

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT



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Unofficial translation from Russian

**Transcript of Remarks and a Reply to a Media Question by Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov Following His Visit to Headquarters of Al
Jazeera Television Company, Doha, May 24, 2006**

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Foreign Minister Lavrov: I am very pleased to have been able to visit the headquarters of Al Jazeera, which is known in Moscow and in Russia. This is a serious professional television journalism. I stressed in my conversation with the head of Al Jazeera that in the years of its existence it had substantially helped democratize the international information space. Russia is also trying to make its contribution to this task. It is very important. In addition to the broadcasting of our traditional channels abroad, the English-language channel Russia Today has been set up. Work is under way to set up an information channel which will soon be aired in the Arabic language.

We discussed the tasks for journalists in the conditions when the new threats and challenges have no borders. To see the distinct border and feel one's responsibility for considering when professionally fulfilling one's duty of conveying the facts of news, especially unique news, to the viewer the concerns of the world community that are reflected in, among other documents, the resolutions of the UN Security Council on the inadmissibility of the use of the media for incitement to terrorism. At the same time it is understandable that comparing views is very important in order to find the correct ways of solving international problems. But in so doing it is necessary to avoid situations where the media would be used for the brainwashing of young people and aid the radicalization of sentiments in the circles from where the extremists of all kinds then draw their resources.

So that I am very satisfied with my visit to the highly professional TV channel.

Question: There will soon be the visit of the Al Jazeera Director General to Russia. Are any joint projects being expected?

Foreign Minister Lavrov: I hope that our media act according to their own plan. Certainly they're preparing this visit on a professional basis, in contact between themselves.

If visa or other support is required from the Russian Foreign Ministry, we will provide it. We prefer that the media themselves would agree on the areas and forms of their cooperation.

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A video recording of the remarks is posted on the Russian MFA's Web site in the Video section (<http://www.mid.ru>).

May 25, 2006