

Pic caption RAF Syria b

*An RAF Voyager taking off in support of four RAF Tornados.*

*Four Royal Air Force Tornados took off this morning (14 April) from RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus, to conduct strikes in support of Operations over the Middle East.*

*The Tornados, flown by 31 Squadron, the Gold Stars, were supported by a Voyager aircraft.*

*At 0200 UK time on 14 April, British forces joined close Allies 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 fifteen 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.*

*Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: 'The reprehensible use of chemical weapons in Douma is further evidence of the Syrian regime's appalling cruelty against its own people. We will not stand by whilst innocent civilians, including women and children, are killed and made to suffer.'*

*'The international community has responded decisively with legal and proportionate military force. Let these united actions send a clear message to the regime – the use of chemical weapons is categorically unacceptable and you will be held to account.'*

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