

# US Airlines Want Protectionism: U.S. Bans Laptops, Tablets On Competing Arab Airlines

By [Moon of Alabama](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

*February 2017: [CEOs of Delta, United and American Hope Trump Will Block Arab Competition](#)*

The big three U.S. airlines maintain that **Emirates, Etihad Airways, and Qatar Airways** — airlines backed by governments of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates — are unfairly subsidized and that their expansion into the U.S. market represents unfair competition that should be blocked by regulators. “The Gulf carriers have received over \$50 billion in documented subsidies from their government owners since 2004,” the chief executives of the big three wrote in a recent letter to **Secretary of State Rex Tillerson**. “Mr. Secretary,” the letter continues, “**we are confident that the Trump Administration shares our view** on the importance of enforcing our Open Skies agreements, ensuring that U.S. airlines have a fair and equal opportunity to compete in the international market, and protecting American jobs.”

*March 2017: [US bans laptops, tablets on flights from Turkey and Arab world](#)*

Senior US officials told reporters that nine airlines from eight countries had been given 96 hours, beginning at 3:00 am (0700 GMT), to tell travelers to pack any device bigger than a smartphone in their checked luggage. Laptops, tablets and portable game consoles are affected by the ban — which only applies to direct flights to the United States from the blacklisted airports. **No US carriers are affected by the ban**, but passengers on approximately 50 flights per day from some of the busiest hubs in Turkey and the Arab world will be obliged to follow the new emergency ruling.

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**The ban will hit flights operated by** Royal Jordanian, EgyptAir, Turkish Airlines, Saudi Airlines, Kuwait Airways, Royal Air Maroc, **Qatar Airways, Emirates and Etihad Airways.**

The U.S. move is certainly not about security. What now hinders anyone to fly from Dubai to Paris and on to New York with a laptop and tablet in her carry on luggage? Why would that be more secure than a direct flight with Emirates Airline? No. This is all about unwanted competition and an effort of the [highly subsidized](#) U.S. airlines to sell higher priced tickets with less service.

Flying from the Middle East to the U.S. one can now choose between a direct flight without any personal entertainment equipment, or take a flight with some additional stop on a

(code-sharing) U.S. carrier. The second variant is of course more “secure”.

A bit funny: The Brits immediately [followed up](#) with their own “security measures”. But they banned different airports and airlines than the U.S. There are no new, additional “security measures” for flights to Britain from Kuwait, Qatar and Morocco. Instead Tunisia is on the British list. That of course does not make sense from a security standpoint. But it probably reflects the importance of certain investors for the City of London as well as the competitive situation of British Airways.

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