

Allied precision strike

At 0200 UK time on 14 April, British forces joined close Allies (US and France) in a precision strike on Syrian installations involved in the use of chemical weapons.

The UK element of the carefully coordinated joint action was contributed by four Royal Air Force Tornado GR4s. They launched Storm Shadow missiles at a military facility – a former missile base – some 15 miles west of Homs, where the regime is assessed to keep chemical weapon precursors stockpiled in breach of Syria's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Very careful scientific analysis was applied to determine where best to target the Storm Shadows to maximise the destruction of the stockpiled chemicals and to minimise any risks of contamination to the surrounding area.

The facility which was struck is located some distance from any known concentrations of civilian habitation, reducing yet further any such risk.

Statement by the NATO Secretary General

'I support the actions taken by the United States, the United Kingdom and France against the Syrian regime's chemical weapons facilities and capabilities. This will reduce the regime's ability to further attack the people of Syria with chemical weapons.'

'NATO has consistently condemned Syria's continued use of chemical weapons as a clear breach of international norms and agreements. The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable, and those responsible must be held accountable.'

'NATO considers the use of chemical weapons as a threat to international peace and security, and believes that it is essential to protect the Chemical Weapons Convention. This calls for a collective and effective response by the international community.'