

Syria – Chemical Weapons – OPCW Report - Statement by Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian (1 March 2019)

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I welcome the report issued this evening by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) confirming that a toxic chemical agent containing chlorine was used in the attack on Douma, Syria, on April 7, 2018. I applaud the meticulous job carried out independently and with professionalism by the OPCW and its staff in difficult circumstances.

The Syrian regime has used chemical weapons in military offenses since 2012, not only in Ghouta, but also in Khan Sheikhou, Al-Lataminah, Saraqeb and Douma, killing and injuring thousands of people.

I reaffirm France's determination to end the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and to punish the perpetrators of such acts.

The OPCW recently created new mechanisms to identify the perpetrators of these attacks. I call on the entire international community to fully cooperate with these mechanisms.

I reiterate my strongest condemnation of the use of chemical weapons anywhere and in any circumstances, and France's determination to combat impunity.

I reaffirm France's unwavering commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and to the organization that oversees it, and its commitment as a member of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons founded in Paris in January 2018, which now includes 40 countries as well as the European Union.