

*** Document 14 of 25 for FBIS ***

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FM FM FBIS LONDON UK

TO RUCWAAA/FBIS RESTON VA
 RHDLCNE/CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK//N2//
 RHEBAAA/DOE IOD WASH DC//DASI FOR RAINE//
 RHFPAAA/UTAI RAMSTEIN AB GE//INOW//
 RHFTAAA/OSIA EUROPE RHEIN MAIN AB GE
 RHHMCMY/JICPAC HONOLULU HI
 RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
 RUCBAIC/AIC NORFOLK VA
 RUCBAIC/AIC NORFOLK VA//DIIC//
 RUCMACC/CDR PSYOPGP FT BRAGG NC//ASOF-POG-SB//
 RUCOXAQ/FITRON ONE ZERO ONE//320//
 RUDKMKB/FBIS LONDON UK//BBC//
 RUDMONI/ONI WASHINGTON DC//214//
 RUDFMAX/FAISA FT BRAGG NC
 RUDFWDC/DA AMHS WASHINGTON DC
 RUEAIIS/STORAGE CENTER FBIS RESTON VA
 RUEALGX/DEFINTAGENCY WASH DC
 RUEBFGA/VOA WASHINGTON DC
 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//INR/CEE//
 RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 RUEHVEN/USMISSION USVIENNA
 RUESDJ/FBIS OKINAWA JA
 RUESFV/FBIS VIENNA AU
 RUESFW/FBIS WARSAW PL
 RUESMF/FBIS MOSCOW RS
 RUETIAV/MPC FT GEO G MEADE MD
 RUFDBJA/CDR USASETAF VICENZA IT//AESE-CMO//
 RUFGAID/USCINCEUR INTEL VAIHINGEN GE

RUBBABA/CG III MEF//G-2//
 RUWSMXI/AMC INTEL CEN SCOTT AFB IL//INO//
 RUWTAEA/NAIC WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH//TAI//
 RUWTNOK/HQ USSPACECOM PETERSON AFB CO//POLAD//
 RXDBHW/HQ AFNW FWD//ATTN LTCOL WILSON//
 RXFNDA/COMNORTH//JOINTINT//
 RXFPPH/SHAPE BE//PIO//
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//((INTERVIEW WITH LIEUTENANT GENERAL VALERIY KOSTENKO, COMMANDER OF THE BELARUSIAN AIR DEFENSE FORCES, BY VALERIY KOVALEV; DATE, PLACE NOT GIVEN: "RUSSIAN AND BELARUSIAN AIR DEFENSE: YEAR OF COOPERATION" — FIRST PARAGRAPH IS INTRODUCTION))

((FBIS TRANSLATED TEXT)) AS WE HAVE ALREADY REPORTED, DOCUMENTS ON THE CREATION OF A UNIFIED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM FOR CIS STATES WERE SIGNED AT THE ALMATY MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT 10 FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR. IT IS NOT BEING BUILT IN A VACUUM — EARLIER ON A NUMBER OF STATES CONCLUDED BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON COOPERATION BY ALERT FORCES AND AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS. A TYPICAL EXAMPLE IS BELARUS, WITH WHICH RUSSIA SIGNED SUCH AN AGREEMENT IN FEBRUARY 1994. A STATUTE ON THE PROCEDURE AND

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MECHANISMS OF THIS COOPERATION HAS BEEN SIGNED. HOW HAS IT OPERATED DURING THIS YEAR? OUR CORRESPONDENT PUT THIS QUESTION TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL VALERIY KOSTENKO, COMMANDER OF THE BELARUSIAN AIR DEFENSE FORCES.

((KOSTENKO)) UNDER THE AGREEMENT, IN THE EVENT OF A THREAT OR THE VIOLATION OF THE BORDER OF ONE OF THE STATES, THE ALERT FORCES AND SYSTEMS MUST IMMEDIATELY INFORM EACH OTHER. WE HAVE ALREADY HAD SOME EXPERIENCE OF THIS. TWO SPHERES OF AN UNKNOWN PURPOSE WERE DETECTED IN THE REPUBLIC'S AIRSPACE. THEY WERE TRAVELING AT A HIGH ALTITUDE, AT VARYING SPEEDS, FROM THE DIRECTION OF OUR WESTERN NEIGHBORS. WE LOCATED THEM, AND LAUNCHED SOME FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO FIND OUT WHAT THESE OBJECTS WERE. THE SPHERES WERE SMALL; THE BLIPS ON THE AIRPLANES' RADAR PERIODICALLY DISAPPEARED, AND THE DARKNESS MADE IT DIFFICULT TO MAKE OUT THE TARGETS VISUALLY. IN SHORT, WE *HAD PLENTY OF TROUBLE WITH THESE "UFO'S" BEFORE ESTABLISHING THAT THEY POSED NO THREAT. SINCE THE SPHERES WERE FLYING IN THE DIRECTION OF RUSSIA, WE REPORTED THIS TO OUR RUSSIAN COLLEAGUES. AS A RESULT, OUR NEIGHBORS AVOIDED HASSLE, SO TO SPEAK, AND DID NOT HAVE TO EXPEND MANPOWER AND RESOURCES.

WE CONSTANTLY EXCHANGE RADAR AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SCHEDULE INFORMATION CONCERNING CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT CROSSING THE BELARUSIAN-RUSSIAN BORDER ALONG THE ESTABLISHED CORRIDOR. THAT IS, WE MONITOR THE SECTIONS OF THE AIR STIPULATED IN THE AGREEMENT. WE COOPERATE A FORCE MAJEURE ARISES -- WHEN ASSISTANCE NEEDS TO BE GIVEN TO AN AIRCRAFT EXPERIENCING AN EMERGENCY, AND DURING SEARCH AND EMERGENCY RESCUE OPERATIONS. THERE WAS A MEMORABLE TERRORIST ATTEMPT TO HIJACK AN AIRPLANE WHICH WAS FLYING ALONG THE SYKTYVKAR-ST. PETERSBURG-MINSK ROUTE. WE OBTAINED INFORMATION ABOUT THIS FROM THE RUSSIAN AIR DEFENSE FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND POST. THE NECESSARY MEASURES WERE URGENTLY IMPLEMENTED AT AIRFIELDS, AND THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SERVICES, THE KGB, AND THE REPUBLIC'S MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS WERE ALERTED. THESE WERE CALLED OFF ONLY AFTER OUR RUSSIAN COLLEAGUES REPORTED THAT THE AIRPLANE HAD LANDED IN TALLINN AND THE HIJACKER HAD BEEN ARRESTED.

((KOVALEV)) FROM WHAT YOU ARE SAYING, VALERIY VLADIMIROVICH, YOU ARE SATISFIED WITH THE WAY THE AGREEMENT IS "WORKING."

((KOSTENKO)) CERTAINLY. I ELABORATED THE COOPERATION MECHANISM WITH COLONEL GENERAL PRUDNIKOV, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE RUSSIAN AIR DEFENSE FORCES, WHOM I CONSIDER TO BE MY MENTOR. VIKTOR ALEKSEYEVICH USED TO BE COMMANDER OF THE MOSCOW DISTRICT AIR DEFENSE FORCES, AND I SERVED UNDER HIS COMMAND AS COMMANDER OF A COMBINED UNIT. WE HAVE UNDERGONE THE SAME TRAINING, WE HAVE THE SAME VIEWS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD SOLVING AIR DEFENSE TASKS. IT HAS ALSO PROVED POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS BETWEEN OUR COMMAND AND CONTROL FACILITIES. DURING THE ELABORATION OF THE STATUTE, WE PROCEEDED FROM THE PREMISE THAT OUR STATES ARE FRIENDLY AND FRATERNAL, AND OUR TASK IS TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF THE AIR BORDERS TOGETHER. COOPERATION IS ADVANTAGEOUS TO OUR COUNTRIES IN THE ECONOMIC SENSE TOO: THE INFORMATION WHICH WE EXCHANGE IS EXPENSIVE. IF IT WERE NOT FOR COOPERATION THEN BOTH BELARUS AND RUSSIA WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO REINFORCE THEIR AIRSPACE.

((KOVALEV)) THERE MUST BE SOME PROBLEMS TOO?

((KOSTENKO)) TALKS HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR A LONG TIME ABOUT THE USE OF RUSSIAN TEST RANGES BY OUR MISSILEMEN FOR COMBAT FIRING. THE TEST RANGE IN OUR REPUBLIC ONLY MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO CARRY OUT REAL MISSILE LAUNCHES OF SHORT-RANGE MISSILES. OFFICERS UP TO THE LEVEL OF DIVISION COMMANDER HAVE NO EXPERIENCE OF COMBAT FIRING. THREE OR FOUR VERSIONS OF THE AGREEMENT HAVE NOW BEEN EXAMINED, BUT EXPERTS CANNOT REACH AGREEMENT OVER THE PRICE.

THE REPUBLIC'S AIR DEFENSE FORCES ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES OVER RENEWING THE STOCK OF COMBAT HARDWARE, PROVIDING SPARE PARTS FOR IT, CONDUCTING OPERATIONAL-TACTICAL REGULATION WORK, AND TRAINING CADRES. IT IS HARD FOR US TO GET BY HERE WITHOUT RUSSIA'S HELP. BUT IT WOULD BE TO RUSSIA'S ADVANTAGE TOO IF OUR TROOPS WERE TO OFFER ASSISTANCE IN ENSURING THE PROTECTION OF THE AIR BORDERS IN

THE WESTERN OPERATIONAL AREA.

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