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Al Arabiya Exclusive: Syria's peace envoy Brahimi to resign end of May



The U.N.-Arab league envoy to Syria Lakhdar Brahimi has informed U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon and Arab League Secretary-General Nabil al-Arabi of his intention to resign with an immediate effect, reported Talal Al-Haj, Al Arabiya's New York bureau chief.

However, two P5 countries –the U.S. and UK –have persuaded him to stay until end of the May, Al Arabiya's New York bureau chief, said.

“JSR (Joint Special Representative) Lakhdar Brahimi has resigned from his position effective the end of this month of May,” Al-Haj said. “Brahimi’s resignation has not been officially conveyed to the U.N. Security Council, but the U.N. and LAS (League of Arab States) P5 are aware.”

According to a well-informed U.N. source, Al Arabiya's New York bureau chief said that one of the main reasons behind Brahimi's decision to resign were “conflicting strategies between the U.N. and LAS after the Doha summit.”

“Brahimi’s resignation is, contrary to the Yemen crisis, the continuous clear divisions at the U.N. Security Council on Syria,” he added.

However, Al-Haj said that there was a possibility Brahimi would be hired again at the end of May as a Special U.N. Advisor to Ban Ki-moon on Middle East affairs, which includes Syria.

“Brahimi could also be appointed as one envoy in a two man team of envoys for Syria. Brahimi represents the U.N. only and the other for LAS,” Al-Haj said.

Brahimi, a former Algerian foreign minister, was appointed in place of former U.N. chief Kofi Annan on August 17 last year.

Like Annan before him, Brahimi has been increasingly frustrated at the failure of the major powers to agree to a plan on ways to end the two-year-old conflict, which has left more than 70,000 dead, according to the U.N..

Russia has vetoed three U.N. Security Council resolutions aimed at increasing pressure on Assad, while the United States, Britain and France have stepped up aid to opposition groups in recent months.

But the Arab League decision to recognize the opposition Syrian National Coalition as the legitimate government of Syria was the final straw for Brahimi, diplomats said, according to AFP.