

Kerry Could Visit Russia in February, Sources Say

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Russian newspaper Kommersant quoted unnamed sources on Friday as saying Kerry would visit Moscow for talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Feb. 4-5.

Moscow and Washington are discussing a possible visit to Russia by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to discuss the Ukraine crisis, diplomatic sources say.

It would be Kerry's first visit to Russia since the start of the conflict in Ukraine, during which ties between Washington and Moscow have plunged to their worst level since the Cold War.

"Talks (on arranging a Kerry visit) have been going on for weeks," one diplomatic source said, adding that the visit could take place "in the coming days or weeks."

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The United States and the European Union have imposed sanctions in Russia over its annexation of the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine and its support for separatists fighting

government forces in eastern Ukraine. The EU decided to extend its current sanctions on Thursday.

Washington accuses Russia of sending troops and weapons to eastern Ukraine, a charge which Moscow denies. Russia says the West was behind the overthrow of a Ukrainian president backed by Moscow, an accusation denied by Washington and Brussels.

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