

Kerry's Claims About Chemical Weapons Evidence 'Strange,' Lavrov Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Monday challenged Washington's declaration that Russia had been provided with "overwhelming" evidence that the Syrian government launched a chemical strike in a suburb of Damascus on Aug. 21, killing 1,429.

"It is very strange to hear that speaking recently on this issue my good friend U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared that the American party provided Russians with irrefutable evidence that the regime used chemical weapons, but that Russians consciously refused to admit this fact," Lavrov said, Interfax reported.

Lavrov made his remarks while speaking before students at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

Lavrov was referring to Kerry's interview on U.S. television channel ABC on Sunday, during which he said that United States had "sent people over to Russia who provided evidence" that

was "going to be overwhelming."

"And they [Russians] chose — I literally mean chose — not to believe it or to at least acknowledge publicly," Kerry said. "If the President of Russia chooses yet again to ignore it, that's his choice."

U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul on Saturday put forward the case for military intervention in Syria, but President Vladimir Putin said that the United State's arguments were "foolish nonsense."

A UN inspection team returned from Syria on the same day with blood and soil samples from the site of the attack that could help clarify whether or not a chemical attack had been carried out.

However, a UN spokesman said that the samples wouldn't provide any clues as to which side ordered the attack.

Russia has refused to rule out the possibility that rebels forces were responsible.

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