

# Syria: As the War Continues, WMD Lies Linger. Chemical Weapons in the Hands of Al Qaeda

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

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*Despite the now historical lies exposed in the wake of the devastating US invasion and occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003, the United States has attempted to use similar lies regarding weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) repeatedly as a pretext for similar wars including in neighboring Syria.*

The Syrian government – perhaps in an effort to head off another round of accusations, threats, and direct military aggression carried out by the US – is leveling accusations against the United States itself and terrorist organizations it has funded, armed, and backed for the past 6 years of using chemical weapons – primarily to create a pretext for wider war.

Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad stated [at a press conference](#) that the April 2017 Khan Shaykhun, Idlib chemical attack was staged by US-backed militants, including members of the so-called "White Helmets," a US and European funded front posing as humanitarian workers but who serve as auxiliaries for listed terrorist organizations including Al Qaeda and its various Syrian affiliates.

As the Syrian military retakes territory from foreign-backed militants, munition warehouses and stockpiles, including those used for the production and deployment of chemical weapons for staged attacks, are being systematically uncovered. In them, chemical weapons – both lethal and nonlethal – provided by the United States and its allies are being discovered.

Mekdad would also point out that the use of chemical weapons by foreign-backed militants did not serve any sort of tactical purpose, but was instead being used as a form of blackmail.

While Western-dominated "international" institutions will likely not accept any evidence provided by the Syrian government – the Syrian government's narrative emerges as a far more logical explanation for the last 6 years of conflict and accusations made regarding chemical weapon use.

Chemical Weapons are Political, Not Tactical

Despite claims by the Western media made in an attempt to enhance US lies regarding WMDs, chemical weapons are particularly ineffective on the battlefield – with conventional weapons being many times more effective.

This was revealed in detail by a study produced by the United States itself, conducted by the US Marine Corps regarding the devastating Iran-Iraq War fought between 1980-1988 which saw the extensive use of chemical weapons.



It goes without saying that gas masks were a must during the Iran-Iraq war of the mid 80s

The document titled, "[Lessons Learned: The Iran-Iraq War](#)" under "[Appendix B: Chemical Weapons](#)," provided a comprehensive look at the all-out chemical warfare that took place during the 8 year conflict. Several engagements are studied in detail, revealing large amounts of chemical agents deployed mainly to create areas of denial.

The effectiveness and lethality of chemical weapons is summarized in the document as follows (emphasis added):

**Chemical weapons require quite particular weather and geographic conditions for optimum effectiveness. Given the relative nonpersistence of all agents employed during this war, including mustard, there was only a brief window of employment opportunity both daily and seasonally, when the agents could be used.** Even though the Iraqis employed mustard agent in the rainy season and also in the marshes, its effectiveness was significantly reduced under those conditions. As the Iraqis learned to their chagrin, mustard is not a good agent to employ in the mountains, unless you own the high ground and your enemy is in the valleys.

**We are uncertain as to the relative effectiveness of nerve agents since those which were employed are by nature much less persistent than mustard. In order to gain killing concentrations of these agents, predawn attacks are best, conducted in areas where the morning breezes are likely to blow away from friendly positions.**

**Chemical weapons have a low kill ratio.** Just as in WWI, during which **the ratio of deaths to injured from chemicals was 2-3 percent**, that figure appears to be borne out again in this war although reliable data on casualties are very difficult to obtain. **We deem it remarkable that the death rate should hold at such a low level even with the introduction of nerve agents.** If those rates are correct, as they well may be, this further reinforces the position that we must not think of chemical weapons as "a poor man's nuclear weapon." **While such weapons have great psychological potential, they are not killers or destroyers on a scale with nuclear or biological weapons.**

According to the US military's own conclusions, the use of chemical weapons only enhance conventional warfare, but are not suitable for wiping out large swaths of enemy troops. Conventional weapons are deemed far more suitable for waging modern war.

The effectiveness of chemical weapons is such that the Syrian government could never justify their use, balancing their limited benefits against the knowledge the US was specifically seeking to use their use as a pretext for direct military intervention.

Thus, neither the Syrian government nor the foreign-backed militants it is fighting would benefit from their use in turning the tide of any specific battle, but should the US use

chemical weapon deployments as a pretext, could intervene directly against the Syrian government, delivering victory to foreign-backed militants.

In essence, the only beneficiary of chemical weapon use by any side in Syria would be special interests in the US seeking regime change in Damascus.

Not only are outright lies regarding WMDs a known tactic repeatedly abused by the United States government worldwide, it has been caught repeatedly using this tactic in Syria. The number of ambiguous, unsubstantiated, or proven-false accusations made by the United States as it seeks a pretext for wider and more direct military intervention have multiplied over time as US-backed militants are pushed off the battlefield.

#### US Provocations, Lies, and Chemical Weapons

Suspicious circumstances and familiar propaganda and diplomatic tactics were used by the US to rush the world to war – first in 2013 when an alleged chemical attack was carried out at the edge of Damascus. The attack [followed multiple claims in 2012](#) by the US that the Syrian government was preparing such an attack, followed by threats of direct military intervention if the Syrian government did so.

This came at a time when it became apparent that quick regime change in Syria similar to that carried out by the US in Libya in 2011 was not possible and that only through direct military intervention would the US be able to topple the Syrian government.

In response, Syria relinquished its chemical weapons under a Russian-brokered deal, confirmed by UN inspectors. Despite this, chemical weapons continued turning up on the battlefield – followed by repeated attempts by the US to expand direct military intervention within Syrian borders each and every time.

No logical explanation has ever been provided by the United States – either by its politicians or its policymakers – as to why the Syrian government would repeatedly use ineffective chemical weapons in battles it was already winning with far more effective conventional weapons – and risk US military intervention.

Conversely, many of these attacks are carried out in areas held by terrorist organizations with direct access to the borders of their foreign sponsors. The more recent April 2017 alleged attack in Khan Shaykhun took place within the Idlib Governorate, directly on the border with NATO-member Turkey who has armed, supplied, and provided direct military support for Al Qaeda and its affiliates since the conflict began in 2011.

#### Consider the Source



The city of Idlib occupied by radical Islamists

Idlib has been controlled by Al Qaeda for years with even the New York Times and LA Times finally admitting as much.

The New York Times in a piece titled, "[In a Syria Refuge, Extremists Exert Greater Control](#)," would admit:

“Idlib Province is the largest Al Qaeda safe haven since 9/11,” Brett H. McGurk, the United States envoy to the coalition fighting the Islamic State, said last month. “Idlib now is a huge problem.”

The LA Times in a piece titled, “[Humanitarian groups fear aid is being diverted to terrorist group after militant takeover of Syrian province](#),” would reveal that torrents of supplies provided by the US, Europe, and their regional allies are still being poured into a city quite literally occupied by Al Qaeda, stating (emphasis added):

The recent takeover of the Syrian province of Idlib by an extremist organization has created a dilemma for the United States and other countries that send humanitarian aid to civilians and military aid to various rebel factions fighting the Syrian government.

**It has become impossible to provide assistance without inadvertently supporting Al Nusra Front, a former affiliate of Al Qaeda that has been deemed a terrorist group by the U.S. government.**

In reality, Al Qaeda’s domination of a region allegedly held by “rebels” provided billions in supplies, weapons, vehicles, training, and even direct military support by the West could only happen if Al Qaeda itself was receiving even more in state sponsorship – or were the recipients of this aid all along.

Both the New York Times and the LA Times in their articles, lace it with language meant to disarm readers from truly understanding the full scope of what the US has done in Syria. Claiming that the Al Nusra Front is a “former affiliate of Al Qaeda,” for instance, is supposed to create in the minds of readers the notion that they are no longer Al Qaeda, or terrorists when they are in fact very much still both.

The LA Times would even go as far as suggesting Al Qaeda’s Al Nusra Front would provide Western-backed organizations with “independence and neutrality.”

The LA Times also claims:

But cutting off the aid could spur a humanitarian disaster among the estimated 2 million civilians who live in Idlib and derail efforts to topple Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Efforts to “topple Syrian President Bashar Assad,” however, can only be done with an armed opposition – and as both the New York Times and LA Times admit, the only armed militants left in Syria are Al Qaeda.

What both newspapers are actually saying is that Al Qaeda has been cornered in Idlib where the US and its allies are still flooding with support, and that support quite literally for Al Qaeda will continue in an effort to topple the Syrian government.

This means that the process of fabricating chemical weapon attacks and using it as a pretext to directly intervene – on behalf of Al Qaeda – will continue as well, either to topple the government outright, or create a safe-haven protected by the US military for Al Qaeda in Idlib.

It is in this context then, that “humanitarian organizations” in Al Qaeda-held Idlib are claiming they are being targeted by chemical weapons allegedly deployed by the Syrian government.

The Syrian government and its allies have all but won the conflict and they have done so using conventional military weapons. They are also attempting in every way to expose these lingering and repetitive lies regarding WMDs wielded by the US, by inviting UN inspection teams to further explore newly liberated Syrian territory and further confirm that the Syrian government did indeed give up its chemical weapons as it agreed to in 2013.

*Tony Cartalucci, Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher and writer, especially for the online magazine [“New Eastern Outlook”](#).*

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