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Russia Refuses to Join Deal Banning Nuclear Weapons

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Sergei Lavrob / Shannon Stapleton / Reuters

Russia will not join the world's first nuclear disarmament deal, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said at a UN Security Council meeting on Thursday.

The Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty has been signed by 56 UN member states and ratified by four countries as of last fall. It will come into force after the ratification of at least 50 UN members.

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"We embrace the goal of building a nuclear weapons-free world," Lavrov said at the UN Security Council meeting on non-proliferation on Thursday.

"However, to achieve this, unilateral methods upon which this treaty is based should be avoided."

Nine countries recognized or believed to possess nuclear weapons, including the U.S., the U.K. and France, also refused to take part in negotiations on the treaty last summer.

The three powers issued a joint statement saying that they "have not taken part in the negotiation of the treaty... and do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to it."

Speaking at the UN on Thursday, Lavrov warned that the treaty "is liable to have a destabilizing effect on the non-proliferation regime."

"It also provokes profound disagreements among members of the international community."

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