
LAVROV: POST-SOVIET SECURITY BLOC'S TOP DIPLOMATS CONCERNED ABOUT AFGHANISTAN'S NORTH

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Foreign ministers of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) member-states are concerned about the situation in northern Afghanistan where the Islamic State terror group outlawed in Russia is establishing a bridgehead, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said following the meeting of CSTO foreign ministers on Monday.

"All ministers spoke about the need to stabilize the situation [in Afghanistan]. They voiced concern that the Islamic State members are tapping into the country, particularly from Syria and Iraq. They were particularly concerned about the fact that terrorists are beginning to establish a bridgehead in the northern provinces of Afghanistan, meaning in immediate proximity to the CSTO's area of responsibility," he said, adding that Moscow "is concerned about it."

According to Lavrov, the Collective Security Treaty Organization members will continue coordinating actions, including assistance provided to Tajikistan in border fortification. "All actions implied through defense ministries, special services, interior ministries, border troops, including the operation on drug interdiction named Channel, will continue. Respective agreements remain in force, which was clearly confirmed today," the minister explained.

He added that the NATO mission in Afghanistan "is not always acting transparently." "There have been several cases when governors of provinces made statements on certain unmarked helicopters heading to the region where terrorists were deployed. Taking into account the fact that NATO forces and the US control all air space above Afghanistan, they at least could not have been unaware of it," Russia's top diplomat noted.

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