



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced the resignation of the United Nations-League of Arab States Joint Special Envoy for the Syrian crisis, Kofi Annan.

“Mr. Annan has informed me, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Nabil El Araby, of his intention not to renew his mandate when it expires on 31 August 2012,” Mr. Ban said in a [statement](#) . “I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. Annan for the determined and courageous efforts he has made as the Joint Special Envoy for Syria.”

Mr. Annan, a former UN Secretary-General, was appointed in late February to serve as the high-level representative of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on the [Syrian crisis](#) , providing good offices aimed at bringing an end to all violence and human rights violations, and promoting a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis.

Syria has been wracked by violence, with more than 10,000 people, mostly civilians, killed since the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad began some 17 months ago. Over recent days, there have been reports of an escalation in violence in many towns and villages, as well as the country’s two biggest cities, Damascus and Aleppo.

As part of his efforts, Mr. Annan put forward a six-point peace plan to help end the Syrian crisis. The plan calls for an end to violence, access for humanitarian agencies to provide relief to those in need, the release of detainees, the start of inclusive political dialogue, and unrestricted access to the country for the international media.

Despite initial signs of acceptance of the plan and repeated calls from UN officials, there has been little in the way of the plan’s implementation by the parties to the conflict.

“The hand extended to turn away from violence in favour of dialogue and diplomacy – as spelled out in the six-point plan – has not been not taken, even though it still remains the best

hope for the people of Syria,” Mr. Ban said.

The UN chief noted that both the Syrian Government and the opposition forces continue to demonstrate their determination to rely on ever-increasing violence, and that, in addition, “persistent divisions” within the Security Council have themselves become an obstacle to diplomacy, making the work of any mediator vastly more difficult.

“Kofi Annan deserves our profound admiration for the selfless way in which he has put his formidable skills and prestige to this most difficult and potentially thankless of assignments. He has worked within the mandate provided to him by the General Assembly and with the cooperation of various Member States,” Mr. Ban said.

He added, “We have worked closely together these past months, and I am indebted to him and his team for all they have tried to achieve. I will continue to draw on his wisdom and counsel, and on the work of the Office of the Joint Special Envoy.”

The UN Secretary-General is now consulting with his counterpart at the League of Arab States, in order to promptly appoint a successor “who can carry on [with] this crucial peacemaking effort.”

“I remain convinced that yet more bloodshed is not the answer; each day of it will only make the solution more difficult while bringing deeper suffering to the country and greater peril to the region,” Mr. Ban said.

The Security Council is due to hold consultations on Syria on Thursday afternoon, and the General Assembly is expected to hold a meeting on same issue on Friday.

Source: [UN News Centre](#)