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Lavrov Welcomes Trump's Signals on Ukraine War, Awaits Concrete Proposals

By AFP

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Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. **Russian Foreign Ministry Press Service**

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Tuesday expressed cautious optimism about signals coming from U.S. President-elect Donald Trump over the war in Ukraine, just days before Trump assumes office.

"The very fact that people are starting to talk more about the realities on the ground probably deserves being welcomed," Lavrov said at a press conference in Moscow.

Throughout his election campaign and transition period, Trump has said he would bring a swift end to the war, criticized U.S. military aid sent to Ukraine under President Joe Biden and expressed skepticism about America's continued involvement in NATO.

While supportive of Trump's public positions, Lavrov noted that Moscow has yet to see concrete proposals from the incoming administration.

"We will wait for specific initiatives," the foreign minister said. "Once he becomes president and formulates a definitive position on Ukrainian affairs, of course, we will study it."

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Lavrov also denied receiving any formal proposals for a meeting between Trump and Putin, despite Trump's saying publicly that such a meeting was being planned. Direct talks between Trump and Putin would mark a significant departure from the current U.S. approach, as President Joe Biden's administration has largely avoided high-level engagement with Moscow since the conflict began in February 2022.

At the same time, Lavrov said he welcomed Trump's apparent understanding of Russia's grievances regarding NATO. Last week, Trump claimed that Biden had decided to allow Ukraine to join NATO and said he could "understand [Russia's] feeling about that."

"This is the first time a Western leader has admitted that NATO lied about its promises not to expand at the expense of Russia's security," Lavrov said.

Moscow has long argued that NATO's enlargement into Eastern Europe and the Baltics, as well as a 2008 pledge that Ukraine would eventually join the alliance, are key reasons for the war's outbreak.

Kyiv and its Western allies have repeatedly dismissed that narrative as baseless, insisting that Russia's invasion is an illegal act of aggression aimed at reasserting control over a sovereign, pro-Western neighbor.

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