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Russia's Lavrov says Moscow concerned by German leaders

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Ties between Berlin and Moscow have been strained in recent weeks and Chancellor Angela Merkel accused [Russia](#) over the weekend of interfering in the domestic affairs of countries that are seeking closer ties with the European Union.

"We can't not [express](#) our concern over what our German colleagues are doing," Lavrov told a news conference.

"[Germany](#) has traditionally played a very constructive role regarding EU ties with Russia and the West as a whole with Russia. If Germany would decide to move to issuing orders, then Europe wouldn't win from that and neither would Germany."

Moscow says countries which support sanctions, in particular the United States, are trying to dictate policy to Moscow.

Merkel, long Russian President Vladimir Putin's closest partner in the 28-nation European bloc, has backed several successive rounds of sanctions against Russia for its role in the [Ukraine](#) crisis, and warned that she would judge Putin by his actions in de-escalating the conflict in Ukraine, not his words.

(Reporting by [Thomas Grove](#), editing by Elizabeth Piper)