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Russian Foreign Minister Says EU 'Destroyed' Relations with Moscow

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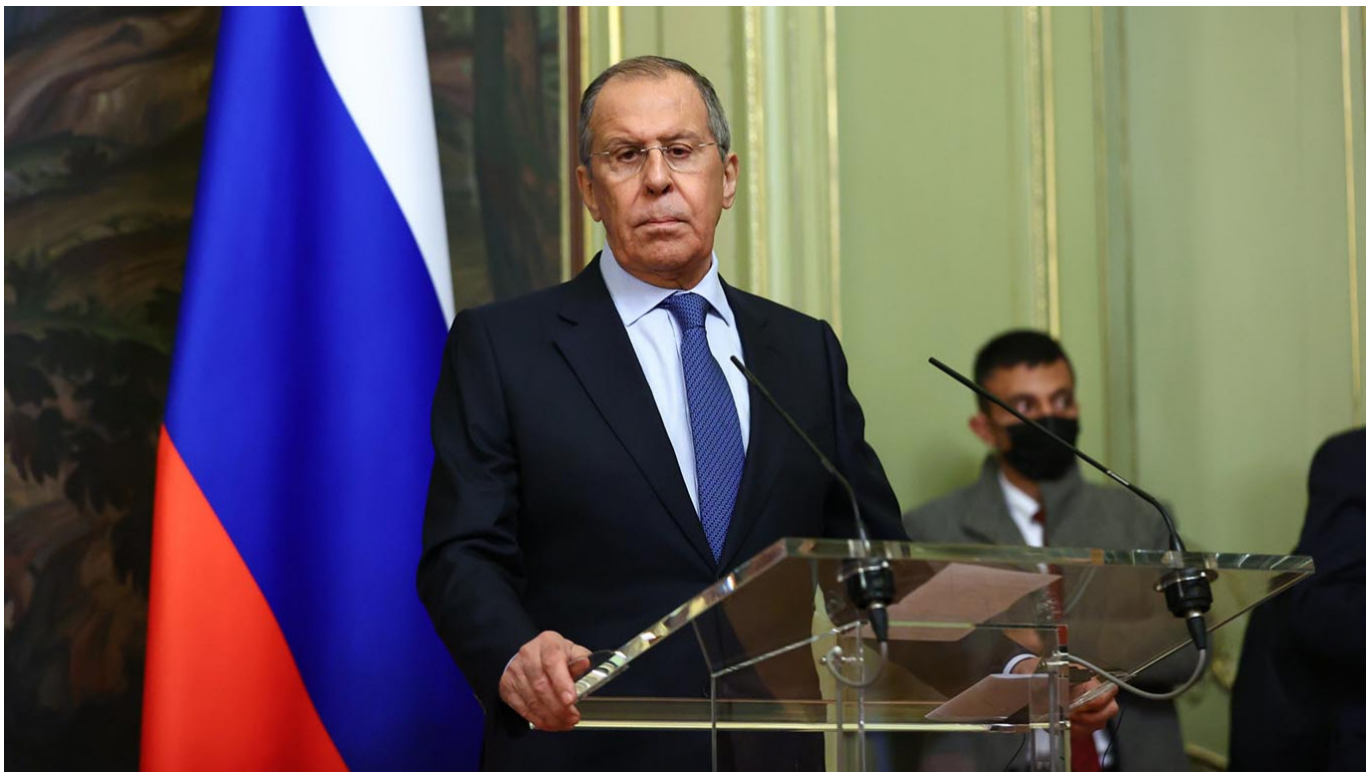

"There are no relations with the European Union as an organization," Sergei Lavrov said during his visit to China. **Russian Foreign Ministry**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has accused European Union leaders of "destroying" relations with Moscow, the state-run TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

"There are no relations with the European Union as an organization. The entire infrastructure of these relations has been destroyed by the unilateral decisions of Brussels," Lavrov was quoted as saying during a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

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Lavrov noted however that Moscow and Beijing are not uniting against anyone.

"If Europe broke off these relations — simply destroying all the mechanisms that had been built over many years — and we have only individual European countries that want to be

guided by their national interests, then this probably objectively leads to the fact that our relations with China are developing faster than what is left of relations with European countries," he said at the conference in the Chinese city of Guilin.

Ties between Brussels and Moscow, which were already strained over the 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and the eastern Ukrainian conflict, fell to new lows over the poisoning and jailing of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Russia also took umbrage toward the EU this week after an executive in charge of the bloc's vaccination rollout said it has "absolutely no need" of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine.

The vaccine is currently under rolling review with the EU's medicines regulator, but individual members such as Hungary and Slovakia have already approved and purchased Sputnik V, bypassing the bloc's approval.

"If and when the Europeans find it expedient to eliminate this anomaly in contacts with their largest neighbor, we will of course be ready to build up these relations on the basis of equality, based on the search for balanced interests," Lavrov said Tuesday.

Lavrov stressed that Russia has always been focused on cooperation with its neighbors. "Our country is located geographically on the vast expanse of the Eurasian continent. We have both China, a good neighbor, and the European Union is also our neighbor. And we have always been interested in promoting our relations in all areas," he said.

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