



ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS AFL-CIO

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Public

FTAA.soc/w/58/add.1

14 April 1999

**Executive Summary - March 31, 1999 Submission of
Patricia A. Friend, International President
Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), AFL-CIO
to the**

**Chairman of the Committee on Government Representatives
on Civil Society Participation - c/o Tripartite Committee (Ref. Civil Society)
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

1-Aviation traffic rights and related services should be excluded from the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations process. The derogation contained in the World Trade Organization's (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) should be maintained in any Western Hemisphere agreement.

2-The provision of aviation services cannot be separated from the foreign policy, national security and economic interests of individual nations. These appropriate concerns are protected by the system created by the Chicago Convention, as are all the technical issues unique to aviation safety. They are enshrined in US labor law covering aviation workers and in the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) program for US military preparedness.

3-Access to aviation markets has increased substantially in the last 20 years using the traditional methods - the bilateral agreement process. Governmental ownership of and financial assistance to airlines is being phased out throughout most of the world in response to market conditions. In the years following US deregulation, bilateral regimes have been negotiated to permit generally greater and greater access. In the last six years, the US has negotiated 65 new progressive agreements including 35 Open Skies bilaterals.

4-Many of the most serious remaining impediments to market access stem from non-governmental causes - natural or practical barriers. Like radio services, which are limited by the availability of frequencies, aviation services are limited by the availability of slots and gates at the desired times at the desired airports.

5-Multilateral concepts like national treatment and most-favored-nation (MFN) would tend to foster the removal of limits on foreign investment and cabotage by non-domestic carriers. We strongly oppose granting cabotage rights to foreign carriers and believe that the domestic control provisions in US law remain essential.

6-The interests of US workers are substantially better protected under the current regime. We are able to significantly affect the outcome of debate in our country and have a legal right to participate in the bilateral negotiations process. By comparison, the FTAA process has refused to allow any formal role for worker representatives.

INFLIGHT SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

