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EurECCA's statement on the EU–Qatar Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement

6 February 2026

The recent confirmation by the European Commission that a senior official breached internal rules of conduct during a period directly connected to aviation policy and external negotiations represents a moment of institutional gravity. It is not merely an administrative matter, nor an isolated ethical lapse. It raises fundamental questions about the integrity of the policy environment in which decisions of far-reaching economic and social consequence were taken.

For EurECCA, the largest independent European Cabin Crew Association based in Brussels, which represents the interests of cabin crew across Europe and has consistently defended the principles of fairness, transparency and social responsibility in aviation, this finding cannot be viewed in abstraction. It intersects unavoidably with the context in which the EU–Qatar Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement was negotiated and concluded. That agreement, already controversial for its profound imbalance in market access, competitive conditions and social safeguards, now appears even more deeply rooted in a process whose neutrality and fairness are open to legitimate doubt.

Aviation is not a purely commercial sector. It is a strategic public service, sustained by human labour, safety obligations and social rights. Agreements that reshape its competitive landscape affect not only airlines and markets, but tens of thousands of cabin crew whose working conditions, employment stability and collective rights depend on a level playing field. When the context of negotiation is shown, after the fact, to have been ethically compromised, the legitimacy of the outcome itself must be reassessed.

EurECCA has long warned that the EU–Qatar agreement was concluded in a structurally unfair environment, one characterised by asymmetry of obligations, insufficient social conditionality and a disregard for the realities of the European aviation labour market. The Commission's finding today gives new and serious weight to those concerns. It demonstrates that the issue is not solely one of policy disagreement, but of governance failure.



In light of these developments, EurECCA reiterates, with renewed determination, its call for the suspension of the EU–Qatar aviation agreement and for a comprehensive reassessment of the conditions under which it was negotiated. Such a reassessment must go beyond technical clauses and traffic rights. It must examine whether the agreement reflects the values the European Union claims to uphold: transparency, ethical governance, fair competition and social justice.

Restoring trust in European aviation policy requires more than internal disciplinary conclusions. It requires political courage to acknowledge that when the context of a decision is tainted, the decision itself cannot remain untouched. EurECCA stands ready to contribute constructively to a renewed framework for international aviation relations that places workers, fairness and democratic accountability at its core.

EurECCA stands for fair skies and fair work

FLYING TOGETHER – PROTECTING EACH OTHER

About EurECCA: established in Brussels in 2014, the European Cabin Crew Association, EurECCA, represents, protects and develops the rights and needs of cabin crew all over Europe. It is composed of cabin crew unions from European Union Member States as well as accession and bordering states and represents some 50,000 cabin crew in Europe. EurECCA has no political connections. EurECCA's work is around Cabin Crew working conditions, wages, social protection and health and safety at work.

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