

Syria: Germany contributing to elimination of chemical weapons

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Welcome

Breadcrumbs

18.09.2013 - Press release 

Foreign Minister Westerwelle issued the following statement at the Federal Foreign Office today (18 September 2013) in response to current developments in the Syria crisis:

The report by the United Nations inspectors gives us certainty that extensive use was made of chemical agents near Damascus on 21 August. This use of chemical weapons in Syria is a serious crime against the civilian population.

We have been appraising the evidence and reports very intently. The findings in the Sellström report clearly indicate that the Assad regime is responsible for this breach of an utter taboo. The report confirms what we had assumed, namely that only the Assad regime can have had the technical and logistical capabilities to carry out a poison gas attack on this scale.

This terrible crime calls for decisive action from the international community. This must not become the start of a slippery slope, neither in Syria nor anywhere else in the world. We need to put all our efforts into preventing a repeat occurrence.

That is why we are pressing for the United Nations Security Council to mandate the International Criminal Court to take over the criminal investigation of this crime and to bring the people who did this to justice.

Germany stands ready to play a substantial part in the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons. We are currently engaged in intensive talks with our partners and are taking part in the planning process at the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Germany will do its bit in the task that lies ahead for the international community.

As a first step, Germany is placing two million euros at the disposal of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons with immediate effect. The money is a contribution towards covering the considerable extra cost that a Syria mission will incur.

We can provide technical and financial assistance for the destruction of chemical weapons. Germany has long-established expertise in this area. We therefore stand ready to help see that these chemical weapons are destroyed. Ridding the world of these chemical weapons will make it a safer place. That is why Germany is going to play its part in destroying these chemical weapons stockpiles in Syria.

We are doing all we can to have the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the ~~UN (United Nations)~~ Security Council draw up a meaningful and binding plan for the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal. The international community now needs to hold the Assad regime to its word.

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