

# UK pledges full support for military intervention against Syria

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British Foreign Secretary William Hague has said that the UK is “closely aligned” with the US over Syria.

His statement makes a mockery of government claims to be “respectful” of parliament’s rejection of British involvement in a US military attack on Syria. It makes plain that the UK is working actively in support of yet another war for regime change in the Middle East, based on a mountain of lies.

Hague’s comment was made at a press conference in London alongside US Secretary of State John Kerry, who had been travelling Europe to gather political support for an attack. At the weekend, the European Union issued a statement supporting war preparations against Syria.

Washington and London claim that military intervention is necessary in response to the Assad regime’s use of chemical weapons. But they have no credible evidence to back their assertions, as was shown by the defeat of Prime Minister David Cameron’s motion for war in parliament. In fact, there is every likelihood that the chemical attack in east Damascus on August 21 was carried out by opposition forces to create a pretext for Western military intervention.

Kerry nonetheless repeated the accusations at the press conference, despite failing to present any new evidence. Asked whether the US would provide any further information to back up its claims, Kerry said he was unsure. “There is a risk. It could damage your ability to disrupt a plot”, he said.

Kerry argued that as a public prosecutor, “I’ve personally tried people who have gone away for long prison sentences or for life for less evidence than we have of this [Assad’s guilt].”

His statement flatly contradicted that of White House

Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, who only the day before admitted that the Obama administration did not have “irrefutable, beyond-a-reasonable-doubt” evidence, adding: “This is not a court of law.”

Kerry also deceitfully argued that the US was only planning an “unbelievably small” attack on Syria, similar to the US bombing raid on Tripoli, Libya ordered by US President Ronald Reagan in 1986.

“We will be able to hold Bashar al-Assad accountable without engaging in troops on the ground or any other prolonged kind of effort in a very limited, very targeted, short-term effort that degrades his capacity to deliver chemical weapons without assuming responsibility for Syria’s civil war”, he said. “That is exactly what we are talking about doing—unbelievably small, limited kind of effort.”

His claim is made necessary by massive popular opposition in the US, Britain and across the world to a military attack. Over the weekend, however, the *Los Angeles Times* cited unnamed military officials who said the Pentagon “is preparing for a longer bombardment of Syria than it originally had planned, with a heavy barrage of missile strikes followed soon after by more attacks on targets that the opening salvos missed or failed to destroy...”

The Obama White House was expanding its target list to comprise “many more” than the 50 targets initially selected, the two US officers said.

The much-vaunted “special relationship” between the US and the UK, which was reiterated by Kerry and Hague, amounts to a criminal conspiracy against the world’s population.

Hague said that the US war drive had Britain’s full “diplomatic support”. The defeat of the government’s war motion has so far prevented British military involvement in these preparations, at least openly. At

the weekend, however, it was reported that two RAF jets at Britain's military base in Cyprus were scrambled last Monday to "urgently investigate" Syrian planes that had crossed into international airspace.

The Ministry of Defence "confirmed that unidentified planes legally crossed into Cypriot skies from the east of the country last Monday", the *Independent* reported.

"But it is understood the behaviour of the aircraft raised suspicions at RAF Akrotiri, less than 200 miles from Syria, prompting the rapid response", it continued. Two Turkish F-16s were also reportedly launched from their base in Incirlik.

Meanwhile, Britain is stepping up its assistance to the opposition forces in the CIA-backed Syrian National Council (SNC), the leading proxy force inside Syria for the imperialist powers.

Hague sidestepped questions at the press conference on whether Britain would provide military equipment to the Syrian opposition. The Foreign Secretary met with SNC President Ahmed Asi Al Jarba last week, supposedly to discuss humanitarian aid.

London hopes to utilise the plight of the refugees created by the Western-backed sectarian civil war to provide another possible pretext for military intervention. Hague has said that parliament could vote again on joining a military attack, if "circumstances change dramatically" and Labour guarantees its backing.

The government lost its motion by just 13 votes. Some 30 Tory MPs voted against the government, and 31 abstained. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, a number of Conservative MPs have said they would be willing to reconsider their position.

A significant number of Labour MPs have also added their support to a second vote. Former Labour Home Secretary David Blunkett urged, "Difficult as it would be, it surely makes sense for the Labour leader to call upon the prime minister and his colleagues to acknowledge that, if circumstances change, minds should change too."

According to "Labour sources" cited by the *Guardian*, Labour leader Ed Miliband "never expected to see the government motion defeated in the Commons on Syria. At one meeting, it was said that Miliband had believed he was playing a sensible forward defensive stroke by voting for his amendment, and then

discovered he had hit a six over the boundary."



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