Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Chemical weapons attack in Syria: US, UK and France joint statement

2018-08-21

US, UK and France statement:

On the fifth anniversary of the horrific Ghouta Sarin attack, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France reiterate their condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime.

Since 2012, the regime has resorted to the use of chemical weapons during military offensives, not only in Ghouta but also in Khan Sheikhoun, Ltamenah, Saraqib, and Douma, killing and injuring thousands of people.

As Permanent Members of the Security Council, we reaffirm our shared resolve to preventing the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, and for holding them accountable for any such use.

Our position on the Assad regime’s use of chemical weapons is unchanged. As we have demonstrated, we will respond appropriately to any further use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, which has had such devastating humanitarian consequences for the Syrian population.

We welcome the establishment of attribution arrangements at the

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

, in accordance with its authority under the Chemical Weapons Convention, as confirmed by the decision of the Conference of States Parties.

The establishment of these arrangements will help ensure that the perpetrators of chemical weapons use in Syria cannot escape identification. We welcome the launch of the

International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons

on 23 January 2018, and call on all countries committed to fight impunity to join the International Partnership. We remain committed to securing justice for victims of chemical weapons use.

Furthermore, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France are gravely concerned over reports of a military offensive by the Syrian regime against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Idlib, and the resulting humanitarian consequences. We also underline our concern at the potential for further – and illegal – use of chemical weapons.

We urge supporters of the Assad regime to use their influence to uphold the global norm against chemical weapons use. We implore those countries to recognize that the unchecked use of chemical weapons by any state presents an unacceptable security threat to all states. We urge the international community to support our collective efforts to end Syria's use of chemical weapons. And we remain resolved to act if the Assad regime uses chemical weapons again.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/us-uk-france-statement-on-the-chemical-weapons-attack-in-syria