



Fifty-Eighth Meeting

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ENGLISH and RUSSIAN only¹**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OPCW
H.E. AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER SHULGIN
AT THE BRIEFING FOR THE CWC STATES PARTIES WITH THE PARTICIPATION
OF THE RESIDENTS OF DOUMA (SYRIAN ARAB RPUBLIC)
THE HAGUE, 26 APRIL 2018**

Excellences,
Distinguished colleagues,

Yesterday the Permanent Representative of Canada to the OPCW circulated a letter to the Director-General of the Technical Secretariat H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü. In the letter the Canadian Representative expressed her doubts regarding the reasonability of such event. In her opinion the OPCW Fact-finding Mission (FFM) that is currently deployed in Syria should have first interviewed those important witnesses who have become available today here due to the efforts by the Permanent Missions of Russia and Syria as well as to the Russian Ministry of Defense. However from her letter a conclusion could be drawn that the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic “kidnaped” the important eyewitnesses and disabled the FFM to get first-hand information that is crucial for the fact-finding.

I note: 6 out of 17 Syrian nationals who are present here have already been interviewed by the experts of the OPCW. The questions were asked. All the explanations were given. As far as the other part of the Syrians is concerned the FFM simply decided not to gather their testimonies.

Another objection expressed by the Canadian Representative was that the briefing had been convened prematurely. She said: let’s wait for the results of the FFM activities, after that such a meeting can be convened. According to her the briefing could have a negative impact on the work of the FFM and distort its findings.

My response to these allegations is sound and clear: the briefing cannot have any harmful effect to the FFM activities in Syria, which is still in Damascus and so far have been twice in Douma. The Mission has its own agenda. On April 24 I had a meeting with the Director-General. There is a list of sites which the FFM is planning to visit. The Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic called upon the Mission to inspect the secret laboratories of the terrorists where the CW’s munitions were produced. A representative of

¹ English version – unofficial translation.



the Ministry of Defense has just informed about it. We will insist that the experts of the OPCW visit these laboratories. There are all grounds to believe that toxic chemical weapons could have been produced there for the use in provocations against civilians.

As far as the timing of the briefing is concerned, we are quite surprised about who are giving us such advices. Didn't we propose that the US, the UK and France wait for the end of the FFM activities in Douma to establish the complete picture of what had happened there? You may recall the course of events: the Director-General H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü – a wise person -immediately made a decision to deploy the FFM to Syria shortly after the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic had turned to him with such a request. He gathered a group of experts and published a press-release on the arrival of the team to Damascus in the morning of April 14. What impact did it have on our US, British and French partners? They committed a strike on Syria, launched more than hundred missiles. Few hours later and the FFM team heading for Douma could have been targeted by them. What does it mean? These actions go against the international law as it is an act of aggression against a sovereign nation. That also means the disrespect towards the OPCW and towards the Director-General H.E. Ahmet Üzümcü – a person whose leadership led our Organization to the Nobel Peace Prize.

I note that representatives of many States Parties have come to our briefing today. But are there any representatives of the UK, France or the US among them? Where are those who launched the missiles against Syria? I do not see any representative. Are there representatives of the European Union or the NATO, who supported the aggression against the sovereign state?

Many of you took part in the last Executive Council meeting convened by the UK, France and the US. You may recall how the debates were going on: the US Representative portrayed a noble anger, saying that the atrocities of the Syrian “regime” cannot be left unpunished. And all their partners, the EU and the NATO representatives repeated automatically after the US Representative: a strike against Syria was logical, natural and proportional. But where are these people now? Why they have not come to the briefing today?

The answer is obvious. They are afraid of the truth. Put yourselves in the shoes of the US partners. If I were the US Representative Mr K.Ward, if I assured you that the “Syrian villains” poison their people, and Russia help them to do so and cover them for, then suddenly it would turn out that all this is not the case, I in the place of Mr. K.Ward would have be ashamed. That's why he has not come today. No other “partners” being under big pressure have come to the briefing. Ambassador V. Koloane was right by saying: the US force the others “to dance to their tune”. But it's not working here in the OPCW. They try to convince everyone that Russia does not hold the majority in the OPCW and does not have veto power. But it's the US that has not been able for more than six months to assure an adoption of the anti-Syrian EC decision. Why? Because they have doubts that they can get the two-thirds votes of the EC members in favor of such decision. You remember how many times the US Representative convened EC special meetings, then postponed them for half an hour, for a day, for two days and so on. But the US delegation didn't succeed in achieving its goals.

Now we have seen that the incident in Douma was a rude provocation - quite similar to one in Khan-Shaykhun. Both of them have been conducted under one scenario. The Russian President Vladimir Putin in one of his interviews said: our “partners” are very predictable we know what they are going to do. Why did we warn about the upcoming provocation? We did

hope that the US would be smart enough to influence on those whom they give money in keeping them from their reckless steps. But the scenario was repeated. As the President Vladimir Putin said, everything what our “partners” have been doing is so predictable that it becomes boring. In this context I want to assure you that we will not stop there and we will seek the truth about the incident in Douma.

Today, with the help of our Syrian friends, patriots of their country, we have managed to establish what really happened in Douma. We also plan to bring to light our western “partners”, first of all the US, with regard to the brutal provocation in Khan-Shaykhun. There are medical doctors among the Syrian colleagues present here. They know well that one of the damaging effects of sarin use is pupils reduced to the size of a pinhead. That is why the scientists, experts and chemists noticed the obvious inconsistency on the pictures from Khan-Shaykhun: the children supposed to be the victims of sarin attack had extremely dilated (instead of reduced) pupils. We addressed these questions to the Technical Secretariat then we were asked to wait for a special briefing for the States Parties. There was a briefing. It was conducted by two British “lions” – Mr L.Phillips and Mr S.Wallis. I asked them how they could explain these inconsistencies. They just looked away. Then they said that this fact was not the most important one. But how come?! The US Representative to the UN N.Haley shook these very photos in the UN Security Council and then showed them to the US President D.Trump, who was so shocked by these pictures and immediately ordered a missile strike against Syria? Of course, this was a provocation as well.

Believe me, we will not stop. We will find witnesses of that provocation with sarin and in the same way as today we will present them and expose the lie. Of course, we will not limit ourselves only to the work in the OPCW. I absolutely agree with my colleague Ambassador V. Koloane that it is necessary to raise this issue in the UN Security Council in order to give a political resonance to this situation. And there our “partners” in contrast to the OPCW - where they are cowardly hiding in order not to look into the eyes of the little boy Hassan Diab - will have to listen to all this.

If they have enough conscience, they will confess everything. Although, to be honest, it is hard to believe in it.

Thank you for your attention.

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