Russia Says Ukraine's NATO Ambitions Are Dangerous For Europe

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Servicemen attend a farewell ceremony at the Vaziani military base outside Tbilisi, on Dec. 16, 2014.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Ukraine's pursuit of NATO membership posed a danger to European security and that the West was using Kiev's bid to join the Atlantic alliance as a way to fuel confrontation between Russia and Ukraine.

The Kiev parliament's renunciation of Ukraine's neutral status this week as a step towards joining NATO has outraged Moscow and deepened the worst confrontation between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War.

Lavrov is the latest Russian official to speak out against Kiev's bid in recent days and to make it clear Russia would see the NATO membership of such a strategic former Soviet republic with a long common border as a direct military threat.

"There are a few Western countries that want to maintain the crisis in Ukraine and to

maintain and boost the confrontation between Ukraine and Russia, including through provocative efforts towards membership in the Atlantic alliance," he said.

"The very idea of Ukraine's efforts to join NATO are dangerous, not only for Ukrainian people, because there is no unity over that issue, it is dangerous for European security," he said, speaking on state television.

NATO boosted its military presence in eastern Europe this year, saying it has evidence Russia orchestrated and armed a pro–Russian rebellion in eastern Ukraine that followed the overthrow of a Kremlin–backed president in Kiev.

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