

Russia Hits Back at UNSC Members Pressing for End to its Syrian Mission

By [The Brics Post](#)

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Russian envoy to the UN Vitaly Churkin [pictured left] has said Moscow is not “apologetic” about its anti-terror mission in Syria and that Russian air strikes were being undertaken in a “transparent manner”. He was reacting to the several UN Security Council members that pressed Russia on Wednesday to stop bombing around Syria’s Aleppo.

The 15-member Security Council met behind closed doors on Wednesday to discuss the humanitarian situation in Syria.

“We are not about being apologetic for what we are doing. We are acting in a very transparent manner... We are present there legally at the invitation of the Syrian government in contrast to what the so-called “US-led coalition” is doing in Syria where they are acting outside of international law and incidentally never telling anybody what exactly they are doing in Syria or Iraq — what their targets are, what the results of their campaign are.” [Churkin said](#).

The UNSC meet came ahead of a crucial meeting of major powers in Germany on Thursday aimed at jump-starting talks between the Syrian government and opposition groups.

Western diplomats have argued that Russian airstrikes are deterring opposition groups from attending talks.

“The (Syrian) regime and its allies cannot pretend they are extending a hand to the opposition while with their other hand they are trying to destroy them,” French envoy to the UN Francois Delattre said on Wednesday.

Russia alleged some Security Council members have “crossed the line” by politically exploiting humanitarian issues.

“Our western colleagues on the eve of Geneva-2 used to say that some balance on the ground must be restored, so if there is some change in balance on the ground then that should be taken as a logical development in any armed conflict,” Churkin hit back.

Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad’s forces on the ground, supported by Russian airstrikes, are moving closer to winning the most decisive victory of the Syrian war by recapturing Aleppo, the largest (pre-war) city in Syria.

Churkin said Russia had been discussing a possible Syria ceasefire and humanitarian issues with the United States.

“We have a number of discussions with the US, including the possibility of a cease-fire and also some humanitarian discussions,” he said.

Russia also said it has noted the “heightened interest of the Security Council in humanitarian matters” and will now propose to the UNSC to also revisit the humanitarian situation in crisis-hit Yemen and Libya, alongwith Syria.

“Incidentally now that we see this heightened interest of the Security Council in humanitarian matters we are prepared to take that up. The Spanish representative said that they are going to convene the sixth, the seventh meetings of the Council on humanitarian situation in Syria. We responded that we are going to propose weekly meetings on humanitarian situation in Yemen till the political settlement is reached there and, given this heightened interest of the Security Council to humanitarian matters, we need to revisit the humanitarian situation in Libya,” the Russian envoy said.

“You will recall that in late 2011 we raised the issue of civilian victims of NATO bombings in Libya only to be rudely rebuffed by our western colleagues,” he added.

Meanwhile [Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi head to Munich on Thursday where they are expected to interact informally with US Secretary of State John Kerry.](#)

China and Russia, both permanent members of the UN Security Council, have repeatedly called for a negotiated settlement to the Syrian crisis.

Since 2011, Syria has been mired in a civil war; the country’s government forces are fighting numerous opposition groups and terrorist organizations, including Daesh (Islamic State) and the al-Nusra Front. The violence has killed 250,000 people and already [driven 11 million from their homes](#).

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