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European Transport Workers' Federation  
Fédération Européenne des Travailleurs des Transports  
Europäische Transportarbeiter-Föderation  
Federación Europea de los Trabajadores del Transporte

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## STATEMENT ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GROUND HANDLING REGULATION

**The ground staff members of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) note the withdrawal of the proposal for a new Ground Handling Regulation by the Commission. This measure has been announced as part of the Commission work programme published this week.**

If adopted, this proposal would introduce unnecessary further liberalisation of the ground handling activities at European airports. As consequence of the previous Directive 96/67/EC, ground handling has been already opened up for competition and the ETF sees no need for imposing even more liberalisation that would inevitably lead to job losses, no binding social protection, lower wages and deterioration of working conditions.

**Robert Hengster**, the Chair of the ETF Ground Staff Committee, commented: "*The ETF has been fighting against further liberalization. Therefore, the withdrawal of the Commission proposal means good news for the European ground handling workers. We are not against fair competition based on quality of the services, but we firmly reject competition based on labour costs.*"

However, the ETF regrets that, once again, it is a missed opportunity to give social rights to the workers and recognize the fundamental role of the collective agreements. **François Ballestero**, the ETF Civil Aviation Political Secretary, added: "*In terms of the ground handling proposal, the ETF organized two important demonstrations to obtain binding social protection of workers' in case of call for tenders or partial loss of activities. We hope that the Commission will take up binding initiatives in this field in the near future.*"

The ETF and its members are determined to continue the fight for quality jobs, social protection, acknowledgement of the collective agreements and high training standards in the European ground handling industry.

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The ETF represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 243 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.



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