

Lavrov Says Russians Suspected of Spying in the Netherlands Were on 'Routine' Trip

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Sergei Lavrov (Russian Foreign Ministry / Flickr)

Russia's foreign minister said on Monday that four Russians detained and expelled by the Netherlands in April on suspicion of spying had been on a "routine" trip, adding that Moscow did not receive a Dutch complaint at the time of the incident.

"They were detained, nobody explained anything to them, they were not permitted to contact Russian representatives in the embassy in the Netherlands and they were asked to leave. It all seemed like a misunderstanding. Especially given that there were no protestations or actions towards us either in Moscow or The Hague in April regarding this incident," Sergei Lavrov said on Monday.

Lavrov further said that the four Russians were not trying to conceal their trip.

"It was a routine trip, they did not hide, not when they checked into the hotel, not when they

arrived at the airport, or when they visited our embassy.”

Dutch authorities said last week they had disrupted an attempt in April by Russian intelligence agents to hack the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was speaking at a joint news conference after talks with his Italian counterpart in Moscow.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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