

# The Tragedy of Syria: All Red Lines Have Been Crossed

What's happening in Ghouta is a war crime. A blood orgy orchestrated by Bashar al-Assad, a modern-day Caligula figure, and his criminal patrons in Iran and Russia.

More than 500 men, women and children have been killed since last week in the eastern enclave, where activists over the weekend reported a suspected poison gas attack.

According to 60 Minutes this past Sunday night, the Assad regime has used internationally banned chemical agents nearly 200 times throughout the civil war. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the world's leading chemical weapons watchdog, opened an investigation on Sunday into attacks in Ghouta to determine whether banned munitions had been used.

The unspeakable suffering we are witnessing in Ghouta is the result of a conscious strategy of besiegement, systematic blocking of humanitarian aid, and the illegal destruction of civilian infrastructure - hospitals, schools and kindergartens have all been bombed into the ground.

If this story sounds familiar, that is because we have heard it all before. We have seen it in the ruins of Aleppo, on the killing fields of Cambodia, the poisoned ghost towns in Iraqi Kurdistan, the sieges of Sarajevo and Srebrenica, and the desert death camps of Darfur.

"Never again," the shell-shocked international community pledged — again, and again - and again — in the wake of these atrocities. And yet the same horrors are now being inflicted on the people of Ghouta and we are reacting with much the same impotence.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), corrupted by the malign agendas of Russia and China with no regard for human suffering, has long been reduced to issuing empty mantras ranging from being "concerned" to "very concerned" and, lately, "gravely concerned."

But their condemnation of crimes committed against innocent civilians does not feed the children on the streets of Ghouta. It does not keep warm the families that must now sleep in the rubble of their homes, or help pull the injured from under the ruins of the city.

Look closely, if you spent the last decade pontificating about US imperialism in the Middle East, sharing uncritically the absurd spectacle of conspiracy theories brought to you by Russia Today, Iranian Press TV and other state controlled outlets with hostile agendas.

Syria is a place where more people died than in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya combined - it's a lawless Wild Wild West of international affairs where the Assads, Khameneins, Putins and Erdogans of this world kill at their pleasure.

The UNSC called for the 30-day truce in all of Syria on Saturday to allow aid deliveries and medical evacuations in the war-torn regions. But Iran and the Syrian regime continued attacks on Damascus suburbs held by "terrorists" the Iranian military chief of staff said on Sunday.

Everyone is now a terrorist. Every hospital bombed a secret weapons storage. Every school destroyed a recruitment center. Every use of poisonous gas a false flag operation by the rebels.

The industrial-scale killing machinery in Syria is the unhappy consequence of American isolationism and non-intervention, with the result that, eight years down the line, the murderous dictator is neither dead nor imprisoned, but still gassing his own people.

The Assad regime has recaptured large swathes of Syrian territory. The mullahs have turned the country into a permanent Iranian military base. And Russia is dictating the way things are going.

America isn't perfect. Far from it. But it's still an unrivaled beacon of light in the darkness of international relations that do not offer a more just and moral superpower to fill its place.

Eight years into the civil war, Syria has turned into the greatest humanitarian catastrophe of our time. It is too late for the people of Ghouta. They will follow the restless souls of Rwanda, Bosnia, and Kurdistan in a long line of victims

abandoned by the international community. All red lines have been crossed.

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