

Delegation of Italy

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ITALY AT THE  
SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE TREATY ON OPEN SKIES**

7 to 9 June 2010

Moderating an early afternoon meeting is not the simplest task in the world. I should like to begin therefore by expressing the hope that your lunch break was interesting and pleasant and that it provided you with a good start for the work we have before us from here on.

Listening to the opening statements of the various countries, and especially the message from Mrs. Hillary Clinton, the Secretary of State of the United States of America, I realized that the meeting we are about to begin may be of crucial significance for this conference and, what is even more important, for the future of the Open skies. We shall in fact be talking about new methodologies for carrying out the missions and especially about the positive effects that might be produced by a sharing of the assets, i.e., the instruments that we employ for carrying out our missions. Before turning over the podium to the colleagues who will discuss specific subjects, I should like to express a few technical thoughts that I have developed as part of my preparations for this conference. I emphasize that these are my personal ideas and do not represent the technical or official programmatic positions of the Italian Government.

Yesterday we heard an interesting presentation by Mr. Scott Simmons on the work performed for the new sensors and for their certification under the Open Skies regime. I believe that we must all congratulate the sensor group on their achievements.

Unfortunately, we cannot say the same thing for the Open Skies platforms.

So far we have been able to experiment with only limited examples of platform sharing. As our Hungarian colleague has so clearly pointed out, the Open Skies platform fleet is highly diverse and far from optimal in terms of minimizing costs. Above all, this extremely varied fleet relies in many nations on platforms that were developed to carry out military missions and that were subsequently adapted for Open Skies missions. This naturally results in an increase in the costs per hour of flight. In addition, this factor could in the future make it more complicated to conduct Open Skies missions for the reason that military air transport activities are rapidly increasing in many countries.

Our subject is sharing assets for Open Skies missions. Slide 1: Sharing assets: Why?

The first thing we must do is to ask ourselves: Why do it?

I should like to share a few ideas based on what has already been pointed out by many colleagues.

The greatest obstacle for the Open Skies, and one that has been identified by everyone, is the cost of the missions.

If we examine now a typical Open Skies mission, we can see that the cost breaks down as follows:

Slide 2: Open Skies mission costs

Sensors  
Platform (i.e. aircraft)  
Crew (flying and mission)  
Logistics

Among the three classes it is easy to understand which are those that make the greatest contribution.

I should now like to invite you to take part in a small geometric exercise.

So as not to get into political considerations, let us view the area of application of the Open Skies regime as a rectangle extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Slide 3.

Now let us use triangles to represent the home bases from which the various Open Skies platforms operate. Slide 4.

I think we are all in agreement as to the fact that most of the bases are located near the perimeter of the rectangle.

How do we operate today?

We depart from a home base and travel long distances merely so as to arrive at our mission starting point or POE (point of entry). Slide 5.

We always fly the Open Skies mission and then fly back again using Open Skies platforms.

By so doing, we use a large part of the flight hours merely to go and come, resulting in a major increase in costs.

If we had available departure and arrival bases that were more barycentric, that is closer to the central zone of the rectangle, we should be able to save many hours of flight. Slide 6.

The notion might also be suggested, as pointed out yesterday, that a common Open Skies aircraft might remain in the same area, with a change only in the observation crew.

Let us now turn to the flight crews and the observation crews.

Any type of training has fixed costs whether you want to carry out one mission every year or 100 missions. Accordingly, we have today this situation. Slide 7.

I should like to stop here, without getting into logistics, direct support, or common or shared acquisitions – all areas in which, at least at first sight, sharing resources and systems could – and I underline the word *could* – produce substantial savings.

There is another area having nothing to do with costs in which a sharing of assets could yield positive results for the Open Skies. I am referring to the availability of platforms and crews. As we have heard here today, many platforms and crews are assigned to the military and, ever more frequently, the military authorities of each country may be called upon to decide whether to use the same platform or the same crew for an Open Skies mission or for transport to operation zones.

We all know what the priority selected will be. For this reason, the availability of assets assigned exclusively to Open Skies missions could provide the easiest option for continuing to fly without further limits. Slide 8.

As promised, I shall stop here and am happy to...