

PC.DEL/480/09
23 June 2009

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. SERGEY LAVROV,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE
OSCE ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Vienna, 23 June 2009

**The challenges of “hard security” in the Euro-Atlantic region. The role of
the OSCE in establishing a stable and effective security system**

Madam Chairperson,
Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Permit me first of all to thank you for the invitation to speak at today’s Conference, which is the OSCE’s primary forum for reviewing the achievements in its first “basket” – the dimension of “hard security”.

We all recall, of course, that this Conference was instituted at the initiative of the United States of America at a critical moment in our common history, in the wake of the tragic events of 11 September 2001, when the world came face to face with the threat of international terrorism.

Today we are faced with no less dangerous challenges of a global nature, challenges that require a genuinely collective response. However, if we are to create the basis on which such responses can be sought, we shall have to deal with the structural inadequacies of Euro-Atlantic security.

Following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar system, which had divided, on the one hand, the European Union (EU) and NATO countries and, on the other, the Comecon and Warsaw Treaty States, it did not in the event prove possible to put into place a stable and effective system that would bring together the countries of the West and the East.

The main structural shortcoming lies in the fact that over a period of 20 years we have been unable to devise guarantees to ensure the observance of the principle of the indivisibility of security. Today we are witnessing a violation of the basic principle underlying relations between States that was laid down in the Charter for European Security of 1999 and in the documents of the Russia-NATO Council, namely the obligation to refrain from strengthening one’s own security at the expense of the security of others.

This principle has deep historic, philosophical and moral roots.

Two hundred and thirty years ago, in 1781, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant referred to this principle as a “categorical imperative”. He called on people to never treat others in a way that they would not wish to be treated themselves. On 4 June of this year, President Barack Obama of the United States recalled this biblical adage in his speech in Cairo.

The same principle was enshrined in the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” going back to the time of the Great French Revolution of 1789. Article 4 of that Declaration reads: “*La liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à l’autrui*” (“Freedom consists in the possibility of doing everything that does not cause harm to another”).

The basic sense of all these formulas can be found in the second part of the sentence taken from Article 4 of the Declaration dating back to the French Revolution: No one must ever act to the detriment of others. General security and concord can be achieved only by respecting this principle. This applies to relationships both between persons and between States.

In putting forward his initiative for the conclusion of a Treaty on European Security, President Dmitry Medvedev noted that our fundamental position was based on the need to ensure the unity of the entire Euro-Atlantic area. With the end of the Cold War there were no longer any reasons for that area to remain divided. In principle, that was also the position taken by all our European partners and by the United States and Canada, who are represented here today. However, as is often the case, “the devil lies in the details”. We differ with regard to the methods to be used to bring about the unity of Europe, a unity that it has not known throughout virtually the entire twentieth century.

The problem could have been easily solved, and in no way necessarily at the cost of doing away with NATO following the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. It would have been enough to ensure the systematic institutionalization of the OSCE and its conversion into a fully fledged regional organization within the terms of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. That is, the OSCE would have dealt with the entire range of problems in the Euro-Atlantic area and, above all, it would have ensured, on the basis of legally binding obligations, an open system of collective security in the region. Regrettably, our western partners took another path, that of not merely preserving but of expanding NATO, something that, in the words of George Kennan, was the “greatest mistake by the West in the last 50 years”. These words are today frequently quoted and, it seems to me, not by accident.

In effect, what we are discussing is a short-sighted policy of “chipping away” pieces of the former territory of the Warsaw Treaty Organization with an accompanying expansion eastward, i.e., towards the Russian borders, the former line of division. I am not speaking here about the fact that this process is coupled with elements contributing to a destabilization of the situation in the countries concerned because their absorption into the alliance sometimes divides society and sometimes encourages the regimes in power to engage in irresponsible politics and military adventures. At the end of the day, all the participants in this process, on either side, end up as its hostages.

A common security space cannot be built by excluding from it individual parts. Not only the entire present-day world but also the Euro-Atlantic area are multipolar so that, consequently, one must act as equals, taking into account one another's legitimate concerns.

Let us be realistic: Security can be either common or illusory. We shall again and again find ourselves confronted with the ineffectiveness of security systems if each actor attempts to mould these systems "only for himself" on the basis of political expediency and without taking into account the interests of others.

The paradox consists in the following: The principle of the indivisibility of security is proclaimed both at the pan-European level (within the OSCE) and within regional organizations (e.g., in NATO documents).

The representatives of the NATO countries, when they are present here in Vienna, talk about the indivisibility of security over the entire space extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok. When they are in Brussels, however, the representatives of these same countries declare in their NATO documents that the boundaries for the indivisibility of security extend from Vancouver but not to Vladivostok on the Pacific Ocean, but rather to Belostok on the border between Poland and Belarus.

The collision between the pan-European and intra-bloc approaches is having the effect that in actual practice the pan-European space is becoming fragmented.

Two legitimate questions arise in this connection:

The first question asks: What are those countries to do whose territories and population are artificially expelled from the indivisible security space by a policy of NATO centrism?

The second question asks: To what degree are obligations concerning the indivisibility of security within individual blocs compatible with obligations regarding the indivisibility of security throughout the pan-European space?

From the point of view of elementary logic, there can be no reliable first-class or second-class security. In the OSCE, however, the principle of the indivisibility of security is a political commitment, whereas in NATO that same principle has legal force.

The way out of this paradoxical situation is obvious. The need is to strengthen the pan-European obligations by transferring them from the political to the legal plane. And further, we must place the responsibility for implementing these obligations not only on individual States but also on the international organizations in the Euro-Atlantic area in which these States participate.

Another structural deficiency of the present security system can be seen in the gap between the global nature of the emerging threats and the narrowly "group-based" approach to the way one deals with those threats.

And there are many such threats. For the purpose of discussion, they can be divided into three categories.

Firstly, there are risks of an *inter*-State nature, connected with a lack of trust between countries and with the deterioration of the general atmosphere that characterizes international relations.

Secondly, there are risks of an *intra*-State nature that harbour the danger that conflicts may escalate on ethnic or religious grounds or that so-called “frozen” conflicts may evolve into heated ones, as happened in August of 2008 when one of the OSCE participating States attempted to resolve one such conflict by force in violation of its international obligations to this very OSCE, not to mention the United Nations.

And, thirdly, there are risks of a *non*-State nature, new challenges and threats, the problems of transborder organized crime, including the challenges of international terrorism, illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

Unfortunately, the international community is not succeeding in effectively countering a single one of these threats.

Within the OSCE area a large number of subregional organizations are active. Their agendas frequently overlap and duplicate themselves. There is not the proper level of co-ordination between them. In dealing with some matters the different organizations not only do not co-operate but actually compete with one another. The result is a dissipation of resources and a lack of clear focus in the efforts undertaken to counter the emerging threats to security.

The Platform for Co-operative Security, which has been discussed today before I took the floor, was designed to solve this problem. That Platform was adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999 at the initiative of the EU countries. Unfortunately, the potential that lies in that document has been insufficiently tapped. I believe that the time has come to give thought to how we might turn that document into an instrument making possible effective co-ordination of the efforts of the various international agencies active in the area of security in the Euro-Atlantic region.

It is also regrettable that in relations between countries and organizations there is frequently a lack of constancy in the priorities assigned. Over the course of many years, we have observed how such priorities are assigned not on the basis of international commitments, joint assessments and the interests of pan-European security but exclusively on the basis of the conditions prevailing at the moment and so-called group “political expediency”.

One example of this kind can be seen in the way in which the attitudes of certain countries towards arms control instruments, mainly the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), have evolved.

At the end of the 1980s and during the 1990s, when the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty countries, and later Russia, were being pressed to cut back their conventional armaments, that Treaty was referred to as the “cornerstone” of European security. The implementation of the Treaty and its adaptation to changing politico-military conditions was the first item on the European agenda.

However, once the task of cutting back Russia's heavy weapons had been successfully completed and most of the Warsaw Treaty countries had joined the NATO camp, thus destroying the system of balances contemplated in the original CFE Treaty, this subject was sidelined. For ten years now, the ratification of the Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty has been dragged out under contrived pretexts that have nothing to do with the Treaty itself.

The situation with regard to confidence-building measures is becoming increasingly stagnant. The Vienna Document of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, which was updated within the OSCE on four occasions during the 1990s, has not seen a single change over the last ten years despite countless initiatives, including those put forward by Russia. It is revealing that now around only half of the provisions of the Vienna Document are being applied, and of this half not all are being implemented in good faith.

Another example of the inconstancy of political priorities and "double standards" can be seen in the approaches taken to conflict resolution. In one case, an ethnic conflict provides a basis for recognizing the independence of a territory, and what is more a territory that no one has been threatening during the last ten years, while in another case territories whose populations have been the victim of repeated armed aggression and provocations in recent years are denied this right.

We shall never be able to create a sustainable security system unless we take into account the interests of all the participants in that system.

President Medvedev has put forward an initiative for drawing up a new legally binding Treaty on European Security aimed at eliminating the structural shortcomings in the European security architecture, creating an integral security space within the Euro-Atlantic area, and establishing there a clear system of co-ordinates that would act as a guide not only for States but for all the organizations operating in that zone.

We see four basic conceptual blocks for such a Treaty.

The first of these would affirm the basic principles of relations between States. I am referring to the good-faith implementation of existing international commitments, namely respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States, non-interference in internal affairs, equal rights and the right of peoples to determine their own fate. An important element has to do with the guarantees that these principles will be uniformly interpreted and observed. The Treaty must reaffirm the inadmissibility of the use of force or the threat of its use both against the territorial integrity or political independence of any party to the Treaty and in any other way incompatible with the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

States and international organizations must also reaffirm – but now in a legally binding manner – commitments previously undertaken within the OSCE and the Russia-NATO Council, namely:

- Not to seek to ensure one's own security at the expense of the security of others;
- Not to allow within military alliances or coalitions actions whose effect would be to weaken the unity of the common security space, including prohibiting the use of one's

territory to the detriment of the security of other States and to the detriment of peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area;

- Not to allow military alliances to evolve to the detriment of the security of other parties to the Treaty;
- To respect the right of any State to neutrality.

Lastly, the Treaty is designed to reaffirm, again in a legally binding manner, the provision of the Charter for European Security to the effect that no single State or international organization can have exclusive rights to maintain peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Here, I am simply quoting from documents that we have together adopted at the highest level.

In the second block, we would propose setting out the basic principles for the development of arms control regimes, confidence-building, restraint and reasonable sufficiency in military doctrine. This includes the principles of non-offensive defence and abstention from the permanent additional stationing of substantial combat forces outside one's territory. I might mention at this point that we shall also finally have to clearly define what specifically we all mean by the term "substantial combat forces". We are also proposing that there be a reaffirmation of the commitment to continue the arms control process on the basis of negotiations and that the possibility of adapting arms control and confidence-building mechanisms be clearly stated.

The third block must, in our view, be concerned with the principles of conflict resolution. An objective of the Treaty is to set out clear rules that would be uniformly applied to all crisis situations and to enshrine uniform approaches to the prevention and peaceful resolution of such crises on the basis of negotiations. This section should also set out conflict resolution procedures and mechanisms in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Above all, this refers to the inadmissibility of force as a means of settling conflicts. The parties themselves must come to an understanding. It is essential that everyone be obliged to respect the negotiation and peacekeeping formats that have been agreed by the parties. Conflict resolution must take place in stages: commitments to abstain from the use of force, confidence-building measures and the initiation of dialogue between the parties. The protection of the civilian population in conflict zones, efforts to prevent their isolation and the ensuring of their humanitarian and socio-economic needs are absolute conditions. Any provocations against peacekeepers operating under a mandate agreed upon by the parties are absolutely unacceptable.

We believe that the legal enshrinement of these principles will make it possible to avoid the use of "double standards" in conflict resolution and will make it impossible to bring matters to the point where the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations is invoked.

Lastly, the fourth conceptual block of the future Treaty would in our view be a section dealing with arrangements for co-operation between States and organizations to counter new

threats and challenges, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism, illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and other forms of transnational organized crime.

We are not attempting to impose anything on anyone. We are simply inviting everyone to engage in discussion – a discussion as to how commitments are being implemented and why there are problems in this area. There are no grounds for being afraid of our ideas or for seeing in them some sort of hidden traps. It took the shock of the Caucasus crisis for all of us to become aware that something is not quite right in Europe and that by themselves the political obligations that we have all gradually assumed for various reasons and in various kinds of documents are not enough.

In principle, we are not proposing anything other than a collective and honest discussion of common problems. The outcome of this kind of discussion can obviously only be the result of consensus. At the current critical stage in global development, we all need to begin by making quite clear to ourselves what kind of world we are living in. And if we succeeded in doing that as part of the pan-European process during the Cold War, then this should be all the more possible now at a time when we are not divided by any fundamental ideological differences.

We are pleased that dialogue is gathering momentum at the political level, through diplomatic channels, and through contacts between experts and political scientists. This subject has been one of the priority items on the Euro-Atlantic agenda. It is being discussed within the institutions of the OSCE that were set up to examine the problems of politico-military security. This subject is also being discussed in the Russia-NATO Council, in Russia's dialogue with the European Union and also in bilateral forums. We note that there has been a concrete response to our initiative by quite a number of countries, in particular Germany, France and Finland. The discussion that has begun within the community of experts and elsewhere shows that few are satisfied with the current state of affairs. Hence the need for the serious talks that we are proposing.

Clearly, like any large-scale initiative, the advancement of the idea for a Treaty on Euro-Atlantic Security is coupled with the difficult process of understanding and overcoming stereotypical thinking.

I wish to stress once more: The Russian proposal is not intended to undermine NATO or any other organizations active in the security area. On the contrary, we are in favour of strengthening co-ordination and synergies between existing international structures. We are also against having individual countries or organizations in the Euro-Atlantic area acting against one another, but favour joint action against common threats. Europe has already experienced the era of "holy alliances", and it would be disastrous and senseless to return to the principle of "either with us or against us". Those who today are seeking to resurrect that principle and are provoking the emergence of new dividing lines and walls in Europe must recognize their responsibility.

By way of further developing the dialogue on the Treaty on European Security, we propose the convening of a meeting of the heads of the key international organizations – the OSCE, NATO, the EU, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. This meeting could be convened on the basis of the Platform for Co-operative Security, which we have all approved within the OSCE. The subject of the

meeting could be a comparison of the security strategies that each of these organizations pursues. This would represent an important step towards the formulation of uniform approaches to the creation of a genuinely single and indivisible security space within the Euro-Atlantic area. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of this step for confidence-building.

The Russian Federation has put forward the idea of concluding a Treaty on European Security because it believes that it is precisely in the area of “hard security” that there has been an accumulation of a critical number of irritants. We intend to promote this initiative in all the forums whose task it is to deal with the problems of “hard security”, including the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation and this Conference.

We also note that our initiative has prompted interest in the work of the OSCE in general – now in terms of a comprehensive approach to pan-European security in all its aspects. We welcome this and trust that this awakened interest will finally make it possible to unblock the process of reforming the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe with a view to transforming it into a fully fledged international organization capable of tackling issues on a mutually acceptable basis, using understandable, clear and universally recognized rules that have been agreed by all. Proposals in that vein by Russia and other countries have long been on the negotiating table.

In that sense, we support the initiative put forward by the Greek Chairmanship in the person of Ms. Dora Bakoyannis calling for the holding of an informal meeting in Corfu. We hope that that meeting will see the start of a serious discussion of long overdue ideas and issues that will make it possible to turn our Organization into a common and effective one.

Clearly, we shall discuss in detail in Corfu the structural problems that have accumulated within the OSCE. This should help to launch an honest and open dialogue on the future of our Organization.

Returning to the subject of today’s discussion, namely the Russian idea of drafting a Treaty on European Security, I should like to make the following point. What is involved here is a security concept that is based on co-operation and this is of fundamental importance for the entire Euro-Atlantic region. It is a concept that we have all long ago proclaimed but that it has not been possible so far to put into practice. The idea of the new Treaty gives it one more chance. If once again there is not enough political will to do this, then we are faced with the prospect of the full-scale renationalization – or privatization – of politico-military security, with all the undesirable consequences that that would entail.

Next year will be an anniversary year for the OSCE – 35 years will have elapsed since the Helsinki Final Act, which is just as important as it ever was. We hope that that year will see positive results in overcoming the structural problems of European security and the construction in the region of a new, stable and effective architecture for co-operation among States and international organizations. We have a real chance to begin building that kind of architecture.

I wish you all every success.

Thank you for your attention.