

## **NOWAR-PAIX position on Syria**

*We oppose a US or NATO attack on Syria. Here is why:*

**First**, the US and NATO have lied to justify military intervention many times in the past. In recent memory, we had “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq. So, frankly, we do not trust the US, UK, or Canadian governments to fairly assess evidence about chemical or other weapons use.

Let’s look at the latest: John Kerry is playing the role of Colin Powell by presenting supposedly “irrefutable” proof that the attacks were ordered by the Assad government. At the same time, reports are surfacing that the rebels had an accident and blew up chemical gas canisters in their storage facility, chemicals provided to them by Saudi Arabia.

Where does the truth lie? We may never know, now that the UN inspection team has fled Syria for fear of imminent US air strikes! An interesting analysis is found at <http://www.fair.org/blog/2013/09/01/which-syrian-chemical-attack-account-is-more-credible/>

**Second**, whoever is responsible; whatever the reason, military action is not the answer.

Previous US and NATO-led attacks, justified under the so-called doctrine of the “responsibility to protect”, have resulted in tens of thousands of civilian deaths.

The death toll from military attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya can be counted in the hundreds of thousands, not to mention the numbers of refugees living in dreadful conditions while placing pressure on neighboring states.

What we are seeing is that the Responsibility to Protect doctrine means “Bomb civilians in order to save them”.

**Third**, no one knows what kind of response a U.S. attack might unleash from Syria and its allies in that volatile region. An escalating, region-wide war appears very possible as a result of these threatened attacks.

Those favoring military action say that Syria must be “punished” or use of chemical weapons will become wide spread even though they are illegal.

Certainly, we need accountability for this tragic and reprehensible violation of international law. But this is what the International Court should be for—a place where the facts can be laid out for all to see, and war-criminals can be appropriately punished. Unfortunately, the US government is not a supporter of this Court, fearing that their own officials or allies will face charges! This leaves them with few options other than a more realistic search for the truth and greater efforts at diplomacy.