

Press statement by the President of the French Republic on the intervention of the French armed forces in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria (14 April 2018)

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Dozens of men, women and children were massacred in Douma on Saturday, 7 April using chemical weapons, in total violation of international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

There is no doubt as to the facts and to the responsibility of the Syrian regime.

The red line declared by France in May 2017 has been crossed.

Tonight, I have therefore ordered the French armed forces to intervene, as part of an international operation conducted in coalition with the United States of America and the United Kingdom against the clandestine chemical weapons arsenal of the Syrian regime.

Our response has been limited to the Syrian regime's facilities enabling the production and employment of chemical weapons.

We cannot tolerate the normalization of the employment of chemical weapons, which is an immediate danger to the Syrian people and to our collective security. That is the meaning of the initiatives constantly promoted by France at the United Nations Security Council.

France and its partners will today continue their efforts at the United Nations to enable the creation of an international mechanism to establish responsibility, prevent impunity and obstruct any temptation on the part of the Syrian regime to repeat these acts.

Since May 2017, France's priorities in Syria have been constant: finishing the fight against Daesh, enabling humanitarian assistance to civilian populations, and triggering collective momentum to bring about a peaceful settlement of the conflict so that peace can return to Syria and to ensure the region's stability.

I will pursue these priorities with determination in the coming days and weeks.

In accordance with Article 35, paragraph 2 of the French Constitution, Parliament will be informed and a parliamentary debate will be organized following this decision to order the intervention of our armed forces abroad.