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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	6595/19
Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules ensuring basic air connectivity with regard to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the Union - Statements

Commission statement

“The Commission concurs with the statements made in Article 1a and Recital 5a as regards the effects of the Regulation on the division of competences between the Union and the Member States in accordance with Article 2(2) TFEU. The Commission recalls that that division is exhaustively dealt with in the Treaties, both for usual and exceptional circumstances.

Against this background, the Commission considers that this Regulation does not prejudice the nature of the future relationship with the United Kingdom in the area of aviation and that the exercise of competence in the Regulation is temporary and strictly limited to its period of validity. It will be for the Council to establish the terms of any decision authorising the opening of negotiations for a future relationship in accordance with Article 218(3) and (4) TFEU and generally with Union law , and in full respect of the division of competences between the Union and the Member States.

The Commission furthermore recalls the European Council Guidelines of 23 March 2018 on the future relation with the United Kingdom, established with a view to the opening of negotiations on the overall understanding of the framework for the future relationship. According to point 11 of those Guidelines, in the area of aviation the aim should be to ensure continued connectivity between the United Kingdom and the EU after the former's withdrawal from the Union; this could be achieved, inter alia, through an air transport agreement, combined with aviation safety and security agreements, while ensuring a strong level playing field.

Having regard to those Guidelines, the Commission intends to submit the relevant recommendation to the Council as soon as possible in due time.”

Statement by Federal Republic of Germany, supported by BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, FR, HU, PL, PT and SK

“Germany declares with regard to Recital 5 sentence 2, that fast negotiations for a new comprehensive air transport agreement with the UK are desirable. The decision to give a mandate however requires a detailed examination of the Commission proposal for the mandate. For Germany it is important that the mandate will provide for a mixed agreement of the Union and the Member States. We understand that recital 5 sentence 2 does not pre-empt this decision.”

Statement by the United Kingdom on Gibraltar, in the context of provisions to ensure basic air connectivity in the event of a no deal withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the Union.

“The United Kingdom (UK):

- Welcomes the intention of this proposal which will help ensure minimal disruption to citizens and businesses across Europe and beyond in the event of a no deal scenario. It is a pragmatic solution which would help to provide certainty for citizens and business, and the UK is prepared to grant reciprocal access to EU operators as the proposal requires.
- However, is clear that it does not accept the positions set out on Gibraltar.
- Reiterates its certainty over its sovereignty over Gibraltar (including the territory in which Gibraltar Airport is situated).
- As such, is clear and puts on the record that the UK rejects recital 7b which is not consistent with the legal position of the UK.
- Is adamant that, as this measure will be adopted while the UK is still a member state, the legal position of the UK should be reflected in the recitals.
- Makes clear that, in the process of finalising the text, it would be more appropriate to use the established language within the Regulation, which states: “This regulation is without prejudice to the respective legal positions of the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom with regard to the dispute over sovereignty over the territory in which the airport of Gibraltar is situated”.
- Notes its regret that Gibraltar has not been included in the scope of this measure and reiterates its intention that, when it comes to the future relationship with the EU, it will negotiate on behalf of the entire UK family, including its Overseas Territories.