

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: Ban, U.N. Security Council condemn Syria violence (Reuters)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Saturday, December 24, 2011 06:03 AM
To: NEWS-EUR; NEWS-IO; NEWS-Mahogany; Syria Unrest
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Subject: Ban, U.N. Security Council condemn Syria violence (Reuters)

WASHINGTON, Dec 24 (Reuters) - U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed "grave concern" over the escalating violence in Syria and the U.N. Security Council condemned the Damascus suicide car bombings as "terrorist attacks".

Ban called for an immediate end to the bloodshed and urged the Syrian government to implement a peace plan proposed by the Arab League, according to a statement late Friday.

"The Secretary-General urges the need for a credible, inclusive and legitimate Syrian-led process of comprehensive political change that will address the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people," the statement read.

Friday's car bomb attacks in the Syrian capital killed 44 people and was a dramatic escalation of violence after nine months of mostly peaceful rallies.

President Bashar al-Assad has used tanks and troops in trying to crush the protests.

The U.N. Security Council strongly condemned the "terrorist attacks".

"Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed," its statement said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks.

European and U.S. officials want the Security Council to impose an arms embargo and other sanctions on Syria over the crackdown, which U.N. officials say has killed 5,000 people.

Russia and China, which have closer relations with Syria, oppose sanctions.

Russia's U.N. delegation on Friday submitted a revised draft resolution on Syria to the U.N. Security Council, but Germany said it did not go far enough in addressing Western concerns about the increasing violence there.