

Speech: Salisbury attack: Foreign Secretary's remarks to media at the March 2018 Foreign Affairs Council

Good morning. I have been very heartened already by the strength of the support that the UK is getting in respect of the incident in Salisbury and I think that is partly because they can see that Britain is acting [with] punctilious accordance with our obligations under the [Treaty on Chemical Weapons](#) and I would contrast that with how the Russians are behaving.

Today the technical experts from the [Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons](#) are arriving in the UK to take the samples from Salisbury and in the meantime the Russian denials grow increasingly absurd. At one time they say that they never made Novichok, at another time they say that they did make Novichok but all the stocks have been destroyed. Then again they say that they made Novichok but all the stocks have been destroyed but some of them have mysteriously escaped to Sweden or at the Czech Republic or Slovakia or the United States – or even – America, or the United Kingdom.

I think what people can see is that this is a classic Russian strategy of trying to conceal the needle of truth in a haystack of lies and obfuscation. And what really strikes me talking to European friends and partners today is that 12 years after the assassination of Alexander Litvinenko in London they are not fooling anybody anymore. There is scarcely a country around the table – here in Brussels – that has not been affected by some kind of malign or disruptive Russian behaviour and that is why I think the strength and the resolve of our European friends is so striking today. Thank you very much.

Watch the Foreign Secretary speaking

[Foreign Secretary's statement to the Foreign Affairs Council](#)