

Activists Tell BRICS to Press Syria for Access

By [The Moscow Times](#)

March 24, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

JOHANNESBURG — Human rights activists from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa are appealing to their leaders to use their influence to press Syria to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to UN agencies.

Camila Asano of Brazil's Conectas says it is "a responsibility" for leaders of a BRICS summit starting Tuesday in South Africa to act to protect Syrian civilians.

Human Rights Watch director Jan Egeland wrote separately that it was "time for BRICS to stop sitting on the fence over Syria's atrocities."

BRICS countries oppose foreign intervention in Syria and accuse the West of forcing regime change. Russia, China and South Africa have vetoed United Nations Security Council resolutions on Syria.

Meanwhile on Monday, a senior Russian diplomat said Moscow would insist that Russian and Chinese representatives join a United Nations investigation into allegations that chemical weapons were used in Syria last week.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon announced the inquiry on Thursday and made clear that it would focus on a rocket attack that killed 26 people near Aleppo. Syria's government and opponents accused each other of firing a missile laden with chemicals.

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