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Russia Accuses U.S. of Hindering Ukraine Talks

By AFP

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Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. **kremlin.ru**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Wednesday accused the United States of seeking to hinder Moscow's talks with Ukraine aimed at ending the almost month-long conflict.

"The talks are tough, the Ukrainian side constantly changes its position. It's hard to avoid the impression that our American colleagues are holding their hand," Lavrov told students in Moscow.

He added that "the Americans simply see it as disadvantageous for them for this process to finish swiftly," claiming "they are counting on continuing to pump up Ukraine with weapons."

Lavrov referred to "provocative statements" about Soviet-era MiG fighter planes — apparently referring to Poland's offer to send its MiG-29 fighter jets via a U.S. air base, which

the U.S. rejected — and Ukraine's pleas for sending extra Stinger missiles.

The United States "apparently wants to keep us in a state of military action as long as possible," the Russian minister said.

Lavrov said that Russia needed to "stand firm."

"Western countries want to play some kind of intermediary role but we have red lines."

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