

Russia-Brazil Relations: Lavrov's Visit to Brasilia

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Lavrov's trip showcased the significant role that Russia attaches to Brazil when it comes to the Latin American dimension of Moscow's grand strategy. Both parties' rhetoric was positive, but it remains to be seen if anything of tangible substance ultimately comes from it, which will be greatly determined by whether or not Lula attends this year's St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in less than two months' time like he was just invited to do.

Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's latest visit to Brazil went exactly as expected with respect to these two [BRICS](#) countries promising to comprehensively expand cooperation, but there were also five very important details that evaded the notice of most observers. The first is that the [official Brazilian press release](#) informed everyone that bilateral trade reached the historic record of \$9.8 billion last year, which occurred entirely under the tenure of Lula's predecessor Bolsonaro.

This fact contradicts the [Alt-Media Community](#)'s narrative that this former leader was a US puppet since no such proxy would ever take trade with Russia to its highest-ever level, especially in the context of the ongoing [NATO-Russian proxy war in Ukraine](#) over the past year. The basis upon which both sides pledged to further enhance their ties was therefore partially built by Bolsonaro, who in turn continued the trajectory that Temer and Rousseff kept in place from Lula's first two terms.

Second, Lavrov's expression of gratitude "to our Brazilian friends for a correct understanding of the genesis of this situation and their striving to contribute to a search for ways of settling it" that was reported in the [Russian Foreign Ministry's official transcript of his joint statement](#) has a deeper meaning. It extends credence to a [recently leaked report](#) alleging that his country approves of the optics surrounding Lula's peace rhetoric, but this crucially [isn't the same](#) as endorsing the substance thereof.

About that, the third detail is the time that Russia's top diplomat devoted to explaining [Moscow's stance towards the conflict](#) and desire to see it end "as soon as possible". This

follows Lula's condemnation of Russia in his [joint statement](#) with Biden, Brazil's [vote in support](#) of an anti-Russian UNGA Resolution, and then Lula [lying just the day prior](#) to Lavrov's trip about President Putin supposedly being disinterested in peace. Accordingly, his words can thus be seen as a polite response to those preceding developments.

Fourth, Lavrov's [reaffirmation of support](#) for Brazil's envisaged permanent UNSC seat proves the [de-ideologization of Russia's relations with Latin America](#), especially after Lula's abovementioned political unfriendliness and his [reported plans](#) to launch a global influence network with the US Democrats. Even though China and the US are Brazil's two most important partners in Lula's [grand strategy](#), Russia can still help it advance their shared goal of accelerating the [global systemic transition to multipolarity](#).

And finally, Lavrov's counterpart confirmed that he passed along President Putin's invitation for Lula to attend the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) in mid-June, which [TASS](#) reported was first extended during his [chief foreign policy advisor's trip to Moscow](#) last month. Lula earlier pledged that he [won't visit either Russia or Ukraine](#) due to their conflict, and the [ICC demands](#) that [Brazil arrest President Putin](#) if he ever sets foot there, so it's unclear whether Lula will take him up on this offer.

This last-mentioned detail from Lavrov's trip to Brazil is by far the most important since it's a clever and polite way to assess the sincerity of Lula's stated intentions to continue building ties with Russia in spite of US pressure. He can of course just say that there are so-called "scheduling conflicts" or possibly claim to be sick right before he's supposed to depart for St. Petersburg, but the point is that this will prove whether Lula is serious about making good on everything that Lavrov and his counterpart discussed.

All told, Lavrov's trip showcased the significant role that Russia attaches to Brazil when it comes to the Latin American dimension of [Moscow's grand strategy](#). Both parties' rhetoric was positive, but it remains to be seen if anything of tangible substance ultimately comes from it, which will be greatly determined by whether or not Lula attends this year's SPIEF in less than two months' time. In the meantime, the US is expected to [maximally pressure](#) him into not going, so it's difficult to predict what he'll do.

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