

Lavrov Says EU Is Stalling on Visas

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Monday that the European Union was dragging its feet in talks on scrapping visas and warned that the delay was already hurting relations with its biggest trading partner.

President Dmitry Medvedev has repeatedly said that clinching a deal on visa-free travel is one of Russia's top priorities in relations with the European Union.

But some EU members are worried that scrapping visas for Russians could spark a surge of illegal immigration from Russia, as well as from other former Soviet republics whose citizens already have the right to travel to Russia without a visa.

"One problem which I would say is becoming unseemly for our level of our relations is the foot-dragging on the move to a visa-free regime," Lavrov said.

"This is already creating real problems for the development of our relations," Lavrov said.

He added that fears about illegal immigration were unfounded and said the EU needed to make a political decision as soon as possible.

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