



## *Press Release*

# **Europeans for Fair Competition Urges the European Commission to enact Aviation Package EU**

**Luxembourg, 6 June 2016** - Europeans for Fair Competition (E4FC) is a coalition of concerned Europeans who have unified across EU member nation boundaries and labor-management lines [see <http://e4fc.eu/e4fc-supporters>] with the goal of establishing a level playing field with countries that subsidise their airlines in violation of European air service agreements, notably the United Arab Emirates and the State of Qatar.

Evidence shows that the nations of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have injected over €39 billion (between 2004-2014 alone) in government subsidies and benefits into their state-owned airlines. These nations and their subsidised airlines have used these funds to develop services and massive capacity between Europe and Asia via their hubs and are proceeding with a certain number of strategic investments in European airlines to feed their own operations, capture, and shift market access. European airlines and their employees can compete with Middle Eastern airlines directly, however, it is an entirely different matter for them to compete with Middle Eastern governments that heavily subsidise their state-owned airlines.

In December of 2015, the European Commission introduced a comprehensive strategy for the European aviation sector. This strategy, commonly known as “European Aviation Strategy”, includes “fair competition” principles and language [see <http://e4fc.eu/euaviation>] introducing new methods of addressing unfair practices from third countries and third-country operators through adoption of comprehensive EU- level agreements.

It is vital that the EU continues to pursue a comprehensive policy that strengthens the accessibility of European hubs to safeguard connectivity and consumer choice long term. We, therefore, call on the EU Commission and Transport Council to deliver to the European Commission a mandate to negotiate with third countries EU level Aviation Agreements that include strong provisions guaranteeing fair competition. We also call for the inclusion of the *oversight and enforcement procedures* necessary for any future air services agreement to be concluded between the EU and third countries, notably the State of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, where massive government subsidy distortions are already wreaking havoc in the European aviation market. We finally call on the Commission to implement its Aviation Strategy by promoting the adoption by the European Institutions of a new defence instrument guaranteeing protection of EU air carriers against subsidisation and unfair pricing practices from third country airlines.

**More information can be found on the E4FC website :** <http://e4fc.eu>  
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