

Beat: News

NATO Secretary General - meeting with Russian Foreign Minister

Brussels

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USPA NEWS - The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov at the Palais d'Egmont in Brussels . The Secretary General restated NATO's position on Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea.

The Secretary General restated NATO's position on Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea and its destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. He urged all parties to implement the Minsk agreements in full, and called Russia to withdraw its troops and support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine. Stressing the importance of transparency and predictability related to military activities, Mr Stoltenberg voiced concern about the large number of snap exercises conducted by Russia. The Secretary General made clear that NATO's policy remains unchanged. As a result of Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine, NATO decided in April 2014 to suspend all practical cooperation with Russia, while keeping open political channels of communications.

Statement -

I just met with Foreign Minister Lavrov and we discussed different issues, among them of course the situation in Ukraine and I restated the very strong NATO position on the illegal annexation of Crimea, but also on the very serious situation we see in eastern Ukraine. I underlined the importance of full implementation of the Minsk Agreements meaning respect for the ceasefire, full implementation of the ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons and of course full access for the OSCE monitors so they can monitor the implementation of the ceasefire.

I also called on Russia to withdraw all its troops and support for the separatists. We also discussed the importance of transparency and predictability especially in a situation where we have increased military presence along our borders. And for NATO it is important to do whatever we can to avoid that the incidents and the situation is spiralling out of control. And therefore we are very focussed on transparency related to all our exercises and we are fully transparent when it comes to when and where we are going to conduct exercises.

I also very much underline that we should strive for even more transparency and predictability and we are concerned about the large numbers of snap exercises conducted by Russia because this decreases transparency and predictability. Therefore the snap exercises, the numbers but also the size of the snap exercises, reduce predictability and transparency along our borders and I think we should try to change that by also the Russians being more transparent when it comes to their military activities.

We also addressed the question of lines of communications ““ military lines of communications. I stated that these lines of military communication between NATO and Russia ““ we keep them open and we check them. It is important to have these lines of communication and also they can contribute to more predictability and avoiding any misunderstandings.

So these were the main issues we discussed and NATO's position remains unchanged. We have suspended all practical cooperation with Russia as a response to their behaviour in Crimea and Ukraine. But we are keeping the lines of political contact open and we will continue to do so. I met Foreign Minister Lavrov in Munich and now I met him here and there are regular contacts on both the diplomatic and political level between NATO and Russia. Thank you.

Click on link below to view Youtube video.

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Article online:

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