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Eliminating Assad's Chemical Arsenal

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كن أول المعجبين بهذا من بين أصدقائك

Press Release
Syrian Coalition
April 28, 2014

Yesterday, on April 27, the Assad regime handed over the majority of its chemical weapons to the international community. This milestone, which still falls short of complete compliance, has drawn much attention from international observers as a success for diplomacy. In reality, the regime has missed a number of deadlines during the handover process and nearly 10 percent of its stockpiles remain unaccounted for.

In addition, it is vital to remember that the Assad regime has used conventional weapons to kill the vast majority of its victims since the uprising first broke out in 2011. In recent weeks, the regime has made a mockery of the chemical weapons disarmament process by weaponizing and deploying ordinary industrial chemicals against civilians. These substances are not covered by the agreement to disarm.

Apart from chemicals and poisons, the regime has used barrel bombs to rain death on residential districts. Earlier still, the regime ordered Scud attacks on civilians, used military attack aircraft to bomb bread queues and unleashed militias armed with machetes to butcher entire families. Clearly, focusing on the weapons used in Assad's war against the Syrian people risks confusing the cause with the symptoms.

The regime has proved time and again that inflicting horrific violence on civilians is a key part of its strategy to intimidate the Syrian population into accepting its rule. The regime has also shown that it responds only when it fears force will be used against it, and then aims to use diplomacy to render any concessions it makes solely cosmetic.

Under these circumstances, the Syrian Coalition feels it is necessary to repeat its call that decisions already taken by the international community be backed by the threat of credible force for there to be any real progress towards bring peace and security to Syria and the region.

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