

NATO War Games in Georgia

Russia's Lavrov criticizes NATO over plans for drills in Georgia

By [Global Research](#)

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YEREVAN – Russia's foreign minister criticized on Thursday NATO's plans to conduct exercises in Georgia, saying they could give the Georgian regime a sense of impunity, and raise tensions in the Caucasus region.

The Cooperative Longbow 09/Cooperative Lancer 09 exercises led by the Western military alliance will be held from May 6 through June 1, and will not feature weapons or military vehicles.

Sergei Lavrov said: "I hope that NATO countries, in planning future interaction with Georgia within the Partnership for Peace program, will avoid steps that could nudge the Georgian regime into a feeling of permissiveness and impunity."

"With regard to Georgia's regime, a demonstration of NATO's participation [in the exercises] will not send the right signal by those who honestly want to achieve stability in the Caucasus," he said.

The diplomat said that countries should understand that in view of the August 2008 conflict, which begun with Georgia's attack on South Ossetia, supplying arms to Georgia poses a severe danger.

He said that NATO countries have ignored Russia's warnings in recent years, in continually supplying offensive weapons to Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's regime.

A total of 19 countries will be participating in the military exercises: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Greece, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Serbia, Spain, Macedonia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Great Britain, and the U.S.

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