

**Interview with Andrey I. Denisov, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the UN for Vremya Novostei newspaper published on 13 and 18 August 2004**

**Question:** The United Nations mission's mandate in Iraq completes on 14 August. What is the future of the mandate in the opinion of the United Nations Security Council?

**Answer:** In the Security Council it is understood that it should be prolonged. Such is the position of the Secretariat of the United Nations, Secretary-General and all members of the Security Council. It is clear to everyone that political settlement in Iraq is impossible without the United Nations. Yet a full-scale return of the United Nations mission to Iraq will be possible only after achieving the proper security for the United Nations personnel. At present, the United Nations personnel is mainly based in Amman, the capital of Jordan.

**Question:** Who will provide their security?

**Answer:** This is an issue for multinational forces, which stay in Iraq. After the Security Council resolution 1546 was adopted, they act as multinational forces.

**Question:** Does Russia intend to send its troops to Iraq?

**Answer:** Let me remind you that Russia's top-level representatives said time and again that this issue is not on the agenda. Naturally, we do not discuss it. Yet we are ready to actively consider the issue of getting Russian civil specialists involved in the work of the United Nations mission. On principle, we are prepared to resume our specialists' participation in the economic recovery of Iraq. Let me make a reservation that there is an essential "no" for this issue. It will become possible only when the proper level of security is provided for the personnel, and this is a crucial issue.

**Question:** What Russian specialists at the United Nations mission do you mean?

**Answer:** Various specialists: legal advisors for restoring the judicial system, for the creation of the election system of central and local bodies of power. Iraq needs specialists who are competent in the issues of construction of state. The United Nations mission carries out wide functions, but the main thing is to help Iraq in restoring and strengthening its political system.

**Question:** How can Russian specialists be recruited to work in the United Nations mission?

**Answer:** This is an issue of a routine selection of specialists by the United Nations. The United Nations always needs qualified specialist practitioners who know a foreign language and have practical experience. We have such specialists who are experienced in the Iraq issue. We recommended some of them as possible participants of the process of assisting Iraq under the aegis of the United Nations. It is a long time that we have been cooperating fruitfully with Iraq in the civil field and this has been continuing in various political situations.

**Question:** What does it mean to be the Chairman of the Security Council? Is it an efficient tool in the international politics or a just a headache and bureaucratic procedures?

**Answer:** There is some headache because an amount of work is considerable. We have assumed this work as part of the rotation procedure on 1 August this month. The Chairmanship in the Security Council is an honorable obligation and a responsible function. In this way I regard the chairmanship of Russia and my role as the Permanent Representative of the RF in the United Nations and the UN Security Council, who is entrusted to be the Chairman during August.

**Question:** What is the essence of the rotation of Chairmen?

**Answer:** According to the schedule in the alphabetical order, all countries of the Council get moved at the horseshoe-like table in the hall of the UN Security Council.

Now we sit in the center of this shoe. In September, when get replaced by Spain, we'll move to the right side of the Chairman.

**Question:** What is the essence of the responsibility?

**Answer:** The Chairman of the Security Council organizes work - he prepares sessions, briefings, distributes documents, and so on, but the main thing is that he promotes the achievement of agreement between the members of the Security Council on acute issues of international politics. The United Nations does not have vacation in summer. The agenda of our Chairmanship includes such serious issues as the situation in Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan, the fulfillment of respective resolutions of the UN Security Council.

There are some acute problems, for instance Sudan, where the internal conflict in the Province of Darfur resulted in heavy humanitarian consequences.

**Question:** Isn't the enhanced attention of western countries to the problem of Darfur a result of their interest to large uranium and oil resources in Sudan? The US talk about sanctions and there has been criticism of Russia for the delivery of 12 fighters MiG-29 to Sudan.

**Answer:** In case of Darfur I don't see any obvious political reasons. There is an acute humanitarian crisis, a wave of violence; large masses of people are expelled from places of their permanent residence, and a humanitarian catastrophe is next to happening because of lack of water and food. This is the reason why the United Nations pay attention to the Darfur crisis. As to the deliveries of Russian fighter aircraft to Hartum, the issue is that we have to fulfill the contract signed as far back as 2001 on the basis of the agreement concluded between our countries. There are no sanctions of the United Nations for deliveries of military equipment to Sudan. There is no any connection between our deliveries and the events in Darfur. This issue is not discussed.

**Question:** Can Russia as the Chairman of the Security Council push through the most acute problems, in its opinion?

**Answer:** "To push through" is not an appropriate expression. We work out mutually acceptable solutions and ideally, of course, try to reach a consensus. This is a large-scale task which is beyond our monthly Chairmanship term in the Security Council. At the same time, we always remember about our national interests, about the principle positions of Russia on the issues under consideration. And being the Chairman of the Security Council gives a chance to state and substantiate our positions more fully.

**Question:** What does the current chairmanship of Russia in the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) present to us?

**Answer:** The CTC is an auxiliary organ of the UN Security Council that organizes work on anti-terrorism. It includes all members of the Security Council. The work is based on United Nations resolution 1373 adopted in autumn 2001 after the New York tragedy. The CTC has not only to control but to promote member states of the United Nations as to fulfilling this resolution. For example, enhance the border control, to suppress financial flows of terrorists. If a country faces difficulties, including a lack of means to do the job, it appeals to the United Nations. Russia's term of chairmanship involves the consideration of another action plan in respect of anti-terrorism for a period of three months and the formation of a new permanent auxiliary organ - the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate for expert support of the CTC activities.

**Question:** Will the CTC discuss the problem of double standards in the struggle against terrorism? For instance, like it is the case with the Chechen terrorist leader Ilyas Akhmadov who was given shelter in the USA.

**Answer:** The CTC does not deal with particular actions and persons. The case with Akhmadov is an obvious evidence of double standards. The decision of the US

legal authorities cannot but provoke the feeling of regret, bewilderment and censure on our part. But this is an issue of our bilateral relations with the USA.

**Question:** What measures does the Committee of the UN Security Council for sanctions take in relation to Al-Qaida, the Taliban movement and the related people and organizations in the context of Russia's struggle against terrorism?

**Answer:** After defeating the Taliban movement in Afghanistan, close relations between Taliban, Al-Qaida and the Chechen detachment of international terrorism became obvious. At the end of September or at the beginning of October, the Committee will review a report on the Committee's work on anti-Taliban sanctions. We will hold a meeting on the situation in Afghanistan on 25 August.

**Question:** In August, the UN Security Council held a meeting on the problem of the Serbian region of Kosovo. Is the intention of Kosovo Albans to create their own state supported?

**Answer:** I don't have an impression that Kosovo Albans are supported by anyone. The United Nations has a formula for resolving this problem: the standards of democratic life hold the priority, and then comes the solution of the issue of the future status of Kosovo. The standards come first.

The solution to this complex problem is not on surface. But this is not the first difficult conflict which the international community is to resolve.

**Question:** There is the Middle East conflict where Russia is reproached sometimes for the unilateral sympathy for the Palestinian side...

**Answer:** Russia's policy in this area may be called pro-Palestinian only in respect of our efforts to find a fair solution to the Palestinian issue. Yet we are not alone here. The results of the recent voting show that the absolute majority of member states of the United Nations hold this position. Russia would want to see less of the political rhetoric around this acute and sensitive issue, while at the same time be looking for practical solutions.

**Question:** Is it necessary to reform the Security Council?

**Answer:** The issue is ripe. The main thing about the reform is to ensure a wider representation of the states in the Security Council. But a mandatory prerequisite is to keep the efficiency of the UN Security Council to the principle of not causing any harm. Finding solutions is possible only on the basis of a multilateral consent. This is not the case yet. Created by the UN Secretary-General, the Group of Wise Men has been working on the issue. The Panel includes Yevgeny Maksimovich Primakov as the Russian representative.

**Question:** Has the question of increasing the number of countries having the right of veto in Security Council been raised?

**Answer:** The right of veto is an inherent element of the activities of the UN Security Council. In this matter the hasty and politicized decisions must be avoided. The necessity to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council is more or less agreed upon by most participants of the discussion. The question is that the member states of the United Nations haven't yet agreed on what countries should be included in the Security Council. But this issue is not related to the veto right. The opinions on this issue will become clearer when the agreement regarding the increase of number of new members is reached within the Security Council.

**Question:** Is there anything extraordinary in the UN work which can amaze even an experienced diplomat?

**Answer:** The previous diplomatic experience helps, of course. Apart from bilateral diplomacy, there exists a multilateral diplomacy when finding agreement between positions of a wide range of countries becomes necessary. The United Nations presents the highest form of multilateral diplomacy. This is an important diplomatic school where one may study for a lifetime. As to the difficulties, I would mention a huge amount of various abbreviations and numbers of resolutions which the

personnel knows by heart. I have to look these up in reference books. Yet, I have already learnt a good deal of them.