Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Second anniversary of a Syria chemical attack: joint P3 statement

2019-04-05

Statement from the governments of the UK, France and USA:

Two years on from the horrific chemical weapons attacks that took place in Khan Sheikhoun, and almost 1 year since the attack in Douma, we the United States, United Kingdom and France warn against, and remain firm in our resolve to respond appropriately to, any use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime. The regime's history of repeatedly using chemical weapons against its own people cannot be disputed, and we remain determined to hold it accountable for indiscriminately killing innocent men, women and children with these heinous weapons. These attacks violate international norms, have caused extreme suffering, and contributed to a worsening of the already acute humanitarian crisis in Syria.

The Assad regime was shielded from being held immediately accountable for its continued use of chemical weapons, in particular in the United Nations Security Council, with the dismantling of the independent investigative mechanism designed to attribute responsibility for chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

Responsible states have remained committed to upholding the prohibition against chemical weapons and ensuring that there will be no impunity for those who use, seek to use, or protect those who use these weapons, in particular by strengthening the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The OPCW's Investigation and Identification Team will now work to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons use in Syria, an important step in ensuring accountability. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France reaffirm their strong resolve to work jointly in achieving this practical goal.

Only a credible, negotiated political settlement, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254, can end the conflict in Syria. The Assad regime must not repeat the use of chemical weapons in Syria. There should be no doubt as to our determination to act strongly and swiftly should the Assad regime use these weapons again in the future.

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