European External Action Service (EEAS)

Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare: Statement by High Representative/ Vice-President Josep Borrell

2023-11-29 · EEAS Press Team

Every year, on 30 November, the European Union commemorates those who have died and suffered as a result of the use of chemical weapons, and pledges to continue to fight against impunity.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is the world's most successful disarmament treaty that has eradicated an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. In July this year, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) verified the destruction of the world's last declared chemical weapons stock.

Despite the progress made, the re-emergence of chemical weapons remains one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

We still witness the horrific consequences of these heinous weapons. In Syria they have caused thousands of victims, including children. Last August we marked the sad 10th anniversary of the Ghouta chemical attack, in which the Syrian regime killed more than 1,400 people. Chemical weapons have also been used in Russia, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Iraq.

No one should use chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time or under any circumstances.

The use of chemical weapons is a violation of international law, which can amount to the most serious of international crimes - war crimes and crimes against humanity. The European Union supports national and international efforts towards full accountability for those responsible, regardless of their position.

The EU will continue working towards a world free from chemical weapons for the sake of all mankind.

Background

Under its regime of restrictive measures dedicated to fighting the proliferation and use of chemical weapons and their precursors, the European Union has imposed restrictive measures on persons and entities in Russia linked to the Salisbury attack in 2018 and the poisoning of Mr Navalny in 2020[1]. In Syria, the EU has imposed restrictive measures on an

entity and persons responsible for development and use of chemical weapons, in particular for the attacks that took place in August 2013 in Ghouta, March 2017 in Ltamenah and 2018 in Douma. Moreover, the European Union continues its active participation in the Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons.

Source: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/day-remembrance-all-victims-chemical-warfare-statement-high-representative-vice-president-josep-0_en