

Russia Threatens 'Military Response' to NATO Expansion

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Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov. **Russian Foreign Ministry Press Office / TASS**

Russia will respond “militarily” to what it perceives as NATO’s encroachment on its western borders, a senior diplomat [said](#) Monday.

Deputy Foreign Ministry Sergei Ryabkov’s threat follows Moscow’s complaints over NATO weapons deployment in Eastern Europe and Western warnings of Russia’s imminent invasion of Ukraine.

“Our response will be military” if the Western military bloc does not guarantee an end to its eastward expansion, Ryabkov told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

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“There will be confrontation,” he added, warning that Moscow would deploy weapons that were previously banned under the INF Treaty, which expired in 2019.

“Currently, [these banned weapons] do not exist; we have a unilateral moratorium. We call on NATO and the United States to join this moratorium,” Ryabkov said, lamenting that “they just don’t respond to our proposals.”

“There’s basically no trust in NATO,” the senior diplomat [told](#) RIA Novosti. “Therefore, we’re no longer playing this kind of game and don’t believe NATO’s assurances.”

Elsewhere in Monday’s interview, Ryabkov [derided](#) the United States’ “inexplicable fixation” on the threat of a Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“This isn’t so and cannot be,” he said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin held a videoconference with U.S. President Joe Biden last week, where he did not say whether he planned to go on the attack but insisted that Russia has a right to defend its security.

Putin also demanded from Biden that the West guarantee in writing that Ukraine would not be a staging ground for NATO.

On Friday, Russia’s Foreign Ministry demanded that the U.S. formally close the door to NATO membership to the ex-Soviet republics of Ukraine and Georgia.

The Foreign Ministry also demanded that the Western military bloc guarantee the non-deployment of weapons threatening Russia’s security on its western borders.

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