

《联合国未通过有关乌克兰问题的决议草案》

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UNITED NATIONS - The UN Security Council on Saturday failed to adopt a draft resolution on Ukraine, which otherwise would declare the March 16 referendum on the status of the Russian-speaking Crimea "can have no validity," and urge nations and international organizations not to recognize it.

Russia, one of the five permanent Security Council members, voted against the draft resolution drawn up by the United States and backed by Western countries. China, also a permanent Security Council member, abstained.

The Russian veto came as no surprise.

Vitaly Churkin, the Russian permanent representative to the United Nations, told the 15-nation council before the vote that "We will respect the will of the Crimean people during the March 16 referendum," which will decide whether Ukraine's southern autonomous republic of Crimea should break away from Ukraine and join Russia.

"This referendum can have no validity, and cannot form the basis for any alteration of the status of Crimea," the draft resolution said, calling on "all states, international organizations and specialized agencies not to recognize any alteration of the status of Crimea on the basis of this referendum."

The draft also noted that the referendum was not supported by the interim government of Ukraine, which came to power after the ouster of Moscow-friendly President Viktor Yanukovich in February and is not recognized by Russia.

The Russian veto came after a Friday meeting in London between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on the Ukrainian crisis made no progress.

Simmering tensions in Ukraine cause increasing international concerns as the West threatens to impose further sanctions against Russia and Moscow has deployed several jet fighters in Belarus to encounter possible NATO activities.

The tensions escalated Thursday when a pro-Kiev protester was reportedly killed in the southeastern city of Donetsk, marking the first death since the focal point moved from Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, to Crimea in the south.

The international community on Friday expressed concern about Sunday's referendum in Crimea.

"It is clear that we are at a crossroads" in the Ukraine crisis and "if positions continue to harden and rhetoric continues to sharpen, there is a great risk of a dangerous downward spiral," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said.