

Russia Asked U.S. to Lift Sanctions From Aeroflot, Lavrov Says

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Denis Grishkin / Moskva News Agency

Russian authorities have asked Washington to lift sanctions against its flagship airline Aeroflot to resume direct flights with the United States but have not yet received an answer, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov [said](#) Friday.

“We made this offer at the [meeting](#) in [Saudi Arabia] more than a month ago,” Lavrov told reporters in Kazakhstan. “The Americans considered it, but so far we haven’t seen any response.”

Aeroflot’s shares on the Moscow Stock Exchange (MOEX) [climbed](#) by as much as 4% following Lavrov’s comments.

Aeroflot was cut off from many of its most profitable routes after Western countries closed their airspace to Russian airplanes in retaliation to its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Western sanctions have also seen aircraft manufacturers Boeing and Airbus halt their supplies of replacement parts, affecting 95% of Aeroflot’s fleet.

Last month, the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia called for the [removal](#) of sanctions on Russia's aviation sector as a "humanitarian necessity" amid reports that the White House had ordered a list of entities and individuals eligible for potential sanctions relief.

The Kremlin has called sanctions relief as a prerequisite for normalizing U.S.-Russia relations.

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Also on Friday, Lavrov said that "some progress" may have been made at Thursday's U.S.-Russian [talks](#) in Istanbul, which focused on normalizing the operations of their diplomatic missions. He said he has not yet been briefed on that meeting.

The U.S. State Department and Russia's Ambassador in Washington Alexander Darchiyev [said](#) the sides "exchanged notes to finalize an understanding to ensure the stability of diplomatic banking for Russian and U.S. bilateral missions."

The second round of Istanbul talks did not appear to make progress on restoring direct air travel, political analyst Vladimir Frolov [wrote](#) on X.

During his press conference on Friday, Lavrov [warned](#) against exaggerating the progress that has been made so far in the recent U.S.-Russia talks, as well as the extent to which relations with Washington can be improved.

"I believe that we should not flatter ourselves [about contacts between Russia and the U.S.], but aiming for normalization based on mutual recognition and respect for the national interests of each country is entirely realistic and necessary," the foreign minister said.

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