

OPCW Executives Praised Whistleblower and Criticized Syria Cover-up, Leaks Reveal

By [Aaron Mate](#)

Global Research, December 08, 2020

[The Grayzone](#) 7 December 2020

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Militarization and WMD](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

Exclusive: Documents obtained by The Grayzone show that OPCW executives privately criticized the manipulation of a Syria chemical weapons probe, and supported a dissenting veteran inspector. One official, however, feared helping the “Russian narrative.” These private admissions further expose the public whitewash of the Douma cover-up, and undermine the ongoing attacks on the whistleblowers who challenged it.

Since the explosive revelation that an investigation by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in Syria was manipulated, a smear campaign has been waged against a pair of veteran OPCW scientists who challenged the cover-up.

The two whistleblowers have been dismissed as rogue, uninformed, and duplicitous actors. Their detractors include the current [OPCW director general](#); [NATO member state ambassadors](#); and anonymous, self-described OPCW officials laundering [fabricated claims](#) through [NATO](#) member [state-funded outlets](#).

OPCW documents and correspondence obtained by The Grayzone offer a stark contrast to these public attacks. Among several revelations, they show that before the attempts to discredit the whistleblowers, OPCW directors privately criticized the chemical watchdog’s suppression of the investigation, and supported the inspector who vocally protested it.

One of these executives, however, feared that raising alarm about the scientific fraud would help the “Russian narrative”— a tacit admission that the organization’s independence and impartiality have become subordinate to geopolitics.

The dissenting inspector, 16-year OPCW veteran Dr. Brendan Whelan, was a member of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) that investigated an alleged chemical attack in the Syrian city of Douma on April 7, 2018. The team’s findings raised major doubts about allegations of Syrian government culpability, the pretext for a US-led bombing of Syria one week later.

But senior OPCW officials, in conjunction with [a US attempt to influence](#) the investigation, censored the evidence and released unsupported conclusions. A [series of damning leaks](#) later exposed [the deception](#).

Rather than having their complaints addressed, Whelan and the other known dissenting inspector, 12-year OPCW veteran Ian Henderson, have been subjected to a second deceit:

false claims about them and their investigation.

Whoever is behind these public attacks, the private OPCW emails and documents obtained by The Grayzone further undermine them. In addition to revealing initial praise by OPCW brass for Whelan's attempt to protect the investigation, these leaks provide a new window into how other officials compromised it:

- One top official acknowledged the doctoring of the Douma evidence. But rather than order an investigation into how it occurred, this official sought to have an email protesting the censorship erased from the OPCW's servers.
- Another executive, who appears to have been deeply involved in the scientific fraud, sidelined the inspectors who collected the evidence in Syria. This same OPCW official also engineered a delay that ensured that the most vocal dissenter, Whelan, would no longer be in the picture.
- By contrast, two senior directors praised Whelan's opposition to the Douma probe subterfuge. (These directors are distinct from the Director General, whom they work under.) The first director criticized the censorship of evidence, and also signaled that it was politically motivated. Yet this same director was also hesitant to press the issue, out of fear that doing so would "feed... the Russian narrative."
- The second director lauded Whelan's contributions to the OPCW, as well as his effort to defend the Douma investigation from fraudulent behavior.

These documents show that internal concerns about the Douma cover-up went beyond members of the FFM team to even the highest levels of the organization.

[To Read the Complete Grayzone Article Click Here](#)

Aaron Maté is a journalist and producer. He hosts Pushback with Aaron Maté on The Grayzone. He is also is contributor to The Nation magazine and former host/producer for The Real News and Democracy Now!. Aaron has also presented and produced for Vice, AJ+, and Al Jazeera.

All images in this article are from The Grayzone unless otherwise stated

The original source of this article is [The Grayzone](#)
Copyright © [Aaron Mate](#), [The Grayzone](#), 2020

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Aaron Mate](#)

not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca