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PRESS RELEASE

Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov Speaks to President Tassos Papadopoulos of Cyprus by Telephone

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On March 3, a telephone conversation between Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov and President of the Republic of Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos took place at the Cyprus side's initiative.

The Cyprus President told Lavrov about the results of his meeting held in Paris on February 28 with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Lavrov positively assessed the accords reached in Paris. The intention of the UN Secretary General and the President of Cyprus to continue efforts with a clearly expressed aim to speed up finding a comprehensive and viable solution to the Cyprus problem merits support. Consent by leaders of both Cypriot communities to hold inter-community discussions at technical level of a whole variety of issues could prepare the ground for an early and full resumption of the negotiating process on the substance of the Cyprus problem and thus help restore trust between the two communities. The results of the Paris meeting corroborate the UN's leading role in the search of ways to resolve the Cyprus problem and the significance of its Secretary General's mission of good offices. The sides spoke in favor of coordinating, through the five UN Security Council permanent members, efforts being made by the international community on Cyprus.

In the course of the conversation there was confirmed in the mainstream of the accords reached in Moscow during the January visit of President Papadopoulos and his conversation with President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin the readiness of Russia to go on helping in every way the achievement of a just, comprehensive and viable Cyprus settlement under the aegis of the UN, on the basis of the voluntary consent of the parties and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

March 4, 2006

