



PRESS RELEASE

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SWAPA Commends Administration on Agreement with UAE Air Carriers

(DALLAS) — The Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA) commends the Trump Administration for entering into a new agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that puts an end to their egregious violations of our Open Skies agreements.

“This new agreement means that the UAE’s carriers, Emirates and Etihad, will finally be required to operate the same as actual commercial enterprises and compete on a level playing field with their commercial counterparts in the U.S.,” said Captain Jon Weaks, president, Southwest Airlines Pilots Association. “This new agreement marks a turning point in the fight for fair competition and ensures the sanctity of Open Skies and the benefits they offer.”

Each and every day, U.S. carriers battle for the opportunity to carry passengers to vacations, business meetings, and to connect with friends and family all around the world. That competition is vigorous and intense. Yet for years, Emirates and Etihad have utilized billions of dollars in government subsidies as a predatory tool, dumping excess capacity into markets and forcing U.S. carriers to abandon service. Despite massive financial losses, these violators continued to grow their fleets, causing great harm to their U.S. competitors. Thanks to the Administration’s actions, these predatory practices will end, and U.S. carriers will once again be able to compete and thrive.

While most international carriers compete fairly, the U.S. must remain vigilant of carriers scheming to cheat the system or circumvent the protections provided in Open Skies agreements. Government subsidies and Flags of Convenience schemes – the two most recent and flagrant violations of Open Skies – cannot be tolerated.

“The Administration’s willingness to enforce the terms of our Open Skies agreements by holding violators accountable is a refreshing and welcomed change,” continued Weaks.

“SWAPA hopes that the UAE announcement will be the beginning of the end of partial compliance, whereby foreign air carriers have received permission by the U.S. Department of Transportation to operate to the U.S. despite lacking full compliance with applicable Open Skies agreements.

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“The men and women of SWAPA encourage the Administration to continue standing with American workers by requiring that foreign airlines seeking to operate in the U.S. adhere to all of the terms of the applicable Open Skies agreements.

The professional aviators of SWAPA strongly believe in a fair and healthy airline industry. It is important to our profession, our economic future, and the overall health and safety of an industry that is critical to the global economy. The Trump Administration today has taken a giant first step in ensuring that U.S. aviation workers will from now on be competing on a level playing field.

About SWAPA

Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization representing the more than 9,000 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through negotiating contracts, defending contractual rights, and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association, visit www.swapa.org.

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