

Lavrov Warns Clinton on Magnitsky

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has warned U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton that their countries' relations would suffer "serious damage" if Washington adopts a bill to penalize Russian officials for human rights abuses.

Lavrov stressed to Clinton at talks on Friday in St. Petersburg that "the possible endorsement in the United States of the Magnitsky bill will bring serious damage to relations between our countries," Itar-Tass reported.

The Foreign Ministry had no comment on the report.

The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week passed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, named after an anti-corruption lawyer whose death in 2009 while in pre-trial detention drew widespread condemnation.

The bill would deny visas and freeze the assets of Russians suspected of involvement in his death.

Despite broad support in Congress, the bill's future remains uncertain, partly because the U.S. administration is unenthusiastic about a measure that Russia says would be an unwarranted intrusion into its internal affairs.

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