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## **Syria: Diplomats' expulsion must be followed by concrete action**

The expulsion of Syrian diplomats by a series of Western countries goes some way to expressing global outrage at the Houla killings but concrete action is needed by the UN Security Council and China and Russia must cease shielding Syria's authorities, Amnesty International said.

"We can only hope that events in Syria will ratchet up the pressure on the Syrian authorities and lead to concrete action by the UN Security Council," said Philip Luther, Director of Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa Programme.

"This horrific event is yet one more reason why Russia and China should stop shielding the Syrian authorities.

"Instead, Russia, China and the other Security Council members should urgently refer the situation in Syria to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, and demand that the Syrian authorities allow in the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, calls which Amnesty International has been making for months.

"In addition, all states should seek to exercise universal jurisdiction before their national courts over crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Syria."

108 died in Houla – most of them summarily executed according to the UN.

On Tuesday Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, the UK and the USA took action and expelled Syrian envoys.