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PRESS RELEASE**Meeting of UN Security Council on Great Lakes Region in New York**

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An official meeting of the United Nations Security Council on the Great Lakes Region took place in New York on January 27. It reviewed the situation in the region and the course of the preparations for the second, concluding Summit of Heads of State and Government of the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Sustainable Development in the GLR. The meeting passed off in a constructive atmosphere and demonstrated the sincere interest of the international community in normalizing the situation in that region and providing conditions for stable development of the African continent.

Meeting participants devoted their main attention to issues of security and the military situation in the GLR with emphasis on intensifying the work of bilateral and multilateral control mechanisms. In so doing they emphasized that of key importance to the successful holding of the International Conference will be a return to normalcy in the eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the disarmament of illegal Congolese and foreign armed groups and a timely conclusion of the transitional period in that country after a general election on June 30, 2006.

The thought running through the statements of practically all the delegations was that for a lasting peace to arrive in the region the participants of the second Summit of the International Conference will have to agree on and sign a package of documents concerning all the sore points of the region with emphasis on security issues.

In the statement of Russian Permanent Representative to the UN Andrei Denisov, it was especially pointed out that to solve the problems that have accumulated in the countries of the region over the period of conflicts serious assistance from the international community will be required, including that with the participation of the Peacebuilding Commission recently established in the UN.

At the end of the meeting Security Council resolution 1653 was unanimously adopted, containing a whole array of recommendations aimed at remedying the security, humanitarian and human rights situation in this part of Africa. Russia, which had from the outset been most active in elaborating this SC decision, voted in its support.

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