

No. 1 is to give thanks for the EMTs, the firemen, the law enforcement officers who risked their lives and, in many cases, died to save people who were victims of the Twin Towers tragedy. That is No. 1.

No. 2 is to remember we are a soldier in the army to fight terrorism. Every American should remember to be vigilant, to watch where they go. If they see something unusual, if they see something out of character, report it. We can be the second security force for our country.

Third, and most importantly, pray for our country. Pray that we have the strength to continue to confront terrorism. It is important for us to remember that terrorists win when we fear them. When we change what we do in our lives because we fear terrorism, they have won that great battle. We must stand up to, be vigilant for those signs that indicate a terrorist attack may happen, and let them know that no matter where, no matter when, or no matter what, the people of the United States of America stand ready to confront it and see to it that never does our country cower in fear because of terrorism. So on this tragic day, when almost 3,000 citizens of the world lost their lives in New York City, Shanksville, PA, and Washington, DC, it is appropriate that we pause and remember those victims, their families, and all of those who worked to save lives on 9/11, 2001. We must also remember those three things: Pray for America and those who were victims, remember to be vigilant and part of the army that keeps our eyes open and reports things that are seen, and always remember that when we cower to terrorism in fear, the terrorists have won. America must always be what America is: the strongest democracy on the face of this Earth.

May God bless our country and may God bless the souls who died on September 11, 2001.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAINÉ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SYRIA

Mr. KAINÉ. Madam President, I rise to speak to the grave issue of the Syria resolution currently pending before the body.

It is September 11. I know many Members have expressed thoughts, and we are all thinking about that day and what it means to our country. In a few minutes I will leave and go to the Pentagon to be with Pentagon staffers and family members as they commemorate the anniversary of this horrible trag-

edy in American life. The shadow of that tragedy and its rippling effects even today, 12 years later, definitely are a matter on my mind and heart as I think about this issue with respect to Syria.

Also on my mind and heart as I think about this grave issue is its connection to Virginia. I believe Virginia is the most militarily connected State in our country. Our map is a map of American military history: the battle at Yorktown, the surrender at Appomattox Court House, the attack on the Pentagon on 9/11. Our map is a map of American military history. We are more connected to the military in the sense that one in nine of our citizens is a veteran. We have Active Duty at the Pentagon, training to be officers at Quantico, the largest concentration of naval power in the world at Hampton Roads. We have DOD contractors. We have DOD civilians such as Army nurses. We have ROTC cadets, Guard and Reserve members, and military families, all of whom care very deeply about the issue we are grappling with as a nation.

I am sure in the Presiding Officer's State, as in mine and across the country, there is a war weariness on this 12th anniversary of 9/11, and that affects the way we look at this question of whether the United States should potentially engage in military action.

I cast a vote last week in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to authorize limited military action, and I have spent the days since that vote talking to Virginians and hearing from them and hearing from some who aren't happy with the vote I cast.

I spent 1 day talking to ROTC cadets at Virginia State University, folks who are training to be officers who might fight in future conflicts for this country. Then I spent Friday in Hampton Roads with veterans and military families talking about the choices before us.

I heard a teenager last night say something that truly struck me. This is a teenager who doesn't have any direct connection to the military herself, no family members in service. But at an event I was attending, she stood and said: I don't know war, but all my generation and I know is war. Think about that: I don't know war, but all my generation and I know is war. During her entire life that she has been kind of a thinking person, aware of the outside world, we have been at war. That makes us tremendously war-weary, and I understand that. So trying to separate out all those feelings and do what is right is hard.

Similar to many Virginians, I have family in the military who are going to be directly affected by what we do or what we don't do. I think about those family members and all Virginians and all Americans who have loved ones in service as I contemplate this difficult issue.

I wish to say three things. First, I wish to praise the President for bring-

ing this matter to Congress, which I believe is courageous and historic. Secondly, I wish to talk about why I believe authorizing limited military action makes sense. Third, I wish to talk about the need to exhaust all diplomatic opportunities and openings, including the ones that were reported beginning Monday of this week by Russia and Syria.

First, on the President coming to Congress. This was what was intended by the Framers of the Constitution; that prior to the initiation of significant military action—and this would be significant by all accounts—that Congress should have to weigh in. The Framers wanted that to be so. They had read history. They knew executives might be a little too prone to initiating military action, and they wanted to make sure the people's elected representatives had a vote about whether an action should be initiated. Once initiated, there is only one Commander in Chief. But at the initiation, Congress needs to be involved. That was the intent from the very beginning of this Nation from 1787. There was an understanding that in an emergency, a President might need to act immediately, but even in that case there would need to be a reckoning, a coming back to Congress and seeking approval of Presidential action.

In my view, the President, by bringing this matter to Congress, has acted in accord with law, acted in accord with the intent of the Framers of the Constitution, and actually has done so in a way that has cleared up some sloppiness about the way this institution and the President has actually done this over time.

Only five times in the history of the Nation has Congress declared war. Over 120 times Presidents have initiated military action without congressional approval—at least prior congressional approval. Presidents have overreached their power, and Congress has often made a decision to avoid being accountable for this most grave decision that we make as a nation.

I praise the President for bringing it to Congress, the people's body, because I think it is in accord with law. But I praise him for a second reason. It is not just about the constitutional allocation of responsibility. Responsibilities were allocated in the Constitution, in my view, for a very important moral reason. The moral reason is this: We cannot ask our men and women in service to put their lives on the line if there is not a consensus of the legislative and executive branches that the mission is worthwhile.

That is why it is important for Congress to weigh in on a decision to initiate military hostility because, absent that, we face the situation that would be a very real possibility in this instance that a President would make a decision that an action or a war was worth fighting but a Congress would not support it. That would put the men and women who have to face the risk

and potentially risk their lives in a very difficult situation. If we are going to ask people to risk their lives in any kind of a military action, we shouldn't be asking them to do it if the legislative and political branches haven't reached some consensus that it should be done.

That is the first point I wish to make. I wish to thank the President for cleaning up this sloppiness in the historical allocation of responsibilities between a President and Congress, for taking a historic step—as he said he would as a candidate—of bringing a question such as this to Congress.

We may be unable to act in certain cases because we are divided. But if we act and we act united, we are much stronger both militarily and in the moral example that we pose to the world. It is the right thing to do for the troops who bear the burden of battle.

Second, I wish to talk about the actual authorization. We grappled with this. The news came out about the chemical weapons attack on August 21, and 18 of us members of the Foreign Relations Committee returned last week. The Presiding Officer came and attended some of our classified meetings. We grappled with the question about whether in this circumstance a limited military authorization was appropriate, and I voted yes. I voted yes for a very simple reason. I believe there has to be a consequence for using chemical weapons against civilians.

It is pretty simple. There are a lot of nuances, a lot of subtleties, and a lot of questions about whether the plans might accomplish the particular objective we hope. Those are all legitimate questions. But at the end of the day, I feel so very strongly that if chemical weapons have been used—and in this case they were and used on a massive scale and used against civilians—there must be a consequence for that. There must be a sharp consequence for it. If there isn't, the whole world will be worse off.

I believe that if the United States acts in this way to uphold an important international norm—perhaps the most important international norm that weapons of mass destruction can't be used against civilians—if we act to uphold the norm, we will have partners. How many partners? We will see. Maybe not as many as we would wish, but we will have partners. But I am also convinced that if the United States does not act to uphold this principle, I don't think anyone will act. If we act, we will have partners; if we don't, I don't think anyone will act. That is the burden of leadership that is on this country's shoulders.

We know about the history of the chemical weapons ban, and we are so used to it that it seems normal. But just to kind of step back from it, if we think about it, it is not that normal at all.

The chemical weapons ban came out of World War I. World War I was a mechanized slaughter with over 10 mil-

lion deaths, a slaughter unlike anything that had ever been seen in global history. There were all kinds of weapons used in World War I that had never been used before, including dropping bombs out of airplanes. Dropping bombs out of airplanes, new kinds of artillery, new kinds of munitions, new kinds of machine guns, chemical weapons, all kinds of mechanized and industrialized weapons were used in World War I. The American troops who served in 1917 and 1918 were gassed. They would be sleeping in a trench, trying to get a couple hours of sleep, and they would wake up coughing their lungs out or blinded—or they wouldn't wake up because some of the gases were invisible and silent. With no knowledge, you could suddenly lose your life or be disabled for life because of chemical weapons.

The number of casualties in World War I because of chemical weapons was small as a percentage of the total casualties. But it is interesting what happened. After World War I, the nations of the world that had been at each other's throats, that had battled each other, gathered a few years later. It is interesting to think what they banned and didn't ban. They didn't ban aerial bombardment. They didn't ban machine guns. They didn't ban rockets. They didn't ban shells. They didn't ban artillery. But they did decide to ban chemical weapons. They were able to all agree, as combatants, that chemical weapons were unacceptable and should neither be manufactured nor used.

It can seem maybe a little bit illogical or even absurd: Why is it worse to be killed by a chemical weapon than a machine gun or by an artillery shell? I don't know what the logic is to it. All I can assume is that the experience of that day and moment had inspired some common spark of humanity in all of these cultures and combating nations, and they all agreed the use of chemical weapons should be banned heretofore on the Earth.

Nations agreed with that ban. The Soviet Union was on board. The United States was on board. So many nations were on board. Syria ultimately signed that accord in 1968. Even in the midst of horrific wars where humans have done horrific things to each other, since 1925 and the passage of the ban, the ban has stuck. The international community has kept that ember of humanity alive that says these weapons should not be used, and only two dictators until now have used these weapons—Adolph Hitler using these weapons against millions of Jews and others and Saddam Hussein using the weapons against Kurds, his own people, and then against Iranians in the Iraq-Iran war.

When we think about it, it is pretty amazing. With all the barbarity that has happened since 1925, this has generally stuck, with the exception of Adolph Hitler and Saddam Hussein, until now. The beneficiaries of this policy have been civilians, but they have also

been American service men and women. The service men and women who fought in World War I were gassed from this country, but the Americans who fought in World War II, in Europe and North Africa and the Pacific, who fought in Korea, who fought in Vietnam, who fought in Afghanistan, who fought in Iraq, who fought in other minor military involvements have never had to worry about facing chemical weapons. No matter how bad the opponent was, American troops haven't had to worry about it, and the troops of other nations haven't had to worry about it either. This is a very important principle, and it is a positive thing for humanity that we reached this accord and we have honored it.

So what happens now if there isn't a consequence for Bashar al-Assad's escalating use of chemical weapons, to include chemical weapons against civilians.

What happens if we let go of the norm and we say: Look, that may have been OK for the 20th century, but we are tougher and more cynical now. There are not any more limits now, so we don't have to abide by any norms now. What I believe the lesson is—and I think the lessons of history will demonstrate that this will apply—is that an atrocity unpunished will engender future atrocities. We will see more atrocities in Syria against civilians and others. We will see more atrocities abroad. We will see atrocities, and we will have to face the likely consequence that our servicemembers, who have not had to face chemical weapons since 1925, will now have to prepare to face them on the battlefield.

If countries can use chemical weapons and there is no serious consequence, guess what else they can do. They can manufacture chemical weapons. Guess what else. They can sell chemical weapons and proliferate chemical weapons. It is not just a matter that the use of chemical weapons would be encouraged, but the manufacture and sale of chemical weapons by individuals or companies or countries that want to make money will proliferate.

This has a devastating potential effect on allies of the United States and the neighbors around Syria such as Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and Turkey. It would have a devastating impact on other allies, such as South Korea, that border nations that use chemical weapons. It could encourage other nations that have nonchemical weapons of mass destruction, for example, nuclear weapons, to think that the world will not stand up, there is no consequence for their use so they can violate treaties, violate norms, and no one is willing to stand and oppose it.

That was the reason I voted last week in the Foreign Relations Committee for this limited authorization of military force. I was fully aware the debate on the floor might amend or change it, and I was open to that possibility. But I thought it was important

to stand as a representative of Virginia and a representative of this country to say: The use of chemical weapons may suddenly be OK in the 21st century for Bashar al-Asad, it may suddenly be OK to Vladimir Putin and others, but it is not OK to the United States of America, and we are willing to stand and oppose them.

The limited military authorization that is on this floor, as the Presiding Officer knows, talks about action to punish, deter, and degrade the ability of the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons. The goal is to take the chemical weapons stockpile of that nation out of the battlefield equation. The civil war will continue. We don't have the power, as the United States, to dictate the outcome of that war. But chemical weapons should not be part of that war, and they should not be part of any war.

The authorization was limited. There will be no ground troops. It was limited in scope and duration, but make no mistake, the authorization was a clear statement of American resolve that there has to be a consequence for use of these weapons in violation of international norms that have been in place since 1925.

Finally, I want to talk about diplomacy and the urgent need that I know we all feel in this body, and as Americans, to pursue diplomatic alternatives—including some current alternatives on the table—that would be far preferable to military action. It is very important that we be creative. It is very important that we have direct talks with the perpetrators and enablers of these crimes, but also important to look to intermediaries and independent nations for diplomatic alternatives.

We have been trying to do so until recently and have been blocked in the United Nations. But the authorization for military force actually had that as its first caveat. The authorization said: Mr. President, if this passes, we authorize you to use military force, but before you do, you have to come back to Congress and stipulate that all diplomatic angles, options, and possibilities have been exhausted.

So on the committee, and with the wording of this authorization, we were very focused on the need to continue a diplomatic effort, and that is why it was so gratifying on Monday, on my way back to DC after a long week, to hear that Russia had come to the table with a proposal inspired by a discussion with administration figures. It is a proposal that the Syrian chemical weapons stockpile—one of the largest in the world—would be placed under international control.

Then a few hours later—and this was no coincidence—Syria, essentially Russia's client state, spoke up and said: We will very much entertain placing our chemical weapons under international control. Syria has even suggested, beyond that, they would finally sign on to the 1990s-era Chemical Weapons Con-

vention. They are one of six nations in the world that refused to sign it. Syria would not even acknowledge they had chemical weapons until 2012—even though the world knew it.

Over the last 48 hours, we have seen diplomatic options emerge that are very serious and meaningful. In fact—and it is too early to tell—if we can have these discussions and find an accord where Syria will sign on to the convention and put these weapons under international control, we will not only have avoided a bad thing, such as military action, which none of us want unless it is necessary, but we will have accomplished a good thing for Syrians and humanity by taking this massive chemical weapons stockpile off the battlefield and submitting it to international control and eventually destruction.

The offer that is on the table, and the action that has happened since Monday is very serious, very significant, and very encouraging, and it could be a game changer in this discussion. I said it is serious, but what we still need to determine is if it is sincere. It is serious and significant, but obviously what the administration needs to do in tandem with the U.N. is to determine whether it is sincere.

I will conclude by saying I think it is very important for Americans, for citizens, and for the Members of Congress to understand—we should make no mistake about this—that the diplomatic offer that is on the table was not on the table until America demonstrated it was prepared to stand for the proposition that chemical weapons cannot be used.

I have no doubt that had we not taken the action in Congress last week in the Foreign Relations Committee to show America is resolved to do something, if no one else in the world is resolved to do something, at least we would be resolved to do something, had we not taken that action, Russia would not have suddenly changed its position—they have been blocking action after action in the Security Council—and come forward with this serious recommendation. Had we not taken that action, and had they not been frightened of what America might do, Syria—which was willing to use with impunity these weapons against civilians—would not have come forward either.

So American resolve is important. American resolve is important to show the world that we value this norm and we will enforce it, even to the point of limited military action. But even more important, American resolve is important because it encourages other nations—even the perpetrators and enablers of the use of these weapons—to come forward and shoulder the responsibilities they have, or so we pray, in the days ahead.

What I ask of my colleagues and my countrymen is that because it has been our resolve that has produced a possibility for a huge diplomatic break-

through and win, I ask we continue to be resolved, continue to show strength, continue to hold out the option that there will be a consequence for this international crime, that America will play a leading role in making sure there is a consequence, and as long as we stand strong with this resolve, we will maximize the chance that we will be able to obtain the diplomatic result we want.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The minority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, my dad was a pilot in the Army Air Corps in World War II. He served in the Eighth Air Force, the 303rd Bomb Group stationed in Molesworth, England. On his 26th bombing mission over Nazi Germany, he was shot down and captured as a prisoner of war where he served for the remainder of the war. So I learned at a very young age that when we start talking about matters of war and peace, we must take these very seriously.

I appreciate the fact that President Obama came to Capitol Hill yesterday and spoke to both the Democratic conference and the Republican conference. I further appreciate very much the fact that President Obama spoke to the American people last night. I actually wish he had done it a little earlier since the chemical weapons attacks occurred on the 21st of August. It was roughly 3 weeks after that that he finally spoke to the American people. I think it would have been better for him and better for the country if he had done it sooner and demonstrated a greater urgency, but I am glad he did it.

When a President asks the American people to support our U.S. military and the use of military force, he has a solemn obligation to communicate to the American people how it will protect America's vital interests. He has an obligation to tell the American people why going to war is absolutely essential to U.S. national security. He has an obligation to lay out clear and realistic objectives; and finally, he has an obligation to explain how military intervention fits within America's broader foreign policy strategy.

I have used the word war advisedly because sometimes I think we get caught up in political correctness around here—talking about workplace violence at Fort Hood and overseas contingency operations.

As a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps who served 40 years told me last week when I asked for his advice on what the President was asking us to do, he said: Anytime you kill people in the name of the U.S. Government, it is an act of war.

So like others in this Chamber over the last few weeks, I have attended meetings with the President where I had the honor of being in his presence and listening to him in person on two occasions. I listened to other administration officials. Like all of us, I sat

through hours of classified briefings with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, and the State Department.

I have listened intently as Senator Kerry described in what I thought at first was an inadvertent statement made as a result of fatigue. I can only imagine what he must have been going through. He has been shuttled back and forth around the world to try to resolve this issue. But he described this strike as unbelievably small. I was further surprised when I heard the White House press secretary say: No, it wasn't a gaffe; he didn't misspeak. I mean, we all misspeak from time to time, so I expected him to say: Well, he should have used other words or might have used other words. Then Senator Kerry himself—now Secretary Kerry—said: No, I didn't misspeak.

I was encouraged to hear the President address the Nation because I believe before we take our case overseas to American allies, we should first make the case here at home to the American people.

In making their case for a brief, limited attack against Syria, administration officials have repeatedly said U.S. military intervention would not seek to topple the Asad regime even though regime change has been the policy of the U.S. Government since at least August 2011. They said their military campaign would not seek to change the momentum in Syria's civil war, even though, as I mentioned a moment ago, our government's official policy is one of regime change, that Asad must go.

My view is a U.S. attack that allowed Asad to remain in power with one of the world's largest stockpiles of chemical weapons would not promote U.S. national security interests. Indeed, it is not hard to imagine how that kind of intervention could actually backfire and end up being a propaganda disaster.

Many of us are concerned about upholding America's credibility, particularly when it comes to matters such as this, and I share their concern. But it would help if before we launch a half-hearted, ineffectual attack which gives our enemies a major propaganda victory that we come up with a more coherent plan and strategy for accomplishing our public policy goals.

Murphy's law says what can go wrong will go wrong. Well, there is a Murphy's law of war too—perhaps many of them but one of them is no plan to go to war survives the first contact intact. In other words, we can plan to shoot the first bullet, but we can't control what happens after that.

In all likelihood, such an attack would hurt our credibility and reduce U.S. public support for future interventions. This is what I mean: If we were to undertake a limited military attack against Asad in order to punish him for using chemical weapons—which is a horrific act on his part, a barbaric act on his part—but it left Asad in power, what is he going to tell the rest of the

world? He is going to say: The world's greatest military force took a shot at me and I am still here. I am still in power. I won and America lost. That is how I can see this backfiring in a very serious way, undermining America's credibility—credibility we must keep intact, particularly as we look at larger, looming threats such as the Iranian aspiration for nuclear weapons.

I wish to be clear, though: I would be willing to support a military operation in Syria but only if our intervention met certain criteria. No. 1: If it directly addressed the nightmare scenario of Asad's use of chemical weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. It is not just his use of chemical weapons on his own people; it is the potential that those chemical weapons could get into the hands of Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations and harm either Americans or American interests around the world.

No. 2: I could support a resolution if it involved the use of decisive and overwhelming force, without self-imposed limitations, and without leaking to our enemies what our tactics are and what it is we would not do, and ruining one of the greatest tools in war, which is the element of surprise. Why in the world would we tell Asad what we are going to do—and Secretary Kerry said it would be a small attack—and why would we tell Asad what we won't do, thereby eliminating both the ambiguity of our position and the potential threat of even more serious and overwhelming military force?

No. 3: I would be willing to support an authorization if it were an integral part of a larger coherent Syria policy that clearly defined the political end state. I still remember General Petraeus, the head of Central Command covering Iraq and Afghanistan, talking about our policy in those countries. He said, The most important question, perhaps, when we go to war is how does this end. We need a clearly defined political end state that we are trying to achieve by what the President requested and we need an outline of a realistic path to get there.

No. 4: I believe it is important that we have a sizable international coalition of nations, each of which is contributing to the war effort.

This is an amazing reversal for the President since the time he was a Senator and a Presidential candidate. To say we are not going to the United Nations—and I understand why; because of China and Russia, their veto of any resolution out of the Security Council, we are not going to go to NATO. Indeed, the President seemed content, or at least resigned, to going it alone. And if it is true this redline is the international community's redline, then the international community needs to contribute to the effort to hold Asad accountable.

The problem is President Obama's requested authorization for the use of military force under these circumstances fails to meet each of those

criteria. He has failed to make the case that a short, limited military campaign would promote our vital interests and our national security. He has failed to lay out clear and realistic objectives that could be obtained through the use of military force. And he has failed to offer a compelling description of how his proposed intervention would advance America's broader foreign policy strategy; indeed, how it would advance his own policy of regime change. Therefore, if we were asked to vote on an authorization under these circumstances, I would vote no.

I am under no illusion—none of us are—about the utter depravity of Bashar al-Asad. Over the last 2½ years his regime has committed unspeakable acts of rape, torture, and murder. The chemical weapons attacks, by the way, as described by Secretary Kerry's own testimony in the House of Representatives, included 11 earlier uses of chemical weapons, but they were smaller. Can we imagine the difficulty of trying to impose a redline when that redline is crossed 11 times before the President finally decides to try to enforce it? But there is no question that the use of chemical weapons shows an appalling disregard for human life and a cruel desire to terrorize the Syrian population. I, as others, have consistently demanded that Russia stop arming Asad and stop defending him and blocking U.N. Security Council resolutions, and aiding and abetting his barbaric atrocities against his own people. I want to see a free democratic Syria as much as anyone else. But that does not mean I will vote to support a reckless, ill-advised military intervention that could jeopardize our most important national security interests.

There have been a lot of people who have opined on the President's request, some better informed than others. One opinion I found particularly convincing was that of retired Army MG Robert Scales who has written that the path to war chosen by the Obama administration “violates every principle of war, including the element of surprise, achieving mass and having a clearly defined and obtainable objective.”

As I said, we know the latest chemical weapons attack occurred on August 21. Yet President Obama didn't address the Nation until 3 weeks later. The Syrians, of course, have now had weeks to prepare for any pending military intervention and no doubt have moved the chemical weapons to other locations and their military equipment to civilian population centers in order to protect them from any attack. With no element of surprise, it makes the potential for success of any military intervention much less and reveals there is no real coherent policy in this regard.

Consider what happened last Monday. Secretary of State Kerry made what he calls an off-the-cuff remark about the possibility of canceling a missile strike if Asad turned over all of his chemical weapons. In the same statement he

said he wasn't sure that would work or that he would ever be serious about it, but he did say it. Russia, of course, immediately responded by offering to broker a transfer of Syria's WMD to international monitors.

After spending weeks trying to make the case for war, President Obama has asked that the vote in this Chamber be canceled and is apparently treating the Russian-Syrian proposal as a serious diplomatic breakthrough. I would caution all of us—the American people and all of our colleagues—to be skeptical, for good reason, at this lifeline Vladimir Putin has now thrown the administration. I would remind the President and our colleagues that Russia itself is not in full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, nor is it even in compliance with nuclear arms control obligations that are subject to an international treaty. The litany of Russian offenses is long, but I would remind President Obama that since he launched the so-called Russian reset, Moscow has vetoed U.N. resolutions on Syria, sent advanced weaponry to the Assad regime, stolen elections, stoked anti-Americanism, made threats over our possible deployment of missile defense systems; it has expelled USAID from Russia, pulled out of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program; it has banned U.S. citizens from adopting Russian children, and offered asylum to NSA leaker Edward Snowden. In short, we have very little reason to believe Moscow is a reliable diplomatic partner. The Russians are part of the problem in Syria, not part of the solution. Let me say that clearly. The Russians are part of the problem in Syria; they are not credibly part of the solution.

Moreover, I am curious to learn how international monitors would adequately confirm the disposal of chemical weapons by a terrorist-sponsoring dictatorship among a ferocious civil war. While this strike the President talked about might have been limited in his imagination, if you are Bashar al-Assad, this is total war, because he realizes the only way he will leave power is in a pine box. He knows that. This is total war. I asked the President yesterday: What happens if, in order to punish Assad, we intervene militarily and it doesn't work? In his fight for his survival and the survival of his regime, he uses them again in an act of desperation? The President said, We will hit him again. Well, clearly, what had become a limited strike could quickly spiral out of control into a full-blown engagement in Syria. I think the President's own words suggest that.

But, of course, the Assad regime is the same one that refuses to acknowledge the full extent of its chemical arsenal—and this is something we will be hearing more about. It has bioweapons capability. Bioweapons capability is actually a much greater threat to American interests than chemical weapons, which are more difficult to transport and much harder to handle.

And this is the same dictatorship that was secretly working on a nuclear weapons program before the Israelis took care of it in 2007.

We have been told that however unfortunate President Obama's "redline" comment might have been, upholding his threat is about maintaining American credibility. And I admit, American credibility in matters of war and peace and national security are very, very important. But America's credibility on the world stage is about more than just Presidential rhetoric. It is about defining clear objectives and establishing a coherent strategy for achieving them. In the case of Syria, President Obama has not offered a clear strategy or clearly laid out his objectives.

Given all that, I am not surprised that the American people do not support the President's call for the use of limited military force in Syria. Those are the calls I got in my office. As I went back to Texas, I kept hearing people—who I would think under almost any other circumstances would say: If America's national security interests are at stake, then we are behind the President, we are behind military intervention, but they simply saw an incoherent policy and objectives that were not clearly laid out to obtain the result the President himself said is our policy.

Well, the most recent experience we have had as a country with limited war has been Libya, and I have heard the President tout that as perhaps an example about how we can get in and get out. The 2011 military operation that deposed Muammar Qadhafi was supposed to be a showcase example of a limited operation in which America led from behind and still obtained its objectives without putting U.S. boots on the ground. Unfortunately, the administration had no real plan for what happened after Qadhafi fell.

We all know it was 1 year ago today in Benghazi when terrorists linked to Al Qaeda massacred four brave Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens. Today Libya is spiraling into chaos and rapidly becoming a failed state. Earlier this month a leading British newspaper reported that "Libya has almost entirely stopped producing oil as the government loses control of much of the country to militia fighters." All sorts of bad actors, including terrorist groups, are flooding into the security vacuum, and "Libyans are increasingly at the mercy of militias which act outside the law."

Before I conclude, I want to say a few words about America's Armed Forces and America's role in the world.

We all know and are extraordinarily proud of our men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. military. No military in history has been more powerful. No military has ever been more courageous. No military has been more selfless and fought and bled and died to protect innocent people in far-flung places across the planet. No military

has ever done more to promote peace and prosperity around the world. I have every confidence that if called upon to act our men and women in uniform will do just that. They will perform their duties with the utmost skill, bravery, and professionalism. But we should never send them to war tying one hand behind their back and ask them to wage limited war against a dictator for whom, as I said earlier, this is total war. This is win or die. Military force is like a hammer, and you cannot thread the needle President Obama wants to thread with a hammer.

I would like to conclude by saying that this debate—which is important and serious and one the American people expect us to have—is not about isolationism versus internationalism. Believe me, I am no isolationist, and I fully support the global security role America has played since World War II, since my dad was a POW. A world without American military dominance would be, as Ronald Reagan noted, a much more dangerous place. I believe peace comes with American strength. However, it will be harder to maintain our global military dominance if we waste precious resources, our credibility, and political capital on hasty, misguided, unbelievably small interventions.

Once again, I would be willing to support an authorization for a military strike against Syria if it met certain basic criteria I have laid out. But I cannot support an operation that is so poorly conceived, so foolishly telegraphed, and virtually guaranteed to fail.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Good afternoon, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you very much, Madam President.

I rise to speak on the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and the decision that is before the Senate on how to respond to such inhumanity. I also come to the floor with the hope that the use of military force will not prove necessary and that the proposal to place Syria's chemical weapons program under United Nations control will, in fact, be successful.

Last night, in my view, the President delivered a strong, straightforward speech that directly outlined the current situation in Syria. He asked that a vote by the Congress to authorize military force against the Assad regime be delayed so that a strategy could be developed with Russia and the United Nations Security Council that would eliminate Syria's deadly chemical weapons program. I believe this is the appropriate path forward, and I appreciate very much the majority leader's holding off on bringing this resolution

for a vote so that negotiations can continue. Here in the Senate, there are discussions going on about how to amend the resolution passed by the Foreign Relations Committee to provide time for diplomacy.

I would also like to take a minute to give Russia credit for bringing forward this plan for a negotiated solution to the conflict. I disagree with the Senator from Texas. As the Russian Ambassador described to me on Monday of this week, he said Russia is sincere, wants to see a United Nations resolution, and supports the Geneva II process which would accompany a negotiated settlement to Syria's civil war. Based on my conversation with Ambassador Kislyak, I believe Russia's goal is now, in fact, to eliminate these weapons, and I would point out that is also our goal.

So I very much hope that the path to settlement—although complicated, no doubt, but if well-intentioned by all participants, it can be accomplished, and I deeply believe that. If the United Nations Security Council can agree on a resolution to put this proposal into practice, it would put the world's imprimatur on an important plan to safeguard and then to destroy Syria's chemical weapons program.

Russia's responsibility to get this done is enormous, and they must move with all deliberate speed. I think Russia and Syria must understand that the only way to forestall a U.S. strike on Syria is for there to be a good-faith agreement and process underway to put all of Syria's chemical weapons—including munitions, delivery systems, and chemicals themselves—under international control for eventual demolition.

Syria's chemical weapons program is maintained and stored across Syria in more than three dozen sites. There are indications that Syria currently has chemical weapons loaded and ready for immediate use in bombs, artillery, and rockets and already loaded on planes and helicopters. All of it needs to be inventoried, collected, and then destroyed as soon as possible if the effort is to succeed. This will be a large and complicated process, and the agreement may take some time to put in place. But if it can be done, we should take the time to get it done right. At the same time, we cannot allow there to be so much delay and hesitation, as has characterized some arms control efforts in the past.

It is clear to me that the United States is moving quickly already. Tomorrow Secretary Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will meet in Geneva to discuss the specifics of how to move forward.

I cannot stress enough the importance of this process. Not only is it a possible solution to the specter of future use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and a way to ensure that extremist elements of the opposition do not gain control of these weapons, but it also sets an important

precedent for the United Nations to act to resolve conflict before there is large military confrontation.

But it should be clear by now that the Asad regime has repeatedly used chemical weapons. So I would like to speak as chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and lay out some of the unclassified intelligence that shows the regime was indeed behind this largest use of chemical weapons in more than two decades. The unclassified assessment is based on classified intelligence we have seen on the Intelligence Committee and it has been available to all Senators. So here is the case.

The intelligence community assesses today, with "high confidence," that the Syrian regime used chemical weapons—specifically sarin—in the Damascus suburbs in the early morning of August 21. This assessment is supported by all 16 of our intelligence agencies as well as other countries, including the United Kingdom and France.

The Obama administration has publicly laid out its case at an unclassified level, and I have carefully reviewed the classified information that supports those findings.

First, there is intelligence indicating that the Asad regime—specifically its military and the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center, which manages its chemical weapons program—has used chemical weapons roughly a dozen times over the past year.

On June 13, 2 months before this latest attack, the administration stated that it had completed a review of all available intelligence and had concluded that the intelligence community had "high confidence" that the Asad regime used chemical weapons, "including the nerve agent sarin, on a small scale against the opposition multiple times." This followed similar assessments by France, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Turkey earlier this year. In some of these cases the regime may have been testing its delivery vehicles or various amounts of chemical agents. Some were small-scale tactical uses against the opposition. Perhaps Asad was just trying to find out how the world would react to his use of chemical weapons.

It has been more than a year since top intelligence officials learned of Syrian preparations to use sarin in large quantities. Since then, at numerous other briefings and hearings, the Intelligence Committee has followed this issue closely. On September 11, 2012—exactly a year ago—while protests against our Embassy in Cairo were underway and the attack on our diplomatic facility in Benghazi was imminent, I was again briefed on the administration's plans should Asad conduct such an attack.

So the attack on August 21 in Damascus was not a first-time use, rather it was a major escalation in the regime's willingness to employ weapons long

held as anathema by almost the entire world population.

Let me lay out the intelligence case that the Asad regime used chemical weapons on August 21. Much of this is described in a four-page August 30 unclassified document entitled "U.S. Government Assessment of the Syrian Government's Use of Chemical Weapons on August 21, 2013."

I ask unanimous consent that the document be printed in the RECORD.

We know that 3 days before the attack of August 21, Syrian officials involved in the preparation and use of chemical weapons and associated with the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center were "preparing chemical munitions" in the Damascus suburb of Adra. That is according to the intelligence community.

The intelligence specifically relates to an area in Adra that the regime has used for mixing chemical weapons, including sarin. The Syrian chemical weapons personnel were operating and present there from August 18 to the early morning of August 21, and finished their work shortly before the attack began.

Some of the intelligence collected on the preparations for the attack is highly sensitive. So the details of the Syrian actions cannot be described publicly without jeopardizing our ability to collect this kind of intelligence in the future. But in numerous classified briefings over the past 2 weeks, Members of Congress have been provided with additional detail on the names of the officials involved and the stream of human signals and geospatial intelligence that indicates that regime was preparing to use chemical weapons. So we actually have names.

It is from the specificity of this intelligence reporting that the intelligence community has drawn its high level of confidence that the regime was behind the use of chemical weapons. The strike began in the early morning hours on Wednesday, August 21. It is beyond doubt that large amounts of artillery and rockets were launched from regime-controlled territory in Damascus and rained down on the opposition-controlled areas of the Damascus suburbs. There is satellite imagery actually showing this, as well as thousands of firsthand accounts that began showing up on social media sites at around 2:30 a.m.

The barrage continued for 5 days, though the use of chemical weapons appears to have been deliberately suspended by the regime after the first few hours. Since the attack, physical samples from the area have been analyzed. The intelligence community assesses with high confidence that "laboratory analysis of physiological samples obtained from a number of individuals revealed exposure to Sarin."

More than 100 videos were posted online showing the effects of the chemical weapons on hundreds of men, women and, most troubling, sleeping children who were dead or showing the

signs of exposure to the nerve agent. At my request, the intelligence community compiled a representative sample of 13 videos which have been corroborated and verified. According to the intelligence community, "At least 12 locations are portrayed in the publicly available videos, and a sampling of those videos confirmed that some were shot at general times and locations described in the footage."

These videos clearly show the suffering and death caused by these weapons. The intelligence committee has posted these videos on our Web site, www.intelligence.senate.gov. I would urge all Americans to look at this. They are absolutely horrendous and should shock the conscience of all humanity.

The videos show the physical manifestations of a nerve agent attack: foaming mouth, pinpointed and constricted pupils, convulsions, gasping for breath, all happening as the nervous system begins to shut down.

One video shows a lifeless toddler receiving emergency respiratory assistance. Another shows a young boy struggling to breathe, gasping while his eyes are swollen shut and covered in mucous. A third heinous video shows rows and rows of bodies lined up in an improvised morgue. Another shows a man foaming at the mouth and convulsing, both indications of sarin exposure. It goes on and on.

Last night, the President urged all Americans to watch these videos to see how hideous the use of these chemicals actually is. Seeing these images firsthand makes clear why chemical weapons have been banned and why Asad must be prevented from using them again.

What truly affected me was a video I saw of a little Syrian girl with long dark hair who was wearing pajamas. The little girl looked just like my daughter at that age—same hair, same pajamas, same innocence, except the little Syrian girl was lifeless. She had died from exposure to sarin, a chemical the world has essentially outlawed. For me, watching the videos shows the abhorrence of chemical weapons. It shows why we must do something. Fired into densely populated areas such as cities, they have an indiscriminate effect, killing everyone in their path and causing suffering and eventual death to others nearby.

We have evidence that the chemical attack was premeditated and planned as part of the regime's heinous tactics against the rebels. Specifically, there is intelligence that Syrian regime personnel were prepared with gas masks for its people in the area, so it could clear these areas in the Damascus suburbs that were attacked in order to wrest control from the opposition. Additional intelligence collected following the attacks includes communications from regime officials that confirms their knowledge that chemical weapons were used.

Let me repeat that. Additional intelligence following the attack includes

communications from regime officials that confirms their knowledge that chemical weapons were used. The official unclassified intelligence assessment distributed by the administration states: "We intercepted communications involving a senior official intimately familiar with the offensive who confirmed that chemical weapons were used by the regime on August 21 and was concerned with the U.N. inspectors obtaining evidence." On the afternoon of August 21, we have intelligence that Syrian chemical weapons personnel were directed to "cease operations." This is specific evidence.

To sum up the intelligence case, I have no doubt the regime ordered the use of chemical weapons on August 21. I also have no doubt the use of these weapons by the military and under the guidance of Syria's chemical weapons team, Branch 450, operates under the command and control of the regime, under the ultimate leadership and responsibility of President Asad.

Let me move now from the intelligence case of Syria's use of sarin on August 21 to the question before the Senate of how to respond. As I said in the beginning, it would be my strong hope that the United States and Russia can come to an agreement with other U.N. Security Council members on a way to resolve this situation peacefully.

Not only is a peaceful solution preferred to the use of force, but if Syria's chemical weapons program, including all of its precursors, chemicals, equipment, delivery systems, and loaded bombs, can be put in the custody of the United Nations for its eventual destruction, that would provide a much stronger protection against future use.

It also sets an important precedent for the future for the world to settle other disputes of this nature. I have urged the Obama administration to take all possible steps to make this proposal work. I appreciate the President's decision to ask us to delay any use-of-force resolution so diplomacy can be given a chance. However, the Senate may still face a resolution to authorize the use of force in the event that all diplomatic options fail. Many of my colleagues have noted that the threat of force has helped push forward the diplomatic option.

The Asad regime has clearly used chemical weapons to gas its own people. I believe it will most likely do so again, unless it is confronted with a major condemnation by the world. That now is beginning to happen.

The regime has escalated its attacks from small scale ones that killed 6 or 8 to 10 people with sarin to an attack that killed more than 1,000. We know the regime has munitions that could kill tens of thousands of Syrians in Aleppo or Homs. If the world does not respond now, we bear the responsibility if a larger tragedy happens later.

Of course, it is not only Syria who is looking at preparing and using weapons long banned by the international

community. Iran is watching intently what the world will do in Syria and will apply the lessons it learns to its current development of nuclear weapons.

North Korea, which has refrained from using both the nuclear weapons it has and the chemical weapons stockpile that actually dwarfs that of Syria, may well use the Asad example to fire on South Korea. Remember, we have 28,000-plus troops right over the border of the DMZ, within a half hour.

More generally, countries around the world will see the United States as a paper tiger if it promises to take action but fails to do so. Former Secretary of Defense, Bob Gates, whom I have great respect for, who worked in both the Bush and Obama administrations, said exactly that when he came out in support on the resolution for use of force against Syria.

Gates said this:

I strongly urge the Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, to approve the President's request for authorization to use force. Whatever one's views on the current United States policy towards Syria, failure by Congress to approve the request would, in my view, have profoundly negative and dangerous consequences for the United States, not just in the Middle East, but around the world both now and in the future.

I strongly believe the major powers in the world have a responsibility to take action when a country not only slaughters 100,000 of its own citizens, makes millions homeless within Syria, and makes millions into refugees in Turkey and Jordan, but especially when it is willing to use weapons against them that have been banned as an affront to all humanity because they are outlawed by a treaty joined by 189 nations representing 98 percent of the world's population.

If the United Nations does not act in such cases, I believe it becomes irrelevant. If nothing is done to stop this use of chemical weapons, they will be used in future conflicts. I am confident of that.

American servicemen in World War I were gassed with their allied partners. In our briefings over the past week, the military has made clear to us that if we allow the prohibition on chemical weapons use to erode, our men and women in uniform may again suffer from these weapons on the battlefield.

Chemical weapons are not like conventional weapons. Consider for a moment how sarin, for example, can kill so indiscriminately. The closer you are to the release, such as from a mortar or an artillery shell, the more certain you are to death. It spreads over a wide geographic area. It can shift from one neighborhood to another if the wind shifts.

During World War I, chemical weapons, primarily chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas were used by both sides of the war. They caused an estimated 100,000 fatalities and 1.3 million injuries, 1,462 American soldiers were killed, and 72,807 were injured by chemical weapons, which represented one-

third of all U.S. casualties during World War I.

Since World War I, not a single U.S. soldier has died in battle from exposure to chemical weapons. However, according to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “since World War I, chemical weapons have caused more than 1 million casualties globally.”

During World War II, Nazi Germany used carbon monoxide and pesticides such as Zyklon B in gas chambers during the Holocaust, killing an estimated 3 million people.

An additional document will be printed in the RECORD that details the history and uses of chemical weapons around the world since World War I.

These past uses of chemical weapons make clear that they should never be used again and that the entire world must stand up and take action if they are.

In Syria, the intentional use of chemical weapons on civilians, on men, women, and children gassed to death during the middle of the night while they were sleeping, is a travesty that reflects hatred and increasing desperation of the Asad regime. I also believe there are other chemical weapons that have been mixed and loaded into delivery vehicles with the potential to kill thousands more.

Think about that. If Asad can slaughter 100,000 of his own people without a second thought, what is he going to do next if we do nothing to hold him accountable? What is he going to do next if the United Nations does nothing? What is he going to do next if this effort to reach consensus on the Security Council doesn't work? He will use them again. I believe they are ready to go.

Why would the Asad regime load bombs with chemical weapons and not use them?

If the United States does nothing in the face of this atrocity, it sends such a signal of weakness to the rest of the world that we are, yes, a paper tiger. That is going to be the conclusion in Iran and in North Korea.

The answer is we cannot turn our backs. The use of chemical weapons is prohibited by international law and it must now be condemned by the world with action.

Albert Einstein said in a well-known quote: “The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it.”

For more than 90 years, our country has played the leading role in the world in prohibiting the atrocities of World War I and then World War II. We are the Nation that others look upon to stop repressive dictators and massive violations of human rights. We must act in Syria. We cannot withdraw into our own borders, do nothing, and let the slaughter continue.

I hope military force will not be needed, that we will allow the time for the United Nations and the parties on the Security Council to put an agree-

ment together, and that the threat of force will be sufficient to change President Asad's behavior.

If these diplomatic efforts at the U.N. fail, I know we are going to be back here on the floor to consider the authorization for use of military force, but I sincerely hope it won't be necessary.

When the Ambassador from Russia described Russia's intentions to me on Monday, he told me it was sincere. Now the ball is in Russia's court. Russia and the United States will need to come together, bring the other parties together, and make it possible for the United Nations to act so the United States won't have to.

I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT'S USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS ON AUGUST 21, 2013

The United States Government assesses with high confidence that the Syrian government carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs on August 21, 2013. We further assess that the regime used a nerve agent in the attack. These all-source assessments are based on human, signals, and geospatial intelligence as well as a significant body of open source reporting. Our classified assessments have been shared with the U.S. Congress and key international partners. To protect sources and methods, we cannot publicly release all available intelligence—but what follows is an unclassified summary of the U.S. Intelligence Community's analysis of what took place.

SYRIAN GOVERNMENT USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS ON AUGUST 21

A large body of independent sources indicates that a chemical weapons attack took place in the Damascus suburbs on August 21. In addition to U.S. intelligence information, there are accounts from international and Syrian medical personnel; videos; witness accounts; thousands of social media reports from at least 12 different locations in the Damascus area; journalist accounts; and reports from highly credible nongovernmental organizations.

A preliminary U.S. government assessment determined that 1,429 people were killed in the chemical weapons attack, including at least 426 children, though this assessment will certainly evolve as we obtain more information.

We assess with high confidence that the Syrian government carried out the chemical weapons attack against opposition elements in the Damascus suburbs on August 21. We assess that the scenario in which the opposition executed the attack on August 21 is highly unlikely. The body of information used to make this assessment includes intelligence pertaining to the regime's preparations for this attack and its means of delivery, multiple streams of intelligence about the attack itself and its effect, our post-attack observations, and the differences between the capabilities of the regime and the opposition. Our high confidence assessment is the strongest position that the U.S. Intelligence Community can take short of confirmation. We will continue to seek additional information to close gaps in our understanding of what took place.

BACKGROUND

The Syrian regime maintains a stockpile of numerous chemical agents, including mus-

tard, sarin, and VX and has thousands of munitions that can be used to deliver chemical warfare agents.

Syrian President Bashar al-Asad is the ultimate decision maker for the chemical weapons program and members of the program are carefully vetted to ensure security and loyalty. The Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC)—which is subordinate to the Syrian Ministry of Defense—manages Syria's chemical weapons program.

We assess with high confidence that the Syrian regime has used chemical weapons on a small scale against the opposition multiple times in the last year, including in the Damascus suburbs. This assessment is based on multiple streams of information including reporting of Syrian officials planning and executing chemical weapons attacks and laboratory analysis of physiological samples obtained from a number of individuals, which revealed exposure to sarin. We assess that the opposition has not used chemical weapons.

The Syrian regime has the types of munitions that we assess were used to carry out the attack on August 21, and has the ability to strike simultaneously in multiple locations. We have seen no indication that the opposition has carried out a large-scale, coordinated rocket and artillery attack like the one that occurred on August 21.

We assess that the Syrian regime has used chemical weapons over the last year primarily to gain the upper hand or break a stalemate in areas where it has struggled to seize and hold strategically valuable territory. In this regard, we continue to judge that the Syrian regime views chemical weapons as one of many tools in its arsenal, including air power and ballistic missiles, which they indiscriminately use against the opposition.

The Syrian regime has initiated an effort to rid the Damascus suburbs of opposition forces using the area as a base to stage attacks against regime targets in the capital. The regime has failed to clear dozens of Damascus neighborhoods of opposition elements, including neighborhoods targeted on August 21, despite employing nearly all of its conventional weapons systems. We assess that the regime's frustration with its inability to secure large portions of Damascus may have contributed to its decision to use chemical weapons on August 21.

PREPARATION

We have intelligence that leads us to assess that Syrian chemical weapons personnel—including personnel assessed to be associated with the SSRC—were preparing chemical munitions prior to the attack. In the three days prior to the attack, we collected streams of human, signals and geospatial intelligence that reveal regime activities that we assess were associated with preparations for a chemical weapons attack.

Syrian chemical weapons personnel were operating in the Damascus suburb of Adra from Sunday, August 18 until early in the morning on Wednesday, August 21 near an area that the regime uses to mix chemical weapons, including sarin. On August 21, a Syrian regime element prepared for a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus area, including through the utilization of gas masks. Our intelligence sources in the Damascus area did not detect any indications in the days prior to the attack that opposition affiliates were planning to use chemical weapons.

THE ATTACK

Multiple streams of intelligence indicate that the regime executed a rocket and artillery attack against the Damascus suburbs in the early hours of August 21. Satellite detections corroborate that attacks from a regime-controlled area struck neighborhoods

where the chemical attacks reportedly occurred—including Kafr Batna, Jawbar, Ayn Tarma, Darayya, and Mu'addamiyah. This includes the detection of rocket launches from regime controlled territory early in the morning, approximately 90 minutes before the first report of a chemical attack appeared in social media. The lack of flight activity or missile launches also leads us to conclude that the regime used rockets in the attack.

Local social media reports of a chemical attack in the Damascus suburbs began at 2:30 a.m. local time on August 21. Within the next four hours there were thousands of social media reports on this attack from at least 12 different locations in the Damascus area. Multiple accounts described chemical-filled rockets impacting opposition-controlled areas.

Three hospitals in the Damascus area received approximately 3,600 patients displaying symptoms consistent with nerve agent exposure in less than three hours on the morning of August 21, according to a highly credible international humanitarian organization. The reported symptoms, and the epidemiological pattern of events—characterized by the massive influx of patients in a short period of time, the origin of the patients, and the contamination of medical and first aid workers—were consistent with mass exposure to a nerve agent. We also received reports from international and Syrian medical personnel on the ground.

We have identified one hundred videos attributed to the attack, many of which show large numbers of bodies exhibiting physical signs consistent with, but not unique to, nerve agent exposure. The reported symptoms of victims included unconsciousness, foaming from the nose and mouth, constricted pupils, rapid heartbeat, and difficulty breathing. Several of the videos show what appear to be numerous fatalities with no visible injuries, which is consistent with death from chemical weapons, and inconsistent with death from small-arms, high-explosive munitions or blister agents. At least 12 locations are portrayed in the publicly available videos, and a sampling of those videos confirmed that some were shot at the general times and locations described in the footage.

We assess the Syrian opposition does not have the capability to fabricate all of the videos, physical symptoms verified by medical personnel and NGOs, and other information associated with this chemical attack.

We have a body of information, including past Syrian practice, that leads us to conclude that regime officials were witting of and directed the attack on August 21. We intercepted communications involving a senior official intimately familiar with the offensive who confirmed that chemical weapons were used by the regime on August 21 and was concerned with the U.N. inspectors obtaining evidence. On the afternoon of August 21, we have intelligence that Syrian chemical weapons personnel were directed to cease operations. At the same time, the regime intensified the artillery barrage targeting many of the neighborhoods where chemical attacks occurred. In the 24 hour period after the attack, we detected indications of artillery and rocket fire at a rate approximately four times higher than the ten preceding days. We continued to see indications of sustained shelling in the neighborhoods up until the morning of August 26.

To conclude, there is a substantial body of information that implicates the Syrian government's responsibility in the chemical weapons attack that took place on August 21. As indicated, there is additional intelligence that remains classified because of sources and methods concerns that is being

provided to Congress and international partners.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS USAGE SINCE WORLD WAR I

1,462 American soldiers were killed and 72,807 injured by chemical weapons in World War I, one-third of all U.S. casualties during the war. No Americans have died in battle from chemical weapons since World War I.

According to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Since World War I, chemical weapons have caused more than one million casualties globally."

1914-1918—During World War I, chemical weapons (primarily chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas) were used by both sides and caused an estimated 100,000 fatalities and 1.3 million injuries.

During the war, Germany used 68,000 tons of gas, the French used 36,000 tons, and the British used 25,000.

April 1915—Germany used chlorine gas at the Battle of Ypres. This is the first significant use of chemical weapons in World War I.

September 1915—The British used chlorine gas against the Germans at the Battle of Loos.

February 1918—Germans used phosgene and chloropicrin artillery shells against American troops. This is the first major use of chemical weapons against U.S. forces.

June 1918—The United States employed a wide variety of chemical weapons against Axis forces using British and French artillery shells.

1918-1921—The Bolshevik army used chemical weapons to suppress at least three uprisings following the Bolshevik revolution.

1919—The British Air Force used Adamsite gas, a vomiting agent, against the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War.

1921-1927—Spanish forces used mustard gas against Berber rebels during the Third Rif War in Morocco.

1936—Italy used mustard gas during its invasion of Ethiopia. No precise estimate of chemical weapon-specific casualties, but contemporary Soviet estimates stated 15,000 Ethiopian casualties from chemical weapons.

1937-1945—Japan used chemical weapons (sulfur mustard, chlorine, chloropicrin, phosgene, and lewisite) during its invasion of China. The Japanese were the only country to use chemical weapons during World War II and did not use them against Western forces. Estimated 10,000 Chinese fatalities and 80,000 casualties as a result of chemical weapons.

1939-1945—Nazi Germany used carbon monoxide and pesticides, such as Zyklon B (hydrocyanic acid), in gas chambers during the Holocaust. Estimated 3 million killed.

1941—Mobile vans were used following the German invasion of the Soviet Union to murder an unknown number of Jews, Roma, and mental patients using exhaust from the vans to gas victims. Vans were also used at the Chelmno concentration camp in Poland.

1942—Nazi Germany began using diesel gas chambers at the Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka camps in Poland.

Zyklon B was used to kill up to 6,000 Jews per day at Auschwitz. Zyklon B was also used at Stutthoff, Mauthausen, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrueck concentration camps.

1963-1967—Egypt used phosgene and mustard gas against Yemeni royalist forces during the North Yemen Civil War between royalists and republicans. Egypt denied their use, but the Red Cross affirmed their use after forensic investigation.

1975-1982—Las and Vietnamese forces used chemical weapons against Hmong rebels. At least 6,504 killed.

1978-1982—Vietnamese forces used chemical weapons against Kampuchean troops and Khmer villages. At least 1,014 fatalities.

1979-1992—The United States alleged that the Soviet Union used mustard gas and other chemical weapons against mujahidin rebels in Afghanistan. At least 3,000 fatalities.

1980-1988—During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq employed mustard gas and Tabun nerve agent. Iran retaliated with mustard, phosgene, and hydrogen cyanide gas. Estimated 1 million chemical weapons casualties.

1987—Libya allegedly used Iranian-supplied mustard gas against Chadian forces. However, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons did not find the allegations sufficiently persuasive to send investigators.

1988—Iraq used hydrogen cyanide and mustard gas against the Kurdish village of Halabja. Estimated 5,000 casualties.

1994—Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese terrorist group, released sarin gas in Matsumoto, Japan. 8 fatalities and 200 injuries.

1995—Aum Shinrikyo released sarin gas in the Tokyo subway system. 12 fatalities and 5,000 estimated casualties.

Sources: Monterey Institute of International Studies, The Nonproliferation Review, declassified CIA report, Encyclopedia Britannica, The Washington Post, Reuters, New York Times, NPR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

BENGHAZI

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, 12 years ago Al Qaeda terrorists attacked our homeland, killing nearly 3,000 people. I will never forget the heroes of that day, many of whom laid down their lives for others.

Their courage is epitomized by the words spoken by a fire department captain at the World Trade Center. He radioed in to say, "We're still heading up." Indeed, these firefighters were still heading up while others were fleeing the flames and the acrid smoke. Where that kind of courage and determination comes from is hard to contemplate, but we are so grateful our first responders have that kind of dedication and courage.

Nor will I ever forget the many people who continue to live with the scars, whether they are civilians who lost a loved one that day, firefighters, police officers, or other first responders who rushed to the scene, or our brave military servicemembers who answered the call to defend our country in the years that followed. We must never lose sight of their sacrifice.

This week we have been considering the weighty issue of whether to grant the administration the authority to use military force against Syria. This day, the anniversary of those horrific attacks on our country 12 years ago, should not pass without our calling attention to another important matter of unfinished business critical to our national security and to our Nation's conscience.

A year ago today terrorists with links to Al Qaeda attacked our diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya. Despite a steadily escalating stream of threat reporting, and an obvious inability of Libyan security forces to protect