

# *Russia Says Syrians Should Decide Fate of President Bashar al-Assad*

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Moscow, December 11 (RHC)-- Russia has slammed a statement by the foreign-backed Syrian opposition calling on President Bashar al-Assad to quit, saying only the Syrian nation should decide the fate of their president.

More than 100 members of opposition groups from inside and outside Syria took part in a two-day meeting in the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

In a statement on Thursday, the participants insisted that “Bashar al-Assad and his aides quit power with the start of the transition period” set out during recent talks on the crisis in Syria that were held in Vienna.

A number of senior Saudi figures also took part in the Riyadh meeting. Saudi Arabia is a main supporter of militant groups operating against the government of President Assad.

On Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the “fate of Assad should be discussed by Syrians themselves, not Russia.” At a news conference in Moscow, the Russian official said: “Now efforts are focused on drawing up the lists of who to recognize as terrorist organizations, who to consider moderate opposition which can and should be part of the political settlement.”

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