

Time for UN Security Council to Hold Assad Accountable for Ghouta Massacre

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Over the past three years, the Assad regime has persistently denied responsibility for the Ghouta Massacre, while seeking to blame opposition groups. At least 1,127 civilians, a third of them women and children, were killed in a sarin attack on the Damascus suburb of eastern Ghouta on August 21, 2013.

Probes by the United Nations and international organizations produced a mass of evidence and facts pointing to the Assad regime's direct responsibility for the chemical attack on eastern Ghouta.

However, the Assad regime's permanent representative to the UN Bashar Aljaafari on Monday blamed France for the chemical attack during a heated session of the UN Security Council in an attempt to deny responsibility of the Assad regime. Following the attack, the Assad regime surrendered its cache of chemical weapons under the threat of UN sanctions and the use of force by the United States.

The Syrian Coalition denounces the extraordinary claims made by the Assad regime's UN representative who showed the utmost disregard for the victims of the Ghouta Massacre.

The Coalition calls upon the UN Security Council to re-open the file of the chemical massacre and refer it to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to determine perpetrators of the massacre and bring them to justice so as to make sure such a heinous crime can not be repeated.

Reports by independent human rights groups indicated that the Assad regime has used chemical weapons 136 times since the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2118 on September 27, 2013 under which Assad's declared stockpiles of chemical weapons were destroyed.

Indeed, the Assad regime would not have used banned weapons against Syrian civilians had it not been for its total disregard for the international community as well as its sense of protection and impunity.