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Committee on Transport and Tourism

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DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Euro Mediterranean Aviation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part (09189/2011 – C7-0122/2011 – 2010/0180(NLE))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Olga Sehnalová

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Euro Mediterranean Aviation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part (09189/2011 – C7-0122/2011 – 2010/0180(NLE))

(Consent)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (09189/2011),
 - having regard to the Euro Mediterranean Aviation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part (14366/2010),
 - having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 100(2), Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a)(v), and Article 218(8), first subparagraph, of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (C7-0122/2011),
 - having regard to Rules 81 and 90(8) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A7-0000/2011),
1. Consents to conclusion of the agreement;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Objectives

Air services between the European Union and Jordan presently operate on the basis of bilateral agreements between individual Member States and Jordan. These bilateral agreements were brought into line with EU law by the conclusion of a horizontal aviation agreement with Jordan in 2008.

The Commission recently negotiated a comprehensive agreement that is much more ambitious in its scope and replaces all of the bilateral agreements by creating a Euro-Mediterranean aviation area between the EU and Jordan. The agreement establishes uniform standards for air carriers in all 27 Member States and allows them to benefit regardless of their national affiliation. Accordingly, EU-based air carriers will be able to operate services between any location in the EU and Jordan, something that was until now conditional upon, among other things, the existence of a bilateral agreement between the Member State concerned and Jordan.

The agreement's objectives are:

- gradual market opening in terms of access to routes and capacity on a reciprocal basis;
- non-discrimination and a level playing field for economic operators, based on the principles laid down in the EU Treaties;
- alignment of Jordanian aviation legislation with EU legislation on issues such as safety, security and air traffic management.

Article 21 of the agreement establishes a joint committee to oversee the proper implementation of the agreement. The joint committee will foster expert-level exchanges on new legislative or regulatory initiatives or developments and will consider potential areas for further development of the agreement. The committee will consist of representatives of the Commission and of the Member States.

Procedural aspects

The Council authorised the Commission to enter into negotiations with Jordan on an aviation agreement in November 2007. The draft agreement was initialled by both parties on 17 March 2010. The agreement was signed on 15 December 2010 and is not subject to provisional application. In a letter dated 17 May 2011, the Council called on Parliament to consent to the conclusion of the agreement.

The agreement regulates not only areas falling within EU competences, but also areas falling within the competences of Member States. In view of this, the conclusion of the agreement requires not only its ratification at EU level, but also its ratification by the national parliaments of Member States.

Parliament will take a decision on the agreement under the consent procedure, as provided for in Rule 81 of the Rules of Procedure, meaning that a single vote will be taken and that no amendments may be tabled.

Rapporteur's recommendation

Relations between the EU and Jordan are based on the Association Agreement which entered into force in 2002 and whose objective is to establish a free trade area between the EU and Jordan. Furthermore, both parties are cooperating closely on democratic reforms and the modernisation of the Jordanian economy. The European Union is Jordan's biggest trade partner after Saudi Arabia.

The conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean aviation agreement with Jordan has long been an EU priority, and it also represents an important element in the development of the EU's neighbourhood policy.

External studies prepared for the Commission estimate that the conclusion of a Euro-Mediterranean aviation agreement with Jordan would generate 54 000 extra passengers and consumer benefits of up to EUR 30 million in the first year of market opening. A similar agreement negotiated with Morocco in 2006 resulted in a significant increase in flights between the EU and Morocco.

Provision is made for the possibility of the agreement being extended in order to create a common Euro-Mediterranean aviation area covering all Mediterranean partners.

The rapporteur is of the opinion that the conclusion of the Euro-Mediterranean aviation agreement with Jordan is in the interests of EU citizens and businesses and in line with European neighbourhood policy, and recommends that Parliament consent to its conclusion.