

# China and Russia Veto UN Security Council Resolution on Syria - No Carte Blanche for Chapter VII

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*Permanent UN Security Council member Russia, on Wednesday, used its veto right to block the adoption of a resolution on Syria that would have condemned the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria and called on the Syrian government to cooperate with an investigation into the incident.*

Ten of the fifteen members of the Council voted in favor of the draft resolution. However, permanent Security Council members China and Russia as well as Ethiopia and Kazakhstan voted against. The “no” of the two permanent Council members China and Russia, who have veto right, prevented the adoption of the document.

The proposed resolution had been drafted by permanent Council members France, the United Kingdom and the United States. The document would have strongly condemned “*the reported use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular the attack on Khan Shaykhun,*” the site of last week’s incident that has drawn increasing global attention.

Some passages of the document implied that the government of the Syrian Arab Republic was responsible for the attack while others implied that the government of the Syrian Arab Republic refused to fully cooperate with relevant previous resolutions and the Organization for the prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The text would, in other words, have implied an authorization of the use of Chapter 7 and military force against the government and military of the Syrian Arab Republic due to its “*alleged*” non-compliance with regard to chemical weapons, in an “*alleged*” chemical weapons attack, “*allegedly*” carried out by Syrian Arab Air Forces.



2013 – The Syrian Arab Army seized 281 barrels with chemicals from insurgents at a farm in Banias, Tartus.

The adoption of the proposed draft resolution would have delivered a carte blanche for a military intervention against Syria. Despite much propaganda to the contrary, a reading of UNSC Resolution 2118 (2013) clearly shows that the resolution from 2013 stipulates that the

## Security Council:

Decides, in the event of non-compliance with this resolution, including unauthorized transfer of chemical weapons, or any use of chemical weapons by anyone in the Syrian Arab Republic, to impose measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Taking all of the above mentioned problems with UNSC Resolution 2118 (2013) into account, this paragraph can only be compared to a hair-trigger. There is dangerously much room for interpretation in this sentence. Two, equally correct interpretations are possible.

1. By adopting UNSC Resolution 2118 (2013), the Security Council has made the unanimous decision, that measures under the UN Charter's Chapter VII will be imposed against Syria. In other words, failure to comply will trigger the use of military force.
2. By adopting UNSC Resolution 2118 (2013), the Security Council has made the unanimous decision, that the Security Council shall discuss the matter and decide whether the alleged non-compliance should trigger the use of military force against Syria under the UN Charter's Chapter VII.



More relevant details and problems with Resolution 2118 (2013) have been described in this author's article entitled ["A Critical Review of Security Council Resolution 2118 \(2013\) on Syria"](#) from September 2013. A reading of this article will explain why UNSC Resolution 2118 (2013) is relevant for the French, British and U.S. American draft resolution and why China and Russia, on April 12, 2017, used their veto right.

Implying that the Syrian government was in non-compliance, the draft resolution would have called on the Syrian Government to comply with relevant recommendations of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Mission (FFM) and the [OPCW-UN](#) Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM).

In February, Russia and China vetoed a measure that would have imposed sanctions on a number of individuals and entities linked to the "alleged" use of chemical weapons in cases where responsibility "allegedly" was [established](#) by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM).



It is noteworthy that UN investigators who investigated the chemical weapons use in East Ghouta in August 2013 worked under the "protection" of exactly those who according to an in-depth investigation by this author were directly responsible for the use of the chemical weapons.

This author has in his article entitled ["Top US and Saudi Officials responsible for Chemical Weapons in Syria"](#) from October 2013 published the results of this in-depth investigation and proven that this author, two months prior to the attack warned that the attack was being planned on highest levels, with Liwa-al-Islam and Saudi intelligence asset Zahran Alloush acting as field commander.

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