

## **RUSSIA TO SUPPORT UN RESOLUTION ON SYRIA**

**By Jenny Lei Ravelo**

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Syrian President Bashar Assad may be losing an ally in Russia.

On Tuesday (March 20), Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said it is “ready to support” a U.N. resolution that endorses Kofi Annan’s peace plan for Syria. It warned, however, that the resolution should not sound like an ultimatum to Assad’s regime.

Russia is one of the few remaining allies of Assad. The country has used its veto power twice at the U.N. Security Council to stop resolutions sanctioning the Syrian government for the year-old uprising. This latest statement, however, may be an indication that the tides are shifting.

Last week, Lavrov criticized Assad at the Russian parliament for being “too slow” in implementing reforms and for Assad’s “unproportional” use of force. He said Russia “disagrees” with many of the decisions made by the Syrian government, The Washington Post reports.

Russia on Monday (March 19) also called on the Syrian government and rebels to halt their fighting once a day in support of the International Committee of the Red Cross’ call for more access for humanitarian aid in Syria. The call was to allow the ICRC to attend to the wounded and give lifesaving assistance to civilians sandwiched in the year-old uprising.

Russia’s announcement came after ICRC President Jacob Kellenberger met with Lavrov in Moscow. ICRC spokesman Hicham Hassan told Reuters the organization is hoping to see “concrete results” from the “positive meeting” on the ground in the coming days or weeks.

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