Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

UK welcomes report on use of chemical weapons in Syria

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In response to the release of the report of the UN inspectors on the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the Foreign Secretary said:

We welcome this objective and unequivocal report which confirms that chemical weapons were used on a large scale in the 21 August attack in Ghouta.

The inspectors were not asked to determine culpability for this attack. But from the wealth of technical detail in the report – including on the scale of the attack, the consistency of sample test results from separate laboratories, witness statements, and information on the munitions used and their trajectories – it is abundantly clear that the Syrian regime is the only party that could have been responsible for using chemical weapons on 21 August. Nothing in the UN report contradicts the conclusions of the Joint Intelligence Committee last month: on the contrary, the new evidence increases our confidence that the regime was to blame.

It is vital that all parties acknowledge the clear findings of the report and cooperate to ensure that Syria's chemical weapons are secured and destroyed in a verifiable manner without further delay. It is now a high priority to secure a decision at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to endorse the US-Russian agreement in Geneva, followed immediately by a United Nations Security Council Resolution that creates a binding commitment for the regime to give up its chemical weapons within a specific time frame and to credibly, reliably and promptly place them under international control for destruction.

It is equally important that we ensure accountability for those responsible for using chemical weapons in Syria, as well as for those responsible for the many horrific war crimes and abuses being carried out there, particularly by the regime. We will consult our partners about how that can be achieved.

We will continue to do everything we can to stop the bloodshed in Syria, to support the moderate opposition and to alleviate humanitarian suffering. Our goal remains to convene a second Geneva conference to bring all sides together to agree a political solution to the conflict and we will work with international partners including Russia on bringing that about as soon as possible".

Further information

Listen to the

Foreign Secretary speaking on Radio 4’s Today program

about dealing with Syria’s chemical weapons

Read about the

latest updates on UK aid to Syria

Read about the

Foreign Secretary’s recent meeting with the US Secretary of State and the French Foreign Minister

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