

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria

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The Secretary-General is shocked to hear the reports of the alleged use today of chemical weapons in the suburbs of Damascus.

Professor Åke Sellström and his team are currently in the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons reported by the Government of Syria at Khan al-Assal as well as two other allegations of the use of chemical weapons reported by Member States. According to the agreement reached in Damascus in July, the two parties are discussing, in parallel, other allegations and their related sites.

The United Nations mission to investigate allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria is following the current situation in Syria carefully, and remains fully engaged in the investigation process that is mandated by the Secretary General. Professor Sellström is in discussions with the Syrian Government on all issues pertaining to the alleged use of chemical weapons, including this most recent reported incident.

The Secretary-General is aware that a number of Member States, the Arab League and the European Union have expressed grave concern about the most recent reports of the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria. The Secretary-General reaffirms his determination to ensure a thorough investigation of the reported alleged incidents that are brought to his attention by Member States.

The Secretary-General reiterates that any use of chemical weapons by any side under any circumstances would violate international humanitarian law.