

Moscow Blames EU and NATO for Latest Balkan Tensions

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Visar Kryeziu / AP / TASS

Rising tensions between the Balkan countries of Serbia and Kosovo are the result of the European Union and NATO “appeasing” Kosovo, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Wednesday.

The Russian Foreign Ministry on Tuesday accused Kosovo of provocation after its police detained more than two dozen people, including one Russian national, during an armed raid in Serb-populated municipalities in Kosovo’s north. The Russian national was [released](#) hours after being detained. He and another UN staffer were hospitalized, the UN mission in Kosovo [said](#).

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“What’s happening is the result of the EU and NATO’s appeasement,” Lavrov was [quoted](#) by the RBC news website as saying.

Speaking to reporters on a visit to Slovenia, Lavrov accused the Western political and military blocs of seeking to create a “cordon sanitaire” around Russia and force Serbia to accept Kosovo’s independence, RBC reported.

Majority-Albanian Kosovo declared independence in 2008, almost a decade after NATO airstrikes wrested control of the territory away from Belgrade, ending a brutal counter-insurgency by Serbian security forces.

Most EU states and the U.S. have recognized Kosovo, while Russia and China have sided with Serbia in its refusal to do so.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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