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# Rocky Start to Russian Foreign Minister's First Meeting With Trump's Top Diplomat

February 16, 2017



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson **Russian Foreign Ministry / Twitter**

For the first time ever, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson sat down with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Thursday, but the meeting got off to a rocky start after journalists were escorted out of the room by U.S. officials as soon as Tillerson said hello.

"Thank you, Mr. Lavrov. It's a pleasure to see you," the U.S. secretary of state said, before reporters were suddenly told to leave. According to Bloomberg, Lavrov was taken aback by the move, asking Tillerson, "Why did you shush them out?"

The journalists didn't step out immediately, however, and Associated Press correspondent Matthew Lee managed to ask Lavrov if Moscow is concerned about the political "turmoil" in Washington today.

In response, Russia's chief diplomat said the matter is a U.S. domestic issue.

**Embed:**

> #Russia FM Lavrov on turmoil in DC a meeting w/Tillerson: "You should know we do not interfere in the domestic matters of other countries."
>
> — Matt Lee (@APDiploWriter) February 16, 2017

Following the meeting, Lavrov told reporters that he'd had a "productive" conversation with his new American counterpart.

Following the White House's statement earlier this week that President Trump expects Moscow to return Crimea to Ukraine, Russian officials have scrambled to adjust their expectations about detente with Washington.

**Related article**: Putin's Most Radical Supporters Turn on Kremlin News Agency Over 'Cult of Trump'

In an op-ed published in Deutsche Welle on Thursday, Russian journalist Konstantin Eggert claimed that one of Russia's largest state-owned media holding companies received new orders on Feb. 15, allegedly drafted by the Kremlin, to halt all favorable coverage of Donald Trump.

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