

BOMB OR NEGOTIATE?

Gas attack in Damascus, 21st August 2013

In the night, shells with **poisonous gas** landed on a rebel neighbourhood in Damascus, Syria. Many died and many were very ill.



At least 1,200 people died and many more were injured.

BOMB! OR NEGOTIATE

US Secretary of State said it was '.....use of the world's most heinous weapon.....'

On 27th August the United States prepared a three day bombing attack using Tomahawk cruise missiles referring to 'the core of (US) National Security'.

The United Nations was not consulted, because the US feared a Russian veto.

The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, supported military action.

On 29th August the British Parliament debated using violence and voted against the attack.

The French Government support evaporated.

The United States pulled back, awaiting a report from inspectors of the Organisation of the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Democracy, debate in Parliament and the voice of the people prevented the attack.

President Putin of Russia suggested negotiations to remove Syria's Chemical Weapons.

September 2013: OPCW inspectors reported that the gas was mostly sarin.

October 2013: Syria agreed to join the Chemical Weapons Protocol.

The considerable stockpile of chemical weapons would be under UN inspection and were to be totally destroyed by 18 months.

November 2013: OPCW report that all manufacturing capacity of the declared facilities has been destroyed.

The Syrian Government still had a considerable stockpile of 1,000 tons of chemicals and weapons.

February 2014: After lengthy negotiations in Geneva removal of chemical weapons stockpile begins.

March 2014: Half of the chemical weapons had been removed to Cyprus to be destroyed.

May 2014:
90% of the Syrian chemical weapons had been removed.



"In rejecting western military intervention, Britain does not turn its back on Syria. We will continue to provide humanitarian assistance but Parliament has told the Government that this must not be delivered in the form of cruise missiles."

- Dr Sarah Wollaston, Conservative MP for Totnes, August 2013



Abolishing Chemical Warfare - **poison gas** (WMD)

1925 - the Geneva Protocols banned the use of **poison gas** in warfare.

1993 - the **UN Chemical Weapons Convention** banned the possession of all chemical weapons.

This required complete destruction of stockpiles by 2007.

Israel and Burma had not ratified the Treaty.
North Korea, Syria, Angola and Egypt had not signed the Treaty.