

# Syrian Territorial Integrity Must be 'Respected,' Says Russian Foreign Minister

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Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov attends a press conference of the BRICS foreign ministers meeting in Beijing Monday, June 19, 2017. **Wang Zhao / AP**

Speaking at the BRICS foreign ministers summit in Beijing June 19, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said countries involved in war in Syria should respect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the TASS news agency reported.

"As for what is happening 'on the ground' in Syria, we proceed from the assumption that it is necessary to fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity in Syria, the way it is envisaged by UN Security Council Resolution 2254 and other UN documents," Lavrov said.

"Any actions 'on the ground', and there are many participants there, including those who carry out military operations, should be coordinated with Damascus."

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The Russian foreign minister said the Astana peace process was an example of this, saying initiatives and proposals that derive from the talks are negotiated with the Syrian government.

Lavrov invited other parties to join the coordinated efforts agreed with the Syrian government but warned the United States and “other parties who have their advisors or forces on the ground” from taking unilateral actions.

BRICS foreign ministers summit gathered foreign ministers of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa on June 18-19 in Beijing to discuss issues of foreign policy, counter-terrorism, and international coordination.

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