

Kosovo, Europe headline U.S.-Russia talks

by UPI

MOSCOW - Talks between U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and top Russian officials Tuesday focused on Kosovo and a proposed missile defense system in Europe.

The Russian news agency RIA Novosti said that Rice's talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Security Council chief Igor Ivanov focused around the proposed U.S. system and Kosovo's independence.

While neither side made any headway with the other during Tuesday's meeting, Lavrov said told Itar-Tass each side did introduce their main concerns.

"The United States supports the (Marti) Ahtisaari plan. Russia stands for further negotiations," he said. "Arguments were heard, but they did not help to bring the two positions closer together."

Lavrov also said that his nation is seeking a complete partnership with the United States in relation to major international issues.

Itar-Tass said that after the meeting with the Russian officials, Rice said that she and U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates would visit Moscow in the fall to continue negotiations.

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