

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION



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PRESS RELEASE

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov Converses with
Louise Arbour, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

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A meeting took place on February 23 between Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, who is in Russia on a working visit.

During conversation, the interlocutors discussed a broad range of issues concerning topical international problems in the human rights field and also regarding engagement between the Russian Federation and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. They paid special attention to progress in the reform of the UN human rights sector, and in particular, the question of establishing a Human Rights Council.

Sergey Lavrov affirmed the Russian side's readiness to develop a constructive dialogue with the UN and international human rights institutions and mechanisms, and expressed support for the efforts of Louise Arbour at the post of High Commissioner. Louise Arbour expressed gratitude to the Russian Federation for the decision to transfer from 2006 an annual voluntary contribution of US\$2 million to the budget of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

February 23, 2006