

Wrongheaded UN Vote on Syria: US-NATO “Arm Twisting” at the General Assembly

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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[Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

On February 4, Russia and China vetoed the Arab League’s one-sided Syria resolution (SC/10536). It illegitimately called for Assad to step down.

Under international law, no nation or combination thereof, may interfere in the internal affairs of others, except in self-defense if attacked.

SC/10536 also called for “further measures” for noncompliance. It resembled SC/1973 on Libya. Aggressive war followed, ravaging the country lawlessly.

Russia and China want replicating Libya avoided. Passing SC/10536 risked giving Washington, NATO partners, and rogue Arab League allies responsibility to protect authority to intervene.

As a result, this unholy alliance circumvented SC authority for General Assembly passage of essentially the same text. It’s non-binding but sends a message.

Syrian UN ambassador Bashar Jaafari denounced the resolution. Calling it politically motivated, he said Western nations and others want “to settle accounts with Syria.”

It authorizes “violence and deliberate sabotage.” It’ll cause “more chaos and more crisis....The Arab (League) Trojan horse has been unmasked today. (It’s) broken both politically and morally.”

Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov called the measure “unbalanced. It directs all the demands at the government, and says nothing about the opposition.” Moreover, it excluded constructive Russian amendments.

Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said one called on “all sections of the Syrian opposition to dissociate themselves from armed groups engaged in acts of violence,” and urged all countries act to prevent it.

Another rejected amendment called for withdrawing Syrian forces from conflict areas “in conjunction with the end of attacks by armed groups against state institutions and quarters of cities and towns.”

China’s deputy envoy Wang Min affirmed Beijing’s opposition to “armed intervention or forcing a so-called regime change in Syria.”

Russia, China, Iran, Venezuela, and other countries condemned it. Venezuela said it violated Syrian sovereignty and “promote(s) civil war on a large scale.”

On December 19, 2011, the General Assembly “strongly condemn(ed) the continued grave and systematic human rights violations by the Syrian authorities.” Pointing fingers the wrong way, it cited forced disappearances, torture of detainees, and the persecution of protesters and human rights defenders.

It also called on Syrian authorities to implement Arab League proposals “in (their) entirety.” It included letting observers monitor conditions and resolving months of crisis.

It passed 133 in favor, 11 against, 43 abstentions, and 6 no votes. It also called on Syria to cooperate with the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) international commission of inquiry.

On December 3, UNHRC in emergency session condemned the violence in Syria, blaming Assad, not Western-backed insurgents. Its measure passed 37 to 4 with 6 abstentions. Russia and China voted against its one-sided resolution, pointing fingers the wrong way.

General Assembly Passes One-Sided [Syrian Resolution](#)

On February 16, GA/11207 was adopted by 137 in favor, 12 against, 17 abstentions, and 27 no votes.

No votes were cast by Bolivia, Belarus, Cuba, China, Ecuador, Iran, Nicaragua, North Korea, Russia, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

Its text “welcome(d) the engagement of the Secretary-General and all diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the crisis.

1. Reaffirm(ed) its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and

territorial integrity of Syria and stresses the need to resolve the current political crisis in Syria peacefully;

2. Strongly condemn(ed) the continued widespread and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities, such as the use of force against civilians, arbitrary executions, killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders, and journalists, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture, sexual violence, and ill-treatment, including against children;

3. Call(ed) upon the Syrian government to immediately put an end to all human rights violations and attacks against civilians, protect its population, fully comply with its obligations under applicable international law and fully implement Human Rights Council resolutions S-16/1, S-17/1, S-18/1 and its resolution 66/176, including by cooperating fully with the independent international commission of inquiry;

4. Condemn(ed) all violence, irrespective of where it comes from, and call(ed) upon all parties in Syria, including armed groups, to immediately stop all violence or reprisals in accordance with the League of Arab States' initiative;

5. Stress(ed) again the importance to ensure accountability and the need to end impunity and hold to account those responsible for human rights violations, including those that may amount to crimes against humanity,

6. Demand(ed) that the Syrian government, in accordance with the Plan of Action of the League of Arab States of 2 November 2011 and its decisions of 22 January and 12 February 2012, without delay:

(a) cease all violence and protect its population;

(b) release all persons detained arbitrarily due to the recent incidents;

(c) withdraw all Syrian military and armed forces from cities and towns, and return them to their original home barracks;

(d) guarantee the freedom of peaceful demonstrations;

(e) allow full and unhindered access and movement for all relevant League of Arab States' institutions and Arab and international media in all parts of Syria to determine the truth about the situation on the ground and monitor the incidents taking place;

7. Call(ed) for an inclusive Syria-led political process conducted in an environment free from violence, fear, intimidation and extremism, and aimed at effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of Syria's people, without prejudging the outcome;

8. Fully support(ed) the League of Arab States' 22 January 2012 decision to facilitate a Syrian-led political transition to a democratic, plural political system, in which citizens are equal regardless of their affiliations or ethnicities or beliefs, including through commencing a serious political dialogue between the Syrian government and the whole spectrum of the Syrian opposition under the League of Arab States' auspices, in accordance with the timetable set out by the League of Arab States;

9. Call(ed) upon all Member States to provide support to the Arab League initiative, as requested;

10. Call(ed) upon the Syrian authorities to allow safe and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance in order to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to persons in need of assistance;

11. Request(ed) in this context the Secretary-General and all relevant UN bodies to provide support to the efforts of the League of Arab States both through good offices aimed at promoting a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis, including through the appointment of a Special Envoy, as well as through technical and material assistance, in consultation with the League of the Arab States; (and)

12. Request(ed) the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this resolution, in consultation with the League of Arab States, within 15 days of its adoption."

Blaming the Victim

In league with Washington and rogue NATO partners, the Arab League resolution lawlessly violates Syrian sovereignty. It disregarded majority Assad support based on a [December Qatar Foundation poll](#).

It ignored Western-backed externally generated insurgents responsible for most violence and deaths. It said nothing about confirmed UK/CIA/MI6 operatives training them. It turned a blind eye to foreign funding and heavy weapons, as well as active participation of UK and Qatari special forces.

GA/11207 violates international law and UN Charter provisions. They recognize sovereign states rights, equality among all states, non-interference in their internal affairs, and responsibility to settle disputes peacefully by refraining from threats or use of force.

Article 2(7) states:

“Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.”

They exclude “the use of armed force....” Under Article 51, it’s permitted only in self-defense against externally generated aggression.

Moreover, the UN Charter explains under what conditions intervention, violence and coercion (by one state against another) are justified. Article 2(3) and Article 33(1) require peaceful settlement of international disputes. Article 2(4) prohibits force or its threatened use, including no-fly zone acts of war.

In addition, Articles 2(3), 2(4), and 33 absolutely prohibit any unilateral or other external threat or use of force not specifically allowed under Article 51 or otherwise authorized by the Security Council in accordance with UN Charter provisions.

Three General Assembly resolutions also prohibit non-consensual belligerent intervention, including:

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- the 1965 Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty;
- the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; and
- the 1974 Definition of Aggression.

Under no circumstances may one nation, or combination thereof, intervene against another without lawful Security Council authorization. Doing so is illegal aggression, a lawless act of war.

Article 8 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention of Rights and Duties says “No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another.”

Under Article 10, differences between states “should be settled by recognized pacific methods.”

Article 11 calls sovereign state territory “inviolable....”

Non-intervention is also included in the following [charters](#):

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- the Organization of American States;
- Organization of African Unity; and
- League of Arab States.

It was also affirmed at It was also affirmed at [conferences](#) in:

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- Montevideo;
- Buenos Aires;
- Chapultepec; and
- Bogot, as well as in decisions of the following:
- the Bandung Asian-African Conference;
- the First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade;

- the Programme for Peace and International Cooperation adopted at the end of the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Cairo; and
- the declaration on subversion adopted at Accra by the Heads of State and Government of the African States.

Nonetheless, Western pressure often gets nations to violate international law and their own non-intervention pledges. When they don't, Washington, rogue NATO partners, and complicit allies wage aggressive war on their own.

In 1999, without Security Council authorization, nonbelligerent Yugoslavia was lawlessly attacked and ravaged. Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya followed. Perhaps Syria's next, then Iran, no matter the threat to humanity.

Given America's imperial ambitions and permanent war agenda, attacking them risks WW III.

Yet political hawks and supportive media scoundrels promote what's crucial to condemn.

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