
Russia counts on joint oil, gas projects with Iraq - Lavrov

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Russia counts on launching joint projects with Iraq in gas, oil and electric energy spheres, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said at his meeting with Iraqi counterpart Hoshiyar Zibari in Moscow on Monday.

"Our energy specialists have long worked in Iraq in difficult conditions, in particular in Baghdad, Basra and Nasiria," he said.

Lavrov also expressed the hope that Zibari's visit to Russia "will allow giving an energetic impulse to the two countries' trade and economic cooperation".

"We are utmost interested in this, and we want to give assistance to friendly Iraq," Lavrov stressed.

He said the signing of an accord on settlement of Iraq's debt showed a real contribution of Russia to efforts to restore Iraq's economy.

"Russian companies are going to actively participate in this project, but for the successful implementation of plans of economic development of Iraq it is necessary to solve two political problems: to achieve national reconciliation and settle the security issue. We expect that today we shall exchange views about how Russia can assist the efforts of the world community in this area," Lavrov said.

The Russian and Iraqi foreign ministers have signed a memorandum of intention to develop trade, economic, and scientific-technological cooperation.

"This document will consolidate the achieved political understanding," Lavrov said.

Zibari said at the talks that a substantial progress was seen in the bilateral relations.

Iraq is glad that Russia took an obligation to settle Iraq's debt to the Paris Club of creditors, he said.

The situation in the security field is improving and regional cooperation is developing, Zibari said.
