

Fabricated Intelligence and the WMD Pretext: Obama Heads Closer Closer to War on Syria

By [Stephen Lendman](#)
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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)
In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

A previous article discussed spurious allegations of Syrian chemical weapons use. Obama calls using them a “game changer.” He also said their use crosses a “red line.”

Syrian officials categorically deny using them. According to Information Minister Omran al-Zoabi:

“Even if Syria does have chemical weapons, our leadership and our military will not use them either against Syrians or against Israelis, above all for moral reasons and secondarily on legal and political grounds.”

On April 24, The [New York Times](#) headlined “US Says It Suspects Assad Used Chemical Weapons,” saying:

“...American intelligence agencies now assess, with ‘varying degrees of confidence,’ that the Syrian government has used chemical weapons, but it said it needed conclusive proof before President Obama would take action.”

On April 25, the White House Office of Legislative Affairs director Miguel Rodriguez addressed Syria. His [letter to Senators](#) John McCain (R. AZ) and Carl Levin (D. MI) said:

“At the president’s direction, the United States government has been closely monitoring the potential use of chemical weapons within Syria.”

“We have kept the relevant committees of Congress fully informed of our assessments on this issue, consistent with our statutory obligations.”

“Our intelligence community does assess with varying degrees of confidence that the Syrian regime has used chemical weapons on a small scale in Syria, specifically the chemical agent sarin. This assessment is based in part on physiological samples.”

“Our standard of evidence must build on these intelligence assessments as we seek to establish credible and corroborated facts.”

“For example, the chain of custody is not clear, so we cannot confirm how the exposure occurred and under what conditions.”

“We do believe that any use of chemical weapons in Syria would very likely have originated with the Assad regime. Thus far, we believe that the Assad regime maintains custody of these weapons and has demonstrated a willingness to escalate its horrific use of violence against the Syrian people.”

“Because of our concern about the deteriorating situation in Syria, the president has made it clear that the use of chemical weapons – or transfer of chemical weapons to terrorist groups – is a red line for the United States of America.”

“Given the stakes involved, and what we have learned from our own recent experience, intelligence assessments alone are not sufficient – only credible and corroborated facts that provide us with some degree of certainty will guide our decision-making....”

“In the interim, the administration is prepared for all contingencies so that we can respond appropriately to any confirmed use of chemical weapons, consistent with our national interests.”

“The United States and the international community have a number of potential responses available, and no option is off the table.”

Britain’s Foreign Office claims “limited but persuasive information from various sources showing chemical weapons use in Syria, including Sarin.”

Days earlier, Israeli General Itai Brun claimed Syria used chemical weapons “on a number of occasions.” He cited unspecified photo evidence. He called the weapon used sarin-based.

Former US ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk said Obama’s “red line appears to have been crossed. The administration has to take some time to decide what to do about it.”

“But if they end up leaving the impression that the president is not willing to enforce his red line, that will have consequences in the region, particularly when it comes to Iran’s nuclear program, as well as for our ability to deter Assad’s use of chemical weapons in Syria.”

An unnamed Israeli official told the New York Times:

“Every intelligence branch can submit its own assessment. The issue of chemical weapons is being examined by Israel and the United States at the most senior levels, and is still being discussed.”

The Times added:

“Administration officials said that the Pentagon had prepared a menu of military options for Mr. Obama if he concluded that there was incontrovertible evidence that chemical weapons had been used.”

“Those options, one official said, could include missile strikes on Syrian aircraft from American ships in the Mediterranean or commando raids.”

Days earlier in Brussels, Secretary of State John Kerry said NATO should plan for a possible Syrian chemical weapons attack. He stopped short of calling for NATO’s intervention.

Separately, Mossad-connected [DEBKAFfile](#) (DF) said Israeli warplanes downed a Hezbollah drone eight kilometers “out at sea” from Haifa. It flew south from Lebanon.

An IDF spokesman said:

“An attempt by an unmanned aerial vehicle to enter Israel’s air space was thwarted. The UAV was identified flying from the north past the coast of southern Lebanon and continuing south.”

“It was tracked continuously until it was downed by Israeli fighter planes and attack helicopters.”

“They went into action after the drone was identified as not coming from a friendly source. The Air Force gave the order to shoot it down.”

Netanyahu said:

“We take an extremely grave view of this attempt to violate our borders and will continue to guard them and keep our citizens safe.”

“We are watching events in Syria and Lebanon with extreme concern. Syria is breaking up and Lebanon is unstable.”

“Both places pose not inconsiderable perils to Israel – two emanating directly from Syria.”

“The first is the possible transfer of sophisticated weaponry to terrorist organizations and the second, attempts by terrorists to break through our borders and attack our towns and villages.”

“Israel stands ready to counteract any threats from Syria or Lebanon by sea, air and land.”

DF claims “there are plans afoot to spread (Syria’s) violence into Israel.” It cites Hezbollah’s UAV incident and violent incidents on the Israeli/Israel border.

On April 23 (updated on April 25), [Washington Post](#) editors headlined “Honoring a ‘red line in Syria over chemical weapons,” saying:

“THREE MAJOR US allies – Britain, France and Israel – have now concluded that the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad has very likely used chemical weapons, not once but on multiple occasions.”

“This would cross a ‘red line’ drawn by President Obama.” He’s been very clear saying America “will not tolerate the use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people.”

So far he stopped short of intervening. “If there is no response, Damascus may decide that it is free to use its chemicals on a larger scale.”

At the same time, “Obama has been inching toward more decisive action.”

“If (he) waffles or retreats on the one clear red line he drew, US credibility across the region will be severely damaged.”

These type reports bear watching. Their significance remains to be seen. They may be prelude to direct US intervention. Stay tuned. More reports will follow.

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