



"[air navigation control, [...] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".
(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).

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It is with great concern about the future of the current excellent flight safety record that ATCEUC concluded its Spring General Assembly in Bucharest from 2nd to 4th April 2014.

The Assembly discussed the national situations as stated by the 26 Organizations member of ATCEUC and it was more than clear that in many European countries the conditions for providing air traffic control and air navigation services are worsening and this can have a negative impact on safety.

This deterioration is directly connected with new legislation prepared and stubbornly defended by the European Commission (EC). The EC's Single European Sky 2 Plus package was recently approved by the European Parliament (EP) despite the ATCEUC Action Day against this on 29th January 2014. By drastically reducing air navigation provider income - but not the costs paid by passengers - while asking for a serious increase in performance with the Reference Period 2 targets, these packages constitute a reckless experiment that will undermine the stability and safety of the ATM system in Europe.

A similar approach was followed by NASA in the early 1990s. The "Faster, Better, Cheaper" concept caused several space mission disasters on Mars before being abandoned by the end of that decade. Today the European Commission does not provide the tools for ATM to become better or safer. But it certainly wants it to be cheaper.

We will not follow the EC's and EP's mission on their spaceship to Mars. We will continue to fight in defense of a safe and efficient ATM system, as we have done for decades. The burden for ensuring this also lies with EU member states and their citizens. We need them to stand beside us to put a stop to the unbalanced EC approach that does not even allegedly guarantee the increase of airline efficiency but will certainly endanger airline passengers` right to a safe journey.

Bucharest, 4th April 2014

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