

## **Russia warns US over possible missile deployment in Europe**

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**Moscow:** Russia considers possible missile deployment by the US in Europe and other regions as counterproductive, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday.

Moscow is studying the US statements on missile deployment, Lavrov said, stressing that militaristic rhetoric is "absolutely counter-productive and harmful", Xinhua reported.

He urged the US to discuss with Russia each other's concerns, especially on military construction, through "direct and honest" dialogues.

"We are open for an honest, but specific, not unsubstantiated dialogue in order to remove any concerns," Lavrov said.

The minister accused the US of breaching the bilateral Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty (INF), which was signed to eliminate nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles of intermediate ranges.

"We have formulated our rather concrete questions to the American side on a number of actions that we think, including in the framework of deploying the global missile defense system, as direct violation of the INF," Lavrov said.

Responding to the repeated accusation of the US for Russia's alleged violation of the INF, Lavrov said that Washington failed to specify its concerns and complaints through mechanism of Russian-American consultations, reiterating that Russia has no intention to break the treaty.

Western media reported on Friday that the US was considering deploying missile systems in Europe as a response to Moscow's alleged violation of the bilateral Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty.

Earlier in the day, Deputy Defence Minister Anatoly Antonov claimed that the US took the allegation as the excuse for its so-called "retaliatory" military actions.

"We believe the deployment of US intermediate and shorter range missiles in Europe and other regions, which might threaten Russia and other countries that are reluctant to follow Washington's instructions, would cause a drastically negative impact on global security and stability," Antonov said.

He pointed out that the US announcement was made on the eve of the Group of Seven summit, which planned to discuss the extension of anti-Russian sanctions.

"These publications were timed for another upsurge in the anti- Russian campaign in the West," Antonov said.