

Syria – OPCW report on the use of chemical weapons in Saraqib – Statement by Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (12 April 21)

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France welcomes the publication of the second report by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). It follows the report published on 8 April 2020, which had concluded that sarin and chlorine were used in Ltamenah, Syria, in March 2017.

This new report, resulting from independent, impartial work, identifies those who used chemical weapons during an attack in Saraqib, Syria, on 4 February 2018. The documented, irrefutable use of these weapons by the Syrian regime is unacceptable. We reiterate our firm condemnation of any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone and in any circumstances.

France remains fully mobilized to ensure that an appropriate response is given to these actions. It was in this spirit that it presented, on behalf of 46 OPCW States Parties, a draft decision entitled “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic”, which will be submitted to the second part of the 25th Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which opens on 20 April 2021.

It calls on all the States Parties to the CWC to support this draft decision, to reaffirm that the use of chemical weapons is unacceptable and that repeated violations of the Convention cannot go unpunished.

France reaffirms its steadfast position that the perpetrators of chemical attacks should be punished. To this end, among other things, in 2018 it launched the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, which now brings together 40 States and the European Union.