

Syria says it will destroy chemical weapons

21st September, 2013



The president of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, has said he will follow a plan to destroy his country's chemical weapons. He told reporters from Fox News that it might take one year to

do this. Mr Assad said: "I think it is a very complicated operation technically, and it needs a lot of money. Some estimates say about \$1billion." He added: "It is very bad for the environment. If the American government is ready to pay this money and take the responsibility of bringing toxic materials to the United States, why don't they do it?" America wants Syria to agree to a United Nations resolution that includes American military action if Syria does not keep its promise. However, Russia said no to this.

President Assad again told the world that rebels carried out a chemical weapons attack in Damascus last month. America says it has information that shows Syria's army used the sarin gas, not the rebels. Mr Assad said America was wrong. Russia says there is not enough proof that Syria's army was responsible. Russia's foreign minister said he has evidence that showed the rebels were part of the sarin attack. Mr Assad explained how the rebels could have used the gas. He said: "Sarin gas is called kitchen gas. You know why? Because anybody can make sarin in his house. Any rebel can make sarin." He also said Syria was in "a new kind of war" because fighters from more than 80 countries had joined the rebels.

Sources: BBC / Sky News / Al-Arabiya

Writing

The USA should go into Syria. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

chemical weapons / operation / lots of money / environment / military action / promise / rebels / attacked / Damascus / sarin gas / information / a new kind of war / fighters

True / False

- President Assad said he will need 3 years to destroy chemical weapons. T / F
- Mr Assad asked America to pay \$1 billion to help destroy the weapons. T / F
- Mr Assad asked America to take deadly chemicals to the USA. T / F
- Russia agreed to military action if Syria broke its promises. T / F
- Mr Assad said rebels attacked Damascus with chemical weapons. T / F
- Russia said America needs to show more proof about the attack. T / F
- Mr Assad said sarin gas was very difficult to make. T / F
- Assad said people from just under 80 countries have joined the rebels. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. follow | a. complex |
| 2. destroy | b. guerillas |
| 3. complicated | c. conducted |
| 4. estimates | d. wipe out |
| 5. toxic | e. type |
| 6. carried out | f. poisonous |
| 7. rebels | g. stick to |
| 8. proof | h. to blame |
| 9. responsible | i. rough guesses |
| 10. kind | j. evidence |

Discussion – Student A

- Why is it so difficult to find out who carried out the attack?
- Why doesn't America show its information to the world?
- What would happen if the USA attacked Syria?
- Why do America and Russia disagree so much over Syria?
- If America proved Syria used chemical weapons, should they attack?
- Why have fighters from 80 countries joined Syria's war?
- What questions would you like to ask a rebel?
- What do you think his answers might be?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. follow a plan to destroy his country's | a. action |
| 2. it might take one year | b. technically |
| 3. a very complicated operation | c. make sarin |
| 4. It is very bad | d. in Damascus last month |
| 5. that includes American military | e. chemical weapons |
| 6. a chemical weapons attack | f. kind of war |
| 7. Russia says there is not enough | g. than 80 countries |
| 8. Any rebel can | h. to do this |
| 9. Syria was in a new | i. proof |
| 10. fighters from more | j. for the environment |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about the situation in Syria?
- What do you know about how Syria's war started?
- How often do you follow the news on Syria?
- Do you think Mr Assad will follow the plan?
- Should the USA pay the \$1 billion to destroy the weapons?
- Should the USA take military action if Syria does not keep its promise?
- What would you like to ask Mr Assad?
- What do you think his answers might be?

Spelling

- a very eliacomcdpt operation technically
- bad for the eeivrnntmo
- take the risynpiesoiltb
- a United Nations tnsilorueo
- American iamliytr action
- if Syria does not keep its emrpios
- eebslr carried out a chemical weapons attack
- there is not enough ofopr
- Russia's roeingf minister
- Mr Assad ldneexaip how
- Sarin gas is called neckth gas
- tghefsri from more than 80 countries

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. a	4. i	5. f
6. c	7. b	8. j	9. h	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Bashar al-Assad

You think Bashar al-Assad is the answer to Syria's war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their people. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): Barack Obama, the U.N. or the rebels.

Role B – Barack Obama

You think Barack Obama is the answer to Syria's war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their people. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): Bashar al-Assad, the U.N. or the rebels.

Role C – The United Nations

You think the U.N. is the answer to Syria's war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their people. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): Barack Obama, Bashar al-Assad or the rebels.

Role D – The rebels

You think the rebels are the answer to Syria's war. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their people. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): Barack Obama, the U.N. or Bashar al-Assad.

Speaking – Syria Dangers

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most dangerous at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| • chemical weapons | • Al Qaeda |
| • Bashar al-Assad | • conventional weapons |
| • rebels | • ethnic differences |
| • Syria's neighbours | • President Obama |

Answers – True False

a F b T c T d F e T f T g F h a

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.