The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

No Overflight Fee Decision Before 2013

By The Moscow Times

October 24, 2011



Charges to European airlines for flying over Siberia on their way to Asia could be reformed but not abolished, a government official said Monday.

"We're talking about soon signing an agreement to continue special negotiations reviewing the current deal on Siberian overflight charges," Maxim Medvedkov, Russia's chief negotiator on WTO accession, told Interfax.

"Those negotiations could take a year. Change will be possible not before 2013," he said.

Medvedkov's comments follow a promise by the EU to resolve all issues related to Russia's joining the WTO, including long-standing differences over the charges levied on European airlines for flying over Siberia.

About 20 European airlines are obliged to pay Russian national carrier Aeroflot fees ostensibly in compensation for business lost by the Russian airline on routes between Western Europe and Asia.

The European Commission says the fees breach antitrust laws that say an airline should not be forced into concluding a commercial agreement with a direct competitor.

The commission has threatened legal action against several EU member states, including Britain, Sweden and Italy, which have concluded separate agreements to pay the fees.

The Russian government does not disclose how much it charges, but the European commission has said the fees cost airlines flying to Asian destinations $420 million in 2008.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/10/24/no-overflight-fee-decision-before-2013-a10354