The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Claims Syrian Chemical Attack Videos Were Staged

April 19, 2018



Maria Zakharova **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

Russia's Foreign Ministry has insisted that a suspected chemical attack against Syrian civilians earlier this month was "staged," citing a report broadcast by Russian state television on Wednesday.

International aid organizations blamed the Syrian regime of carrying out a chemical attack in early April that reportedly killed dozens of civilians in a rebel-held area outside Damascus. Moscow has denied that any gas attack happened in Douma, instead accusing Western countries of staging it to whip up anti-Russian hysteria and provide a pretext for airstrikes against Damascus.

Related article: U.S., Russia Clash at U.N. Over Chemical Weapons Attacks in Syria

"God, when will this bloody spectacle with the States and their 'coalition,' the militants and

the White Helmets, end!" Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova wrote on Facebook Wednesday.

Russia has repeatedly accused the White Helmets group of rescue workers, which reported on the alleged chemical attack in Douma, of aiding terrorists and creating fake videos of government atrocities.

Zakharova's post linked to a state-run Vesti.ru news report citing a boy who said he took part in the alleged false flag operation in exchange for sweets and food.

Through a translator, the boy said he and his family were hiding in a basement on April 7 before heeding the call to visit a local hospital.

"I was grabbed as soon as I entered the hospital and they started pouring water on me, then they laid me on cots next to others," the boy, introduced as 11-year-old Hasan Diab, told the news show.

It was not immediately clear whether the chemical attack footage and the interview featured the same boy.

"The video then made its way across the world and became an 'evidence base' that served as a pretext for missile strikes by the U.S., Great Britain and France," Zakharova wrote.

Russia's representative to the United Nations, Vasily Nebenzya, said Thursday that Russia would find a way to show the state television footage of the boy at the next UN Security Council meeting, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

Inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons are in Syria to investigate the April 7 incident in which Western countries and rescue workers say scores of civilians were gassed to death by government forces.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/04/19/russia-claims-syrian-chemical-attack-videos-were-staged-a61211