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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Blocks UN Vote

January 18, 2011

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Security Council on Tuesday delayed a vote on sending additional troops to Ivory Coast, where the blue helmeted peacekeepers have been under attack, due to Russian objections, council envoys said.

The 15-nation council was set to vote on a resolution to send an additional 2,000 peacekeepers to help the 10,000 UN troops and police in the UN peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast, known as UNOCI. But diplomats said Russia raised last-minute objections on Tuesday morning about the language.

One diplomat said Russia's objections to the language "appeared minor on the surface." The Russian delegation had asked to reorder several paragraphs and add language on "freedom of expression," several diplomats said.

"They're not substantive objections," a diplomat said. "So we're really not sure what they are trying to accomplish. The Russians have been causing problems on Ivory Coast from the beginning because they think we shouldn't take sides."

(Reuters)

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/01/18/russia-blocks-un-vote-a4335