

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on the OPCW report into Amesbury

The independent report produced by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has today confirmed the assessment of the United Kingdom in identifying the chemical agent responsible for the death of Dawn Sturgess in Amesbury on 8 July. This was a Novichok nerve agent, of the same kind used in the attempted assassinations of Sergei and Yulia Skripal earlier this year.

Analysis carried out by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) at Porton Down had previously identified the nerve agent as Novichok.

Chemical weapons experts from the OPCW have twice visited the UK to collect samples for testing after this latest detection of chemical weapons use on the streets of the UK. All the samples returned equally conclusive results.

The Foreign Secretary said:

We are grateful to the OPCW for the independent, expert work in confirming the type of nerve agent used in Amesbury, and once again pay tribute to the high standards set by our world-leading scientists.

The recklessness of the Russian state in bringing a nerve agent in to the UK, and total disregard for the safety of the public, is appalling and irresponsible. Our thoughts are with the family of Dawn Sturgess, and with Charlie Rowley.

This is another reminder of the importance of the international community standing together to uphold the global ban on all use of chemical weapons, and ensure that the rules based international order is respected so we can all keep our citizens safe.

In the interests of transparency, the UK has requested that the OPCW publish the executive summary and share the full report with all state parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The police continue their investigation into the poisonings in Amesbury and Salisbury and we await their further conclusions.

Further information