

Lavrov: Ukraine Will Lose More Land Because of US Long Range Rockets

Description

Russian army will push Ukrainian troops further away from Russian territory and create a safe buffer zone in response to Kiev's procurement of longer-range rockets from the West.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says the Russian army will push Ukrainian troops further away from Russian territory and create a safe buffer zone in response to Kiev's procurement of longer-range rockets from the West.

In an interview on state television aired on Thursday, Lavrov also said everybody sought an end to the current conflict in Ukraine but the West's relentless support of Kiev was playing an important part in how Moscow approached the war.

"We're now seeking to push back Ukrainian army artillery to a distance that will not pose a threat to our territories. The greater the range of the weapons supplied to the Kiev regime, the more we will have to push them back from territories which are part of our country," Russia's top diplomat said.

Lavrov's comments came just two days after Reuters cited two unnamed US officials as saying that Washington was preparing a new package of military aid worth \$2.2 billion that is expected to include longer-range rockets for the first time.

Russia launched what it calls "a special military operation" in Ukraine on February 24, 2022, over the perceived threat of the ex-Soviet republic joining NATO. Since then, the United States and Ukraine's other allies have sent Kiev tens of billions of dollars' worth of weapons, including rocket systems, drones, armored vehicles, tanks, and communication systems.

Western countries have also imposed a slew of economic sanctions on Moscow.

The Kremlin has said that the sanctions and the Western military assistance will only prolong the war.

Potential tank deliveries show West's direct involvement in Ukraine war: Russia

Washington and Berlin say they would arm Kiev with dozens of battle tanks.

Russia annexed the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia in September last year following referendums, vowing to protect them from any aggression by Ukrainian troops.

Crimea also declared independence from Ukraine on March 17, 2014 following a referendum and became part of the Russian Federation after it formally applied to become part of Russia.

Elsewhere in his remarks on Thursday, Lavrov said that the US had been directly involved in explosions that severely damaged Russia's Nord Stream gas pipelines under the Baltic Sea last year. Previously, Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the United Kingdom of blowing up the pipelines, which London denied.

By Jonas E. Alexis

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