The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Medvedev Defends Veto of UN Resolution on Syria

October 09, 2011



President Dmitry Medvedev on Friday defended Russia's decision to veto a European-backed UN Security Council resolution on Syria, saying it would have opened the door to military action.

The resolution threatened sanctions against Syria if it did not halt its brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. But Medvedev said in televised remarks that the authors of the resolution had refused to include a Russia-proposed provision saying there should be no foreign military interference in Syria.

"That means only one thing: Our partners at the UN Security Council are not excluding a repetition of the Libyan scenario, although in private conversations they said they understand that Syria is not Libya," Medvedev said at a session of his presidential Security Council. "The proposed text would have allowed to again resort to weapons."

"If the Syrian leadership is incapable of conducting such reforms, it will have to go. But this decision should be made not in NATO or certain European countries, it should be made by the

Syrian people and the Syrian leadership," he said.

"We understand that Syria is not Libya. But the essence of the text that was proposed was a text once again allowing the use of weapons," he said, Interfax reported.

Russia and China last week vetoed the measure, which would have been the first legally binding resolution against Syria since President Bashar Assad's forces began attacking civilian protesters in mid-March. The United States and European countries have strongly criticized the veto.

The crackdown has left nearly 3,000 people dead, according to UN estimates.

Russia abstained in the UN vote authorizing military intervention in Libya, but harshly criticized NATO for the excessive use of force and civilian casualties from its campaign.

Medvedev and other Russian leaders have strongly warned the West against emulating Libya's experience in Syria. Medvedev said Russia backs international demands that the Syrian government end violence against civilians, but also believes that the opposition must disavow "extremists."

"We are using our channels and are actively working with the Syrian leadership. We are demanding that the Syrian leadership implement the necessary reforms," Medvedev said, RIA-Novosti reported.

(AP, Reuters)

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/10/09/medvedev-defends-veto-of-un-resolution-on-syria-a10015