

U.S., Russia Agree to Help Ukraine Uphold Reconciliation Agreement, Lavrov Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Sergei Lavrov criticized Western countries for taking measures that "undermine dialog and cooperation" between various political forces in Ukraine. / Maxim Stulov / Vedomosti

The top diplomats of Russia and the U.S. agreed at their meeting on Wednesday that they should help Ukraine to implement an EU-brokered reconciliation deal, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said.

"We have agreed that Ukrainians need assistance to implement the February 21 accord," Lavrov said Wednesday.

However, a senior U.S. State Department official has denied that any such agreement took place.

"There were no agreements in this meeting, and there never will be without direct Ukrainian

government involvement and absolute buy-in," the official said, Reuters reported Wednesday.

Lavrov met with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in Paris before heading to a meeting with top diplomats of France, Germany and Poland, who mediated the signing of the reconciliation agreement between the government and the opposition and put their signatures under it.

The agreement announced early presidential and parliamentary elections, a national unity government and a return to an earlier constitution. It would have allowed the erstwhile pro-Russia government to remain in power until early elections.

Ukraine's ousted President Viktor Yanukovich was impeached by the parliament a day after the agreement was signed, enabling the opposition to take control and appoint interim leadership.

Russia has since accused Ukraine's new leaders, whom it considers illegitimate, of violating the deal.

Lavrov criticized Western countries for taking measures that "undermine dialog and cooperation" between various political forces in Ukraine.

Some of these measures have been taken within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Russia-NATO council, the Russian foreign minister said.

OSCE said Wednesday that it would send 35 unarmed military personnel to Ukraine to dispel concerns about "unusual military activities" in the south of the country.

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