

Lavrov Says No Agreement Yet With U.S. on Missile Defense

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Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov **Maxim Stulov**

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Friday that talks with his United States counterpart Hilary Clinton concluded without a deal being made on U.S. missile defense plans.

Lavrov said the two sides agreed at a meeting in Washington on Thursday that work must continue at a lower level, RIA-Novosti reported. He said he reiterated Russia's position of wanting guarantees that a U.S. missile defense system in Europe, which the U.S. says is meant to counteract a possible strike from Iran, will not present a threat to Russia.

"We will make sure that our position is fully taken into account," Lavrov said.

Earlier this month, acting U.S. Undersecretary of State Rose Gottemoeller said Russian and U.S. technical experts should meet to discuss the U.S. missile shield's specifics.

Last week, Lavrov said U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul had "arrogantly" rejected Russia's concerns about U.S. plans for a missile shield in a recent interview with RIA-Novosti.

"Yesterday our colleague, the U.S. ambassador, arrogantly announced there will be no changes on missile defense, even though it would seem that an ambassador ... should understand it is necessary to take the interests of the state in question into account," RIA-Novosti quoted Lavrov as telling students in Azerbaijan.

McFaul had said the United States would move forward with the creation of a shield capable of protecting the U.S. and its NATO allies and would not put binders on its potential development. The remarks were in line with previous statements by the U.S.

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