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Story: Russia's new military doctrine

Russia moves to ease concerns over new military doctrine

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MOSCOW, October 23 (RIA Novosti) - Countries that do not threaten Russia have no reason to fear its new military doctrine, the Russian foreign minister said on Friday.

The new document envisions the use of preemptive nuclear strikes against potential aggressors.

"This process [drafting of a new military doctrine] is transparent. We have repeatedly provided explanations, and it is an ongoing process," Sergei Lavrov said.

"There are no innovations here that would create any threats to anybody - that is, except for those who may be harboring insane plans of attacking the Russian Federation. I hope no one has such plans or ever will," he said.

Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of the Russian Security Council, said Thursday the new doctrine should be submitted to President Dmitry Medvedev by the end of the year.

The current military doctrine outlines the role of the Russian military in ensuring the defense of the country and, if necessary, preparing for and waging war, although it stresses that the doctrine is strictly defensive.

Some Russian military analysts, however, have questioned the need to revise the existing doctrine.

Alexander Sharavin, director of the Institute for Political and Military Analysis, said on October 14 that the current document stipulates the use of nuclear weapons only in large-scale wars when an aggressor has an overwhelming superiority over Russia in men and materiel.

"I think that the provision contained in the 2000 document is comprehensive enough and need not be expanded because nuclear weapons are a political tool and an element of the strategic deterrent. If we announce that we will use these weapons in a local conflict, we will thus belittle its role," he said.

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