

HELLO STEVE - HERE IS THE ESSENTIAL PART OF HIS SPEECH VERY HARSH AND TO THE POINT:

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He said Russia was ready to start talks as soon as Saturday, with Geneva a possible venue, but Russian news agency TASS quoted him as saying later that Moscow was extremely disappointed by the signals coming from Washington and NATO. Ryabkov said Russia was not willing to put up with the current situation any longer, and urged Washington to come up with a constructive response fast.

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Moscow handed over its proposals to the United States this week as tensions rose over the Russian troop build-up near Ukraine.

It says it is responding to what it sees as threats to its own security from Ukraine's increasingly close relations with NATO and aspirations to become an alliance member, even though there is no imminent prospect of Kyiv being allowed to join.

The Russian proposals were set out in two documents - a draft agreement with NATO countries and a draft treaty with the United States, both published by the foreign ministry.

The first, among other points, would require Russia and NATO not to deploy additional troops and weapons outside the countries where they were in May 1997 - before the accession to NATO of any of the former communist states in East Europe that for decades were dominated by Moscow. It would mean NATO abandoning any military activities in Ukraine, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

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nuclear-sharing arrangements, where European NATO members provide aircraft capable of delivering U.S. nuclear weapons. Moscow handed over its proposals to the United States this week as tensions rose over the Russian troop build-up near Ukraine.

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