

# Russia, China gave Syria 'license to kill,' White House says

By Olivier Knox | [The Ticket](#) - 3 hrs ago

Even as visiting Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping got the red-carpet treatment from President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, the White House on Tuesday accused China and Russia of effectively giving Syrian President Bashar al-Assad a "license to kill" the critics of his regime by vetoing a United Nations Security Council resolution aimed at ending bloodshed in Syria.

Obama press secretary Jay Carney did not use the incendiary phrase, which Norah O'Donnell of CBS News put in the mouth of an anonymous administration official, in a TV report Monday and in a question to Carney at his daily briefing with reporters on Tuesday.

Carney signed on without hesitation: "I agree with that. I agree with that assessment."

"And it is a warning that we made to our fellow ambassadors and others up at the United Nations, prior to the United Nations Security Council vote, that failure to pass that resolution would be essentially a signal to Assad that he could act with further impunity in brutalizing his own people, killing innocent Syrian civilians," Carney said.

"It is highly regrettable that that veto occurred," he added.

Carney signaled that the Obama administration had not given up on winning over countries like China and Russia.

"We can continue to make the case internationally to those who have yet to agree with us--and they are in the distinct minority--that the Assad regime has lost its legitimacy and needs to go," he said.

"There is a political solution to be had here," he said. "And it is imperative that every nation that considers itself a friend to the Syrian people act on the Syrian people's behalf."

*Olivier Knox is the White House correspondent for Yahoo News.*

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