

Lavrov Not Picking Up the Phone When Kerry Calls

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry tried and failed to reach Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov by telephone for a second day on Wednesday to discuss North Korea's recent nuclear test.

Kerry has spoken with foreign ministers from South Korea, Japan and China — North Korea's neighbors, who have tried to influence the country's nuclear ambitions — but he was unable to get in touch with Lavrov as of Wednesday evening, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

"He's — he reached out to Foreign Minister Lavrov yesterday, made it clear again today that he's ready to talk whenever Foreign Minister Lavrov can find the time," she said at a daily press briefing, according to a [transcript](#) on the State Department's website.

Nuland denied a reporter's suggestion that Kerry had been "frantically trying to call" Lavrov since Tuesday, when North Korea conducted the third nuclear test, detonating a device

underground to nearly unanimous international condemnation.

"There's been nothing frantic about it. He's reached out to the Foreign Minister," she said.

Lavrov has been traveling in Africa this week, including official stops in Mozambique, Algeria and the west African nation of Guinea, according to the Foreign Ministry's website.

Kerry is not the first U.S. secretary of state to have trouble getting in contact with Lavrov.

Then-Secretary Hillary Clinton tried in vain to reach him for about 24 hours to discuss a United Nations resolution on Syria while Lavrov was in Australia in January 2012, the State Department said at the time, RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

"If you can't get him on the phone, maybe you can text him?" a reporter at Wednesday's briefing joked.

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