

BREAKING: Russia warns against foreign forces meddling in Syria's internal affairs

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The Security Council met on Tuesday afternoon on the current situation in Syria, with the Arab League and Western countries urging the 15-nation council to adopt their joint draft resolution, which demands what they call a "political transition" in the Middle East country.



U.S. Sixth Fleet flagship USS Mount Whitney



Standing NATO Maritime Group 1, currently conducting surge operations in Eastern

UNITED NATIONS: Russia on Tuesday warned foreign countries against meddling in the internal affairs of Syria, saying that “the Syrian crisis can only be resolved within the Syrian-led political process.”

The statement came as Vitaly Churkin, the Russian permanent representative to the United Nations, was addressing an open meeting of the UN Security Council on the current situation in Syria.

“The solution to the crisis can be found only through a Syrian-led, inclusive political process,” Churkin said. “If all key players of the international community were to concentrate their efforts on implementing these provisions we are convinced that the crisis would long be a thing of the past. Unfortunately, this hasn’t been the case.”

“We are convinced that in a time of extreme internal political crisis, the role of the international community should not be one of exacerbating conflict nor meddling by the use of economic sanctions or military force,” he said. “No, it should be fostering dialogue so as to seek an optimally effective and smooth resolution with a view to a cessation of violence and establishing a Syrian-led inclusive political process.”

“Russia, which has enjoyed close, friendly contacts with the Syrian people and the Arab world from the very beginning, fought to ensure that the Syrian people would be able to decide for themselves without bloodshed and violence and set a course, a format for necessary social, economic, and political reforms,” he said.

Russia has asked representatives of the Syrian government and opposition to enter into peace talks in Moscow to find a political solution to the Syrian crisis, which broke out in March 2011.

“We appeal to the Syrian government and all opposition groups to send their representatives to Moscow on an agreed-upon timeline to conduct informal contacts without preconditions,” he said. “This would allow for the Syrian parties to discuss many issues on the national agenda without any limitations, in particular the task of preparing an inter-Syrian dialogue under the LAS (League of Arab States) aegis.”

“Moreover, we suggest that in drawing up its decision the council be guided by the principle of non-imposition,” he said. “We will not stand for any sanctions resolutions or using the council’s toolbox so as to fuel conflict or possibly justify any foreign intervention in the future.”

“But this is not the matter at hand, the council cannot impose the parameters for an internal political settlement,” he said. “It simply does not have the mandate to do so under the (UN) Charter.”

The Security Council met on Tuesday afternoon on the current situation in Syria, with the Arab League and Western countries urging the 15-nation council to adopt their joint draft resolution, which demands what they call a “political transition” in the Middle East country. Moscow voiced its strong opposition to the Arab-European draft resolution, which was tabled at the Security Council by Morocco on Friday, saying the draft resolution was not conducive

to a proper settlement of the current Syrian political crisis.

The draft resolution, jointly drawn up by Arab states, Britain, France and Germany, wants the Security Council to back an Arab League plan which calls on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to hand over power to his deputy so that new elections can be held.

The United States, France, Germany and Britain asked the Security Council to take urgent actions to address the current situation in Syria.

Damascus has accused foreign and terrorist elements of being behind the months-old turmoil in the country.

On Tuesday, Churkin told the Security Council that consensus among the 15 council members is possible and necessary.

"We found some of the elements of our text in it, and this gives rise to hope," he said. "We hope that the council will come to a consensus on the Syrian issue, as that is not only possible but also necessary."

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