Basic information

2005/2085(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Relations with the Russian Federation and China in the field of air transport **Subject** 3.20.15.02 Air transport agreements and cooperation **Geographical area** China Russian Federation	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	TRAN Transport and Tourism	ZĪLE Roberts (UEN)	19/04/2005
Council of the European Union	**Council configuration**	**Meetings**	**Date**
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2695	2005-12-01

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/03/2005	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2005)0077	Summary
09/06/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/11/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
29/11/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0375/2005	
01/12/2005	Debate in Council		
17/01/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0007/2006	Summary
17/01/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
17/01/2006	Debate in Parliament		
17/01/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2005/2085(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/27987

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE362.835	13/10/2005	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0375/2005	29/11/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0007/2006	17/01/2006	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2005)0078	11/03/2005	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2005)0077	14/03/2005	Summary

Relations with the Russian Federation and China in the field of air transport

2005/2085(INI) - 17/01/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Roberts **ZILE** (UENS, LV) on relations with the Russian Federation and China in the field of air transport.

China: Parliament welcomed the Commission's general response to the process of growth, modernisation and liberalisation currently underway in Chinese commercial aviation, and acknowledged the desirability of a comprehensive aviation agreement between the EU and China. It felt, however, that prior to the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement, a horizontal agreement should be reached so that China's current bilateral air service agreements with various Member States could be brought into line with the Court of Justice's 'open skies' judgment. The negotiation of such an agreement would strengthen the EU's position and would be more beneficial to stakeholders and consumers than a series of revised bilateral agreements essentially concerned with traffic rights.

Parliament called on the Council to extend the Commission's negotiating mandate to cover the provision of the necessary airport and safety infrastructures and air traffic control over Chinese airspace, which unfortunately are inadequate at present and pose an obstacle to the development of aviation relations. It acknowledged the excellent work the Commission is carrying out with its Chinese partners, but regretted that it has not had access to the terms of the negotiating mandate the Commission now seeks from the Council in respect of China. Parliament insisted that it be better integrated in the process of negotiating the agreement. It also insisted that the provisions of a balanced conclusion to negotiations with China on air cargo should be implemented without delay and if necessary before completion of negotiations on passenger traffic.

Russia: Parliament noted that the charges imposed by Russia for flights over its territory are in violation of international law and have not, in the main, been used for the promised improvement of air traffic control management but rather to subsidise Russia's own airline, in breach of competition law. It insisted to the Commission and Council that no comprehensive agreement should be concluded without the immediate and complete abolition of Russian overflight charges. Furthermore, no modified charging scheme should be agreed to replace the current overflight charging regime. Parliament called on the Commission not to conclude an agreement on the Russian Federation's accession to the World Trade Organisation while Russia continues to charge for Siberian overflights. In this context, Parliament asked the Commission to evaluate all arguments related to modernisation, capital investment and technical requirements in the links between the European Union's and Russia's aviation industries and their differences over overflight charging.

Parliament acknowledged the excellent work the Commission is carrying out with its Russian partners, but regretted that it has not had access to the terms of the negotiating mandate the Commission now seeks from the Council in respect of Russia. Again, it insisted on being better integrated in the process of negotiating the agreement.

China and Russia: Negotiations can only be successfully concluded with both China and Russia if stakeholders are able to advise the Commission and are fully apprised of the progress of negotiations and the positions adopted therein. Parliament insisted that no mandate should be granted which does not inexorably link increased access to both China's and Russia's markets to the creation of a 'level playing field' through the convergence of operating standards in the areas of air traffic control and management, staff training and operating standards and aviation security and safety. The principle of reciprocity must be applied.

Relations with the Russian Federation and China in the field of air transport

2005/2085(INI) - 14/03/2005 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present a framework for developing relations with the Russian Federation in the field of air transport.

CONTENT : the aviation and aeronautical industries of the EU and the Russian Federation are fundamental components of economic cooperation contributing to the mobility of citizens and to industrial development. The importance of the Russian Federation and EU aviation relations increased with the enlargement of the EU and traffic between the markets of the EU-25 and the Russian Federation grew significantly. Nevertheless, the full potential of the internal market is unlikely to be achieved until the Community acts as a single coordinated entity in its aviation relations with third countries wherever such co-ordinated efforts can create added value in the interest of the European aviation industry and users.

This paper presents the background and arguments substantiating the need for a comprehensive air transport agreement between the Community and the Russian Federation, which would allow the two partners to establish a clear and coherent framework in which to constructively develop their aviation relations in the coming years.

Furthermore, in parallel to this Communication, the Commission therefore recommends that the Council authorise the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the European Community, a comprehensive air transport agreement with the Russian Federation.

Such a framework would inter alia aim to improve market opportunities for both sides, ensure compliance with Community law, implement a phase-out of trans-Siberian overflight payments, promote the approximation of aviation laws where appropriate, establish joint mechanisms for co-operation on security, safety and environmental standards, and foster co-operation in the industrial field. It would also bring about significant economic benefits.

The current situation whereby each Member State separately, and not the Community, negotiates air traffic rights and access conditions with third countries is a clear handicap. As long as Member States negotiate bilaterally with Russia it will be considerably more difficult to achieve the significant benefits in terms of market access and integration, which the Community would expect to achieve, together with offering substantial opportunities for cooperation in the regulatory, technical and industrial fields.

A comprehensive EC-Russia air transport agreement would provide for a transition period for the modernisation of the current mechanism of payments for trans-Siberian overflights by 2013 at the latest and ensure that charges applied after the end of the transition period will be transparent, cost-based and not lead to discrimination between airlines.

Relations with the Russian Federation and China in the field of air transport

2005/2085(INI) - 11/03/2005 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to develop a Community civil aviation policy towards the People’s Republic of China with a view to strengthening co-operation and opening markets.

CONTENT : following EU enlargement in 2004, the EU is now China’s largest trading partner. The Chinese air traffic market is among the fastest growing in the world. The average annual growth rate of air travellers in China has been approximately 16% between 1958 and 2002 and high growth rates are expected to prevail until 2020. China therefore offers a strong potential for growth also for airlines, aircraft manufacturers and service providers in Europe.

China is therefore expected over the next 10 years to become the largest Asian market and leading hub for air passenger traffic as well as for international cargo traffic thereby taking over Japan’s current leading position.

As a consequence of the “open skies” judgements of the European Court of Justice on 5 November 2002, the bilateral agreements between Member States and China are unsustainable and need to be amended. The Commission has been given a “horizontal” mandate to negotiate with third countries such necessary corrections to bilateral agreements.

However, in view of (i) the growing importance of the Chinese aviation market, (ii) the difficulties encountered by individual Member States in seeking to bring bilateral agreements into conformity with Community law and (iii) the benefits of replacing the fragmented European approach in its relations with China with a co-ordinated and liberal approach, the Commission is of the view that it is now time to develop a wider range of opportunities between China and the Community in air transport.

In parallel to this Communication, the Commission therefore recommends that the Council would authorise the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the European Community, a comprehensive Open Aviation Agreement with China. Positive exploratory contacts between the General Administration of

Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) and the services of the European Commission were initiated in May 2004, which may serve as a good basis for entering into formal negotiations with China.

This agreement should establish an ambitious framework integrating industrial co-operation and wider aviation issues such as co-operation in the fields of aviation safety, security, air traffic management, technology and research as well as “doing-business” issues.