Russia: We Had Doubts About UN Draft, Tried to Delay Vote

December 27, 2016

The Times of Israel

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/russia-we-had-doubts-about-un-draft-tried-to-delay-vote/>

A Russian diplomat claimed Tuesday that his country had misgivings about the timing and content of last week’s United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlements.

While Moscow supported the resolution, Russia’s Deputy Ambassador to Israel Alexander Dubrovin told Army Radio on Tuesday morning that his country tried to delay the vote but was opposed by the rest of the Security Council members.

“Russia had reservations, primarily about the timing of the resolution,” he said, “but the other countries did not agree with Russia’s position to continue the discussion.” He said that Russia was also unhappy that the resolution focused on one aspect of the complex ongoing situation between Israelis and Palestinians, that of settlements.

Also Tuesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced sanctions against Angola in retaliation for its support of the resolution.

Ambassador to Angola Oren Rozenblat will tell the African republic’s foreign minister that Israel plans to halt bilateral cooperation in response to its vote in favor UNSC Resolution 2334. The move is almost entirely symbolic as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Agency for International Development Cooperation, known by its Hebrew acronym MASHAV, is currently running just one program in Angola — bringing students to Israel to study water and agriculture. According to the ministry, only one student was due to arrive in the next few weeks; it currently appears that his trip will be canceled.

The Ynet news website reported that Angola’s vote was particularly hurtful to the prime minister as Luanda had promised Netanyahu that it would abstain from the vote.

Of the 15 countries on the UN Security Council, 14 voted in favor of Resolution 2334, which demands a halt to all Israeli settlement activity, with one abstention from the US, whose veto would have nixed the measure.

Angola’s first secretary was one of 10 envoys called in on Christmas morning for scoldings from the directors of the Foreign Ministry’s respective regional departments.

To make matters worse, while Angola’s diplomat was receiving a dressing-down from Foreign Ministry his diplomatic car received a parking ticket.

Popular former Likud minister Gideon Sa’ar, who is viewed as a potential rival and successor to the prime minister, said that he fully supported Netanyahu’s tactics.

“I don’t believe the explanations of Obama’s government, they are not authentic,” he told Army Radio on Tuesday. “I think that this was an ambush. Therefore I choose to support the prime minister when Israel is under attack and I think that all Israeli patriots must do the same.”