

Lavrov's public provocation

Background and comments

By Dr. Manfred Pohl

According to an interview on Russian television, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov sees a real danger of the outbreak of a third world war. **Not only he, everyone sees this danger. But he hasn't said who created this danger. I hand it here. It is the invasion of Ukraine, for which there was no need. If Russia, contrary to all international agreements, does not respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, no one else can be blamed for fueling tensions. It is therefore legitimate that the international community does not look on without reacting, because ultimately one has to recognize that in the case of the destruction of Ukrainian sovereignty, there is a real danger of escalation to other European states, next for example Moldova , as has already been seen.**

Lavrov also made it clear in this interview on Russian television that he considers NATO arms deliveries to Ukraine to be legitimate targets for his country. "Of course, these weapons will be a legitimate target for the Russian armed forces," Lavrov said in the interview. **He therefore presumes to declare international aid to Ukraine unjustified and to call the arms deliveries "legitimate targets". I call it a logical somersault. Even the use of the term "legitimate" is unacceptable. No detail of this aggressive war is legitimate. "How could it be otherwise?" Lavrov continued. "If NATO de facto goes to war with Russia through a proxy and arms that proxy, then in war you do what you have to do in war." And what do you have to do? One must stop invading other countries. That is the legitimate demand of the international community. It has nothing to do with NATO. Russia must shed the paranoia it has fallen into, with which it is trying to justify the war against Ukraine.**

However, the change of heart in this statement, is very remarkable. Lavrov no longer calls the attack on Ukraine a "special military operation" but war.

The danger of a third world war is "serious, it is real, it must not be underestimated," Lavrov said in that interview the Foreign Ministry shared on its Telegram channel on Monday evening. At the same time, he explained that he did not want to be artificially inflated the risks any further in such a situation. **Isn't it Russia that created these risks? Now should others be blamed for the aggravation?** There are many sides that want that, he said, without being specific. **I see only one side that wants that: the Russian Federation. It wants to subjugate Ukraine, calls on it to capitulate, want to liquidate the Ukrainian people and their state. That inflates the risks because such intentions are non-negotiable. There is no alternative: Russia must end the war against Ukraine. This war is in danger of getting out of control. Russia alone started it, only Russia can end it. Blaming others for this is a mockery of the public.**

The inadmissibility of a nuclear war remains Russia's principled position. **This is an empty speech, a phrase without factual content. The behavior of Russia shows otherwise. I may remind that Russia is threatening to increase its near-border nuclear weapons potential because Finland and Sweden intend to join NATO. Here it must be said unequivocally: even if Ukraine wants to join NATO, Russia has no say in that. And certainly no threats can be accepted. It is solely the decision of these countries. I may also remind that on May 27, 1997 in Paris, NATO and Russia signed an internationally binding declaration of intent in an official Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. The Founding Act represented an attempt to strike a balance between the security policy interests of the NATO partners on the one hand and Russia on the other. Both sides committed to renouncing the threat or use of force, to mutual consultation and to the peaceful**

resolution of conflicts. With the attack on the Ukraine, Russia threw this declaration of intent overboard.

Asked about a comparison of the current situation with the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Lavrov said that there were few written rules at the time. But the “rules of conduct” were pretty clear - Moscow knew how Washington was going to behave, and Washington was clear how Moscow was going to behave. Even today there are few rules only, Lavrov said, referring to the New Start nuclear disarmament treaty. **What are these “few rules” and how are they supposed to work?** I quote from <https://frieden-sichern.dgvrn.de/abruestung/abc-waffen/atomwaffe/ueberkommen/start-new-start-vertrag>:

“The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) was signed between the US and the Soviet Union on July 31, 1991 and provided for the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons by 2009. He allowed both sides to each have 6,000 nuclear warheads and 1,600 launchers. Furthermore, the treaty had a control system that allowed both states to carry out inspections in the other country. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the agreement has applied to Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and the USA. A START II agreement was sought, which would provide for the deactivation of all land-based ICBMs with multiple warheads. However, this agreement never came into force as it was not ratified by the Russian Parliament. On April 8, 2010, the USA and Russia signed a follow-up agreement with the “New START” treaty. It provides for a further reduction in operational nuclear warheads to 1,550 and up to 800 delivery systems and came into force on February 5, 2011.”

These treaties no longer play any role for Russia. The “few rules”, as Lavrov calls the treaties, were unilaterally broken.

However, the following must be stated on this question in general. All of these contracts are useless half measures. What good is a reduction to 1,550 weapon units? They undoubtedly still guarantee an overkill of humanity. Do it make a difference whether the existing armament can wipe out humanity four times or “only” three times? The process would only happen once anyway. Any contract that only is limiting the number of existing nuclear weapons is useless. There is general recognition that the use of nuclear weapons cannot achieve political goals, since such use can only result in the annihilation of both warring sides. So nuclear weapons are completely useless. There is only one possible treaty that can solve the problem of the demise of human civilization, it must include the **abolition of all nuclear weapons of any size**, without regional limitations, without exceptions, without ifs and buts, without any time delay and made binding for all nine currently nuclear-armed states. Anything else is mere eyewash, just as all of the so-called “politics of deterrence” is utter nonsense. Something like that doesn't work. The curse of science and technology, the atomic weapon as an object of human invention and realization, must be eliminated. All nine countries that currently have nuclear weapons should think this through with logical precision. Russia and the USA must lead the way in negotiations.

Lavrov accused the United States and Britain of slowing down negotiations with Ukraine. We know for sure that “neither London nor Washington” would advise Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to speed up negotiations, he said in the interview. **That is also not to be expected in view of the Russian ideas. Negotiations on the basis of ceding part of Ukraine's territory to Russia cannot be conducted.** “They always advise Zelenskyy to tighten his position.” **So Lavrov calls the Ukrainian demand for respect of their territorial integrity a tightening of the position? That cannot be an option for Ukraine and for the world. It is an aggression directed against international**

law and all applicable treaties, and which Russia would certainly not end with the annexation of Ukraine.

According to the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyj, Moscow will not be successful in its war of aggression in Ukraine. Within two months, the Russian armed forces have deployed more than 1,100 rockets, countless aerial bombs and artillery. Some Ukrainian places have been destroyed to the ground, Zelenskyj said in a video address published on Telegram. "But they have achieved nothing." The international community sees it the same way and will therefore endeavor to end the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine without fulfilling the occupation goals that Russia is striving for. This is the only way to preserve world peace and the world order that has been achieved through the painstaking detailed work of many diplomatic forces in recent decades. With this goal in mind, UN Secretary General António Guterres and other personalities are traveling to Moscow, with this goal in mind, representatives from numerous countries are advising in Ramstein. The Russian Federation must stop the aggression. This is the main demand of the international community.

Source: NTV

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