



(S//SI) SIGINT in the City that Never Sleeps

FROM: [REDACTED]
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(S//SI) The pace of work is fast for NSA's Representatives at the U.S. Mission to the UN.

(S//SI) Hello from New York! What is it like to brief SIGINT product to an ambassador, answer a question from [NSOC](#) about the U.S. President's visit, and then stop by Grand Central Station for a quick lunch? It's all possible if you work at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN). The work is exciting and interesting, and the pace is quick. It becomes even more so in mid-September, when world leaders gather here for the opening of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The USUN staff grows, and so does USUN's need for SIGINT support.

(S//SI) The job of the NSA Representative to USUN can be summed up in one word: liaison. The Rep is the main link between analysts at NSA and customers at USUN. These customers are high-level policy-makers: the US Permanent Representative, his deputies, and sometimes even the Secretary of State and the President. To ensure that SIGINT gets into the customers' hands in a timely manner, the Rep has to serve both the policy-makers and the analysts.

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(U) UN Security Council meeting (Reuters)

(S//SI) Serving policy-makers means more than just handing them packets of reports. It means meeting with them to find out what is going on at the Mission and at the UN, tailoring SIGINT packages to each customer's needs, and answering a myriad of questions. Those questions can range from "Is there any SIGINT on the NAM conference in Havana?" to "What does 'POC' mean at the bottom of this report?"

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(U) US Permanent Representative to the UN, John Bolton (Reuters)

(S//SI) Serving NSA TOPIs* is equally challenging. Each weekday, the NSA Rep scans press reports, UN Security Council and General Assembly schedules, ambassadors' calendars, and State Department diplomatic cables. The result is "Diplonotes," an unofficial roadmap for many analysts. A less glamorous, but very important part of the job, is making sure that analysts get feedback on their work. NSA TOPIs produce vital information, and they need to know that this information really is read and used by policy-makers.

(S//SI) Sometimes analysts from the TOPIs visit USUN for discussions with policy-makers. The Rep coordinates the visit, plays host, and ensures that the time is well spent for both USUN and the TOPI analysts.

(S//SI) So, in a nutshell, the NSA Rep to USUN is a briefer, a writer, and sometimes even a travel agent!

Notes:

*TOPI = Target Offices of Primary Interest

(U) See also earlier articles on *SID today* :

- [\(S//SI\) A Visit to the USUN](#)
- [\(U\) Life in the Big Apple](#)

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