

# Press Releases: Understandings With Qatar Seek Level Playing Field

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

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At the U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue held today, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Foreign Minister Mohammed Al Thani welcomed the outcome of recent discussions on civil aviation aimed at ensuring a level playing field in the global aviation sector while maintaining the Open Skies framework of U.S. international aviation policy.

On January 29, U.S. and Qatari delegations reached a set of Understandings to address concerns that U.S. carriers have raised with respect to government support of Qatar's flagship carrier, Qatar Airways. Anchored in our two countries' close bilateral economic and strategic relationship, the Understandings represent a set of important, high-level political commitments. They affirm both governments' intention to promote best practices for marketplace participation by their airlines providing scheduled passenger service under the 2001 U.S.-Qatar Air Transport Agreement. On the vital issue of financial transparency, in the coming year, those airlines should issue public annual reports with financial statements audited externally in accordance with internationally-recognized accounting standards, to the extent they are not already doing so. Within two years, those airlines should publicly disclose significant new transactions with state-owned enterprises and take steps to ensure that such transactions are based on commercial terms. Officials plan to meet again bilaterally in one year to discuss progress.

The above outcome is a result of the effort led by the Department of State to address concerns about subsidized competition and a lack of transparency. We are maintaining the Open Skies framework, which continues to yield real benefits for U.S. airlines, airports, labor, the travel industry, and consumers, among others. Our goal is to provide beneficial results for as many U.S. stakeholders as possible.

Information on U.S. international aviation policy and Open Skies agreements currently in force is available on the Department of State's website here: <https://www.state.gov/e/eb/tra/ata/>.

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