



Gibraltar deadlock hurting European aviation, growth & jobs

For immediate release

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ACI EUROPE

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Kiev, 7 October 2016: On the occasion of the 2016 AeroCongress which took place yesterday in Kiev and in the margins of a meeting with Ukrainian Vice Prime Minister, Vladimir Kistion, ACI EUROPE denounced the damaging impact that the territorial dispute between the UK and Spain over Gibraltar is having on European aviation, economic growth and job creation.

The European airport trade body expressed frustration over the fact that this bilateral dispute has resulted in a political deadlock for a number of important aviation policy issues at EU level. The EU-Ukraine aviation agreement is one of the victims of this ongoing saga.

Following a successful negotiation, this agreement was initialled almost 3 years ago at the Eastern European Partnership Summit*. However, ever since then, the Gibraltar deadlock has prevented its signature and activation by EU Transport Ministers. As a result, a closer integration of the Ukrainian aviation market into the EU Single aviation market remains blocked. This means that airports and airlines on both sides are unable to take advantage of the air route development and traffic growth opportunities afforded by the agreement – with consumers and businesses ultimately being deprived of the benefits of increased and more affordable connectivity.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE said *“Down the line - and alongside other external policy considerations - the Gibraltar deadlock means we are missing out on opportunities for growth and job creation that Europe so badly needs. This is the case today with the EU-Ukraine aviation agreement which cannot be activated, but also with the Single European Sky¹ – where legislative proposals are also stalled. Next in line might be the EU-Brazil aviation agreement² currently being finalised, which might well be blocked for the same reason.”*

He added *“With its Aviation Strategy adopted last December, the European Commission has put our sector in the spotlight as part of its focus on growth, investment & jobs – recognising the tremendous value of air connectivity for the economy**.* In the past, the Gibraltar dispute did not stand in the way and should not now. We need a swift, responsive and responsible solution.”

ENDS

*28 November 2013, Vilnius.

**Every 10% increase in air connectivity yields a 0.5% increase in GDP per capita

In March 2016, ACI EUROPE and other stakeholders from across the air transport sector sent a joint letter to the Transport Ministers of the Netherlands (during the Dutch Presidency of the EU), Spain and UK, concerning the deadlock over Gibraltar. That letter can be downloaded here: <https://www.aci-europe.org/component/downloads/downloads/4770.html>

¹ SES proposals could contribute €720 million a year to the EU economy and deliver up to 11,000 jobs.

² The two comprehensive EU aviation agreements with Brazil and Ukraine represent over €1 billion in added value for the EU economy.

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*ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over **500 airports** in 45 European countries. In 2014, our member airports handled over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming more than **1.8 billion passengers, 18.4 million tonnes of freight** and **21.2 million aircraft movements**. These airports contribute to the employment of **12.3 million people**, generating **€675 billion each year (4.1%) of GDP** in Europe.*

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