

[Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the US strike in Syria](#)

In response to the air strike that hit the town of Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib province on 4 April 2017, with many victims displaying symptoms of gas poisoning, the EU (in its Declaration 193/17 of 6 April 2017) has been unequivocal in its condemnation of the use of chemical weapon: the use of chemical weapons or chemical substances as weapons amounts to a war crime and identified perpetrators must be held accountable for this violation of international law.

The US has informed the European Union that, based on their assessment that the Syrian regime has used chemical weapons, they launched a strike on Shayrat Airfield in Syria with the understandable intention to prevent and deter the spread and use of deadly chemical weapons. The US also informed us that these strikes are limited and focused on preventing and deterring further use of chemical weapons atrocities. The EU will continue to support the efforts and work of the OPCW, in particular in Syria, including the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism, with regard to the investigation of the use of chemical weapons. Those found responsible should be sanctioned within the framework of the United Nations.

The EU firmly believes that there can be no military solution to the conflict and is committed to the unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the Syrian State. Only a credible political solution, as defined in UNSCR 2254 and the 2012 Geneva Communiqué will ensure peace and stability in Syria and enable a decisive defeat of Da'esh and other UN-designated terrorist groups in Syria.

The EU reiterates its support to the UN-mediated intra-Syrian talks in Geneva to reach a political solution to the Syrian conflict. This is even more urgent now, as reaffirmed by the International Conference "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" that the European Union hosted in Brussels on 4-5 April 2017.

[Statement by President Juncker on the Situation in Syria](#)

A horrific chemical weapons attack on civilians struck Khan Shaykhun on 4 April. Last night, in response, the US launched air strikes on Shayrat Airfield. The US has informed the EU that these strikes were limited and seek

to deter further chemical weapons atrocities.

President **Juncker** has been unequivocal in his condemnation of the use of chemical weapons. The repeated use of such weapons must be answered. He understands efforts to deter further attacks. There is a clear distinction between air strikes on military targets and the use of chemical weapons against civilians.

Efforts to stem the spiral of violence in Syria and work towards a lasting peace should be redoubled. Only a political transition can lead to such an outcome. President Juncker and the European Commission as a whole stand ready to play their part in full.

[Press release: Jail term for Scunthorpe waste operator](#)

Yesterday, Nessa Anne Thompson, of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd was sentenced at Hull Crown Court in relation to two charges relating to waste site operations in Scunthorpe. This followed as a result of the defendant pleading guilty to both offences.

Ms Thompson from Scotter Road, Scunthorpe was sentenced to a total of 6 months in custody. She was also disqualified from being a director for a period of 7 years.

The charges were brought by the Environment Agency contrary to section 33(1)(c) and section 157(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and one contrary to Regulation 12(1)(a) and Regulation 41(1) of the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010.

Ms Thompson operated an illegal waste operation for the company that had previously held a permit until it went into administration before liquidation. The permit at this point was formally disclaimed.

The site at Winterton Road in Scunthorpe continued to be used and waste was stored in large quantities and in such a manner that it presented a human health and fire risk.

When the site did catch fire on 6 May 2014, firefighters attending the scene were even advised not to re-use the firewater due to the risk of waterborne diseases linked to the number of rats on site.

As a result of inadequate fire breaks at the site efforts to prevent the spread of fire was hampered, causing a greater impact to the adjacent businesses and the wider community.

Speaking after the case, an Environment Agency officer involved with the investigation said:

This site posed a risk to property, the local environment, and people's health because our advice was ignored.

This prosecution demonstrates that we take cases such as this very seriously and will not hesitate to prosecute if necessary, to protect the environment and local communities.

In mitigation, the court heard that the defendant had pleaded guilty to both offences and she was given credit for that. It also heard that her partner was in poor health and that they were both suffering from significant financial hardship.

In passing sentence, the judge said there had been a deliberate flouting of environmental regulations by the defendant. He commented that as the Technically Competent Manager for the site, she would have been well aware that there was no permit in place at the site. He found that there had been attempts to conceal the illegal activity. The judge noted that Ms Thompson has previous convictions for breaches of environmental legislation, for which she was under investigation at the time the current offences were committed. He said that this amounted to a significant aggravating feature.

-ends-

Notes to Editors

Charges

Count 1

PERMITTING THE TREATING, KEEPING OR DISPOSING OF CONTROLLED WASTE IN A MANNER LIKELY TO CAUSE POLLUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OR HARM TO HUMAN HEALTH contrary to Section 33(1)(c) and Section 157(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990

NESSA ANNE THOMPSON as director of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd, on or before 6 May 2014 Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd Thompson Yard, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 0DH, did treat, keep or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health on land at Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 0DH, namely mixed waste that was being brought onto the site, processed and stored in a manner which posed a fire risk and which did result in two fires on site, and the said offence was committed with your consent, connivance, or attributable to your neglect, as director.

Count 2

PERMITTING THE OPERATION OF A REGULATED FACILITY WITHOUT AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT contrary to Regulation 12(1)(a) and Regulation 38(1)(a) and Regulation

41(1)(a) and (b) of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010

NESSA ANNE THOMPSON, as director of Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd, between 18 March 2014 and 13 August 2014 Thompson Waste Recycling Ltd of Thompson Yard, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 0DH, operated a regulated facility, which was not authorised by a permit, namely a non-exempt waste operation, on land at Winterton Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 0DH, involving the deposit and processing of waste at the site and the said offence was committed with your consent, connivance, or attributable to your neglect, as director.

[Green Party statement on US airstrikes in Syria](#)



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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[Jeremy Corbyn statement on US air strikes on a Syrian air base](#)

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party,

speaking in response to the US air strikes on a Syrian air base, said:

“The US missile attack on a Syrian government air base risks escalating the war in Syria still further.

“Tuesday’s horrific chemical attack was a war crime which requires urgent independent UN investigation and those responsible must be held to account.

“But unilateral military action without legal authorisation or independent verification risks intensifying a multi-sided conflict that has already killed hundreds of thousands of people.

“What is needed instead is to urgently reconvene the Geneva peace talks and unrelenting international pressure for a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

“The terrible suffering of the Syrian people must be brought to an end as soon as possible and every intervention must be judged on what contribution it makes to that outcome.

“The British government should urge restraint on the Trump administration and throw its weight behind peace negotiations and a comprehensive political settlement.”