



Statement

8 March 2018

Reports of Chemical Weapons Used in Syria's Eastern Ghouta

Rethink Rebuild Society (RR) and the Syrian British Medical Society (SBMS) express their outrage at the suspected use of chemical weapons in Eastern Ghouta yesterday, and calls for immediate investigations into their alleged use.

A [press release](#) by the Union of Medical Care and Relief Organisations reported yesterday March 7th a chlorine attack that hit the towns of Saqba and Hammourieh in Eastern Ghouta around 9.00pm Damascus time which affected more than 50 people. Dr. Imad Kabbani, manager of the Damascus and Rural Damascus' Directorate of Health, [dismissed](#) an alleged chemical attack earlier this week but confirmed yesterday's chlorine attack. The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) [reported](#) treating 29 patients with symptoms of a chlorine attack yesterday in one of their facilities.

More than 85 people have been killed yesterday in what was one of the most devastating nights Eastern Ghouta had endured over the past years, with Syrian regime attacks reported to have used napalm and cluster bombs in addition to chemical weapons. As a result of the severe bombardment, an aid convoy originally planned to enter Eastern Ghouta today has been [postponed](#).

According to SAMS, yesterday's chlorine attack was the fifth chemical weapon attack in Eastern Ghouta and the eighth in Syria this year only. Moreover, a [report](#) released yesterday by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria confirmed the documentation of the regime's use of chemical weapons during its fighting with rebel groups in Harasta in November of last year.

RR and SBMS demand an immediate investigation by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons towards determining the validity of these attacks. While world powers continue to reiterate their commitment to preventing the use of chemical weapons, such as the latest "[International Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons](#)" initiative, such attacks are believed to have continued. Use of such weapons are a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention to which Syria is a signee, and perpetrators must be held accountable. We urge the enforcement of UN resolution 2401 that called for a 30-day ceasefire, the entry of direly needed humanitarian relief and the evacuation of medical cases to end the indescribable suffering of civilians in the enclave.

ENDS

For further information and press enquiries, please contact 07510007187, or email: bilal@rrsoc.org

Rethink Rebuild Society has established itself as a non-profit organisation that acts as an umbrella for the Syrian community in Manchester, and endeavours to promote peace and protection of civilians to its audience in the UK and the wider public.

The Syrian British Medical Society was established in 2007, as a forum for healthcare professionals of Syrian descent working in the UK. It is a non-profit, non-political organization that aims at promoting the highest professional and ethical standards amongst British-Syrian Healthcare Professionals, and the creation and promotion of academic and professional links with the Healthcare Profession in Syria and related organizations worldwide. Since the start of the uprising in Syria in 2011, the SBMS has redirected most of its activities towards helping the devastated healthcare sector in Syria.