

Lavrov Hopes Ukraine's Poroshenko Won't Yield to 'Party of War'

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Ukrainian serviceman walks on armoured personnel carriers (APC) during a ceremony to hand over weapons, military equipment and aircraft to the army at a firing range outside Zhytomyr, Ukraine.

Russian is concerned that a rotation by Kiev of front-line forces in eastern Ukraine could undermine peace efforts, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Friday.

"Any action related to military preparations does not help the process," Lavrov told a news conference. "We will hope that all this... does not lead to a renewed military confrontation."

Ukraine's parliament voted on Thursday to refresh its front-line forces and resume partial conscription after a security official said Russian forces backing separatist rebels had sharply increased military activity in the east of the country.

Lavrov voiced hope that "common sense will prevail" and that Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko would not yield to the "party of war" — the politicians whom Moscow says seek

a military solution to the conflict.

The former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan hopes to arrange a summit of the Russian, Ukrainian, French and German leaders on the conflict in east Ukraine later this month.

Lavrov said President Vladimir Putin had discussed the situation in Ukraine on Thursday with German Chancellor Angela Merkel but gave no details of the discussions.

Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said the president had met members of his advisory Security Council on Friday to discuss "escalating tensions" in east Ukraine and progress on arranging the four-way summit, Interfax reported. He gave no details.

Efforts are also under way to arrange a meeting in the Belarussian capital Minsk of the so-called Contact Group on Ukraine which brings together Russia, Ukraine, separatist leaders from east Ukraine and the OSCE security watchdog.

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