



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on January 26, 2024

Moscow's Top Spy Says NATO Trying to Intimidate Russia, China Calls NATO a "Walking War Machine"

In an interview with RIA Novosti on January 25, Sergey Naryshkin, head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), accused the West for conducting an "information war" to discourage the Kremlin from pursuing its Ukraine policy. Naryshkin lambasted the warnings of various Western officials as part of an "information war" being waged against both Russia and the populations of their own countries. This type of warfare tries "to justify ... the West's existing aggression against Russia," he added.



AP Images
Sergey Naryshkin

According to the Russian intel chief, by perpetuating "hybrid" actions, the West is trying to intimidate Moscow by raising the notion of a full-scale direct conflict between Russia and NATO. "The Westerners emphasize their belligerence, their mobilization readiness, hoping to influence Russia so that it ... abandons its plans ... and goals of the special military operation," he explained, adding that such efforts were of no use.

Naryshkin's comments came after Admiral Rob Bauer, the chair of the NATO Military Committee, cautioned the U.S.-led military bloc that it must prepare for a major conflict with Russia within the next 20 years, a conflict which would necessitate the huge mobilization of civilians. Admiral Bauer declared that NATO member states should ensure that their industries can be quickly put on a war footing and that there are mechanisms in place to allow the mass mobilization of civilians should a large-scale conflict occur.

Earlier this month, the German tabloid *Bild* reported, quoting a classified document, that Berlin was gearing up for Russia to stage an "open attack" on NATO in mid-2025 following battlefield victories against Ukraine. Moscow has dismissed the prediction as a "zodiac forecast."

While NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg declared that the bloc sees no direct threat from Russia at the moment, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius called on his country to be prepared to resist a possible Russian offensive, calling on NATO members to prepare themselves for such an outcome.

Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Lennart Billström also urged his compatriots to prepare for a potential military conflict, amid deteriorating ties with Moscow. Last week, U.K. Defense Secretary Grant Shapps



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predicted that a global conflict between the West and Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea would erupt within five years.

Russian officials have repeatedly disavowed such purported plans to attack NATO as “nonsense,” with President Vladimir Putin maintaining that Moscow has no interest whatsoever in doing so. For decades, Moscow has articulated its worries about NATO’s expansion toward its borders, especially the bloc’s push to include Ukraine among its ranks.

Likewise, Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian told reporters on January 25 that NATO is a “walking war machine” that has been fomenting unrest across Asia since its creation, also lambasting the alliance for using the idea of a militarily assertive Beijing as an excuse to stoke regional conflict.

Wu seemed to be alluding to comments made by NATO’s Stoltenberg during the World Economic Forum (WEF) last week, in which the bloc’s leader tried to position its expansion in Asia as a response to Chinese pugilism.

“It should be said that NATO is a walking ‘war machine,’ and wherever it appears, it brings disorder everywhere,” Wu said, alluding to “inappropriate statements by the NATO Secretary General regarding China.”

“This is not about NATO moving into Asia, but instead about the fact that China is coming close to us,” Stoltenberg told attendees at the globalist Davos gathering, contending that the U.S.-led alliance remains “regional” in its focus.

Wu warned NATO against deliberate provocations, asking the bloc to treat China and its military development “objectively and rationally, and do something beneficial to world peace,” based on reports by Chinese state-controlled Xinhua news agency.

Despite claiming to limit its influence regionally, NATO has openly wooed Asian allies to tackle China’s growing power. The bloc’s members already include countries thousands of kilometers from the Atlantic, such as Türkiye and Bulgaria, although Article 6 of its charter specifies that the mutual defense agreement at its core only applies to territories in Europe and North America, as well as islands north of the Tropic of Cancer.

In August, U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan explicitly dismissed the claim that Washington was trying to set up “NATO for the Pacific” with the establishment of a trilateral defense partnership with Japan and South Korea, even as President Joe Biden lauded a “new era” of collaboration with Washington’s regional allies. Last July, NATO indefinitely postponed the contentious planned opening of a liaison office in Tokyo.

In September, Russian General Viktor Sobolev posited that the United States planned to “drag” Tokyo and Seoul into NATO by 2030, instead of creating a copycat organization. Similarly, during a speech to the UN General Assembly, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov blasted Washington and its allies for creating discord with “unprecedented” activity in the region.

In July, NATO members published a joint statement describing China’s “stated ambitions and coercive policies” as a “challenge” to the alliance’s own interests, security, and values, castigating China for trying to “subvert the rules-based international order.” Nonetheless, NATO has maintained that Beijing is not an enemy, insisting that they still were open to “constructive engagement” with the Chinese communist regime.

Speaking at a question-and-answer session at UN headquarters in New York on January 24, Russia’s



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Lavrov stated that Russia does not want to enter into a “big war” and has no plans to attack other countries. The Russian diplomat also bemoaned his country’s frosty ties with the United States, blaming Washington for the current state of affairs.

Furthermore, Lavrov said that despite rising tensions, “no one wants a big war,” including Russia. “We have lived through ‘big wars’ many times in our history,” he added.

Besides, Lavrov contended that the United States was responsible for increased global tensions while it accused Russia of being a threat. He cited Finland’s accession to NATO last April and Sweden’s aspirations to join as instances of Washington “dragging neutral countries” into the U.S.-led NATO.

Also, Lavrov slammed the United States for systematically undermining most of the de-escalation mechanisms that existed by withdrawing from a number of key arms-control accords.

The foreign minister described Russia-U.S. relations as being at a “low point,” with “practically no contacts” apart from discussions over operating both countries’ diplomatic missions.



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