

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on UN Joint Investigative Mechanism vote

Speaking following the Security Council vote, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

We are deeply disappointed that the mandate for the UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), which is impartial and independent, has not been renewed.

Last year the JIM found that the Syrian regime used chemical weapons against its people on no fewer than three occasions. The JIM will be reporting in the coming days on responsibility for a further two chemical weapons attacks, including in Khan Sheikhoun in April.

Russia's veto at the UN Security Council means that in a month the JIM will cease to exist. It will no longer be able to do its work to investigate who is responsible for use of chemical weapons in Syria. The veto suggests that the Syrian regime has something to hide and risks letting both Asad forces and Daesh off the hook for these heinous crimes. In 2013, Russia said it had secured Syria's agreement to destroy all its chemical weapons. Since then, the JIM has found the Syrian regime used chemical weapons three times. Russia's response is not to redouble its efforts to ensure disarmament, but to shut down the investigation.

While we are deeply disappointed, the United Kingdom will not let Russia's actions stop us from working with international partners to seek justice for victims and to prevent the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere.