

Europe Seeks Russian Support Against Syria

October 02, 2011

The  Moscow Times

UNITED NATIONS — European nations dropped an explicit threat of sanctions against the Syrian regime of President Bashar Assad to try to win Russian support for what would be the first UN resolution condemning his military crackdown on civilian protesters.

The Europeans also appealed to all sides in Syria "to reject violence and extremism." ☒

The new European draft resolution, obtained Friday by The Associated Press, still threatens to consider imposing "targeted measures" — which can include sanctions — against Syria if it does not comply with demands, including an immediate halt to violence and respect for human rights.

But the words "including sanctions," which were in the previous draft, are gone.

Russia's UN ambassador, Vitaly Churkin, told reporters after a closed Security Council meeting Thursday that Moscow is totally opposed to even mentioning the possibility of sanctions, "and we are not the only ones ... who think that."

Asked Friday about the latest draft, Churkin said: "The important thing is that our capitals are looking at it."

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