

Russia Regards the “Indo-Pacific Region” as an “Artificially Imposed” Pro-US Concept

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

Russia's top diplomat Sergei Lavrov strongly spoke out against the US' so-called “Indo-Pacific” concept that's recently become very popular among Indian strategists, remarking that it's “artificially imposed” and conditioned on containing China.

From “Conspiracy Theory” To Strategic Fact

Routinely dismissed as a “conspiracy theory” by hyper-jingoist Indian commentators, none other than Russia's top diplomat Sergei Lavrov just confirmed that it's actually a strategic fact that the US' so-called “Indo-Pacific Region” (IOR) concept that's recently become very popular in New Delhi is “artificially imposed” and [conditioned on “containing China”](#). His remarks were reported on by Russia's publicly funded international media outlet TASS and made in connection with his words about another externally supported structure, the so-called “Middle East Strategic Alliance” (MESA), better known by many as the “Arab NATO” initiative. So as not to be accused of misportraying the Foreign Minister's comments, here's the entirety of TASS' [short article](#) on his comments:

TASS' Report

“The United States is trying to impose the creation of the so-called Arab NATO, the Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA), despite serious doubts of its possible members, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Monday.

The steps have been made to reshape geopolitical landscape in a way to obstruct the natural development of events and try to contain the formation of new growth centers, Lavrov told a conference dubbed International Cooperation in a Troubled World, organized by the Valdai International Discussion Club in partnership with the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam.

“One of the examples is the Middle East Strategic Alliance, which now [US President Donald] Trump's administration is trying to impose on the Persian Gulf states plus Jordan and Egypt while overcoming very serious doubts of potential members, and here Israel is also pursuing its interests around this initiative,” Lavrov said.

Another artificially imposed concept is the Indo-Pacific Region, which Washington has started advancing together with Japan and Australia with an apparent goal of containing China and involving India in military and political and maritime processes, Lavrov said, noting that this concept undermines the role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the region.

“I want to compare natural processes integrating countries based on their coinciding interests and artificial processes, which they try to forcefully impose on the countries to carry out a joint effort in the interests of one geopolitically

oriented power,” the foreign minister stressed.

According to the US idea, the Arab NATO will bring together six Persian Gulf states (Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia) and also Egypt and Jordan. In mid-January, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo toured these countries holding a series of talks with their leaders. One of key tasks of the trip is bringing closer the positions of eight countries to create MESA. The goal of the coalition is to counter threats in the region and step up economic and energy cooperation.”

Key Takeaways

In view of the above, the following observations can be made:

- Russia regards the IOR and MESA as being complementary components of the US’ Eurasian strategy;
- Both of these concepts are military-led and designed to contain an obvious target (Iran and China);
- Nevertheless, Russia will continue comprehensively cooperating with its members;
- This includes through “[military diplomacy](#)” (especially [arms sales to the Gulf](#) and India) and energy;
- Russia’s [21st-century “balancing” act](#) is driving its pragmatic relations with both US proxies.

Concluding Thoughts

Lavrov’s remarks and the reality of Russia’s “balancing” act reveal the complexities of the [emerging Multipolar World Order](#) whereby Moscow has lately found itself strengthening relations with countries that can generally be regarded as American allies and are the centerpieces of Washington’s regional containment strategies ([India through the IOR](#) against China and Saudi Arabia through the MESA against Iran). Nevertheless, Russia doesn’t interpret International Relations through the “zero-sum” paradigm but instead follows the “win-win” philosophy, meaning that it has no compunctions about cooperating real closely with those two despite their US-designated roles in undermining its Chinese and Iranian partners. After all, the alternative is to give the US uncontested influence over India and [Saudi Arabia](#), which is disadvantageous to Russian, Chinese, and Iranian interests.

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