

Russia says U.S. used fake evidence to blame chemical attacks on Syria



Moscow, June 25 (RHC)-- Russia says the United States and its allies have relied on fabricated evidence to accuse the Syrian government of conducting chemical attacks against civilians.

"The United States, Britain, France and their allies have misled international community... relying on fabrications to accuse Syria of violating the chemical weapons ban with Russian assistance," said Maj. Gen. Igor Kirillov, the chief of the Russian military's radiation, chemical and biological protection unit, at a briefing in the capital Moscow.

He also accused the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) of violating the Chemical Weapons Convention, saying: "The remote nature of investigations as well as the collection, analysis and use of the documents obtained without specialists" trips to the alleged sites of chemical weapons use is in direct contradiction to the convention's provisions."

Back in April, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov also criticized the OPCW's previous investigations conducted from long distance on alleged chemical attacks in Syria.

In the course of the liberation operation in Eastern Ghouta, which began in February, Moscow has repeatedly warned that different factions of militant outfits in the region could stage gas attacks in a bid to frame the Syrian government.

The suspected chemical weapons attack, however, hit the town of Douma in the Eastern Ghouta region in the suburban area near Damascus on April 7, reportedly killing at least 60 people and wounding more than 1,000 others.

Western countries swiftly blamed the incident on the Syrian government. Damascus rejected the accusations as "chemical fabrications" made by the terrorists themselves in a bid to halt pro-government forces' advances.

The alleged use of chemical weapons in Douma, however, triggered a missile strike by the U.S., Britain and France that Russia has denounced as a violation of international law.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Kirillov said the so-called civil defense group White Helmets had doctored samples and used explosive devices to make craters that looked like those left by bombs. He added that in the images presented by them, they worked at the site of the alleged use of sarin without protective gear, which would have been impossible if the nerve agent had indeed been used there.

Kirillov also lambasted the OPCW for turning a blind eye to the discovery of a militant-run lab and its stockpiles in Eastern Ghouta that contained over 40 metric tons of chlorine and other toxic chemicals.

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