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Lavrov to Meet With Biden at Munich Conference

By The Moscow Times

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Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is set to attend the International Security Conference that opened in Munich on Friday to deliver a speech and to meet with U.S. and United Nations officials.

Lavrov will meet with U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden on Saturday for talks that Washington hopes will be "a good chance to assess the results of the mutual work ... over the last four years" and to discuss future cooperation, said Biden's national security adviser Tony Blinken.

The two are expected to discuss cooperation in nuclear arms reduction, as well as economic and trade issues, Blinken said, RIA-Novosti reported earlier this week.

During the three-day forum, Lavrov will also hold talks with his German counterpart, Guido Westerwelle, and meet with other officials, including the UN and Arab League special envoy to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich, RIA-

Novosti reported Friday.

But the ministry denied a report that Lavrov would also hold joint talks with Biden, Brahimi and Syrian opposition leader Moaz Alkhatib.

Alkhatib had been set to meet with the senior officials from Russia, the U.S. and the UN at the forum's venue to discuss the political situation in Syria, Reuters reported Friday, citing a source in the Syrian opposition.

"The media reports about a meeting in the format Lavrov-Biden-Brahimi and Syrian opposition representative Alkhatib in Munich don't correspond to reality," tweeted Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov. "As of today such a meeting is not on the agenda of Russia's Foreign Minister."

Lukashevich said Lavrov will also deliver a speech at the conference focusing on "strengthening mutual trust" among Euro-Atlantic countries and cooperation in responding to global threats.

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