

# **The United Kingdom remains committed to eradicating the threat posed by chemical weapons in Syria: UK statement at the UN Security Council**

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## **Statement by Caroline Quinn, UK Deputy Political Coordinator, at the UN Security Council meeting on Syria.**

The United Kingdom remains resolute in its commitment to eradicating the threat posed by chemical weapons in Syria.

We welcome the 22 January publication of the fifth Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) report.

The report concluded that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Arab Air Force under the former Assad regime carried out the chlorine attack on Kafr Zeita on 1 October 2016, injuring at least 35 people.

Its findings add to an already extensive body of evidence confirming a systematic pattern of chemical weapons use by the former Assad Regime.

Publication of this report is a significant milestone.

It is the first attribution report to have received direct support from a Syrian government.

It demonstrates Syria's commitment to accountability and represents a crucial step towards truth and justice.

The United Kingdom thanks the OPCW technical secretariat staff for their unwavering dedication and professionalism in the pursuit of attribution.

And we look forward to the conclusion of other ongoing and future investigations into chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

President, the progress made by the Syrian government and the OPCW provides a genuine opportunity to eradicate the threat of Assad era chemical weapons once and for all.

However, progress is neither inevitable nor assured.

As we stated in this Council in January, and as the OPCW Director General has reaffirmed at the Executive Council meeting in The Hague today, significant and sustainable additional financial and in kind support from the international community remains essential to ensure the safe, verifiable, and rapid elimination of Assad's chemical weapons programme.

The United Kingdom has contributed over \$3.8 million to the OPCW Syria Missions since the fall of Assad.

We encourage other States Parties who have not previously supported Syria-related destruction activities financially to contribute at the earliest opportunity.

For our part, we will continue to provide technical expertise to both Syria and the OPCW.

Colleagues, let us not squander this window of opportunity.

Together, we can support Syria and the OPCW to make further progress to eliminate Assad's chemical weapons programme and help to ensure those responsible for chemical weapons use are held to account.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-united-kingdom-remains-committed-to-eradicating-the-threat-posed-by-chemical-weapons-in-syria-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>