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**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT
WORKING SESSION 2 OF THE SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TREATY ON OPEN SKIES**

9 June 2010

**Impact on balance of information received by the
Russian Federation given that NATO Member States do not conduct
observation flights over each other**

Madam Chairperson,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As has been repeatedly and rightly pointed out by the States Parties, the Treaty on Open Skies is one of the most successful international agreements in operation in the Euro-Atlantic region.

Its effectiveness depends in the first instance on the conduct by the States Parties of the active quota of observation flights allocated to them. It is extremely important in this regard that the flights ensure adequate observation of the territories of the States Parties in question. The greater the number of flights and the larger the amount of territory in the OSCE region covered by them, the greater the amount of information obtained about military activities and compliance with existing military agreements in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and consequently the greater the level of confidence among the States. In this way, the predictability of military activities is increased overall, thereby safeguarding the security of all States Parties to the Treaty.

For all the positive aspects of the Treaty implementation that we have already talked about, the States Parties have unfortunately not managed to ensure the uniform provision of information throughout the entire area covered by the Treaty on Open Skies. There are manifest distortions: States Parties fly very intensively over some countries and their passive quotas are practically used up in full; over others, in spite of an interest in them and an appreciable passive quota, a sufficient number of flights is not carried out.

In this way, States Parties acquire a solid mass of information on the former but are somehow “starved” of information on the latter.

This is a result to a large extent of the fact that NATO Member States do not carry out flights under the Treaty on Open Skies over each others’ territories. This means, for example, that the group of States Parties consisting of the Russian Federation and the Republic of

Belarus has no possibility of making up for a shortage of information about NATO Member States by requesting data on observation flights over these countries, since such flights are basically not carried out. This absence of adequate information can give rise to a lack of confidence and reduce the predictability of military activities.

We firmly believe that this practice by the NATO countries runs counter to the spirit of the Treaty, causing demarcation lines to be drawn, and essentially creates a different status for its Member States that brings us back to the bloc confrontation. The Cold War ended a long time ago, but for some reason its legacy continues to function within the Treaty framework.

It would be desirable for the States Parties to the Treaty on Open Skies who are members of NATO once again to take a dispassionate look at this problem. Different levels of information in the Euro-Atlantic region result in different levels of security – security that should, in our firm conviction, be indivisible.