



## Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of South Africa

### PRESS-RELEASE

#### **MFA Spokesman Alexander Lukashevich Answers a Media Question about the Legal Basis for the Use of Force by NATO**

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**Q:** Some politicians in the West have increasingly claimed recently that for the alliance's military intervention it is not obligatory to obtain the consent of the UN Security Council. What is Russia's stand on this issue?

**A:** We have noted the statements of a number of Western politicians from NATO countries, as well as some commentators, which boil down to a thesis alleging that for military intervention in case of threats to the civilian population in a country, the appropriate decision of the UN Security Council is not required. Among other things, they refer to NATO's military operation against the former Yugoslavia.

Our position in this regard is well known. The hints that NATO could be endowed with a right to use force under the concept of "responsibility to protect" without a proper Security Council mandate are certainly worrying. Such an approach, if it becomes part of the strategy and operational planning of the alliance, can undermine the very foundation of the existing world order.

It seems that the prospect of NATO's engagement as a tool to legitimize unlawful decisions will encourage other states to seek more reliable and "convincing" security means that can create additional risks of WMD proliferation.

We proceed from the assumption that all members of the international community, including military-political organizations must strictly follow the provisions of the UN Charter in regard to the use of force. For our part, we have repeatedly raised these fundamental issues in discussions with our partners in the Russia-NATO Council. It is obligations under international law, including the UN Charter that are the basic principles of Russia's cooperation with NATO, enshrined in the Founding Act of 1997 and the Rome Declaration of 2002.