The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Foreign Minister 'Indifferent' About Future of OSCE

By AFP

December 01, 2023



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at the 30th OSCE Ministerial Meeting in Skopje. **Russian Foreign Ministry Press Service**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday expressed indifference over the future of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which this week hel its annual summit in the North Macedonian capital of Skopje.

Created in 1975 as a forum for dialogue between the Eastern and Western blocs, the OSCE faces mounting challenges in its regular functioning as Moscow's invasion has fueled sharp divisions within the organization.

Lavrov, who attended the two-day summit, criticized the organization but also expressed a lack of concern about its future.

"This is the main feeling — indifference. The [OSCE] has already turned itself into something

that makes me indifferent to what will happen to it next," the Russian minister told reporters.

At the same time, Moscow's invasion of Ukraine sparked fierce criticism from participants at the Skopje summit this week.

"Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine flies in the face of all this organization holds dear," said Bujar Osmani, North Macedonia's Foreign Minister and OSCE chairman in office, during opening remarks at the start of the summit.

But Lavrov on Friday said: "I don't care about the results of this OSCE meeting."

In an address on Thursday, the Russian official said that OSCE was becoming an "appendage" of NATO and the EU.

"The organization, let's face it, is on the edge of a precipice. A simple question arises: does it make sense to invest in its revitalization?"

This year's summit in Skopje was boycotted by Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland over Lavrov's attendance, which the latter described as "unacceptable."

Ukraine wants the OSCE to expel Russia, as the Council of Europe has done, warning the body faced a "slow death."

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