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'Bloc discipline' precludes Western diplomats from criticizing Ukraine - Lavrov

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Sergey Lavrov refuted insinuations about his being isolated at the latest OSCE session, telling of 20 parleys a day.

The forum has been quite comfortable despite the "bloc approach" of his counterparts, Lavrov said at a press conference in Basel, Switzerland.

*"I was above par [at the OSCE session] because I used to take part in the UN General Assembly sessions and other international activities, so I know very well what is usually being said in pursuance of 'bloc discipline'. Therefore nothing surprised me,"* he told journalists.

Lavrov informed that on the sidelines of the session his foreign counterparts confessed that the 'Lustration Law' (the vetting of corrupt officials) adopted in Ukraine is "terrible," while blocking off the southeastern regions from the Ukrainian economic system is "unreasonable, harmful and inhumane."

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*"But we agreed not to criticize [the actions of the Kiev authorities],"* Lavrov quoted those diplomats as saying.

He inquired then whether his counterparts share these thoughts with the Ukrainian authorities during their direct contacts, and the answer was "inarticulate," so Lavrov believes they don't.

*"That means that I do know what is going on for real and I believe that Ukrainian journalists [present at the press conference] do comprehend the essence of the lustration and other laws, which are adopted not to sooth the situation, not to reach a national consent,"* Lavrov said.

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*"If I do understand the ongoing processes in Ukraine correctly, a national consent is not a task solely for the southeast, but for all of Ukraine,"* he said, stressing that *"Probably, one day this is going to come up."*

Answering a question from a Ukrainian journalist about feeling isolated at the event, Lavrov said that he "felt no isolation whatsoever."

*"Everybody greeted me cordially as usual. We were telling jokes and discussing affairs being solved together,"* Lavrov said.

*"Unfortunately, yesterday I spent only about an hour in the convention hall, because another seven hours I spent in bilateral meetings. There were 20 of them altogether. That's why I didn't feel isolated. Rather I felt excessively communicated to,"* he said.