

Moscow calls on Washington to join in assuring nuclear war won't happen



Moscow, June 12 (RHC)-- Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says it is important for Russia and the United States -- the world's top two nuclear powers -- to jointly declare that the use of atomic weapons is "unacceptable." Lavrov made the remark in an address to the 2019 edition of the Primakov Readings summit in the Russian capital, Moscow.

"From a political perspective, it's of principal importance that Russia and the U.S. calm the rest of the world and pass a joint statement at a high level that there can be no victory in a nuclear war and therefore it is unacceptable and inadmissible," Russia's TASS news agency quoted Lavrov as saying at the forum.

He said such a declaration had a historical precedent, in the form of assurances made during the Cold War, and added that his country had already forwarded proposals for a new declaration to the U.S. but has yet to receive a reply. "We do not understand why they cannot reconfirm this position now. Our proposal is being considered by the U.S. side," Lavrov said.

The Primakov Readings is an international summit aimed at promoting dialog on trends in global politics and economics among senior experts, diplomats, and decision-makers from around the globe. The

summit has brought together more than 500 participants, representing over 30 countries, this year.

Russia and the U.S. together possess over 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads. The U.S. was the first country to develop nuclear weapons and is the only one to have ever used them, killing tens of thousands of innocent Japanese in two major cities in 1945.

A recent move by U.S. President Donald Trump to withdraw his country from a nuclear arms treaty with Russia has recently raised concerns about a potential new nuclear arms race between the two countries. That pact, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), was signed by the then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev during the Cold War, in 1987.

In a recent article on The Moscow Times, Gorbachev, now 88, referred to the concerns but said it was still possible for the U.S. and Russia to avoid nuclear confrontation.

The Pentagon recently said that Washington sought dialog with Russia to decrease the risk of combat actions with the use of nuclear weapons that are "unprovoked" by the United States. In response, Lavrov said those remarks had been made by the US "military agency, the latest nuclear doctrine of which has significantly lowered the threshold of using nuclear weapons," in an apparent reference to the withdrawal from the INF.

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