



Remarks With Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

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FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: (Via interpreter.) Good morning, journalists. It's a great pleasure for me to welcome once more to Lisbon my colleague, the Secretary of State of the United States. It was a very quick visit, but we had time enough to talk a long time yesterday and today about issues that concern both of us.

Of course, we talked about the crisis situation that we're living through now in the Caucasus after the Georgia crisis. We also talked a long time about transatlantic relations in view of the meeting that we'll have this afternoon of the European Union in Avignon which also will deal with transatlantic relations. And I also heard a lot of information about the Middle East from the Secretary, who has made a long, sustained effort, so she – after Annapolis especially, and she explained those things to me.

We had an opportunity to talk about also the Maghreb, where the Secretary of State is going to after this. And of course, to talk -- to exchange views with somebody who has so much knowledge about that region and is also an ally of that region as we are is a very important thing for us.

And of course, we had interesting conversations that we'll expect to continue in New York soon during the UNGA, the United Nations General Assembly, and the meetings that will take place there on that occasion. And I would like to hope the Secretary of State will make yet perhaps at least another visit to Lisbon before she leaves office, and that's because the good relations and the satisfaction with which she's welcome here.

SECRETARY RICE: Well, thank you very much, Minister Amado, Luis. We have indeed had very excellent discussions, very deep discussions. The time has not been very long, but I think it has been well used. I want to thank you particularly for the important role that you are playing in expanding and deepening the transatlantic ties.

I really like coming to Portugal and speaking with Luis because he is truly a deep thinker about so many issues in the world. We have discussions that are not just tactical about what to do today, but we have discussions that are strategic about how to face the future. And we have had those discussions about the situation in the Caucasus, about relations with Russia in light of that. We have had really excellent discussions about the Middle East.

And I was particularly interested in Luis' insights on the Maghreb, a place to which he has been a number of times. He's been to Libya. And so it was very good to talk about the role that the Maghreb plays and the role that Libya, in particular, plays given its African Union and Arab League roles in its relationship with Europe and the broader global environment.

And so it's been a very good set of discussions. It is a very good place to begin my trip to the Maghreb, because as is always the case when I come here and when I meet with Luis either here or in the United States or the many times that we've met in Europe, it is beneficial not just for formulating near-term policies, but really very beneficial for enhancing our ability to think about these issues in a strategic way. So thank you very much for having me here.

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Shall we take a few?

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: (Inaudible) us any questions?

QUESTION: This was concerning to the situation in Georgia. We believe that independence of Kosovo, might have been somehow a Pandora box that was open and that the West (inaudible) the U.S. gave the goods to (inaudible) to Russia?

SECRETARY RICE: Well, first of all, the Kosovo situation was *sui generis*. It was a unique situation. It came out of the collapse of Yugoslavia as a state. It came out of the war of the Serbs against – the Serbs under Milosevic against other parts of the collapsing Yugoslav state. And I might note that it also came – the recognitions that took place came after an extended, extended, extended international discussion led by a special representative of the United Nations, Mr. Ahtisaari, of how to move forward, and a recognition that it was not going to be possible to have Kosovo a part of Serbia. But there was no existing state of which it really was a part. The situation was completely different.

I also think that it is very telling that the Russian preemptive recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia took place in violation of a ceasefire agreement that had been negotiated by President Sarkozy, in which the sixth point talks about international discussions on security and stability in the zones of conflict. It took place after an extensive effort in which the Germans, in particular, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier had been trying to bring about a solution to this conflict.

And I think it is telling also that very, very, very few states have found it – found the Russian lead in recognizing to be one that they wish to follow.

QUESTION: So it's not (inaudible), right?

SECRETARY RICE: No. Situations are different sometimes and there simply was no precedent here from Kosovo, and we shouldn't allow that argument to be made.

QUESTION: It's the same question. (Question was interpreted.)

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: (Via interpreter.) I essentially agree with the Secretary of State. Situations are different. However, I think that in view of the analysis that people are making of the situation in the Balkans and in the Caucasus, I suppose that a parallel might be established between the two. The essential issue is that now, we be in a position to deal with the two different situations and propose different solutions for two different situations.

SECRETARY RICE: Sylvie.

QUESTION: Sylvie Lanteaume from AFP. Madame Secretary, you are going to meet with Colonel Qadhafi tonight. What do you expect from this historic meeting, knowing that he's considered as rather unpredictable?

And Mr. Minister, if you had an advice to give to the Secretary about this meeting, what would it be?

SECRETARY RICE: I think I'd like to hear your advice first, Luis. (Laughter.)

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: I had the opportunity to give the advice that I think are important to listen at this particular moment. I have, as you know, a very straight relation with the leader of Libya. And I had the opportunity to explain to Condoleezza Rice my views on the importance of this relationship with Libya and on how to implement in the future this relationship in consideration, certainly, of the principles and values that we assume together at the core of our societies and of our world, but in consideration of the tremendous challenges that we are facing in the relationship with Islam, in the relationship with the Maghreb region, in the relationship with the African continent.

And we should look forward in how to understand the dynamic of all these problems that we face and we need to address them together. And we had a very good conversation on this particular issue. I don't need to advise Condoleezza Rice on that issue, as you understand.

SECRETARY RICE: The discussion nonetheless was very much appreciated, because it is a historic moment. And it is one that has come after a lot of difficulty, the suffering of many people that will never be forgotten or assuaged, Americans in particular, for whom I'm very concerned. It is also the case that this comes out of an historic decision that Libya made to give up its weapons of mass destruction and to renounce terrorism, the important role that Libya can play in the – does play in the Maghreb, in the African Union. We will discuss, of course, issues like Sudan, where Libya plays an important role. And so I'm very much looking forward to it.

I also understand from those who have been there that Libya is a place that is changing. And I want to discuss how that change is taking place, because a more open Libya, a Libya that is itself changing will be also good for Libya and for the international community.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, are you happy with the way European Union is dealing with the Caucasus crisis, namely the decisions at the last European summit? And what do you expect from the next President Sarkozy visit to Moscow?

Minister, should Sarkozy fail in his mission, what do you think will be the next move of the European Union?

SECRETARY RICE: Well, we've had the very closest cooperation and coordination with the European Union, including a trip that I made to see President Sarkozy in France and then a meeting of NATO in Brussels. This is a continuation of our coordination and discussion with Europe. Luis will go just after this to a Gymnich and so it gives me an opportunity to tell him what we're thinking.

I believe that we actually, together, are making it difficult for Russia to achieve the strategic objectives that it had set out when it invaded its small neighbor. Georgian democracy is still strong and, in fact, is gaining support from the international community. The Georgian economy has not only not collapsed, but it is receiving significant support from the international community. Russia is being widely condemned for having recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

And so I think the unity that the United States and Europe are showing is having the effect of demonstrating to the Russians that, yes, they can demonstrate that they can use military force against a small neighbor, but they're not achieving much from that except the approbation of the civilized world. And so I am quite pleased with the cooperation that we've had. We will, of course, continue to coordinate, to consult about how to move forward should Russia fail, as it has failed thus far, to live up to the obligations that it undertook to President Sarkozy to honor the ceasefire.

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: As I've said before, our priority is to preserve the unity of the council and the unity of the alliance. It would be really a very dangerous situation if we fracture and if we have divisions in what constitutes the main frame of alliances that we have to guarantee peace and stability in Europe. That's our main priority. And I think that President Sarkozy visit to Moscow will address the situation in a very firm position of what are the principles of that agreement and how it has to be respected.

And at the same time, in a constructive and open position towards Russia, we believe that the security and defense system in Europe, the stability and peace in Europe has to be guaranteed in the future with the cooperation of Russia. But for that, certainly, Russia has now to show that they really are engaged in what was delivered during the negotiations led by President Sarkozy.

So we hope he succeeds. He was the master of the agreement. And we believe in his capacity to deal with the complexities of its implementation, but certainly, Russia will understand that isolation is not what we want and isolation is not also what is the strategic interest of Russia. So I believe that good sense will prevail.

QUESTION: Following up on that point, Madame Secretary, do you think the European Union went as far as it could have gone on September 1st? And are you satisfied with – you said you were satisfied with the cooperation, but are you satisfied with what the European Union is doing itself in this, right now?

And Mr. Foreign Minister, you mentioned that Russia has to be careful of isolation, but what – how far is the European Union willing to go? And do you think you will be considering stronger measures and possibly sanctions before the end of this year?

SECRETARY RICE: I am satisfied with the result that we're getting together. And that is a result that has strengthened Georgia, that has demonstrated to Russia that the Europeans and the United States together, the NATO alliance, the European Union, the transatlantic alliance is not prepared to see Russia invade a small state and overthrow its democratic government, but rather, will stand with that democracy.

I am satisfied with a set of outcomes that has made available to Georgia \$750 million in a standby facility from the IMF. That happened because of our unity. I am satisfied at the condemnation of Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and the fact that by last count, it was South Ossetia and

Abkhazia recognizing each other, Russia, maybe Nicaragua, I understand, and Hamas, and that even some non-Europeans have seen the danger in what Russia has done. And I am quite satisfied that the message that will be delivered to Russia will be one that Europe, as well as the United States, find it extraordinary that the President of Russia has not lived up to the obligations that he undertook to President Sarkozy.

And I am quite certain that Russia will understand that it is deepening its isolation and that it will have no way out unless it honors its commitments and unless it begins to change its behavior. I'm also confident, by the way, that the Russians are beginning to understand that there are costs to this kind of behavior in rallying the world against this kind of behavior. So yes, I'm satisfied with where we are because we're getting results. And should Russia not respond, then we can have further discussions on how to go beyond that.

FOREIGN MINISTER AMADO: Unfortunately, as you know, I cannot give you a straight answer on that. I cannot respond on behalf of the European Union. I know it's quite complicated for an American, as for a Russian, having the decision-making process you have as a national state to understand the way we function.

But what I can say to you is that the instinct of unity is there. In the council of the European Union, and we all understand that in such a challenging and complex international environment as the one we face, to preserve the unity is a main value of strategic and political importance. And we all are able to understand what is the common strategic interest of Europe and what are the different sensibilities in the way of dealing with this specific situation or in the long term with the relationship with Russia.

So I believe that the presidency -- the French presidency has the responsibility to understand, in every moment, which is the platform of compromise to preserve unity, because this is really what we need to understand. Without unity in European Union, with the visions in European Union or in NATO, we would be in a much chaotic and irrational environment, and this will be quite complicated to construct any positive solution for such a challenging crisis as the one we face.

So to preserve unity is the main responsibility of the presidency, and what I can assure you is that the Portuguese Government will be always in a very constructive position to (inaudible) -- our particular sensibilities to force unity position of the European Union, step by step. We believe that Monday, President Sarkozy will have a very difficult mission, he will come back, and we will certainly have the opportunity, namely in New York in the next weeks, to revisit the situation, and to do the movements that we intend to develop, assuming that the cohesion of our positions in European Union are level is the main condition to have the cohesion of the transatlantic camp and of the transatlantic alliance.

Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you.

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