



United States Mission to the OSCE

**Opening Remarks by Ambassador Ian Kelly  
To the Open Skies Review Conference  
Vienna, June 7, 2010**

Good morning Excellencies, Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is my honor to welcome you all to the second Review Conference for the Treaty on Open Skies. It is a privilege and a pleasure for the United States to serve as the Chair for this important Conference. The United States is proud of the part we played in initiating Treaty negotiations twenty years ago. I believe the Treaty founders would also be quite proud of all that the States Parties have accomplished during the past two decades. Open Skies remains one of the most effective Euro-Atlantic arms control treaties, and we want to see it continue for the decades ahead.

I would like to take a moment to thank our Hungarian colleagues for bringing the original signed Treaty from Budapest for all of us to see this week – it is in the case out in the foyer. I for one find it inspiring to reflect on the diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Treaty founders and I hope the physical presence of the Treaty will inspire all of us to carry on this tradition during the Conference this week.

Though it took about 10 years to enter into force, The Open Skies Treaty has become a model for cooperation and transparency, operating not only within the letter of the Treaty, but also within the spirit of the Treaty. I say that last part about the spirit of the Treaty in earnest, because as we transition away from a Cold War mentality, realizing that European security is not a zero-sum game and that we all benefit from increased cooperation and transparency, this Treaty shines a light into the future as we explore other ways to increase Euro-Atlantic security.

Open Skies was initially viewed by the United States as a somewhat symbolic gesture, pointing to increased trust and openness on both sides of the Cold War. Glasnost was winning hearts and minds in Europe and it seemed the ideal opening to achieve some lasting improvements in not only better cooperation among former adversaries, but also in actual arms control verification measures.

One of the key benefits of the Treaty was, and still is, the close official cooperation required to implement it. Both operational and political cooperation are a constant among the thirty-four nations that currently are members of the Treaty. Continuous professional dialogue is certainly a valuable confidence and security building measure, and adds that much more value to a Treaty that is highly effective in its primary role of verification. It functions well through the effort of many— air crew, inspectors, sensor operators, translators, as well as people doing policy and technical support, including all of you.

Especially in today's austere fiscal environment, it is time to reenergize this extremely useful arms control and transparency regime. One suggestion came from President Gorbachev during the initial discussions – an international pool of aircraft and sensors for the Open Skies mission. NATO has a similar concept with shared aircraft. It is time to take a serious look at such ideas again.

It is in light of both the current reset in U.S. – Russian relations and a new global security environment that we re-examine Open Skies today. This Conference comes at an important time as the OSCE is heavily engaged in the Corfu process dialogue on European Security and my colleague Ambassador Nuland has begun consultations on the way ahead for the CFE regime.

The Treaty on Open Skies is an interlocking part of European security, supporting and supported by other means. We need to work together, through Open Skies and other mechanisms, to create a more secure Europe that takes into account the changing nature of the threats we face, and respects the core principles of existing institutions such as NATO and the OSCE.

As we participate in the Conference, let's keep in mind that we are all here for one purpose: to enhance the security, and thus the prosperity, of our citizens. We can do that here in the Treaty on Open Skies by moving forward together, exploring those ideas I have mentioned in the spirit of cooperation and transparency, and building the future security of all our citizens--one Open Skies mission at a time.

We have an ambitious program before us during the next three days. We will talk about implementation of the Treaty over the previous five years since the last Review Conference, as well as explore the future of the Treaty. I encourage you to have a robust discussion in the coming days, and wish you fruitful exchanges that will help us all chart a new course for the Treaty. So let us begin.