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Mikhail Kamynin, the Spokesman of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Answers a Question from ITAR-TASS Regarding the Signing in Abuja, Nigeria, of the Peace Agreement Between Darfur Rebels and the Central Government of Sudan

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Question: Media reports have come in from Sudan of the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement that took place in Abuja yesterday. How do you evaluate these accords? Will they draw the line at the three-year conflict in western Sudan?

Answer: Indeed, in Abuja as a result of the talks going on since August 2004 the Peace Agreement between the Sudanese government and the Darfur armed opposition was signed yesterday. It had been elaborated with vigorous assistance from the African Union, other international mediators and is designed not only to put an end to hostilities, ensure security and resolve the political and socioeconomic contradictions there, but also to overcome the acute humanitarian crisis in Darfur. A necessary step has thus been taken along the way to terminating violence and establishing stability in the western part of Sudan, which cannot but evoke satisfaction.

At the same time, it has to be noted that the agreement with Sudan's Government of National Unity so far has been signed only by one of the three Darfur groups that took part in the negotiation process. The challenge now is to successfully conclude the Abuja talks as soon as possible and have all their participants join the accords.

Russia in a bilateral and a multilateral format, as well as in the UN Security Council will continue its allround support for efforts to achieve a political settlement in Darfur as an important factor strengthening the unity and territorial integrity of Sudan and peace and security in the region.

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