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**LAVROV: UKRAINE'S MOVES TO LEAVE CIS STEM FROM POLICY BASED ON HATE AGAINST RUSSIA**

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29.05.2018

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Russian News Agency (29 May 2018)

Ukraines moves, including those aimed at withdrawing from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), stem from the Kiev authorities policy based on hate against Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said following Tuesdays talks in the Belarusian capital of Minsk.

"As for the actions of our Ukrainian neighbors, often times common sense and concern about their own people become hostage to their hate against Russia," he said. "They make statements about the need to sever diplomatic relations [with Russia - TASS] without thinking about hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who work in Russia, they also make statements about leaving the CIS. If you mean to leave, then do it," Lavrov added.

The Russian top diplomat pointed out that "it is Ukraines sovereign right to decide in which organizations to remain." According to him, the Ukrainian authorities should make a decision as to what kind of negative or positive effect its moves regarding the CIS will have on their own people.

"But since in every situation involving Russia they are inclined to act based on hate against Moscow, we can do nothing about it. We are interested in cooperating with all the founding countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States because constructive cooperation is crucial for resolving numerous issues related to our peoples lives," Lavrov concluded.

Ukraine and CIS

On May 19, Ukrainian President Pyotr Poroshenko announced the signing of a decree recalling the countrys representatives to CIS agencies. According to him, Ukraine "has nothing more to do there" as the country "is moving forward on the path to Europe." Poroshenko explained earlier that Ukraine would stop participating in the activities of CIS coordination bodies, which, however, would not mean "the withdrawal from the CIS since Ukraine never joined it."

In December 1991, Ukraine ratified the agreement establishing the CIS and a protocol to the agreement, at the same time refraining from ratifying the CIS Charter, so the country did not

become the organizations member de jure. Nevertheless, Kiev took part in the organizations activities though not at all levels. However, after the 2014 coup, the countrys new authorities announced the process of withdrawing from the CIS. In October 2014, a relevant bill was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian parliament) but it has not been considered.

<http://tass.com/politics/1007013>

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