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COMMISSION COMMITS TO CREATE LONG-AWAITED SOCIAL PACKAGE IN AVIATION AT TALKS WITH ETF AND ECA

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and the European Cockpit Association (ECA) met with the Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc and the Employment Commissioner Marianne Thyssen for talks on the many and diverse social challenges facing the hundreds of thousands of aviation professionals they represent. Following those discussions, ETF and ECA warmly welcome the joint commitment made by the Commissioners to deliver a social package for aviation in 2018 and to bring the Juncker Commission's social pillar to life in the aviation sector.

Dirk Polloczek, ECA President, said: *"For too long, aviation and its highly mobile workers have been treated differently to other workers, with aviation's often separate regime used to enable bogus self-employment, artificial temporary agency worker status or even 'pay-to-fly', where the pilot ends up paying more to fly the aircraft than the passengers do for a seat."*

Oliver Richardson, ETF Civil Aviation Section President, added: *"We now see the EU wet-leasing rules being used to break a lawful industrial action while putting safety and security at stake. The EU must stop practices that favour freedom of provision of services over workers' rights. We need a clear definition of principal place of business in order to avoid letterbox companies as well as a consolidated definition of home base ensuring proper application of labour law. At the same time, a revision of the Single Permit Directive is needed to extend its application to mobile workers in aviation and prevent social dumping in case third-country crewmembers work on board of EU-registered airplanes"*.

Against this background, ETF and ECA stand ready to assist Commissioners Thyssen and Bulc in any possible way to help build aviation's social pillar. Both organisations strongly hope that the commitment of the Commissioners to deliver a social package for aviation will materialize in the form of strong and binding rules protecting European aviation professionals. This will contribute to the overall aim to ensure level playing field in European aviation.

European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) represents more than 270,000 civil aviation workers from 81 trade unions located in 42 European countries. We are a recognized social partner and the only representative of aviation workers across all sub-sectors (air traffic management, aircrew, ground handling, maintenance, etc.). Contact : François Ballestero, Political Secretary, tel : +32 2 285 46 65 www.etf-europe.org

European Cockpit Association (ECA) is the representative body of European pilot associations, representing over 38.000 pilots from across Europe. Contact: Ignacio Plaza, Deputy Secretary General, Tel: +32 497 477 499. www.eurocockpit.be