

Moscow Rules Out Meeting Between Lavrov, Blinken at UN Assembly

By [AFP](#)

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U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. **Martial Trezzini / EPA / TASS**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will not meet his U.S. counterpart Antony Blinken despite both attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York this weekend, Moscow said Friday.

Tensions between Russia and the United States have worsened in the two and a half years since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and Washington is currently mulling whether to give Ukraine the green light to strike targets inside Russia with its long-range weapons.

"Of course not. What is there to talk about with him [Blinken]?" Russian state media quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying when asked about a possible meeting between the top diplomats.

More than 130 heads of state and government representatives are expected to attend the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Sunday — at a time when the international community seems unable to resolve conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Lebanon and Sudan.

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Russia, now one of the most sanctioned countries in the world, has seen ties with the West severely damaged by its war against Ukraine.

Moscow insists it is not isolated despite wide-ranging sanctions and travel bans. Ryabkov said that Lavrov had a "colossal program of meetings" in New York that "do not concern Ukraine."

"Of course, the maniacal focus of our opponents on the topic of support for Ukraine is not going anywhere," Rybakov said. Russia and its allies wanted to show "this is not the only subject or even the main one" at the UN General Assembly.

Moscow and Washington are also at loggerheads over a litany of other issues, including policies on Israel, Iran and North Korea.

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