

Press Release

Russia Seeks to Maintain its Influence in Central Asia

(Translated)

Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova announced in a press briefing on the 17th of April that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will pay an official visit to the capital, Tashkent, on the 22-23 of April. During the visit, he is scheduled to meet with the President of Uzbekistan and hold detailed negotiations with Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov.

Lavrov's visit to Tashkent is a necessary step on the geopolitical chessboard. Given the accelerating moves by China, the European Union, and the United States in the region, particularly in Uzbekistan, Russia is seeking to maintain its influence in Central Asia, particularly in Uzbekistan. Lavrov's visit is a diplomatic expression of this. It is worth noting that Uzbek Defense Minister Major General Shuhrat Kholmukhamedov received a military delegation headed by Russian Defense Minister Andrey Belousov on an official visit on 22/1/ 2025. The two defense ministers signed the 2025 Cooperation Plan between the Russian and Uzbek Defense Ministries and the 2026-2030 Strategic Partnership Program in the Military Field between the two countries. Lavrov's visit is therefore significant following that visit.

While Belousov has reined in the Uzbek regime by claiming that Russia is the sole guarantor of regional security, Lavrov wants to restore Uzbekistan to the position of a "the close neighbour," implying that Uzbekistan is not a pawn in the big game but merely a player. As is well known, after the Uzbek president's state visit to France, and especially after the first EU-Central Asian summit earlier this month, the "distant galaxy" seemed more attractive to Mirziyoyev than ever. The mining agreement signed following meetings between the Uzbek delegation and US officials in Washington, and Uzbekistan's full membership in the global coalition to combat ISIS, have raised concerns in China. Russia is taking a cautious approach toward China, as they are rivals disguised as "partners" in maintaining and expanding their economic influence in the region.

It's only natural that Lavrov will address security and migrant workers during his visit to Uzbekistan, both of which are pressure cards. Uzbekistan's membership in regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which seek to keep it within their sphere of influence, is also a key focus. Furthermore, the war in Ukraine, the West's blockade of communications with Europe, and sanctions have increased the importance of transit corridors connecting Russia to southern and eastern Eurasia. In this regard, the role of the International North-South Transport Corridor has increased. This corridor's length can be shortened by ensuring its passage through Afghanistan, which is why Russia has officially removed the Taliban from its "list of terrorist organizations." Now, Lavrov is trying to establish a unified position on the Taliban issue with the Uzbek government. In short, through this visit, Russia is attempting to maintain and consolidate its influence in Central Asia.

O Leaders of the Uzbek regime: We remind you that not only Russia, but China, America and Europe are also colonial powers, some of which are no less dangerous than the other. Their goal is to suck the blood of Muslims and weak people like leeches, to make them submit to all their aggressions, to turn them into weak and helpless people who always kneel before them asking for help, and to use you as a "rag" to break the honour and pride of the people. No matter how much you submit to them, they will not hesitate one day to sacrifice you like Gaddafi, Saddam and others. What is worse, you will incur the wrath of Allah and become regretful in this world and the Hereafter. Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾
﴿أَعْمَى﴾ **“But whoever turns away from My Reminder will certainly have a miserable life, then We will raise them up blind on the Day of Judgment.”** [Ta-Ha: 124]. Do not submit to the greedy colonialists, but obey Allah and His Messenger (saw) and choose the glory of Islam over humiliation at the hands of kufr (disbelief).

﴿وَاللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“But all honour and power belongs to Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, yet the hypocrites do not know” [Al-Munafiqun: 8]

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