innovation, connectivity, regional development and social cohesion. In addition, the liberalised internal market has brought many benefits to consumers. The industry contributes more than €450 billion to European GDP annually, employs more than 7 million people, and transports 860 million passengers and 7.5m tonnes of freight to, from and within Europe each year.

However, for a number of years the air transport industry has been hampered by a political dispute between the United Kingdom and Spain over Gibraltar. Unfortunately, and unacceptably, this deadlock has led to major delays in advancing some of the most important European air transport files – to the detriment of consumers.

The industry believes that this situation has now become unsustainable. As recognized by the recent EU Aviation Strategy, the European air transport industry is simply too important an enabler for Europe as a whole to be adversely affected by a political dispute which it did not instigate and over which it has no control. In the past it has been possible to find solutions which were acceptable to the governments of Spain and the United Kingdom and which enabled legislative initiatives to progress, without prejudice to respective political positions.

We therefore call on the EU Transport Council to put this topic as a priority on the agenda of the upcoming meeting on June 7th in the hope that it will be possible to find an acceptable solution for the air transport industry.

Yours sincerely,



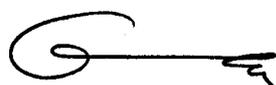
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Sent to: Transport Ministers of the Netherlands (EU Presidency), Spain and the UK
Copy to: Frans Timmermans, Vice President, European Commission
Violeta Bulc, EU Transport Commissioner
Martin Schultz, President of the European Parliament
Michael Cramer, Chair of the EP Transport & Tourism Committee
EU Transport Attachés