

NATO Reassures Russia on Missiles as Ambassador Contacts Resume

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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BRUSSELS — NATO countries assured Russia on Wednesday that the planned deployment of Patriot missiles to Turkey was a defensive measure as the alliance and Moscow resumed ambassador-level meetings after a gap of nearly a year.

Envoys from the 28 alliance members held their first meeting with Alexander Grushko, a former deputy foreign minister who President Vladimir Putin appointed last month as Russia's ambassador to NATO.

Russia had left the post vacant since Grushko's predecessor, Dmitry Rogozin, was promoted to deputy prime minister at the end of 2011.

NATO ambassadors attempted to calm Russian fears over Ankara's request for the alliance to station Patriot surface-to-air missiles in Turkey to guard against any spillover from the Syrian civil war.

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