

OSCC.RC/25/10
4 June 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT
WORKING SESSION 1 OF THE SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TREATY ON OPEN SKIES**

7 June 2010

**Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the
resources needed to implement the Treaty on Open Skies**

Madam Chairperson,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Introduction

The Treaty on Open Skies is unique both in its essence and its successful functioning over a long period. In terms of its content, objectives and tasks, our Treaty fits smoothly into the concept of indivisible security as one of the instruments for strengthening confidence and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

In examining the implementation of the Treaty on Open Skies over the past five years, it must be remembered that the basic objective and the ideas behind the Treaty were to contribute to “the further development and strengthening of peace, stability and co-operative security in that area through the creation of an Open Skies regime for aerial observation”.

It is aerial observation through the conduct of quota-based observation flights that ensures the viability of the Treaty.

2. Conduct of observation flights – a right and a duty

Active quotas are the principal asset of the Treaty on Open Skies. The effectiveness of the Treaty in many respects depends on these quotas being used. In view of the general financial crisis and the aging of the Open Skies platforms, the States Parties are now conducting joint observation flights with increasing frequency, allowing them to make fuller use of their active quotas. At the same time, it cannot be said that there is no room for improvement here. At times some States Parties use less than 50 per cent of the active quotas allocated to them. It is true that the Treaty provides for the right to conduct observation flights, without imposing even a minimum obligation to use this right. We must not, however, in our view, allow a situation to develop whereby as a result of economic crises, technical difficulties or any other such circumstances we move towards a substantial reduction in the

number of observation missions or just formal participation of countries in the Treaty on Open Skies, as this could have a negative impact on the future of the Treaty.

Observation flights make a fundamental contribution to Treaty implementation. It is the results of these flights that enable us to create an effective information base to promote greater openness and transparency in military activities and facilitate the observation of the implementation of existing and future arms control agreements with a view to preventing possible crises and resolving crisis situations. In our view, the desire for full implementation of active quotas is to a certain degree an indicator of a State Party's political responsibility.

3. Implementation of commitments by the Russian Federation

Despite the economic difficulties it is facing, the Russian Federation is doing its utmost to make maximum use of its active quota and also to ensure observation flights over its territory.

Statistics for all the observation flights carried out since the Treaty entered into force show that more than 65 per cent of these flights have been missions by the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus over the territory of other States Parties or missions by other States Parties over the territory of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus.

4. Analysis of observation flights

How effectively do States Parties use their active quotas?

An analysis of the active quotas used by the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus over the past five years shows that the average distance of our observation flights was 1,800 kilometres, this is two and a half times less than the average distance of observation flights conducted over our territory. This is in fact an objective indicator of the effectiveness with which active quotas are used. Although the reason here has more to do with geography, such a considerable difference nevertheless forces us to consider ways of reducing it.

If Open Skies aircraft are equipped with sensors requiring good visibility, the number of observation flights carried out is largely dependent on the weather conditions. As a rule, mission planning provides for several options so as to obtain the maximum possible number of quality images of the area in the actual weather conditions on the day the observation flight is conducted. And still, according to our estimates, the average annual success rate for observation flights stands at just 75 per cent. This fact increases the cost of each kilometre of an observation flight by 33 per cent and reduces the effectiveness of their conduct.

5. Resources

The resources used are an important indicator of Treaty implementation.

Treaty resources include Open Skies platforms, airfields, laboratories for processing the material obtained during observation flights, other infrastructure, aircraft crews and maintenance personnel.

The Russian Federation maintains in operating condition four observation aircraft (one Tu-154M-LK-1 and three AN-30s), two points of entry and exit, four Open Skies airfields and 14 refuelling airfields. In view of the natural process of the aging of equipment and the need to replace it with more modern models, resources are required to maintain them in constant readiness.

As has already been mentioned, the Russian Federation conducts and receives 65 per cent of all the observation flights carried out under the Treaty each year.

This volume of work requires significant expenditure in terms of human, material and financial resources, and also virtually year-round maintenance for all the Open Skies infrastructure on our territory.

For example, just the direct expenses involved in the conduct of observation flights (taking into account the cost of the amortization of the aircraft fleet, fuel, material, meals and accommodation for personnel) amount to around 200 million roubles per year (around 7 million dollars). The cost of developing and equipping two Tu-214 Open Skies aircraft is more than 7 billion roubles (230 million dollars). The cost of fuel is a critical aspect in this expenditure.

The established procedure for determining the cost of fuel according to the minimum prices at Cologne Bonn Airport is causing a large deficit in this respect. Virtually all the prices are at least one and a half times lower than the commercial prices at Open Skies airfields, alternate airfields and refuelling airfields. We believe that the relevant provision of OSCC Decision Number One should be revised with respect to the average commercial prices so that the States Parties would have the same conditions for their financial outlays.

6. Ways of reducing expenses

We need to find ways of reducing expenses while at the same time looking for opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the way in which active quotas are used.

One such way is the planning and conduct of joint observation missions, the number of which has increased steadily over the last five years.

For example, in 2002 no such flights were carried out, while there were only two in 2003, 12 in 2004 and 16 in 2005. Now the States Parties are conducting around 40 joint observation flights each year.

This trend is, of course, also due to the reduction in the potential of the aging fleet of Open Skies aircraft, but it is primarily a means of economizing on resources.

In the context of reducing expenses and the workload for the personnel at the verification centres, we need to look into the possibility of carrying out combined missions, whereby in the course of a single mission active quotas are used over two or more States Parties, and also successive missions over States Parties.

We have great hopes that the transition to digital technologies will reduce Open Skies expenses. The replacement of film cameras with digital video cameras, the closing down of laboratories for the processing of film, and an end to the purchase of film and associated

materials will, in our view, help considerably to reduce expenses within the Open Skies regime.

7. Conclusions

The conduct of observation flights provides the basis for the Treaty on Open Skies and is a right and a duty of the States Parties.

Implementation of the Treaty on Open Skies requires considerable expenditure on the part of the States Parties.

The main areas for a possible reduction of expenses and an increase in the effectiveness of Treaty implementation are:

- The use of the right to joint observation flights;
- The conduct of combined and successive missions by one State Party over the territory of several States Parties;
- The elaboration of joint projects to create and use Open Skies platforms, and also the use of digital and, ideally, standardized sensors;
- The transition to a new technological basis that would make film-based technology redundant.

Thank you for your attention.