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Unofficial translation from Russian

PRESS RELEASE

Adoption by UN Security Council of a Resolution Extending the Mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sudan

466-27-03-2006

On March 24 the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1663 to extend the mandate of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) until September 24, 2006.

The resolution sets out the parameters for a possible transformation of the current African Union Mission in Sudan to an integrated UN Mission in Sudan with the extension of its mandate to Sudan's Darfur region.

Russia presumes that the preparation for the above transformation should include consultations with the government of Sudan in the context of the planning of an integrated UN Mission in the country and sanctioning of a future operation by the UN Security Council only on the basis of the consent of the Sudanese side and an official request to the UNSC from the African Union.

We for our part are ready to continue, under the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement, to make our contribution to ensuring stability and achieving a lasting political settlement in Sudan.

It should be noted that the UN Mission in Sudan currently includes 14 Russian military observers, 19 civilian police officers and practical modalities are now being elaborated for contributing to UNMIS a troop unit of the Russian Armed Forces - a helicopter group of four MI 8-MT (MTB) transport and combat helicopters and up to 200 servicemen.

March 27, 2006