

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2017/04/16/un-response-us-attack-syria-noble-words-empty-deeds.html>

UN Response to US Attack on Syria: Noble Words, Empty Deeds

ALEX GORKA
4/16/2017



The refusal of the United Nations to qualify the recent US airstrike against Syria as an act of aggression makes the Organization irrelevant – something Russia has been trying to prevent. It has become vulnerable to scathing criticism after demonstrating its impotence and inability to act. The continued paralysis is an eloquent example of the UN's disengagement and lack of

political will to fulfill its duty. The Organization's image has suffered great damage. It still has a chance to rectify it by launching an investigation into what really happened in Syria.

Article One of the UN Charter states that one of the purposes is *«To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace»*. It also mentions *«adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace»*.

The April 7 attack on Syria is no doubt an act of aggression against a sovereign state. There is nothing to support the US accusations against the Syrian government. No evidence to go upon has been presented. If it were, it would still be no reason to use force. Neither the UN Charter nor any other international document envisages the right of US president to strike other countries at his discretion, even if they are suspected of possessing and using chemical weapons (CW).

The US has a long record of trampling on international law under the pretext of conducting military operations for «humanitarian reasons» or to protect «democracy».

The UK and several other Western countries rushed to support the action. No wonder! If they had the capability, they would have done the same thing. The prospects for being left without the US «nuclear umbrella» made them really scared after Donald Trump was elected. Now they are happy that the 45th president has failed to keep his promises. Their support for the US action is understandable and was expected. But what about the United Nations?

The Secretariat of the UN has shied away from taking a position. Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, emphasized that neither the CW attack in Idlib nor the following US airstrikes influenced the UN stance. According to him, *«For us, we would reiterate the importance of the process going on in Geneva, which, obviously, one of the issues on the agenda is transition. What is important is that the future leadership of Syria be decided by the Syrian people themselves, as we have said since the beginning of this crisis. And, again, I think we would call on all the parties to recommit themselves to the Geneva process and the political discussions going on in Geneva»*.

Asked about the statement made by Nikki Haley, the US Ambassador to the UN, about the loss of legitimacy by Syrian President Assad after the chemical attack, he said *«the future leadership of the Syrian... of Syria should be decided by the Syrian people themselves»*. At least, the official admits that it's the people who should rule the country, not the leaders of other states who order to strike Syria with cruise missiles!

On the other hand, the refusal to condemn the United States for its attack in Syria makes the law a sham. The strongest is always right! The UN turns a blind eye on violations and crimes.

There is another aspect of the problem that is important to draw attention on. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has said Syria has no CW. In 2013, the

elimination of CW in Syria was an OPCW-UN joint mission. Is the organization operating under the auspices of the United Nations not trustworthy? If it is, why not wait for its results of its investigation? Thus, the very affirmation that the Syrian government has CW is a severe blow against the OPCW and the UN.

So, the stance taken by the UN Secretariat actually diminishes the UN influence on international affairs. The UN refuses to comply with the provisions of its own Charter!

What's wrong with Russia's calls for broader UN role? Moscow says important decisions related to international security must be taken collectively and after detailed consultations in the UN. Should this position be resisted? Is it reprehensible to insist on thorough investigation of CW attack in Idlib before discussing the issue and taking decisions on what to do about it? Is it right to forget the lesson learnt in Iraq when no weapons of mass destruction were found to justify the invasion with terrible repercussions to follow, including the emergence of the IS?

An investigation would meet the interests of all. That's what UN officials should be talking about instead of repeating the mantra of the Geneva negotiations having a chance to make progress. Turgid words to make a hollow statement.

A CW attack is a serious crime against humanity. The culprits must face justice. So is the US attack against a UN member state. At least, it must be discussed within the framework of the United Nations. The US could veto any decisions but the world has the right to know.

With all the tensions running high and global security threatened, the time is propitious for the UN to start fulfilling its duties and abide by its obligations. The world needs deeds, not empty words.