

Syria: Russian Foreign Minister Warns of Abyss of Bloody Sectarian Strife

By [Stop NATO](#)

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Western support to rebels 'pushes Syria deeper into the abyss of bloody sectarianism' - Lavrov

Those who insist on a ceasefire only by the Syrian government encourage the opposition to intensify its hostilities, and "take upon themselves an enormous responsibility," Russian FM Sergey Lavrov said in a speech to the UN General Assembly.

The shortest way to stop the loss of life in Syria, Lavrov said, is to adhere to the commitments in the Geneva communique, which were agreed upon by the Action Group as follow-up of the Kofi Annan Plan.

"We proposed to adopt a resolution in the UN Security Council that would endorse the Geneva communique as the basis for negotiations at the beginning of the transitional period, but this proposal had been blocked," Lavrov noted.

"Those who oppose the implementation of the Geneva communique," he explained, "in fact push Syria even deeper into the abyss of bloody sectarian strife."

Lavrov noted that the deepening of internal conflict in Syria is of particular concern because the militarization of the conflict is combined with open calls for foreign intervention.

"We have consistently called for the consolidated efforts of the international community to compel the government and its opponents to immediately cease the violence and come to the negotiating table," Lavrov said, adding that so far, there has been no progress in reaching unanimity on how to create conditions towards achieving that goal.

The foreign minister also expressed concern about the growing number of war crimes on both sides of the conflict, as recorded in a recent report by the UN Human Rights Council.

"Extremist organizations including al-Qaeda have become more active in Syria - they perpetrate terrorist attacks against innocent civilians and civil infrastructure," Lavrov said.

The situation in the region requires the international community to use a comprehensive approach, and to reject "simplified and ideology-driven patterns and double standards," the FM asserted.

He also condemned any unilateral sanctions "imposed by a state or a group of states sidestepping the United Nations to advance their political goals."

“We have no doubt that such sanctions, especially when they are applied extra-territorially, weaken the unity of the international community and undermine the effectiveness of its efforts,” Lavrov said, adding that the events of recent years have clearly shown that “unilateral actions that violate international law and go beyond the decisions of the UN Security Council or distort the substance of these decisions do not do any good.”

He urged the UN to discuss the consequences of such actions and to resume discussions on the humanitarian limits of sanctions, a topic that, he said, somehow “faded away” in the UN.

Meanwhile on Friday, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Washington would contribute an additional \$15 million in “non-lethal gear” to the “civilian opposition” trying to oust Assad. Another \$30 million will be sent in humanitarian assistance to help people affected by the continuing conflict, Clinton said at a Friends of Syria meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA.

“It is no secret that our attempts to move forward at the UN Security Council have been blocked repeatedly, but the United States is not waiting,” Clinton said.

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