

Green Party statement on US airstrikes in Syria



Green Party

7 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to the US missile strike launched by Donald Trump against a Syrian air base following a suspected chemical weapons attack [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“We condemn President Assad’s barbarous and criminal use of chemical weapons against innocent men, women and children. This is the latest in a long line of attacks against his own people and the international community has clearly failed to hold him to account. We also remain concerned about the dire humanitarian crisis in the region. However, there is no simple answer to this most complex of crises and President Trump’s air strikes risk exacerbating an already complex situation in the absence of any coherent strategy to contain the violence and in the longer term, build peace. In the interim, the UK Government should immediately reconsider its inhumane treatment of the people fleeing this terrible conflict. We must allow more refugees from Syria to find safety in our country.”

Caroline Lucas MP, Green Party co-leader, said:

“If our ultimate goal is to protect people – and it should be – there are other effective steps that could be taken, including stepping up soft and hard diplomacy, looking anew at sanctions, the freezing of assets and the continued flow of arms to the region. Crucially we need to send a strong signal to Assad that his actions are intolerable whilst at the same time avoid any escalation of violence that puts more civilian lives at risk. It is deeply concerning that President Trump took this action without the permission of Congress and it is now of the utmost importance that Prime Minister Theresa May calls on him to help build some kind of international consensus around what happens next. I also urge her to remember that the UK must not commit to any military involvement in Syria without a vote in Parliament, and to confirm whether or not she is talking with Russia about the role they can play in bringing this conflict to an end.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-39523654>

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[Dieselgate: Greens welcome EU step in the right direction](#)



Green Party

4 April 2017

Keith Taylor MEP: “Green MEPs were instrumental in securing an inquiry into the emissions fraud scandal on behalf of European citizens who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate”

Responding to the [vote on the findings of the Dieselgate inquiry](#), Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East and a member of both the European Parliament’s Environment and Transport committees, said:

“Greens were instrumental in securing an inquiry into the emissions fraud scandal on behalf of European citizens who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate; through their exposure to toxic fumes and the complete contempt for their consumer rights. Today’s vote is both a vindication and an important step forward in taking an EU-wide approach to ensuring that a similar scandal can never be allowed to happen again. It’s a reminder that Dieselgate was a problem of too little Europe, not too much.”

“The report adopted today by MEPs will help break the cosy relationship between national authorities, car manufacturers, and the technical bodies in charge of the testing. The legislation also contains welcome steps towards greater transparency, with the Commission required to make public when it questions the non-compliance of a vehicle, giving consumers a better understanding of emerging problems.”

“UK Conservative MEPs were the biggest opponents of the Dieselgate report and were responsible for watering down its findings, which excoriate their

friends in the car industry. That and the UK Government's promise of a bonfire of regulations offers British citizens an alarming insight into what kind of (lack of) protections we might look forward to outside of the EU."

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[Green Party: Scrappage scheme the only way to help people ditch diesel](#)



Green Party

4 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to news the Government plans to encourage people to get rid of diesel vehicles by introducing what has been dubbed a "toxin tax".

Caroline Russell AM, Green Party transport spokesperson, said:

"It's good to see the Government recognising the damage dirty diesel engines do to our air and our health, but if we are serious about encouraging drivers to leave diesel behind we need to help them to do that. We urgently need a proper scrappage scheme which helps businesses swap diesel for cleaner vehicles, while people giving up domestic cars should have access to efficient public transport, car clubs and streets that enable safe walking and cycling."

Notes:

1. <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/20-daily-toxin-tax-for-diesel-drivers-mhkzggdn3>

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[Greens call on EU to create new agency to avert future Dieselgate scandals](#)



Green Party

Keith Taylor MEP: “Dieselgate is not a problem of too much Europe, but too little”

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, is joining fellow MEPs in calling for the creation of a new [independent surveillance agency](#) ahead of a vote on the findings and recommendations of the committee inquiry into the Dieselgate scandal.

The European Parliament’s Environment Committee, of which Mr Taylor is a member, has already voted to back the establishment of a new EU-wide agency to guarantee independent enforcement of EU emissions legislation.

Keith, who is also a member of the European Parliament’s Transport Committee and a vocal campaigner on air quality issues, said ahead of the vote on Tuesday (4 April):

“The dieselgate inquiry shows unequivocally that EU emission limits, far from simply being ignored by some car manufacturers, were the subject of deliberate fraud with criminal intent, through the use of so-called ‘defeat devices’ which trick the test procedure into thinking that the car produces much lower nitrogen oxide emissions than it does on the roads. Nitrogen oxides react in the atmosphere to form nitrogen dioxide, which is toxic to human health.”

“The inquiry is clear that member states and the EU Commission both failed to act on emissions fraud and are not sufficiently impartial to ensure a similar scandal does not happen again. It is clearly not enough to simply ask our national governments and the Commission to do better next time.”

“The establishment of an EU-wide independent and neutral surveillance body, that has the power to test vehicle emissions in the laboratory as well as in

real driving conditions, is absolutely essential for the health and wellbeing of the people of Europe, who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate; from being exposed to toxic air pollution and having their rights as consumers disregarded.”

“Dieselgate is not a problem of too much Europe, but too little. The UK government’s promise of a bonfire of regulations and the fact that Tory MEPs tried to water down this report gives British citizens an alarming insight into what kind of (lack of) protections we can look forward to outside of the EU.”

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[Green Party: Theresa May must raise war crime allegations during Saudi Arabia visit](#)



Green Party

3 April 2017

The Green Party has called on Theresa May to raise allegations of war crimes in Yemen when she visits Saudi Arabia this week [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“It is deeply disturbing to see the prime minister cosying up to an oppressive regime in an attempt to get a trade deal after Brexit. Saudi Arabia has an appalling human rights record and we should not be exposing ourselves to a dependent relationship with a country that was accused of killing civilians as recently as last month [2].

“The Met police are currently investigating Saudi Arabia for war crimes in Yemen and Theresa May must raise the allegations during her visit.

“We have repeatedly called on the Government to stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia. If there’s any chance UK weapons were used to violate international law and human rights, we must stop supplying them immediately.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/theresa-calls-closer-uk-ties-10146879>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/02/met-police-examine-allegations-saudi-arabia-war-crimes-yemen>

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