

Lavrov Says Russia Agrees With U.S. on N. Korea

By [The Moscow Times](#)

April 10, 2013

The  Moscow Times

LONDON — Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Wednesday that Moscow agrees with Washington's stance on North Korea but warned that any military moves could hamper chances to calm tensions in the Korean peninsula.

"There is no disagreement with the United States over North Korea," Lavrov said at a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in London, where G8 foreign ministers are to hold talks, Interfax reported.

"One should not frighten anybody with military maneuvers," he said, apparently referring in part to past military exercises by the United States and North Korea. "There is a chance everything will calm down."

North Korean threats of war and the Syrian conflict were expected to be high on the agenda of the Group of Eight leading industrialized nations — the United States, Britain, France,

Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada and Russia — meeting in the British capital.

The talks, which were set to begin formally over dinner on Wednesday and end on Thursday, will also be the first chance for the ministers to discuss face-to-face the failure of last week's meeting in Almaty on curbing Iran's nuclear program.

Leaders of the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) will be present on the sidelines of the G8 and will hold talks with those foreign ministers willing to meet them, British Foreign Secretary William Hague told reporters on Tuesday.

Hague, his French counterpart Laurent Fabius and Kerry were to have lunch with Syrian civilian opposition figures but Lavrov, whose country has backed Assad, was not planning to.

There was no sign that Russia would relent in its longstanding opposition to any UN Security Council move that would increase pressure on Assad, though Kerry and Lavrov were to discuss Syria and other issues one-on-one.

"Look, it's no secret that Minister Lavrov ... does not have the identical perspective that we do," a senior U.S. State Department official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The official, however, suggested that some of Assad's advisers might be coming to the conclusion that the civil war, now in its third year, would ultimately be a losing proposition for him.

The foreign ministers were also to discuss how to respond to North Korea, which has been threatening to attack the United States and South Korea and on Tuesday warned foreigners to evacuate the South to avoid being caught in a war.

Russia said Tuesday that the G8 was in agreement in rejecting North Korea's provocative behavior and urged all sides to pursue diplomacy.

Hague said the ministers also planned to discuss Burma, Somalia, cybersecurity, and sexual violence in war zones.

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