

Russia Refuses To Be Patsy On NATO Missile Shield

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Russia rules out being NATO's patsy on missile defense

Moscow: Russia will do whatever is necessary to ensure its security if NATO attempts to give Moscow a raw deal in building a joint European missile defense system, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said.

Russia and NATO agreed to discuss the creation of the European missile defense system in Lisbon in November last year, but as yet the talks have not brought any positive results.

"If negotiations between NATO and Russia will only be used as a cover for a NATO-American missile defense system that ignores the Russian interests then of course we will have no choice but to take adequate measures to protect ourselves," Lavrov said in an interview with Russia Today international TV channel to be aired on Saturday.

Moscow insists on setting up a joint European missile defense network with NATO to make sure that the planned placement of elements of a U.S. missile defense system in a number of European countries will not threaten Russia's national security.

NATO, however, proposes creating two separate systems that would exchange information

Lavrov reiterated that the future missile defense system "must be equal" and "must not create any risks for the strategic arsenals of the Russian Federation."

"If these two [issues] are resolved positively, I believe we will achieve huge success," the minister said.

The missile defense issue will be on the agenda of the upcoming global security conference in Munich on February 4-6.

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