

Russia Says Major Disagreements Remain in Peace Talks with Japan

By [Reuters](#)

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Sergei Lavrov / Russian Foreign Ministry

Russia still has significant disagreements with Japan, which stand in the way of clinching a peace deal to end a decades-old territorial row, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Monday.

Russia and Japan have been in dispute since World War II over islands captured by Soviet troops in the last days of the war. The islands are known as the Southern Kurils to Russia and the Northern Territories to Japan.

"I won't hide that we still have significant divergences. To start with the positions were diametrically opposed and we have said this more than once," Lavrov told reporters in Moscow after talks with Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Kono.

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"But the political will of our leaders to fully normalize between Russia and Japan prompts us to activate this dialogue," he said.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is making a push for a treaty with Russia over the islands. He is due to hold peace talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin this month.

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