

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Transportation Security  
Committee on Homeland Security**

**“Strengthening International Cooperation on Aviation Security”**

**April 7, 2011**

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Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for calling this hearing today on the important, relevant and timely issue of strengthening international cooperation on aviation security.

It is no secret that terrorists have tried to attack our Nation through the aviation system, originating from locations abroad.

Last October, international cooperation and public – private interaction resulted in the successful interception of explosive devices shipped on passenger and all-cargo aircraft from Yemen.

The year before, a terrorist attempted to destroy Northwest Flight 253 over the skies of Detroit on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009. That flight originated in Amsterdam.

So the question I will present to the Administration and to all of our witnesses today is how do we secure our skies, secure our air borders, if you will, while also allowing for the flow of law abiding passengers – our own residents, tourists and students traveling to this great land of ours?

How do we balance securing the shipment of cargo and commodities against sabotage with the need to not impede the essential flow of commerce through the quickest form of transportation – that being aviation?

We grapple with these questions domestically, but these questions and issues are magnified when addressing securing the global aviation system.

Aviation is made of hubs and spokes, commercial and general aviation aircraft, passenger and cargo traffic, domestic and international routes. All of these complexities must be considered in the implementation of effective and efficient security programs, processes and procedures.

Secretary Napolitano and Administrator Pistole have put the important issue of raising and harmonizing security standards before the governments of the world.

Agreements have been signed, accords have been reached, but what we are here to examine today is how the United States can leverage these developments, along with the security programs required by the Transportation Security Administration, to secure aviation from terrorist attack.

I would like to welcome our witnesses today. We truly have an international panel, and I look forward to your perspective and insight into what is happening on the international level in terms of increasing security at airports and throughout the global supply chain.

Now, more than ever, we must work with our partners abroad in government, at airports, with air carriers, and throughout the industry to seek solutions to the complex issues associated with aviation and global supply chain security.