

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001464/19
to the Commission
Costas Mavrides (S&D)
(22 March 2019)

Subject: IFALPA and Nicosia FIR

According to an article published in the newspaper 'Phileleftheros' ⁽¹⁾, the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) has released a document outlining the dangers that continue to affect flights in the Flight Information Region (FIR) of Nicosia. These include radio interference from the illegal Ercan International Airport and the Turkish air traffic controllers' refusal to cooperate and communicate with their Cypriot counterparts.

As the document outlines, the interference from the illegal Ercan International Airport threatens the safety of the Nicosia, Beirut and Damascus FIRs. IFALPA has instructed its national and regional pilot associations in the area to exert the greatest pressure on the authorities involved to ensure that every safety incident is referred to the appropriate air traffic control centre, with a copy of every report being forwarded to IFALPA for information.

Taking into account the gravity of the situation (as stated by IFALPA and reiterated by relevant international and European bodies) and the fact that the Commission's interventions have not yielded any results, what direct and effective measures will the Commission take to exert pressure on Turkey to comply with international law, ensure that flights can operate safely, and thus protect the lives of thousands of passengers?

Answer given by Ms Bulc on behalf of the European Commission
(7 June 2019)

The issue addressed by the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) is known to the Commission. Finding a solution to this issue, i.e. the lack of communication between the air control centres of Nicosia and Ankara, is one of the requirements set in the Accession Partnership with Turkey. It is equally an important part of the discussion with Turkey in the context of the ongoing transport dialogue. The Commission receives regularly information from airlines, air traffic controllers and the Member States affected by these disruptions. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) also has raised this safety issue in the context of its standardisation activities involving affected Member States.

The Commission continuously monitors the situation in the Nicosia Flight Information Region (FIR) and regularly raises the issue to the attention of the Turkish aviation authorities in the context of the ongoing negotiations for a comprehensive air transport agreement with the Union.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.philenews.com/koinonia/eidiseis/article/668299/sobara-themata-asfaleias-sto-fir-log-ertzian>