

# Russia Says It Won't Breach 'International Law' to Fight Islamic State

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U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (L) and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov chat at the Chief of Mission Residence in Paris, Oct. 14, 2014.

Russia played down comments by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Thursday over sharing intelligence about Islamic State militants, saying Moscow refuses to be involved in coalitions that breach "international law."

Without denying that cooperation existed, a statement from the Foreign Ministry said clarification was needed on reports that Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had agreed on intelligence sharing.

Kerry, speaking after meeting Lavrov in Paris earlier this week, said the United States and Russia had agreed to "intensify intelligence cooperation with respect to ISIL and other counter terrorism challenges of the region."

The Russian ministry said Moscow already has been providing help to Syria and Iraq in their fight against "terrorism."

"Russia will continue those efforts but will not get involved in 'coalitions', which are being created in circumvention of the UN Security Council and are in breach of international law," the ministry said in a statement.

U.S. jets, backed by a coalition of Arab and Western allies, have been carrying out air strikes on Islamic State fighters in Iraq and Syria.

The statement said the work of an anti-terrorism group on a Russian-U.S. Presidential Council had been stopped unilaterally by the United States.

Islamic State could potentially threaten Moscow as it includes in its ranks a number of Muslims from Russia's North Caucasus region, who have been waging their own insurgency in the mountainous region following two wars between Moscow and separatists in Chechnya in 1994-96 and 1999-2000.

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