



**International Physicians**  
for the Prevention of Nuclear War

## **Statement by IPPNW on Chemical Weapons and access to Health Care in Syria**

IPPNW firmly believes that chemical weapons, and any weapon of mass destruction, should never be used, and existing stockpiles should be eliminated in line with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Chemical weapons are banned because of their capacity to cause indiscriminate deaths in large numbers, extreme suffering and long-term disability. It is essential that whatever stockpiles of chemical weapons exist in Syria are maintained in a safe condition prior to their final elimination, which should be achieved as rapidly as possible. A cessation of hostilities would provide a much more favourable context for this to happen.

We call on all parties involved in the present conflict in Syria to ensure that any existing stockpiles of chemical weapons are placed under safeguards and that there is no intentional use, or threat of use, whatever the circumstances. UN weapons inspectors must be allowed full, safe and timely access to investigate suspected chemical weapons use. If the facts determine that chemical weapons have been used, then those who used them should be brought before the International Criminal Court and held accountable for crimes against humanity.

We call on all sides to cooperate with the UN and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria in his quest to resolve the present conflict through dialogue. The present suffering of civilians in areas controlled by the government and by the opposition forces is unacceptable and a ceasefire needs to be negotiated as soon as possible.

IPPNW demands free and safe access of the population to medical care. To make medical facilities and personnel a target of violence is unacceptable and a gross violation of international humanitarian law. We urge all parties to the civil war in Syria to engage in negotiations to resolve the conflict. We demand from all countries and parties outside Syria that they stop delivering weapons into Syria.

IPPNW Board of Directors

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