

'Israeli bombs source of Uranium contamination'

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Syria says Israeli warplanes may be the source of alleged uranium traces found in a Syrian site inspected by the UN nuclear watchdog.

"No one has ever asked himself what kind of Israeli bombs had hit the site, and what they contained," Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem said on Wednesday.

The remarks came after a report was circulated by the media alleging that International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors had found uranium traces at a Syrian site bombed by Israeli warplanes in September 2007.

Israel has alleged that the site was a reactor under construction with the help of North Korea. Syria has dismissed the allegations and allowed IAEA inspectors to visit the site.

According to the Syrian Minister, Israel possesses bombs which contain depleted uranium. Depleted uranium (DU) is used in armor penetrating weapons. The US has reportedly used DU weapons in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Didn't anyone ask what did the Israeli bombs contain? Didn't anyone pay attention that the United States and Israel have precedents in using ... uranium when bombing, whether in Iraq, south Lebanon or Afghanistan?" Muallem said.

Al-Muallem said reports that traces of uranium had been found in the site is politically motivated.

"These media leaks are a clear signal that the purpose was to pressure Syria. This means that the subject is not technical, but rather political," added al-Muallem at a press conference with his Iraqi counterpart Hoshyar Zebari.

The UN nuclear watchdog is preparing a report on the Syrian site.

The Syrian Foreign Minister said Damascus would wait for the report before replying to it.

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