

Lavrov Meeting Planned With Clinton and Syria Envoy Brahimi

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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DUBLIN/MOSCOW — Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were expected to meet international Syria mediator Lakhdar Brahimi in Dublin on Thursday to try to put a UN peace process for Syria back on track, diplomatic sources said.

The talks were to come ahead of a meeting of the Western-backed "Friends of Syria" group in Marrakech next week that is expected to boost support for rebels fighting to overthrow Syrian President Bashar Assad.

"They will speak about a plan [or] common understanding on how to move forward," one source said of Thursday's meeting, which was to take place on the sidelines of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) gathering.

In Moscow, a senior Russian lawmaker and ally of Vladimir Putin described Syria's government as being incapable of doing its job properly, in a sign Russia is trying to distance

itself from Assad.

Clinton held a bilateral meeting with Lavrov ahead of the expected talks with Brahimi. A Western diplomatic source hinted that at least some change may be forthcoming from Russia.

"I don't really know what may come out of the meeting, but I'd expect something based on the Geneva agreement as I cannot imagine Russia now changing completely on Assad. So I am not expecting anything radically new, rather a new version of Geneva maybe," the source said.

The Geneva Declaration, which was approved when Kofi Annan was international mediator, called for a transitional administration but did not specify what role, if any, Assad would have.

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