

Norwegian Military Inspectors to Fly Over Russia and Belarus

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Norwegian military inspectors are set to fly above Russia and Belarus starting Monday under the international Open Skies Treaty, a Russian Defense Ministry official has said.

"Within the framework of the international Open Skies Treaty, Norwegian specialists flying Romania's An-30 aircraft will perform a surveillance flight above the territories of Russia and Belarus in the period between Sept. 23 and 27," said Sergei Ryzhkov, the head of the ministry's National Nuclear Risk Reduction Center.

The aircraft's surveillance equipment was inspected and certified by international experts, some of whom were Russian. The An-30 does not carry weapons.

Russian and Belarussian experts will also be on board the aircraft, to oversee the proper use of surveillance and filming equipment in line with the treaty's provisions.

The Open Skies Treaty, which entered into force on Jan. 1, 2002, establishes a regime of unarmed aerial observation flights over the territories of its 34 member states to promote openness and the transparency of military forces and activities. Russia ratified the deal in May 2001.

Under the treaty, each aircraft flying under the Open Skies program is fitted with a sensor suite including optical panoramic and framing cameras, video cameras with real-time display, thermal infrared imaging sensors, and imaging radar.

The image data recorded during the observation flights can be shared among all signatories to support the monitoring of compliance with existing or future arms control treaties.

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