

# *Russia Seeks Productive Talks with U.S. Secretary of State Visit*

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Moscow, April 11 (RHC)-- Russia's Foreign Ministry says it hopes for "productive talks" with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson as he arrives in Moscow for his first visit.

The ministry said in a statement on Tuesday that the outcome of the talks was important not only for Russia-U.S. ties but "for the overall atmosphere on the world stage."

During his official visit, Tillerson will meet with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. The top U.S. diplomat is also likely to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin, although that has not been confirmed.

During the visit, the U.S. secretary of state will reportedly persuade Russia to abandon Syria, which has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011.

The visit comes several days after a U.S. missile strike on a Syrian army base. Moscow has already dismissed the strike as "an act of aggression."

Tillerson had earlier acknowledged that Russia can play a role in Syria's future. The U.S. secretary of state said that Russia must choose between the United States and the administration of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

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