Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Foreign Secretary: Video footage exposes Assad's lies on barrel bombs

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New video footage has emerged of aircrew on a Syrian regime helicopter lighting and dropping a barrel bomb, proof that the indiscriminate weapons are being used against civilians in spite of frequent and public denials by President Assad.

Filmed on a mobile phone mid-flight, an airman is shown lighting a barrel bomb with his cigarette before pushing it out of a military helicopter.

The footage was discovered on a mobile phone found by opposition forces in the wreckage of a crashed Syrian regime helicopter. It was handed to Al Jazeera which broadcast the footage last night on their Arabic channel.

Responding to the broadcast, Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said:

This video footage exposes Assad’s lies on barrel bombs. It shows the casual and indiscriminate way in which Syrian regime forces are dropping these horrific weapons out of helicopters onto civilians below. For months we have seen reports of barrel bombs hitting hospitals and schools, killing thousands.

The UN has called for an end to these attacks but Assad continues to ignore international outrage. We will bring those involved in these criminal acts to justice and will continue to help those caught in attacks by continuing our support of rescue teams working on the ground.

Notes to Editors

Barrel bombs are improvised barrel-shaped containers typically packed with explosives and shrapnel. They are rudimentary and unguided but highly lethal and are believed to be responsible for killing thousands of Syrians.

The video footage can be found

here

Further information

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