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Lavrov urges Europe to drop 'geopolitical games'

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Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Wednesday called for Europe to drop its "geopolitical games" and unite behind efforts to fight terrorism, a day after attacks in Brussels killed around 30 people.

"I really hope that Europeans, in the face of the terrible threat of terrorism that occurred yesterday in Brussels, will put aside their geopolitical games and unite to prevent terrorists from acting on our continent," Lavrov was quoted by Russian agencies as telling his German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Europe is facing a security crisis after Tuesday's triple bomb attacks in Brussels, which left around 30 dead, and the November 13 bomb and gun assaults in Paris that killed 130.

Russia's call to unite against terrorism comes amid a diplomatic push over the conflict in Syria.

Steinmeier was in Moscow Wednesday, to be followed by US State Secretary John Kerry. They are scheduled to meet separately with Lavrov and President Vladimir Putin.

The West is looking to size up the Kremlin's game plan after Putin's surprise announcement on March 14 that Moscow was withdrawing the bulk of its forces flying a bombing campaign in support of President Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

An unprecedented ceasefire negotiated by Russia and the United States has largely held since February 27, but the truce does not apply to jihadists.

Peace talks between Syria's government and opposition are dragging on in Geneva but have yet to make any breakthrough.

Many Russian officials, including Putin, have offered their condolences in the aftermath of the attacks and echoed Lavrov's call for unity in the fight against terrorism.

"The fight against this evil calls for the most active international cooperation," the Kremlin said in a statement Tuesday.

Ties between Moscow and the West have plunged to their lowest point since the Cold War over Russia's intervention in Ukraine but the Kremlin's Syria gambit thrust Putin back into the centre of international diplomacy.

Other Russian officials and politicians have used the Brussels attacks to rebuke the West.

The outspoken head of the Russian parliament's foreign affairs committee, Alexei Pushkov, tweeted Tuesday that while NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg was "battling an 'imaginary Russian' threat and stationing troops in Latvia, people are being blown up under his nose in Brussels."

The spokeswoman of Russia's foreign ministry, Maria Zakharova, deplored "double standards" in the fight against terrorism.