



United States Mission to the OSCE

Second Intervention on Georgia (in response to Remarks from Russian Delegation)

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 7, 2009

A couple of comments regarding elements we have heard in this debate deserve a little bit further elaboration. The first dealt with the Partnership for Peace exercises which are underway right now in Georgia, in which my country is also participating. There was a statement, if I'm not mistaken, that these somehow violate the August 12th and September 8th agreements. I'm not sure of any part of the August 12th or September 8th agreements of the Medvedev/Sarkozy plan which deal with this issue. I am aware of the parts of those agreements which call for all parties to withdraw their troops to the numbers and positions held prior to the start of the conflict, and certainly I am aware that this is not being upheld by the Russian Federation. But I am unaware that a Partnership for Peace exercise inside Georgia fits in that category.

Further, the Russian ambassador talked of this exercise as "military maneuvers." I'm sure that he is well aware, since his country is fully engaged with NATO in Brussels, that these are not military maneuvers. There is, in fact, no military weaponry whatsoever involved in this Partnership for Peace exercise; it is a command and control exercise. Russia is fully aware, because Russia was invited to fully participate in this exercise, which has been planned for over twelve months now. So, I just wanted to clarify those matters.

As to the question of the unitary monitoring operation, I would simply remind the Ambassador of the Russian Federation that this was not "Kyle Scott's view," as he stated. Instead, it was the view of the United States of America, and I would like him to respect that. Secondly that, in fact, when you look at peacekeeping operations around the world in disputed territory, I am unaware of any that are not a unitary command operation. In fact it is necessary for the operational effectiveness. That is all we are asking for with the OSCE effort in an area of disputed territory, and there is no question that this is an area of disputed territory.

And finally as regards the work of the OSCE on current events in Georgia, my delegation, too, regrets that we are at an impasse on this issue. I would only point out that our OSCE mission in Georgia would this day still be reporting actively on everything that was going on had it not been for Russia's refusal to agree to a technical roll-over of the work of that mission, and Russia's insistence that the mission do no reporting whatsoever during its technical closeout phase.

Thank you very much, Madame Chairwoman.