EU/United States Air Transport Agreement

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The Council welcomes the results of the negotiations between the European Community and its Member States and the United States of America on a first stage comprehensive air services agreement. It the agreement which will be endorsed at the forthcoming EU-US Summit on 30 April in Washington.

The Council also reiterates its ultimate objective of a fully liberalised open aviation area covering the EU and the US in accordance with the mandate agreed by the Council in June 2003. It underlines the importance of reaching a second stage agreement in order to pursue the benefits of liberalisation on both sides of the Atlantic. It calls upon the Commission to engage robustly with the United States Government so as to secure this goal as quickly as possible.

The Council instructs COREPER to proceed without delay with the necessary formalities for the signature of the agreement. In this respect, the Council confirms that:

a) the provisional application of the agreement will take place from 30 March 2008. The Commission was asked to secure agreement of the United States to confirm their agreement to reflect this;

b) if no Stage 2 agreement has been reached within 12 months of the start of the review mentioned in Article 21 (3), any Member State may notify to the Commission which traffic rights in relation to its own territory it wishes to suspend. Such traffic rights may not include any rights specified in the agreements mentioned in Annex 1 to the Agreement. The President of the Council on behalf of the EC and its Member States shall then give notice of the suspension of such rights to the US in accordance with Article 21 (3).

However, the Council, acting by unanimity on a proposal from the Commission, may decide not to give notice of suspension or subsequently to withdraw it.

The Commission is invited to draw up provisions to that effect for insertion in the draft Council Decisions on signature and conclusion of the EU-US air transport agreement.