
NORTH KOREAN LEADER KIM JONG UN RECEIVES RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV: MOSCOW

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North Korean leader Kim Jong Un received Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Thursday (May 31), Moscow said, in what is believed to be the first meeting between the head of the reclusive state and a Russian official.

Lavrov was greeted by the Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of DPRK Kim Jong Un during his visit to Pyongyang, the Russian foreign ministry said on Twitter in English, releasing pictures of the two men shaking hands.

Lavrov's visit to Pyongyang comes amid a flurry of diplomatic activity to organise a landmark summit between Donald Trump and Kim, with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also meeting Kim's right-hand man Kim Yong Chol in New York late Wednesday.

Lavrov was met by Vice Foreign Minister Sin Hong Chol at the airport.

Sergei Lavrov, foreign minister of the Russian Federation, arrived here on Thursday at the invitation of Ri Yong Ho, foreign minister of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (North Korea), KCNA news agency said in a brief dispatch.

It gave no further details but Russias Tass news agency said the two foreign ministers had begun talks at the Supreme Peoples Assembly building in Pyongyang.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said earlier they were expected to discuss "vital issues of bilateral relations and key international and regional issues".

Lavrov is paying a visit to North Korea for the first time since 2009, Tass said.

Lavrov spoke to his US counterpart Pompeo by telephone for the first time on Wednesday ahead of the Secretary of State's dinner meeting with Kim Yong Chol.

Washington is pressing North Korea to quickly give up all its nuclear weapons in a verifiable way in return for lifting sanctions and economic relief.

But analysts say North Korea will be unwilling to cede its nuclear deterrent unless it is given security guarantees that the US will not try to topple the regime.

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