

Syrian Coalition Calls on the EU to Speak up for Protection of Civilians from Chlorine Attacks by Assad Regime

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Human rights groups, medical workers and Syrian activists this week reported a spate of new chlorine attacks by the Assad regime on villages in Idlib, injuring many civilians. Commenting on the recent attacks, the Syrian National Coalition's Representative to the Benelux and European Union, Mouaffaq Nyrabia, said:

“Once again the Assad regime has shown its readiness to unleash chemical weapons against the Syrian people. As with previous chlorine attacks, barrel bombs containing gas canisters were dropped from helicopters – which the OPCW has concluded that only the Assad regime possesses. This follows recent revelations that OPCW inspectors found sarin in regime facilities in direct defiance of UN Security Council resolutions. Responsibility for the now frequent chlorine attacks against Syrian civilians is clear, but the lack of action – or even international condemnation – to prevent their ongoing use by the regime has only emboldened it to continue to utilise illegal chemical weapons against ordinary Syrians.

“In my discussions with EU partners I have repeatedly urged the need for a comprehensive solution which must include practical steps to protect Syrian civilians from the regime's daily airstrikes; establishing safe areas to facilitate humanitarian assistance and creating the conditions for a viable political solution. Four years on from the start of the Syrian revolution, the establishment of a no-fly zone is the only practical means of achieving the basic steps needed to alleviate the suffering and help bring an end to a crisis which threatens regional and European security.”