

China Backs Russia's UN Resolution on Syria

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BEIJING — China's Foreign Ministry said Monday that it supported a new, beefed-up draft resolution on the violence in Syria presented by Russia to the UN Security Council last week.

The proposal offers a chance for the 15-nation panel to overcome deadlock and deliver its first statement of purpose on Syrian President Bashar Assad's crackdown on nine months of protests, which has killed 5,000 people according to the UN and provoked Western and Arab League sanctions on Damascus.

The council has been split, with Western countries harshly critical of Syria pitted against Russia, China and nonaligned countries that have avoided blaming Assad for the violence.

Long-time Syrian ally and arms supplier Russia took a step closer to the Western position last Thursday when it presented a surprise draft resolution at the United Nations which stepped up its criticism of the bloodshed in Syria.

"China supports the Russian proposal and applauds Russia's hard work at trying to resolve

the Syrian crisis, and is willing to maintain contacts with all sides on this," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Weimin told reporters, without elaborating.

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