



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on September 29, 2023

Russia Hosts Taliban at “Regional Threat” Talks and Affirms Support for Kabul

The Taliban may be a pariah to the Western geopolitical establishment, but it is not without friends in high places.

As seen in an [Associated Press](#) report, at Russia’s hosting of a meeting with Taliban representatives to discuss regional threats on Friday, Moscow affirmed that it will keep providing Afghanistan assistance, both through its own resources and through the United Nations food agency.

During the meeting, a letter from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was read in which Western nations were accused of “complete failure” in Afghanistan and thus should “bear the primary burden of rebuilding the country.”

Zamir Kabulov, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s special representative for Afghanistan, was present at the event and said Moscow would leverage the UN’s World Food Program to assist Kabul.

Meanwhile, Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi called on other countries to stop telling Afghanistan how to conduct its affairs.

“Afghanistan doesn’t prescribe forms of governance to others, so we expect regional countries to engage with the Islamic Emirate rather than give prescriptions for the formation of a government in Afghanistan,” he said Friday from Kazan, Russia.

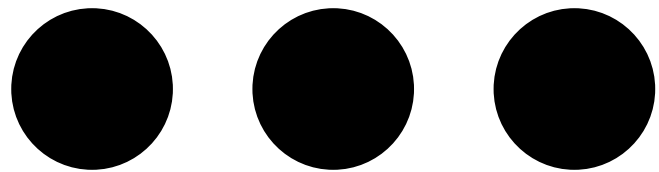
The minister even extended an invitation for “tourists, diplomats, aid workers, journalists and researchers” to travel to Afghanistan and see the country for themselves.

Since 2017, Moscow has hosted talks of this kind with the Taliban and other Afghan factions, as well as with representatives from China, Pakistan, Iran, India, and the former Soviet nations in Central Asia.

AP reports of Russian-Afghan relations:

Russia had worked for years to establish contacts with the Taliban, even though it designated the group a terror organization in 2003 and never took it off the list. Any contact with such groups is punishable under Russian law, but the Foreign Ministry has responded to questions about the apparent contradiction by saying its exchanges with the Taliban are essential for helping stabilize Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union fought a 10-year war in Afghanistan that ended with its troops



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withdrawing in 1989.

China has also cultivated close ties with the Taliban. [Earlier this month](#), it became the first nation to officially appoint a new ambassador to Afghanistan since the Taliban took power there, and it is among those working closely with Afghanistan to develop its mining sector. As [The New American](#) previously reported, the Taliban claims to have signed contracts worth \$6.5 billion to let Chinese, British, Iranian, and Turkish companies conduct mining operations in Afghanistan.

All this comes as both Russia and China have been making major inroads with a number of nations throughout the globe in a contest against the United States for diplomatic influence.

Earlier this year, China made enormous headway when it [brokered a deal](#) restoring Saudi Arabian-Iranian relations, which had broken down in 2016 after the Sunni Islam kingdom executed a Shia scholar (Iran is a majority Shia Muslim nation).

Soon thereafter, Saudi Arabia's King Salman signed documents making his country a "dialog partner" in China and Russia's Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which emphasizes defense and economic collaboration between its members.

In addition, Saudi Arabia is also eager to join (and has received an invitation to) BRICS, an economic bloc currently consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. BRICS has its own bank, payment system, and framework for providing protection against global liquidity pressures.

It appears the Russo-Chinese international order is on the ascendant, raising questions about America's future place in world affairs.



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