

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's meeting with ambassadors of Arab states

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On January 17, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met with the heads of diplomatic missions of Arab states and a representative of the League of Arab States in Moscow.

There was a thorough discussion of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa with an emphasis on de-escalating tensions in that region and overcoming crises. At the same time, the participants underscored the need to consolidate the efforts of the Arab countries and the entire international community in fighting international terrorism.

The Palestinian-Israeli settlement process was the main focus.

Sergey Lavrov stressed that final status issues related to the Palestinian territories, including the future of Jerusalem, should be determined via direct Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the well-known international legal basis, including relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the UN General Assembly, as well as the Arab Peace Initiative. Russia stands ready to continue promoting stable political dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis on this basis both in bilateral format and at various international venues, including the Middle East quartet of international mediators.

The Russian Foreign Minister confirmed Russia's principled approaches towards resolving internal political issues and conflicts in the Arab countries by peaceful means, through an inclusive national dialogue and without outside interference. This is the foundation on which Russian is working in close cooperation with regional partners to prepare the Syrian National Dialogue Congress in Sochi, which is designed to step up the Geneva process under the aegis of the UN, and to assist the Syrians in developing their new constitution and preparing for elections on its basis, as stated in Resolution 2254 of the UN Security Council.

At the end of the meeting, the participants expressed their common interest in strengthening interaction between Russia and the Arab League, including as part of the Russian-Arab Cooperation Forum.