

National Coalition of Syrian
Revolution and Opposition Forces



الائتلاف الوطني لقوى
الثورة و المعارضة السورية

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York

ACTION

Mr. Kun

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Mr. Feltman

Mr. Seppa Soares

Mr

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31 August 2016

Your Excellency,

I am writing in regards to the recent release of the third report of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism on the use of chemical weapons, confirming the Syrian regime's repeated use of chlorine gas as a weapon of war, in violation of Security Council resolutions 2118 (2015), 2209 (2015) and 2235 (2015), and its obligations as a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The evidence is now incontrovertible: the Syrian regime has systematically deployed chemical weapons to terrorise, maim and kill Syrian civilians, and likely retains a hidden chemical weapons programme. The OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has concluded unequivocally that Syrian Arab Air Force helicopters dropped bombs containing chlorine gas in civilian occupied areas, including Talmenes and Sarmin, Idlib on 21 April 2014 and 16 March 2015, respectively. The JIM's conclusions follow those of the OPCW Declaration Assessment Team report, dated July 4, which state that the Syrian chemical weapons declaration cannot be fully verified as accurate or complete. OPCW investigators have discovered precursors for chemical warfare agents including soman and VX at several undeclared facilities—a clear indicator that the Syrian regime has hidden the full extent of its chemical weapons program and continues to retain the capacity to use chemical weapons against unarmed civilians.

It is imperative that the United Nations and Member States of the Security Council—acting collectively or independently—take measures to hold the Syrian regime accountable. The National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (SOC), as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people, appeals to you, in your capacity as Secretary-General, to enforce the UN Charter and repeated Security Council resolutions on Syria, including by calling on Member States to:

- (i) **Impose punitive measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter**, as required by Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013), 2209 (2015) and 2235 (2015) **sanctioning** the Syrian regime for its defiance of international law and its willful killing of innocent civilians.

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- (ii) **Protect civilians** from further chemical weapons attacks by employing measures to ground Assad's air forces - which are the primary delivery mechanism for chlorine gas. The enforcement of a **no-bombing zone** implemented over all of Syria is a feasible, low risk method to stop the bombs and protect civilians without requiring planes in the air or boots on the ground.
- (iii) **Ensure accountability** for individuals responsible for the use of chemical weapons by referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and taking action under national or universal jurisdiction through individual Member State governments.

Your Excellency, the SOC reaffirms its commitment to the goals of the revolution against injustice, tyranny and the criminality of the Assad regime as well as our commitment to the establishment of a civil, modern, pluralistic, and democratic state where all Syrians have equal rights and duties regardless of ethnic, sectarian, religious and tribal affiliations. The SOC also reaffirms our commitment to the fight against terrorism in all its forms. However, we will not defeat terror nor establish a free, democratic Syria, while the Assad regime continues to gas civilians with impunity. Syria's civilians need protection from chemical weapons and other internationally banned weapons, as well all indiscriminate airstrikes. Anything less will only condemn more Syrians to death and make a greater mockery of international law.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Anas Abdah

President of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces

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Revolution and Opposition Forces

Representative Office to the United Nations

The Honorable Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York

By fax to (212) 963-2155

TRANSMISSION NOTE:

31 August 2016

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, it is my honor to transmit to you as an enclosure to this letter a letter dated 31 August 2016 from the President of the Syrian National Coalition, Mr. Anas Al Abdah. This letter draws attention to the latest report by the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) regarding the use of chemical weapons in Syria. This letter was also delivered to the President of the Security Council.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Najib Ghadbian
Special Representative of the Syrian National Coalition to the United Nations

cc:

H.E. Mr. Ramlan Bin Ibrahim
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations
President of the UN Security Council