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Kerry and Lavrov to Discuss Ukraine, Syria at Paris Meeting

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John Kerry will meet with Sergei Lavrov to discuss the crises in Ukraine and Syria.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will meet with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Paris on Thursday to discuss the crises in Ukraine and Syria, a spokeswoman has said.

"The focus of the discussion will be on Ukraine given the upcoming inauguration on Saturday, as well as Syria and the ongoing effort to remove the remaining chemical weapons," spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters.

The talks come as Ukraine prepares to inaugurate President-elect Petro Poroshenko and a U.S. delegation led by President Barack Obama heads to France to attend celebrations on Friday to mark the 70th anniversary of the World War II D-Day landings.

Kerry's meeting with Lavrov will be on the sidelines of the Obama visit to France. Russian President Vladimir Putin will be at the D-Day events, but he will not meet Obama, U.S. official say.

While tensions between the U.S. and Russia over Ukraine have scuttled cooperation between Washington and Moscow in most areas, both countries are still working together to make sure Syria hands over its stockpile of chemical weapons.

Syria is months behind schedule and still has roughly 8 percent of 1,300 metric tons of chemical weapons it declared to the UN's nuclear watchdog. It is unlikely that Syria will meet a final deadline of June 30 to destroy its entire toxic stockpile.

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