



## Press Availability in Moscow

### Marc Grossman, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

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**Under Secretary Grossman:** My name is Marc Grossman. I have the good fortune to be in Moscow this morning. Before I do anything else, let me, on behalf of myself and all of my delegation, express our condolences and outrage for the terrible crime that was perpetrated here yesterday in front of the National Hotel. We condemn this terrorism. Our hearts go out to the victims.

I had the chance to come here today to talk about the global repositioning of United States forces. On the 25th of November, President Bush made a statement directing us to intensify our conversations with our allies -- and our partners and our friends -- about the global repositioning of our forces. And that's what I have come here to do today. We spent about 90 minutes or so with Ambassador Chizhov and his team and we were very glad to do that. I tried to emphasize in my presentation to our Russian colleagues, first, that the Cold War is over and that the positions of American Forces around the world sometimes reflect the Cold War and not the threats that we face today. We face new threats, and we have some new opportunities. We consider Russia to be a partner in meeting these new threats. We briefed the Russian side on our thinking and we tried to emphasize that everything that we are doing is designed in a way that will meet our treaty commitments, that will meet our political commitments, and is not directed against any country. I emphasized that no final decisions have been made and that's why we were having this conversation. Obviously, the Russian side will speak for itself about its reaction, but I felt that they were glad that we've made the effort to come here, and I said that we would be very glad to come back and to continue this conversation. So I would be glad to take a couple of questions. Thank you very much for waiting for me.

**Interfax:** Has the American side already made some concrete decision about movement of U.S. military bases to Eastern Europe and particularly to Poland?

**Under Secretary Grossman:** No, is the answer to your question -- as I said, no final decisions have been made. I want to be clear here though that what has been decided is that we need to make changes. In other words, there is no possibility, I think, that everything will just remain the same. Because if everything remains the same, than it seems like we're still in a Cold War posture. That isn't right. And so the decision has been made to change. What we are now talking about is how to make those changes. I also would say, as we said yesterday, I'm sorry -- Monday, that as NATO expands south and east, obviously our military forces have the opportunity to follow that expansion.

**Associated Press:** Two questions. One, how specific can you get when you say there are no decisions yet? Did you talk about specific countries, Russia, Poland, Azerbaijan? If so, was there any difference in their reaction to former Soviet bloc countries and former Soviet republics? The second question is -- do you think that they accepted the basic idea that moving from the sort of threatening Cold War positions will be, in fact, less threatening or did they see them as more of a threat?

**Under Secretary Grossman:** On the first question -- no, we did not talk about specific countries or specific locations. And the reason is we felt it was very important on this first round of consultations to have people understand the concept, to have people understand the idea. We felt that if we started talking about this place and that place, then everyone would jump immediately to those details and we would lose this conversation about what it's all about. So, no, we did not talk about specifics. We didn't have any specifics to offer. On the second question, again, as you say, they'll have to make their own comments, but I felt, yes, that the recognition that this old way of thinking in the Cold War is over was very much welcomed by the Russian side and also very welcome was our repeated commitment that everything we are doing will be consistent with our treaty and political commitments. So I think, there is recognition on their side that there are new threats. There is recognition there are new opportunities to meet those threats and also, I hope, recognition that we'd like Russia to be a partner in this.

**CNN:** -- Could you explain the U.S. position on Russian contracts in reconstruction in Iraq and explain the logic behind the Defense Department statement yesterday. And if you got any feedback from the Russians today about the U.S. position...

**Under Secretary Grossman:** It was not raised today and so, I think, for me standing here the best I can do, I know it's not satisfactory for you, is just refer you back to the Defense Department in Washington. We came here to talk about these things and that's what we did today. Ok, thank you all very much.

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