

From: [Davis, Jeff A CAPT USN OSD PA \(US\)](#)
To: [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM: \(b\)\(6\)](#) [Wright, Mark E CIV OSD PA \(US\)](#); [Rojas, \(b\)\(6\)](#)
Subject: FW: ~~SECRET~~ Suspected Use of Chemical weapons against CF or Partner Forces
Date: Monday, June 26, 2017 11:44:09 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

From: Votel, Joseph L GEN MIL USA USCENTCOM CCCC (b)(6)
Sent: Sunday, June 25, 2017 7:41 AM
To: Faller, Craig S RADM USN (US) (b)(6) Dunford, Joseph F Jr Gen USMC JS (US) (b)(6)
Cc: Sweeney, Kevin M SES (US) (b)(6) Karem, Robert S HON OSD OUSD POLICY (US) (b)(6) White, Dana W SES OSD (US) (b)(6) (b)(6) USARMY OSD PA (US) (b)(6) Selva, Paul J Gen USAF JS OCJCS (US) (b)(6) Mayville, William C Jr LTG USARMY JS ODJS (US) (b)(6) Dolan, John L Lt Gen USAF JS J3 (US) (b)(6) (b)(6) USARMY JS OCJCS (US) (b)(6) Bunch, Lance R Col USAF OSD OSD (US) (b)(6)

Subject: ~~SECRET~~ Suspected Use of Chemical weapons against CF or Partner Forces

Classification: ~~SECRET~~ REL TO USA, FVEY

HTML Pls

Mr Secretary and Chairman,

This is for your information.

Another Chemical (Mustard) attack against partnered forces in Mosul. While there are no US or Coalition casualties --- very definite CTS casualties. This attack represents at least the 19th time that ISIS has used these types of munitions against CF / Partnered forces since the start of the West Mosul Campaign.

Vr,

Votel

Classified By: Votel, Joseph L GEN MIL USA USCENTCOM CCCC

JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0001

Derived From:USCENTCOM SCG, CCR 380-14, 24 Feb 2016

Declassify On:6/13/2042

Classification: ~~SECRET//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

From: [REDACTED] (b)(3);10 U.S.C. § 130.(b)(6)

Sent: Sunday, June 25, 2017 6:57 AM

To: Votel, Joseph L GEN MIL USA USCENTCOM CCCC

BLUF: SOJTF reports suspected use of a chemically enhanced munition (mustard) by ISIS against Partnered Forces. 3x CTS members (TF-2, Salah ah Din BN) reported that an IDF round emitted a yellow smoke and smelled of almonds. Approximately 8x hours later, casualties experienced blisters and difficulty breathing, indicative of mustard gas. Soldiers will be decontaminated and their clothing tested with an AP4C after arriving at TAA Wyvern CCP. No injuries to CF or damage to friendly equipment was reported.

WHO: 3x Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) personnel (TF-2, Salah ah Din BN)

WHAT: Suspected Mustard Gas IDF attack

WHEN: Exposure: 1000Z 24 JUN 17 | TAA Wyvern CCP informed: 2000Z 24 JUN 17

WHERE: Old City, West Mosul (NFI)

WAY AHEAD: CENTCOM JOC will continue to monitor and report

Amplifying Information: TAA Wyvern was informed of 3x casualties with suspected chemically enhanced munition (CEM) attack signs and symptoms. The soldiers explained that an IDF round exploded in close proximity and emitted yellow smoke and smelled of almonds. Approximately eight hours later, the soldiers experienced blisters and difficulty breathing, indicative of mustard gas. Soldiers will be decontaminated and their clothing tested with an AP4C after arriving at TAA Wyvern CCP.

14 APR 1730Z: Possible mustard mortar attack on TF-2 in B.29, IVO 38SLF [REDACTED] (b)(6) Initially reported as chlorine exposure. ~10 victims exhibited blisters, trouble breathing, red inflamed skin, vomiting, itchy skin.

[REDACTED] (b)(1),Sec. 1.4(h)

15 APR 0600Z: Possible mustard mortar attack on 6th DEVI FEDPOL and Ninewah Police Emergency Battalion in B. 29 IVO 38SLF [REDACTED] (b)(6) 11 possible victims from this attack received emergency medical treatment. No details of symptoms.

16 APR 1300Z: Possible IED containing toxic chemicals (possible hydrogen cyanide) attack on CTS TF-2 in B.32 IVO 38SLF (b)(6) Nine CTS soldiers exposed exhibiting minor respiratory issues and nausea. (b)(7)(C),Sec. 1.4 (h)

17 APR 1145Z: Possible mustard chemical mortar attack on TRIDENT 1711B in Sector B.34 IVO 38SLF (b)(6) 18 possible victims, no details of symptoms. (b)(7)(C),Sec. 1.4 (h)

17 APR 1730Z: Possible toxic chemical (initial reports of nerve agent) IED on 3rd Division, 10th Brigade, 3rd Battalion Fed Pol in Sector B.29 IVO 38SLF 3114323211. Two victims experienced a wide variety of symptoms

18 APR: Possible attack at undisclosed location in Mosul.

19 APR: ISIS members conducted attack with UI gas.

20 APR 1245Z: Possible mustard mortar attack on CTS TF-2 in B.32 IVO 38SLF 2971423877. Two soldiers experienced extreme respiratory distress. (b)(7)(C),Sec. 1.4 (h)

20 APR 1303Z: Emergency Response Division (ERD) unit was attacked by chemical mortar fire in B.52 IVO 38SLF29842376. Mortar position was the same position which fired on CTS and ISF on 15 April 2017; 1320Z, one mortar struck and destroyed at 38SLF3073725017

21 APR 1000Z: Possible toxic chemical mortar attack on CTS TF-2 in B32 IVO 38SLF 2953623834. No injuries or symptoms reported. (b)(7)(C),Sec. 1.4 (h)

22 APR 1312Z: Possible dual mustard mortar attacks on CTS TF-2 in B.32 IVO (38S LF 29803 23730) | (38S LF 29735 23721. CTS TF-2 reported that two of three impacts resulted in a yellow-tar like substance at the site with a distinct smell. Five TF-2 injured; worst patient was noted to be foaming from the mouth and having difficulty

24 APR 0758Z: Possible chlorine incident on CTS TF-1 Nasariya Battalion in B.07 IVO 38S LF 25420 23770. 7 CTS members observed white smoke. Symptoms included teary eyes, running nose, and respiratory difficulties.

29 APR 1130Z: Possible toxic chemical attack on CTS TF-2 in B.21. Personnel observed mild rashes to arms, forehead, and one patient complained of shortness of breath. Patients were checked, observed to be stable, and forwarded to the MoH for further treatment.

29 APR 1315Z: Possible mustard attack on civilians with two rockets Al Islah Az Zira'ai neighborhood of Mosul. An unknown number of civilians received skin burns and blisters at this location.

29 APR 1730Z: Possible use of Chemical Weapons on Iraqi FEDPOL. FEDPOL Officer arrived at NGO casualty collection point with concerns of chemical exposure. Testing was conducted and results were inconclusive. The

01 MAY 1300Z: Possible Sulphur Mustard mortar attack on CTS TF-2 / FEDPOL in B.32 IVO 38S LF 30077 24010. (b)(7)(C),Sec. 1.4 (h)

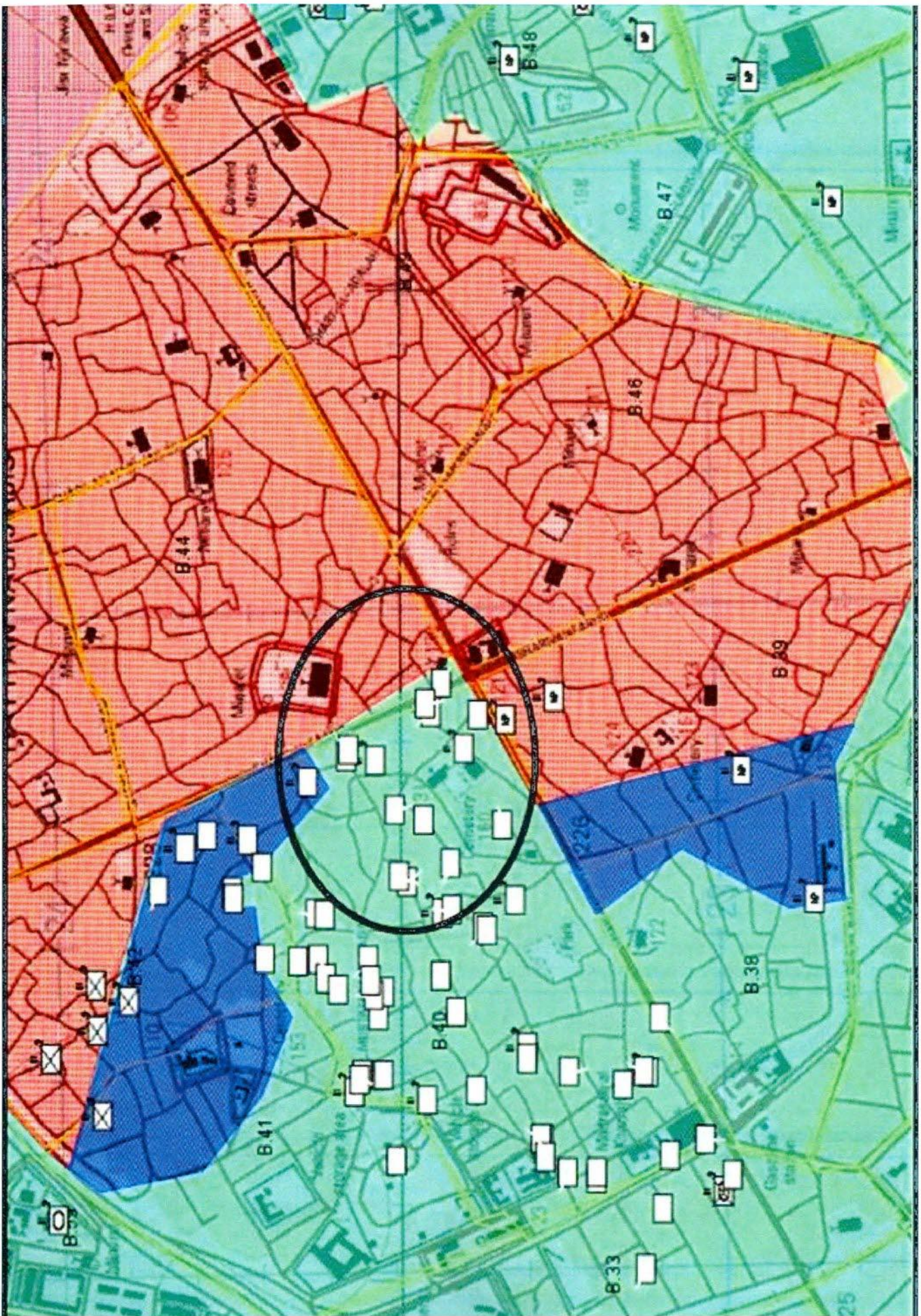
04 JUN 1400Z: Possible chemical munition attack on 9th IAD's 73rd BDE, 2nd BN. 2nd BN reported receiving a mortar attack with a possible chemical munition. 10x ISF casualties were evacuated with signs and symptoms of choking and vomiting. There were no Coalition Force casualties.

(b)(1),Sec. 1.4 (h)

(b)(1),Sec. 1.4 (h)

18 JUN 0925Z: SOJTF reports 2x injuries from a chemical munition attack in West Mosul, the presence of Chlorine and Mustard was confirmed with a hand-held chemical detection system (AP4C). NOTE: 2x Partner Forces (CTS) injured, no damage to friendly equipment reported.

24 JUN 1000Z: suspected use of a chemically enhanced munition (mustard) by ISIS. 3x CTS members (TF-2, Salah ah Din BN) reported that an IDF round emitted a yellow smoke and smelled of almonds. Approximately 8x hours later, casualties experienced blisters and difficulty breathing, indicative of mustard gas.



JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0005

From: Rigler, Tara M. EOP/NSC
To: [White, Dana W SES OSD \(US\); \(b\)\(6\) OSD PA \(US\); Wright, Mark E CIV OSD PA \(US\); OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM; OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations](#)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: FW: DRAFT June 27 Daily Press Guidance
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 9:40:12 AM
Attachments: [DRAFT June 27 Daily Press Guidance.docx](#)

Good Morning Dana and (b)(6)

Attached is today's DRAFT Daily Press Guidance (b)(5)
(b)(5)

Many thanks,
Tara

(b)(5)

Syrian Regime Prepare for CW Attack

The White House released a statement Monday warning the Syrian regime not to conduct chemical attacks.

(b)(5)

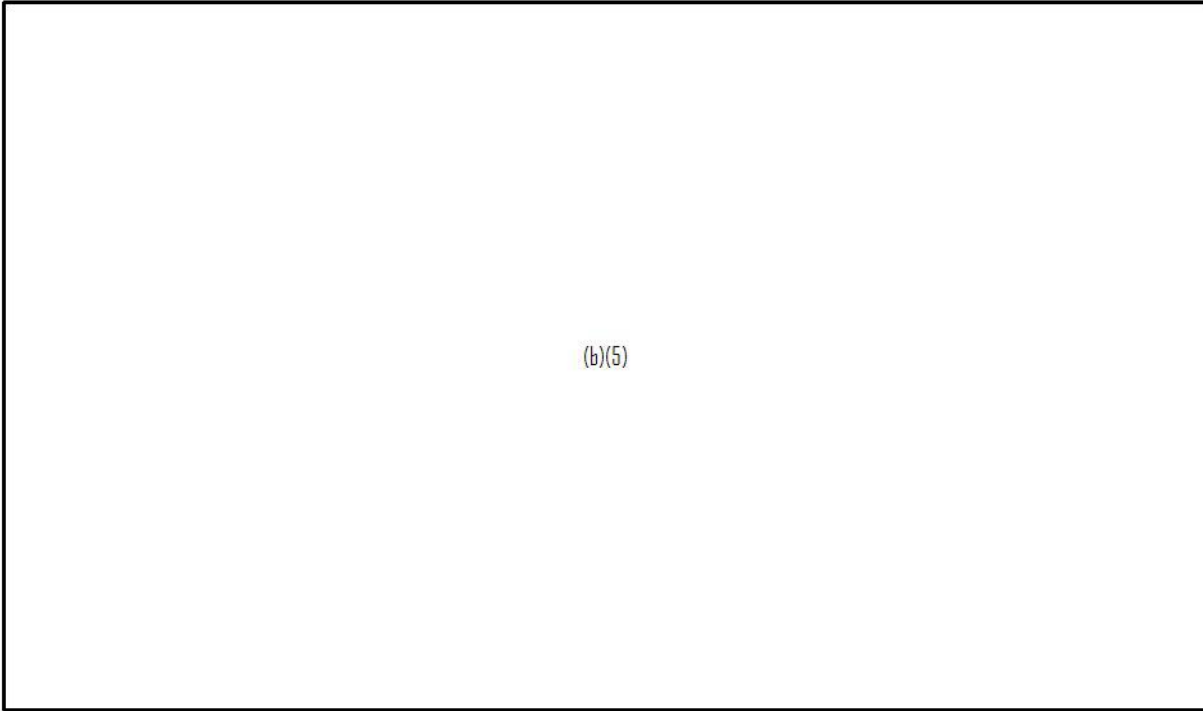
Syrian Regime Prepare for CW Attack

The White House released a statement yesterday warning the Syrian regime not to conduct chemical attacks.

(b)(5)



NSC DAILY PRESS GUIDANCE



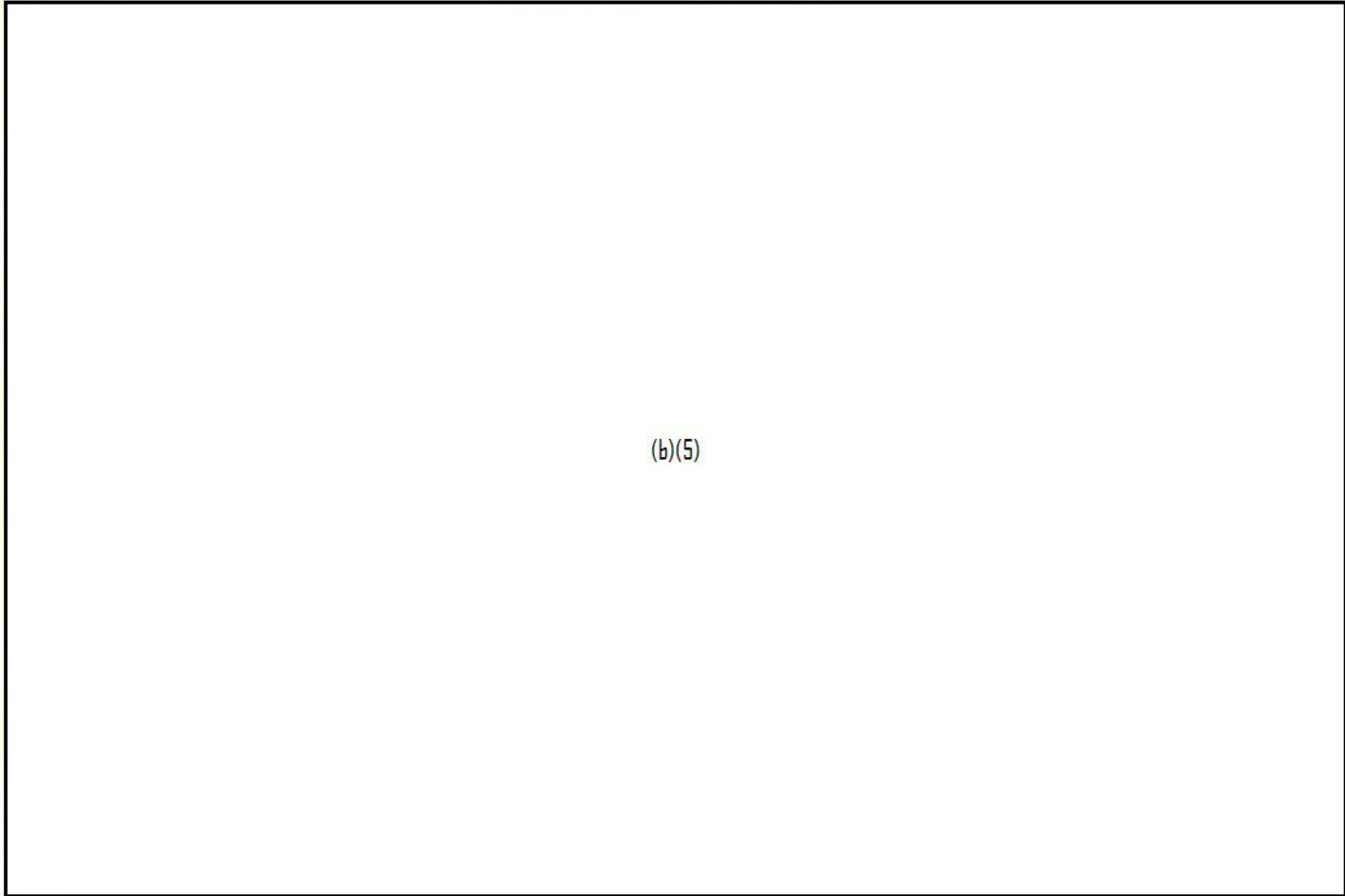
(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)



(b)(5)

From: andrei sitov
To: [OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations](#); [OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations](#); [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Query from WashTASS/Chemical weapons activity at Syrian air base
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 9:56:26 AM

Dear Sir/Madam:

AP informed that Pentagon says US has seen chemical weapons activity at Syrian air base used in past chemical attack.

Is it a statement or readout? If yes please send it.

Thank you in advance!

Sincerely,

TASS News agency of Russia

--

Andrei Sitov
Bureau Chief
TASS News Agency of Russia
1004 National Press Bldg
Washington DC 20045

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: Aidan Johnson
To: [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] BBC News: Syria Shayrat Airfield Confirmation
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:00:47 AM

Hello,

I'm wondering if someone can provide us some information about recent reports that the United States saw activity at Syria's Shayrat Airfield concerning chemical weapons. Any statement you can pass along would be greatly appreciated.

Additionally, we're wondering if you can confirm the validity of the statements below:

1) US saw chemical weapons activity at Syrian base struck in April

MUNICH, June 27 (Reuters) - The United States saw what appeared to be active Syrian preparations for a possible chemical weapons attack at Shayrat airfield, the same Syrian airfield the United States struck in April, Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis said on Tuesday.

"This involved specific aircraft in a specific hangar, both of which we know to be associated with chemical weapons use," Davis said, speaking by phone from Washington.

2) U.S. SAW ACTIVITY AT SYRIA'S SHAYRAT AIRFIELD SUGGESTING ACTIVE PREPARATIONS FOR CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE - PENTAGON SPOKESMAN

Aidan Johnson

Picture Producer

BBC News (Washington)

(Office)

(Mobile)

From: Hennigan, William
To: [QSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] LAT
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:08:44 AM

Got anything on Syria CW prep?

Thanks,

Bill

From: Wright, Mark E CIV OSD PA (US)
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Cc: (b)(6) OSD PA (US)
Subject: Fw: Are you tracking
Date: Monday, June 26, 2017 10:23:12 PM

Gents,

FYI

Mark

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Verizon Wireless 4G LTE network.

From: Rigler, Tara M CIV OSD PA (US) (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, June 26, 2017 9:03 PM

To: White, Dana W SES OSD (US)

Cc: (b)(6) OSD PA (US); Wright, Mark E CIV OSD PA (US)

Subject: Re: Are you tracking

Will be a press sec statement

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 26, 2017, at 8:42 PM, Rigler, Tara M CIV OSD PA (US) (b)(6)

<mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:

(b)(5) will be posted shortly.

The United States has identified potential preparations for another chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime that would likely result in the mass murder of civilians, including innocent children. The activities are similar to preparations the regime took before the April 4, 2017 chemical weapons attack.

As we have previously stated, the United States is in Syria to eliminate the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. If, however, Mr. Assad conducts another mass murder attack using chemical weapons, he and his military will pay a heavy price.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 26, 2017, at 7:54 PM, White, Dana W SES OSD (US) (b)(6)

<mailto:(b)(6)> wrote:

(b)(6) & Mark

Hi Tara,

No. White House is putting this out? Do you have the statement? I'm on the SD's plane.

Thanks,

Dana

From: Rigler, Tara M CIV OSD PA (US)
Sent: Monday, June 26, 2017 11:46 PM
To: White, Dana W SES OSD (US)
Subject: Are you tracking

Hello Dana,

A Syrian statement on chemical weapons from my area tonight?

Many thanks,
Tara

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6) OSD PA (US)
Cc: [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: Can you review short statement on the CW statement? (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:34:22 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Sir,

Can you review this? I'd like a short statement to use for chasers...

Attributable to me:

(b)(5)

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region. Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners.

Very respectfully,

(b)(6)

Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961

Tel: (b)(6)

Blackberry: (b)(6)

Main: (b)(6)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: Rigler, Tara M. EOP/NSC
To: [White, Dana W SES OSD \(US\)](#); [\(b\)\(6\)](#) OSD PA (US); [Wright, Mark E CIV OSD PA \(US\)](#); [Stroh, Mark E](#); [Vasquez, Edgar J](#); ["Starr, Katherine L"](#); [QSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#); [QSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations](#)
Cc: [Raimondi, Marc](#)
Subject: [\(b\)\(5\)](#)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:39:14 AM

(b)(5)

From: (b)(6)
To: Hennigan, William; OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Subject: RE: LAT (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:45:16 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

This is what I can get to you now:

As the President stated on April 6, the use of chemical weapons threatens U.S. vital national interests. The statement last night was clear and reinforces this message. We have seen indications that the Syrian regime is preparing another major chemical attack. The President warned the regime of consequences should they proceed.

Check with me in a bit.

Very respectfully,

(b)(6)
Major, U.S. Marine Corps

Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: (b)(6)
Blackberry: (b)(6)
Main: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Hennigan, William [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:04 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM (b)(6) >
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] LAT

Got anything on Syria CW prep?

Thanks,

Bill

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) OSD PA (US)
To: (b)(6)
Cc: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Subject: RE: Can you review short statement on the CW statement? (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:51:01 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

IF ASKED: Are you making preparations for new strikes against this facility?

* We always plan for contingencies in order to provide our leaders with options.

IF ASKED: What specific information have you seen?

. I'm not going to get into intelligence matters. The Assad regime knows what it is doing and the statement was meant for its leaders.

Additional talking points:

* The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

* Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners.

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: (b)(6) JSMC OSD PA (US)
To: Hennigan, William; OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Subject: RE: LAT (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:52:43 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Attributable to me:

We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners.

Very respectfully,

(b)(6)

Major, U.S. Marine Corps

Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: (b)(6)
Blackberry: (b)(6)
Main: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Hennigan, William [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:04 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM <(b)(6)>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] LAT

Got anything on Syria CW prep?

Thanks,

Bill

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0030

From: Stump, Adam M CIV (US)
To: andrei sitov; OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations; OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations; OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Query from WashTASS/Chemical weapons activity at Syrian air base (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:54:07 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Andrei

You can attribute the following to me, a Defense Department spokesman:

"We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners."

Adam Stump
Defense Department Spokesman (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia)
Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: (b)(6)
Email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: andrei sitov [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 9:48 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations (b)(6) OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations (b)(6) OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM (b)(6)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Query from WashTASS/Chemical weapons activity at Syrian air base

Dear Sir/Madam:

AP informed that Pentagon says US has seen chemical weapons activity at Syrian air base used in past chemical attack.

JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0031

Is it a statement or readout? If yes please send it.

Thank you in advance!

Sincerely,

TASS News agency of Russia

--

Andrei Sitov
Bureau Chief
TASS News Agency of Russia
1004 National Press Bldg
Washington DC 20045

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: [Stump, Adam M CIV \(US\)](#)
To: [Aidan Johnson](#); [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: RE: BBC News: Syria Shayrat Airfield Confirmation (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:54:24 AM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Aidan

You can attribute the following to me, a Defense Department spokesman:

"We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners."

Adam Stump
Defense Department Spokesman (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia)
Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: (b)(6)
Email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Aidan Johnson [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:00 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM <(b)(6)>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] BBC News: Syria Shayrat Airfield Confirmation

Hello,

I'm wondering if someone can provide us some information about recent reports that the United States saw activity at Syria's Shayrat Airfield concerning chemical weapons. Any statement you can pass along would be greatly appreciated.

Additionally, we're wondering if you can confirm the validity of the statements below:

JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0033

1) US saw chemical weapons activity at Syrian base struck in April

MUNICH, June 27 (Reuters) - The United States saw what appeared to be active Syrian preparations for a possible chemical weapons attack at Shayrat airfield, the same Syrian airfield the United States struck in April, Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis said on Tuesday.

"This involved specific aircraft in a specific hangar, both of which we know to be associated with chemical weapons use," Davis said, speaking by phone from Washington.

2) U.S. SAW ACTIVITY AT SYRIA'S SHAYRAT AIRFIELD SUGGESTING ACTIVE PREPARATIONS FOR CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE - PENTAGON SPOKESMAN

Aidan Johnson

Picture Producer

BBC News (Washington)

(Office)

(Mobile)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: Hennigan, William
To: (b)(6) USMC OSD PA (US)
Cc: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Re: LAT (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:01:47 PM

Thanks, Adrian.

> On Jun 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Rankine-Galloway, Adrian J Maj USMC OSD PA (US) <(b)(6)>
> (b)(6) wrote:

>
> CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

> Attributable to me:

> We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

> The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

> Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

> The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners.

> Very respectfully,

> (b)(6)

> Defense Press Operations
> Office of the Secretary of Defense
> Pentagon, Room 2D961
> Tel: (b)(6)
> Blackberry: (b)(6)
> Main: (b)(6)

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Hennigan, William [mailto:(b)(6)]
> Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:04 AM
> To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM <(b)(6)>
> Subject: [Non-DoD Source] LAT

> Got anything on Syria CW prep?

> Thanks,

> Bill

> CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

From: [Stump, Adam M CIV \(US\)](#)
To: [Deng, Boer](#); [OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] NOON DEADLINE: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:05:00 PM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Boer

You can attribute the following to me, a Defense Department spokesman:

"We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners."

Adam Stump
Defense Department Spokesman (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia)
Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: (b)(6)
Email: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Deng, Boer [[mailto:\(b\)\(6\)@pentagon.mil](mailto:(b)(6)@pentagon.mil)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:45 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM (b)(6)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] NOON DEADLINE: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment

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JONES/1:17-cv-01921-KBJ/0037

From: Deng, Boer [redacted] (b)(6)
Date: 27 June 2017 at 08:17
Subject: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment
To: Michelle Baldanza [redacted] (b)(6) < Caution-mailto:[redacted] (b)(6) >

Hi Michelle,

I hope this message finds you well. Does the Pentagon have a statement about the WH statement warning Syria against conducting another chemical attack? Are you at liberty to discuss what kind of intelligence was uncovered to spur the statement?
Was it coordinated with the DOD?

Please let us know ASAP before noon

Thanks,
Boer

--

Boer Deng
Washington Correspondent, The Times

[redacted] (b)(6)
[redacted] (b)(6)

--

Boer Deng
Washington Correspondent, The Times

[redacted] (b)(6)
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From: [redacted] (b)(6)
To: [redacted] (b)(6); [redacted] (b)(6)
CENTCOM CCCI (US); CENTCOM Macdill AFB CENTCOM HQ Mailbox CCCI Media Desk
Cc: [redacted] (b)(6)
CENTCOM CJTF OIR (US); OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM; CENTCOM GLOBAL CJTF OIR Mailbox CJTF OIR Media Ops
Subject: Transcript of CAPT Davis gaggle on CW statement (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:10:48 PM
Attachments: 0627davis.chem.prep.RG.Reviewed.doc

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

CCCI colleagues,

Attached is the transcript of CAPT Davis' short notice transcript on the CW statement.

If you see someone within the DOD/PA family who you think should get this, I ask that you forward it along.

Very respectfully,

[redacted] (b)(6)

Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961

Tel: [redacted] (b)(6)
Blackberry: [redacted] (b)(6)
Main: [redacted] (b)(6)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Presenter: Captain Jeff Davis, Director, Defense Press Office
June 27, 2017
Press Briefing by Captain Davis on Syrian Chemical Preparations

CAPTAIN JEFF DAVIS: -- to tell you. I do want to tell you everything.

All right. So here's what I know. We have seen activity at Shayrat Airfield. Shayrat Airfield, as you will recall, is the same airfield we struck in April. That airfield was associated with Syrian chemical weapons use. The - the activity we have seen at Shayrat in the last couple of days is -- is associated with chemical weapons handling at a known spot on that base -- a known aircraft shelter that's used for chemical weapons. And that is what inspired the -- the statement you saw last night.

Q: Was that hangar struck in the cruise missile strike?

CAPT. DAVIS: Part of it was. Yes.

Q: So, when you say at a shelter, do -- is -- does that mean there's an aircraft in it, and you see it being loaded up? Because last time, it was our understanding they -- (inaudible).

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes. We see -- I should say we see activity, to include aircraft activity.

Q: So what does that mean?

CAPT. DAVIS: I can't be more specific.

Q: So, okay, let me just try it this way, and somebody jump in. I think, last time, what we were told is there were specific C.W. storage sites, bunkers, whatever, you know.

CAPT. DAVIS: Right.

Q: C.W. storage in a particular thing on the base --

CAPT. DAVIS: They --

Q: -- and then it moves to the airplanes.

CAPT. DAVIS: -- they have specific -- specific places on the base, specific aircraft shelters that are associated with chemical weapons use.

(CROSSTALK)

Q: So the C.W. is stored at these aircraft shelters?

CAPT. DAVIS: It can be stored in a variety of places, but these are -- these are -- these are places and types of aircraft and types of things that are all associated with -- with chemical weapons use and preparations for it.

Q: (inaudible)

CAPT. DAVIS: You know, I don't -- I don't have the nomenclature. It's a type of MIG.

Q: Sarin again?

CAPT. DAVIS: They have -- they have a wide range of capabilities.

Q: So has there been activity at Shayrat since the April --

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Well, Shayrat's a full-functioning base that has Russian presence at it and --

(CROSSTALK)

Q: (Inaudible) put it back up, and will you --

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes, but this particular -- this particular location at Shayrat, which we know to be associated with chemical weapons, we have seen activity that is suggestive of -- of intent.

Q: How many Syrian Russian jets are there at the -- (inaudible)?

CAPT. DAVIS: I don't --

Q: Have they been operating continuously?

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes. The -- the base is still active. Right.

Q: So, suggestive of intent. What does that mean?

CAPT. DAVIS: Suggests that they were making preparations to -- to use chemical weapons again.

Q: (CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Much too -- (inaudible).

Q: Walk us through the time -- timeframe on when did you -- and I think -

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: This has -- this has emerged over the last few days. I think the -- the information became more compelling yesterday.

Q: What became more compelling?

CAPT. DAVIS: The information.

Q: Yes, I know. What part of that?

CAPT. DAVIS: I'm sorry --

(CROSSTALK)

Q: Captain, just to follow up --

CAPT. DAVIS: The compelling part. Yes.

Q: -- David's question, Is this the first time that activity in these particular areas has been observed since the --

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: I don't know. But I know that what we've seen in the -- the -- very recently has been -- has been, again, strongly suggestive of -- of intent.

Q: More compelling than the last 24?

CAPT. DAVIS: I don't have a timeline. I know that the -- the -- the information that we have, that we saw, became more compelling in the last day. Yes.

Q: In the last day?

CAPT. DAVIS: Correct.

Q: So that's the last 24.

CAPT. DAVIS: Correct. Yes.

Q: Have any military options been presented by Secretary Mattis --

CAPT. DAVIS: We are -- we have -- we do military options. That's -- that's our job. We have --

(CROSSTALK)

Q: But in light, I guess --

(CROSSTALK)

Q: -- to fall on Barbara's kind of line -- in the last 24, have the options been presented to the president?

CAPT. DAVIS: Not that I am able to discuss. But it is our job to always have military options for the commander in chief.

Q: So can -- I'm sorry. Go back one more time, just really as -- and you have been precise.

CAPT. DAVIS: Right.

Q: I don't mean you're not. So you see at a shelter, at an aircraft shelter --

CAPT. DAVIS: Right.

Q: -- so can we say, at one location?

CAPT. DAVIS: You can -- you can say that, if you want.

Q: At --

CAPT. DAVIS: That's fine, go ahead.

STAFF: (Recording ?)?

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes.

Q: -- at one location on --

CAPT. DAVIS: We're almost done. I got to run.

Q: -- on -- on one location on this base, right?

CAPT. DAVIS: Correct.

Q: One location.

Q: One -- one shelter?

CAPT. DAVIS: Correct.

Q: One location on the base, it's a shelter, and you see activity associated with the aircraft and the chemical weapons substance?

CAPT. DAVIS: We saw activity that is -- again, just like the White House statement said -- which was similar to what we saw in -- in April.

Q: So how do we --

Q: Suggestive of -- of loading chemical weapons onto --

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Suggestive of activity at this particular location. Yes.

Q: Right. My question is exactly David's. What other conclusion could we come to other than you see it --

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes and I don't know -- and I -- I mean --

Q: -- begin to be loaded, loaded on?

CAPT. DAVIS: To be very clear, and if you look in the White House statement you'll see it, too, it's not -- this is not a, you know, "hey, we know for a fact this is happening." It's -- it strongly suggests it, though, and that was -- and it was a strong enough suggestion that it warranted the statement.

Q: Right, but did we say -- is it accurate -- was this stuff being prepared to load onto the aircraft, being loaded onto the aircraft or --

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes, we're not being more specific than that. It was -- it was activity.

(CROSSTALK)

Q: But you know the -- but you know the answer to that, right?

Q: And these are just hardened shelters?

CAPT. DAVIS: Correct, yes. Correct.

(CROSSTALK)

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes, we're not being more specific than we've seen --

(CROSSTALK)

Q: But you know the answer, but you can't say.

CAPT. DAVIS: We are not being more specific than to tell you we have -- we have seen activity -- (inaudible).

Q: Has it stopped since this statement?

CAPT. DAVIS: Don't know yet.

Q: Can you see down into those hardened shelters from high above, if they're these hardened reinforced bunkers?

CAPT. DAVIS: We -- I -- I can't get into that -- that level of technical detail.

Q: But that (inaudible) -- with the hangars, I remember the aftermath --

CAPT. DAVIS: Yes, yes.

(CROSSTALK)

Q: -- where they showed these hardened bunkers.

CAPT. DAVIS: Right, right. Okay?

Q: Was the Pentagon given a heads-up before last night's statement?

CAPT. DAVIS: I'm not going to help you with process. I'm sorry.

Q: Are we working late tonight?

CAPT. DAVIS: I hope not. All right, that's all -- that's everything I know, guys.

Q: And you're on the record, correct?

Q: Thank you.

CAPT. DAVIS: I'm on the record.

Q: Thank you, sir.

Q: Yes.

-END-

From: [REDACTED] (b)(6) USMC OSD PA (US)
To: [Deng, Boer; OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM](#)
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] NOON DEADLINE: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment (UNCLASSIFIED)
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:29:02 PM

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Attributable to me:

We have observed activities at Shayrat Air Base that suggest possible intent by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons again. These activities are similar to what we observed prior to the regime chemical weapons attack against Khan Sheikhoun in April.

The Department of Defense remains focused on operations to defeat ISIS. Nevertheless, the continued brutality of the Asad regime and his use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to regional stability and security as well as the national security interests of the United States our allies. Asad's actions, highlighted by the chemical weapons attacks in April, have fueled the rise of terrorist groups like ISIS and al-Qaida, displaced millions of Syrians, and destabilized the region.

Weapons of mass destruction use by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit and threatens the international legal regime prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

The use of chemical weapons in an unstable country where internationally recognized terrorist groups operate and control territory also raises our intense concern about the potential for these dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists who seek to harm the US, our allies, or our partners.

Very respectfully,

[REDACTED] (b)(6)
Major, U.S. Marine Corps

Defense Press Operations
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Pentagon, Room 2D961
Tel: [REDACTED] (b)(6)
Blackberry: [REDACTED] (b)(6)
Main: [REDACTED] (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Deng, Boer [mailto:[REDACTED] (b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 10:45 AM
To: OSD Pentagon PA List DPO CENTCOM <[REDACTED] (b)(6)>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] NOON DEADLINE: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment

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From: Deng, Boer <(b)(6)>

Date: 27 June 2017 at 08:17

Subject: Query for The Times-- Syria chemical intelligence and comment

To: Michelle Baldanza <(b)(6)> < Caution- (b)(6) >

Hi Michelle,

I hope this message finds you well. Does the Pentagon have a statement about the WH statement warning Syria against conducting another chemical attack? Are you at liberty to discuss what kind of intelligence was uncovered to spur the statement?

Was it coordinated with the DOD?

Please let us know ASAP before noon

Thanks,

(b)(6)

--

Boer Deng

Washington Correspondent, The Times

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

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(b)(6)

Washington Correspondent, The Times

(b)(6)

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(b)(6)

From: Faulkner, Charles S (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2017 12:34 PM
To: Miller, Paul J. EOP/NSC; Boney, Virginia M. EOP/WHO; Giambastiani, Pete CIV (US)
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Rep. Engel (HFAC) - Syria CW

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HFAC Democratic Staff Director Jason Steinbaum indicated Rep. Engel and other members would like to know if the Administration plans to brief Congress on media reports the U.S. is aware of Syria Regime forces potential use of CW; warnings issued by the United States; and possible plans to seek authorization considering the lead time.

Charles S. Faulkner
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Bureau of Legislative Affairs (H)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

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