

Russia to Press for Putting "White Helmets" on Trial for Crimes in Syria

Statement of Russian Foreign Ministry

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Russia will press for putting the White Helmets on trial for crimes committed in Syria, including faked videos of chemical attacks, the director of the Foreign Ministry's department of new challenges and threats, **Ilya Rogachyov**, <u>told TASS in an interview on February 20</u>.

"The leading Western countries have failed to place the struggle against terrorism above their own time-serving political interests. In the sphere of international counter-terrorist cooperation various selective approaches thrive. Terrorists are rated as 'bad' and 'not very bad'. Countries are being forced to agree with the concept of 'resistance to violent extremism' and its dangerous elements that create situations for ousting 'disfavored' governments," Rogachyov said. "The Western sponsors are keen to present the contractors on their payroll in a favorable light as 'envoys of peace' in order to use this as a cover to push ahead with political destabilization scenarios."

"We are determined to push ahead with and safeguard Russia's foreign policy positions in order to ensure the White Helmets' crimes in Syria and their attempts to mislead the international community by means of fake chemical weapons attacks attributed to the Syrian government forces, just as any other terrorist activity, should be thoroughly investigated and put on trial," Rogachyov said.

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