

There is not, in Europe, a single country that is remote from the concern of the security of this continent. When discussing measures of confidence-building, indeed this must apply to everyone. Just as security, confidence is indivisible.

I was happy to hear the opinion expressed by the Secretary of State of the United States of America on this question.

Indeed, Open Skies, right from the origin, should be based on a national basis, allowing new associations without this affecting its functioning, nor affecting the rights and obligations of the participants. Subsequently, of course, it is up to us all to cooperate with others on the basis of existing solidarities and indeed, why not on the basis of new affinities?

A single principle should guide this approach. The rights and obligations of the states should not stem from their membership or non-membership of an alliance.

Indeed, only a national regime could adapt to present and future developments. This is an essential consideration for the credibility of Open Skies. Indeed, what would be the value of a system that was based on realities which, tomorrow, could be placed in question?

Indeed, the need to adopt a national approach, to my mind, is not only justified through considerations of principle, but also through the concern of seeing that Open Skies develops hand-in-hand with other developments in Europe and the East-West relationships.

To anticipate the movement of European history, this indeed should guide us in the negotiations in Vienna on conventional forces and the confidence-building measures, negotiations, indeed, which would be linked with the Open Skies negotiations.

You know that I recently was in Vienna with my colleagues from the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy to give a political impetus to these new negotiations and bring forth a rapid conclusion. The western countries have just tabled four new proposals. These concern ground vehicles, planes, helicopters, and the stationed troops.

In many respects, these proposals could give a new twist to the Vienna discussions. The progress is important. France has, without reservations, supported the principle and contributed actively to developing the contents.

The impulse that the 16 countries wish to give to these negotiations calls for a constructive answer to three major questions concerning planes, terrestrial equipment, helicopters. These indeed constitute the basis for an agreement. This exists already.