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UN Condemns 'Terrorist' Attack on Russian Embassy in Syria

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A view of Damascus, Syria

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Security Council on Tuesday strongly condemned what it called a "terrorist attack" on the Russian Embassy in Syria's capital.

Russia's deputy UN ambassador, Vladimir Safronkov, told The Associated Press that a mortar round had penetrated a diplomat's office, but no one was killed because people were out at lunch.

Safronkov said the attack came from the Jobar neighborhood, which he said "as far as we understand is controlled by illegal armed groups." He did not know which group was responsible.

The Russian diplomat said the embassy in Damascus has been targeted before.

Russia is a strong ally of the Syrian government.

The Security Council statement said the Russian Embassy sustained "serious material

damage." The current council president told reporters that news of the attack came during a council meeting.

The U.S. State Department issued a separate statement condemning the mortar attack and pointing out that the embassy compound is protected under international law.

"We call for those responsible for all such acts to be held accountable and continue to stress the need for a political solution to the turmoil in Syria," the statement by spokesman Jeff Rathke said.

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