

Russia Has 'No Optimism' Over Korea

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The  **Moscow Times**

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Monday that tension between North and South Korea was very high and Moscow had "no optimism" about the situation, urging the two sides to heed calls for restraint.

Russia initiated an emergency UN Security Council meeting Sunday after North Korea threatened to respond with military force to South Korean live-fire drills.

The Security Council failed to agree on a draft statement because Western powers including the United States wanted to blame Pyongyang for the tension, while Russia and China did not.

Lavrov said that Russia had called for the meeting "not to condemn anyone, but simply to send a signal" urging the sides to show restraint. He voiced regret that the council had made no statement.

North Korea, meanwhile, said it would not react to "reckless" military drills by the South on Monday, despite an earlier threat to retaliate, and CNN reported that Pyongyang had agreed to the return of nuclear inspectors.

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