

Rising Tensions: Russia Rejects UN Security Council Resolution on Syria

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With Libya still smoldering, Russia rejects UN resolution on Syria

Robert Bridge

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Russia, Brazil, China, India and South Africa, however, which together make up the so-called BRICS economic bloc, spoke out against the document, expressing concerns that the Western countries may use this resolution to carry out another military operation.

Russia, wary of more military intervention, has rejected the latest version of a UN Security Council draft resolution on Syria, where the government of President Bashar al-Assad is cracking down on violent anti-government protests.

The four European member states of the UN Security Council, Britain, France, Germany and Portugal, were hoping to put the draft resolution to a vote on Friday, but Russia rejected the document.

During consultations held in the UN on Thursday, Russia’s UN ambassador Vitaly Churkin said he was “disappointed” with the provisions of the draft resolution, in which he says the proposals made by Russia were not taken into account.

“I’m not optimistic,” Churkin said before the meeting. “And we are not the only ones in this position.”

China has also threatened to use its veto power, as a permanent member of the council, against any UN resolution against Syria that leaves room for “punitive measures.”

There is also disagreement over whether violence by protesters should be given the same importance as that by the government.

India’s UN envoy Hardeep Singh Puri said there must include a reference to violence by “extremist elements” in any resolution.

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United States, were hoping to “fast-track” this latest resolution, which calls for the immediate imposition of a weapons embargo and other sanctions against the government of President Bashar al-Assad.

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Indeed, with Libya still smoldering from its ongoing civil war, which saw forces loyal to ousted Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi battling anti-government forces, who received heavy aerial support courtesy of NATO fighter jets and cruise missiles, Russia and others states are taking extra precautions in handling the Syrian crisis.

Churkin said members of the UN Security Council had “a good discussion” and Russia is expecting a new edition of the resolution to be presented soon.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton demanded that Syria “take every possible step” to protect US diplomats after supporters of President Bashar al-Assad tried to attack US ambassador Robert Ford in Damascus.

Amid rising US-Syrian tensions, Damascus earlier accused the United States of inciting “armed militias” into violence against its army, which is trying to contain a six-month anti-government movement.

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