



# Unterlagen zum 1. Jahrestag der Giftgasangriffe auf die Ghoutas vom 21.8.2013

Zusammengetragen auf Anregung und mit Hilfe  
von Überlebenden und syrischen Aktivisten

für die mediale Verwendung

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# Leben am anderen Ende der roten Linie

**Vor etwa einem Jahr, im August 2013, wurde die Ghoutas, Vorstadtgebiete östlich von Damaskus, mit chemischen Kampfstoffen angegriffen. Die betroffenen Stadtteile wurden von Rebellen gehalten, sie befanden sich seit 2012 unter der Belagerung syrischer Truppen sowie schiitischer Milizionäre und unter dauerhaftem Beschuss.**



Nach dem Angriff am 21. August 2014

Am frühen Morgen des 21. August 2013 meldeten erste Posten der Freien Syrischen Armee den Einschlag von Raketen, die wahrscheinlich toxische Kampfstoffe enthielten. Zeugen berichteten von Geschossen, die bei der Detonation wie platzende Wassertanks klangen. Um drei Uhr in der Frühe schlug die erste mit Kampfstoffen konfektionierte Boden-Boden-Rakete ein. Es folgte eine ganze Reihe von Einschlägen in den Stadtteilen Hammuriyah, Hirista, Irbin, Sepqa, Kafr Batna, Ayn Tarma, Jobar und Zamalka. Die Hilfsorganisation »Ärzte ohne Grenzen« bestätigte nur wenige Tage später über 350 Tote auf der Grundlage von Krankenhausakten. In den folgenden Tagen musste diese Zahl immer weiter nach oben korrigiert werden. Die betroffenen Stadtteile standen unter Beschuss, die medizinische Versorgung war bestenfalls notdürftig. Ärzte vor Ort gehen in Übereinstimmung mit anderen Berichten mittlerweile von über 1.300 Toten aus – fast ausnahmslos Zivilisten, die buchstäblich im Schlaf getroffen wurden.

Fünf Tage nach dem Angriff untersuchte ein Team von UN-Inspekteuren, die sich zur Untersuchung vorangegangener mutmaßlicher Einsätze chemischer Kampfstoffe vor Ort befanden, einige der Einschlagstellen, nahmen Bodenproben, untersuchten Überlebende und interviewten Ärzte. In der Zwischenzeit waren die Stadtteile ununterbrochen mit konventionellen Waffen beschossen worden. Das Inspektionsteam der UN konnte dennoch nachweisen, dass in den untersuchten Gebieten der hochtoxische Kampfstoff Sarin eingesetzt wurde. Sarin tritt über die gesamte Körperfläche ein. Es führt zu Atemnot, Krämpfen, unkontrollierbarem Muskelzucken, Speichelfluss, Erbrechen und schließlich Atemlähmung. Sarin wirkt, wie andere chemische Kampfstoffe, auf das vegetative Nervensystem und löst eine Dauererregung der Nervensysteme aus. Damit einher gehen extreme Angst- und Panikreaktionen bei den Vergifteten. Sarin bewirkt einen grausamen und qualvollen Tod.



**Notdürftige medizinische Versorgung in einem Untergrundhospital**

Ein Jahr später sind die Ghoutas immer noch belagert, die Situation der Bevölkerung ist schlimmer denn je. Es mangelt an allem: Nahrungsmitteln, sauberem Trinkwasser, Medikamenten. Das Regime Bashar Al Assads hungert die widerständischen Stadtteile der Ghoutas und anderer Stadtteile aus. Betroffen sind auch die Überlebenden der Giftgasangriffe. Mehr als 9.000 Menschen wurden registriert, die dem toxischen Kampfstoff ausgesetzt waren und zum Teil lebens-

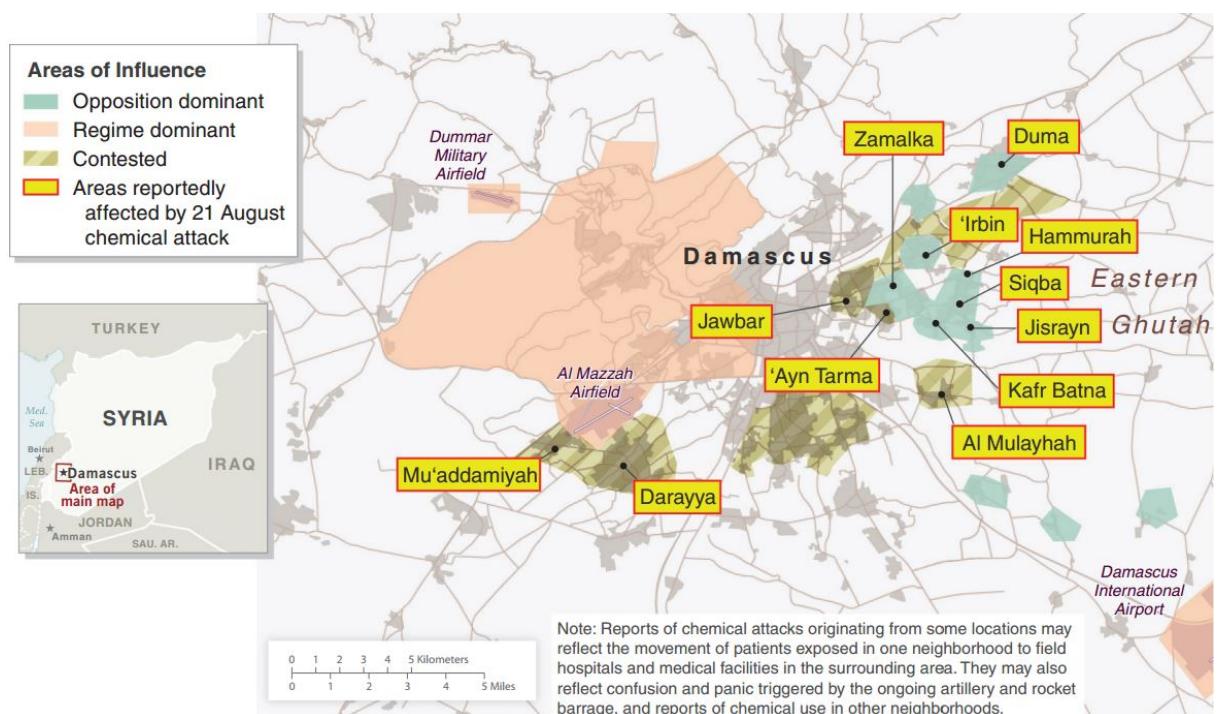
gefährliche Verletzungen davon trugen. Ihre Behandlung von Sarinopfern wäre auch unter friedlichen Bedingungen extrem schwierig, unter Belagerung und Beschuss ist sie praktisch unmöglich. Internationale Hilfe gibt es nicht. Weder wurde eine weitere Fact-Finding-Mission vor Ort durchgeführt, noch gab es ernsthafte Bemühungen gegenüber der syrischen Regierung den Zugang humanitärer Hilfe zu den Betroffenen zu ermöglichen. Es scheint, als habe sich mit der Zustimmung der syrischen Regierung zur von der OPCW geleiteten Vernichtung der bekannten C-Waffenarsenale auch die internationale Aufregung um den Einsatz toxischer Kampfstoffe gegen Zivilisten in Syrien erledigt.



**Nach dem Angriff**

Ohne Zweifel ist die Vernichtung des syrischen C-Waffenarsenals ein wichtiger Schritt. Chemische Kampfstoffe gelten zurecht als Massenvernichtungswaffen. Der Begriff führt allerdings schnell in die Irre, wenn man vernachlässigt, wo und unter welchen Bedingungen C-Waffen in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten eingesetzt wurden. Vor dem syrischen Bürgerkrieg geschah dies in großem Umfang zuletzt im Irak, wo die Regierung Saddam Husseins zuerst C-Waffen gegen iranische Soldaten einsetzte und später, Ende der 80er Jahre, gegen die kurdische Bevölkerung des Landes. Bereits damals zeigte sich, dass ihr einfacher und lokal begrenzbarer Einsatz sie zu einem verlockenden Werkzeug in Konflikten macht, die ohne Rücksicht auf die Bevölkerung ge-

führt werden. Im Vergleich zu anderen Massenvernichtungswaffen sind chemische Kampfstoffe relativ einfach herzustellen, vor allem aber einzusetzen. Toxische Kampfstoffe können als Bomben abgeworfen, per Rakete oder mithilfe von Artilleriegeschossen abgefeuert werden. Sie benötigen nicht den enormen technisch-administrativen Apparat, der bspw. für den Einsatz von Nuklearwaffen nötig ist. Dennoch ist ihr Einsatz von verheerender Wirkung auf die betroffene Bevölkerung, die praktisch keine Gegenmaßnahmen ergreifen kann, sondern buchstäblich aus heiterem Himmel vergiftet wird. Hier kehrt sich der militärische Nachteil der Waffen – die kurzzeitige Wirkung, ihre relative Unzuverlässigkeit aufgrund der Windanfälligkeit – in einen Vorteil, wenn sie in dicht besiedelten Gebieten eingesetzt werden. Chemische Waffen sind daher vor allem ein Instrument zur Terrorisierung der Bevölkerung. Sie sind vergleichsweise einfach herzustellen, lagerbar, einfach einsetzbar und lokal begrenzt wirksam, was den Nachweis in Konfliktgeschehen erschwert. Und: Ihr Einsatz blieb – zumindest bislang – für die verantwortlichen Regierungen weitgehend folgenlos.



**Karte der Angriffe am 21. August**

Solange Regierungen wie jene Bashar al Assads für den Einsatz toxischer Kampfstoffe gegen die Bevölkerung nicht zur Rechenschaft gezogen werden, bleiben C-Waffen die Waffe der Wahl in Konflikten, bei denen der Schaden der Zivilbevölkerung ein Teil der Kriegsführung ist. Syrien hat sich unter der Androhung militärischer Maßnahmen zur Preisgabe seines bekannten C-Waffenarsenals bereit erklärt. Auf Terror und Bombardierung der Bevölkerung hat die Regierung nicht verzichtet. Schlimmer noch: Mehrere Quellen berichten, dass syrische Truppen Chlorgas als Waffe gegen die Bevölkerung einsetzt, das aufgrund seiner vielfältigen zivilen Nut-

zungsmöglichkeiten nicht unter die Liste der verbotenen chemischen Kampfstoffe fällt. So führt die syrische Regierung unter dem Deckmantel der Vernichtung ihres C-Waffenarsenals weiter einen schmutzigen Krieg gegen die eigene Bevölkerung. Den Preis für die Unterzeichnung und Umsetzung des Chemiewaffenprotokolls zahlt die syrische Zivilbevölkerung.

Im Sommer 2012, ein Jahr vor den Angriffen auf die Ghoutas, hatte US-Präsident Barak Obama den Einsatz chemischer Waffen als »rote Linie« bezeichnet, deren Übertretung zu Maßnahmen gegen die syrische Regierung führen werde. Im Sommer 2014 leben die Menschen der Ghoutas nun bereits seit einem Jahr auf der anderen Seite der roten Linie – und nichts wurde für sie unternommen. Die Tatenlosigkeit der Welt gegenüber dem andauernden Morden, gegenüber gravierenden Kriegsverbrechen und Verbrechen gegen die Menschheit in Syrien ist ein andauernder Skandal.

*Thomas Uwer, Vorstandsmitglied Wadi e.V.*

# Timeline

**Eine Übersicht über - grösstenteils umfassend belegte - Angriffe mit Giftgas auf syrischem Boden findet sich unter folgendem Link:**

<https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?mid=zYOyPe9SkCr8.k5UuguwGE-w>

# Interviews

Hinweis: Es ist schwierig, Überlebende der Giftgasangriffe zu finden, welche bereit sind, öffentlich Stellung zu nehmen, selbst wenn es den Menschen gelungen ist, aus den eingeschlossenen Gebieten zu flüchten. Der Interviewer, ein syrischer Aktivist, dem die Interviewten Vertrauen entgegenbringen, musste ihnen versichern, dass ihre Identität unkenntlich gemacht wird. Die interviewten Personen stellen sich aber für weitere Fragen zur Verfügung, auch für Interviews. Bei Bedarf wird ein entsprechender Kontakt (inkl. Übersetzung) hergestellt (siehe Kontaktliste am Ende des Dossiers).

## Erstes Interview

### **Interview with a witness of the chemical attacks on Ghouta who worked as a coordinator for medical staff in eastern Ghouta.**

**A- Did you witness the chemical attacks?**

B- Yes, I was there

**A- Did you lose any close friends or family members?**

B- I didn't lose family members but I lost many of the people I knew. We lost members of the medical staff and first aid providers especially in Jobar. It wasn't the first chemical assault, but it was the one, that captured the public attention because of the high number of victims. Eastern Gouta had been previously attacked with chemical weapons 5-6 times.

**A- Tell me more details about that day.**

B- As I said, it wasn't the first time that we have been attacked with chemical weapons. The people were already so afraid of these attacks, that we had stop the rumors and tried to prepare ourselves for further attacks, so we established medical emergency points since we were afraid that the regime would targets densely populated areas. Although all previous attacks had been in contested areas, we couldn't rule out the possibility, that the Assad-Regime would target other areas. So we were working as best as we could to prepare for such an attack such as organizing the first responder teams. Although we were prepared the situation on August 21<sup>st</sup> was

**"You can't really imagine the horror of that night"**

chaotic. For example we had a lot of car accidents, because the people panicked and the regime started to shell the areas with conventional weapons as it always does after chemical attacks.

**A- So you were kind of overwhelmed by the attacks and the number of victims?**

B- As I said the panic of the people is one of the main side effects of the chemical attacks. As soon as people smell something strange they believe that this must be a chemical attack. But you have to keep

in mind that there is no necessity to add an odour to the weapons. Its up to the people who prepare the gas if they add it, like cooking gas in the kitchen.

The day of the attack was chaotic. Victims sometimes where carried more than 20 minutes to the medical points. We soon understood that all the medical points close to the attacked areas where overwhelmed by the number of victims. So we communicated with the medical points all over Ghouta that all had to prepare for receiving victims, even if that would mean that the victims had to be transported more than 20 minutes in the ambulance. We also started to ask the medical points nearer to the attack sites what they need the most. The first two hours where horrific and just overwhelmed us.

**A- Tell me more about what you did and what was your reaction:**

B- I headed to the area of the attack as soon as I heard that there were chemical attacks. Some colleagues and I started to call all the staff and points asking them to get ready. Unfortunately everyone was overwhelmed, even the wireless communication point workers.

I was calling every point trying to know and assess their needs and their shortages. The whole day was difficult, but the first two hours until we recognized the magnitude of the catastrophe were really the most difficult.

**A- What were the main medical supplies you lacked in these two hours and afterward?**

B- We lacked many things. There was essentially no automatic ventilation equipment, some sites even lacked syringes because of the numbers of victims. Some points lacked atropine. The scale of catastrophe had forced us to depend on volunteers, who risked their lives to carry medical equipment to the makeshift hospitals. You can't really imagine the horror of that night.

**A- In addition to the high number of victims, what is the other reason you lacked medical supplies?**

B- When the attacks happened, the Easter Ghoutas had been under siege for over ten months. The siege effectively started in October 2012. Since then the Ghoutas had been without electricity and without water. Since 2013 the regime agreed on some food deliveries, but almost non medical supply's were delivered. Before the attacks we planned to treat 300 victims simultaneously all over eastern Ghouta. There had been some of us who doubt that we ever had to treat up to 300 persons. After the attack the number was in the thousands.

**A- You mentioned earlier that it is more difficult to let the medical supplies into the besieged area. How did manage to receive any medical supplies? Did you had to smuggle it? Or did you had some sort of agreement with the regime or regimes proxies like Iranian militias to let some medical aid in the Ghoutas?**

B- No, the regime never agreed on something like this. Quite the reverse: The regime arrested everybody who even tried to smuggle in some medical supplies, and the regime was reacting more brutally to such persons than to those who tried to smuggle in weapons. Because the regime is well aware of the urgent need for medical materials and is also aware that the besieged areas essentially depends on the question of medical supply. This is why the regime is fighting the medical work, and this is why it's totally forbidden to let any medical materials into the besieged areas. So it is very dangerous for us to smuggle medical supplies. And this is why the prices of some materials is so high and specific things became very rare. Add to it that the population of Eastern Gouta is relatively large. In August 2013 the population was over one million.

**A- And now it's 700,000, I've heard?**

B- Yes approximately.

**A- How dangerous is it for the people to leave the area?**

B- Some crossing point had opened in Harasta. The Syrian Red Crescent organized the evacuation for families with special cases. There is another way which is bribing to get out, and there is a third very dangerous way which is: crawling into tunnels, or passing through minefields. So the number of residents is decreasing by these three ways. And by the way; people are not fleeing from Eastern Gouta because of the shelling. Even after the chemical attacks most of them refused to leave. But what really makes it impossible to live there is the siege. The siege is just exhausting us, even basic living materials are rare. For example I have a child, I couldn't get baby milk for it. There is no difference between rich and poor anymore. There is just nothing left.

Ghouta had been an rich area; an area of agriculture, industry, trade and tourism and suddenly even the basic things for living aren't not available anymore. For example we had to make bread out of soya fodder. We cannot use flash lights since there are no more batteries.

**"We do not expect anything from any government in the world"**

**A- In these two years of siege; how do you assess the world support and the world activists' support?**

B- The international organizations refuse to send money - but how can you survive if there is nothing getting in because of the siege? So we get nothing. We got some support from local organizations for the last three years. But after that these organizations don't have any funds left to give. The third point is that, the expenses drastically increased during the last years. A medical station

that used to need \$10,000 a month, now it needs 30,000 or even 40,000 a month. Now we don't have fuel and the prices are really high, we need fuel to generate electricity. Now we can only smuggle it and this is expensive. The organizations are not able to bridge this gap. These organizations are essentially Syrian, and they can only support us in a very limited way. The international organizations are not helping us at all.

For example the International Red Cross, what have they accomplished in Eastern Ghouta? Nothing. The UN? They entered three times to Eastern Ghouta and they couldn't even cover 1% of what is needed for the residents. The UN visits to Eastern Ghouta have been more or less a show for the world so that they can claim, that they are working in the areas. We have a problem with local NGOs who don't organize their work as well as they should. But international organizations they treat us as if we were another human species that has not the right to exist.

**A- What do you expect from US and Europe?**

B- It is clear that these countries only act when it's in their interest. These countries put red lines for the Syrian regime, which has crossed these lines again and again. But the West did not react. It is only cheap talking for the TV stations and by doing so, the revolution changed from its original demands and the composition of demands. To be honest: We do not expect anything from any government in the world.

**A- And from the people?**

B- To the people all over the world who are following up the crisis and see what the regime is doing, I would like to say: What is happening in Eastern Ghouta can happen anywhere in the world. It might be in France, the US or any other place. I think most of the people around the world are sympathizing with us as human beings. And I think they disapprove what is happening to us.

**A- You have not been directly exposed to chemical attacks but you witnessed them and your job was respond and organize responding to the attacks. In this interview, you provided your own experience with the attacks, what you've witnessed and your essential role. You left Syria some time ago, but I would like to know if the attacks still affect you?**

B- I have no physiological damage although I left Ghouta very emaciated. I recovered very fast within a month or two. My son suffered from damage due to the underfeeding and the missing nutrients. The worst that has been triggered by the siege is without a doubt on the psychological level. No matter how much we talk about it, we still suffer. We had to see such horrible things during the siege and this has damaged us more than anything else. For example I needed medication for my son and I just couldn't get it for him. I knew a lot of people but nobody was able to help me. Imagine how you would feel as a father? Every time there is loud sound around us, me and my family start to panic. Other people just stopped laughing or crying. They just can't do it anymore.

## **Zweites Interview**

# **Interview with a doctor who whitnessed the attacks in Eastern Ghouta himself**

**A- Have you been personally affected by the chemical assaults which hit Ghouta?**

B- I was working in a medical emergency station close to where one of the attacks happened. I was affected because I had been in direct contact with victims.

**A- Did you lose any of your relatives or friends because of it? Friends or activists?**

**When did you notice that the attacks were not carried out with conventional weapons?**

**Can you talk in details here?**

B- If you are referring to the chemicals weapons (missiles or shells) I have to say the following: I live about 1-2 km from where it hit. And because of the ongoing shelling and bombardment on Eastern Ghouta, we had stopped giving any attention to any special sound or intensity of the explosions. And the assault happened at 2am and when I was asleep, so I didn't notice it at the time of the attack.

**A- As a doctor, when did you notice this was an attack with chemical agents? And what did you do?**

B- I was asleep. And when I heard the call for all medical staff to move to the emergency stations I ran towards it to start working.

**A- Did you inhale the gas?**

B- We weren't equipped with protective masks or protective clothes and the number of victims was much higher than we could have imagined. We started working and then we smelled a strange odor. Minutes later I realized difficulties in breathing, a low headache, nausea and blurred vision.

**A- Did you help the victims? And what challenges did you face?**

B- Yes – of course. I am a doctor. And we had difficulties because of the lack of capacity for urgent medical care for the huge number of victims. On top of that the people broke out in panic.

**A- Lacked essential material for patient care? And if so, why?**

**"I will not  
forget the feeling  
that I was dying"**

B- We were experiencing lack of everything: medication, nutrition, fuel, electricity, water. And that was because of the siege. Chemical weapons are weapons of mass destruction. In order to react properly on it you really must be prepared well. You need special equipment such as tents for cleaning and for medical evacuation. Then you must have protected civil defense teams equipped with cardiopulmonary resuscitation tools and oxygen cylinders etc.

We had heard before about the use of Sarin gas in Aleppo. We were really doing our best to prepare ourselves for such assaults. But our efforts to stock enough medical supplies could not be sufficient because we live under siege, on an island that is surrounded by an iron curtain.

**A- Did these assaults leave any permanent marks on your body? Do you suffer from any other physiological after-effects?**

B- I am ok now and I don't suffer from anything except from the miserable life I live because we are deprived from all that is important. (fuel, nutrition, medication, services etc.) And I will never forget the moment when I was affected by chemical toxins: I suddenly realized inhaling problems, Arrhythmia and blurred vision. I will not forget how they hold me and took me to intensive care. I will not forget the feeling that I was dying. And I will always remember my feelings for my family and loved ones.

**A- Tell me more about the general situation – education, work, health care etc. - in the besieged Ghouta.**

B- The regime of Bashar Assad has deprived us from all these services and utilities with a brutal siege. But thanks to our personal efforts and with the support of some loyal people, we have managed to establish some educational and medical institutions. We have started digging wells and then we are focusing on agriculture although we do not have a lot of capacities available. But the main challenge is the brutal siege. The lack of fuel for example, has led to a huge price rise: we pay now 12-15 dollars per liter and therefore for generating energy we are depending on chunks of wood, plastic waste and even wooden furniture.

**A- During the two years of the siege, how would you describe the international support and support by activists?**

B- Officially they've supported us with statements and the international community has made a unprecedented step by confiscating the chemical weapons from the offender while at the same time allowing him to commit new crimes. The international community is only weeping over the victims but does not take any action. But we are dedicating great thanks to international activists like Angelina Jolie and George Newcomb. We appreciate what they do.



Untergrundhospital, in dem Verletzte notdürftig versorgt werden können.

**A- What do you expect from Europe and America**

B- Nothing. But I hope they will at least comply to their international obligations and responsibilities. And I hope they understand that it is by not supporting the Syrian revolution in its two forms - the peaceful and the armed one - that now the doors are open to extremism and terrorism. The key factor for stability and to end terrorism would be supporting this revolution through action and not only words.

**A- And there is one last question asked by Dr. M.: Can you tell us a story about victims that you've witnessed?**

B- I remember the rescue people were bringing in whole families and people of all ages. There was a child hallucinating in front of his mother's corps. It was asking his mother to take him

home, convinced that she was only asleep. Some victims were having fits of crying and laughing. I was entering houses where you could see that life had just suddenly stopped. I won't forget myself counting the bodies of people I knew and how they had turned into numbers in surveys. I will not forget the mother who was crying for her dead children and who was saying: "I struggled till they could sleep while hungry, and now they died of chemicals."

**Drittes Interview**

# **Interview with an survivor of the chemical attacks on Moaddamyeh (Western Ghouta) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August**

**A- Before we start I would like to remind you that what you say will be used in reports and that we will not mention your Name. Do you like to refer to a pseudonym?**

B- No, it's better that I don't mention my real name.

**A- So then I will call you a doctor from Moaddamyeh of Damascus?**

B- I mean, half of my family died or disappeared because of me, I don't want to harm them even more.

**A- You're right.**

B- While others here "in Turkey" are having fun.

**A- Right. So we just refer to you as a "Doctor from Moaddamiye El Sham"**

B- Yes

**A- You told me that you have been affected by the chemical assault on Moaddamiey?**

B- Yes, I have been there and I was affected.

**A- Did you loose any of your relatives or friends because chemical attack?**

B- Yes, I lost many relatives. My cousin, her husband and their five children. Also another cousin and his wife as well a nine of our neighbors.

**A- When did you notice that the assault was different? I mean when did you notice that the attacks where conducted with "non-conventional" weapons?**

B- After the prayer of dawn, we heard four unusual sounds, unfamiliar to us, these sounds were neither mortar, nor typical shelling, nor was it hitting the usual places? When we went to the site where, we noticed that every person who was inside or entered the building that was hit had already fallen on the ground, with clear sign of suffocation. They had turned blue, froth at the mouth and abdominal cramps.

**A- What did you do then?**

**"I noticed that my pupils shranked to pinpoints which lead to blurred vision and my eyes started to itch"**

B- We head to the field hospital and receiving the injured. Because, half an hour after the chemical attacks, the regime launched random shelling to prepare for invasion. The number of casualties reached 760.

**A- Did you inhale the gas?**

B- Yes, I inhaled the gas about 50m from where the shells landed. I noticed that my pupils shranked to pinpoints which lead to blurred vision and my eyes started to itch. Additionally my skin started to

scratch and I felt debilitated.

**A- So when you went to the hospital, were you ready for this kind of attacks? Were you able to cure or at least mitigate the symptoms?**

B- We had Atropine and Hydro Cortisone. From the beginning every person who reached the field hospital was given Atropine and we started to wash the victims with water until the floor of the hospital was flooded. You have to keep in mind that the hospital is located in an underground site and we couldn't pump out the water since did not have electricity for over two years.

**A- You told me that the number of injured reached 760.**

B- Yes

**A- Were all of the victims affected by the chemical attacks or have there been also victims from the regular shelling's?**

B- 78 died immediately from the chemical attack and three later in the makeshift hospital. 69 died of the conventional shelling of the regime. First I was treated when I arrived at the hospital and after that I helped the victims together with Dr. Omar Hakim. But all of the time I felt sick, since we waded through the intoxicated water for hours. Most of the time I was conducting CPR.

**A- Ok. Was there a shortage in medication in that night? Was there something missing for the treatment and what was the reason for that?**

B- We were short on Oxygen due to the siege. We didn't have any single oxygen cylinder. Additionally you have to take into account that the chemical attacks happened after a long and fierce siege which caused malnutrition and the spread of disease. This explains why even a slight inhalation caused great damage to the victims.

**A- Besides that night, let's talk about yourself. Do you still suffer from the attack? Either physical or psychological?**

B- Yes, I have a second degree burning in face. The burning was caused from the water that we used to wash the victims. It was intoxicated from chemical agent.

**A- Psychologically?**

B- Seizures of panic, anxiety, and depression have become the theme of my life.

**A- So from the date of the assault till now, tell me briefly about the general situation in terms of work, education, health in the besieged moaddamiyah neighborhood.**

B- Since the ceasefire between the rebels and the regime agreed on the situation is much better. Now we have food and medication. But there is a sort of instability caused by the big number of martyrs, prisoners of the regime and the tremendous destruction. Everything that would enter Moaddamieyh is in return for something, and the ones who are paying the bills are the prisoners.

**A- I don't understand. Paying the bills?**

B- The prisoner issue is very complicated and the more it's delayed the more aid we get. About 180 prisoners died of torture in the regime prisons and if we would talk about it, this would without a doubt end the ceasefire.

**A- Do you trust the ceasefire? And are you afraid the chemical attack would happen again?**

B- We are not afraid of the chemical attacks, we are more afraid of the siege. The siege has harmed us more.

**A- During the two years of siege, how would you evaluate the international support and the activists support to you?**

B- The absence of aid programs is one of the main reasons for the catastrophic situation. If I would have conducted my work for one side I would tell you that I wasn't compensated. But my job was to serve my people and I trust that god will compensate me with goodness. Right now inside of Mohadamiyya there is no shortage of medical supplies. But when you leave it nobody cares for you. The regime wants that the doctors die inside the country.

**A- Last question, what do you expect from UK and US?**

B- That the conflict in Syria ends. Everyone in the country is a looser; the country is destroyed, the manners are destroyed and the human being has no value. This is why I say stop the fight.

**Viertes Interview**

# **An interview with a young woman (a Palestinian Syrian) aged 27, who lost all her family members in Zamalka in Eastern Gouta.**

**A- Have you been affected by the chemical assault on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2014**

B- Yes I am from the Mazra'a district (which was directly targeted).

**A- Did you lose any of your parents or friends during this catastrophe?**

B- Yes. I lost 4 members of my family ( my mother, my father, my brother, my sister). My second brother was affected but he survived. But I lost almost my entire neighborhood.

**A- Tell us what happened and what were the symptoms?**

B- All I remember from this catastrophe is that I had slept at night and found myself after two days at one of the medical points. I was being treated as a victim, my vision was almost gone and I had heavy respiration till the degree of suffocation together with continuous vomiting. I was hearing moaning and screams of many men, women and children. I stayed at the hospital for 20 days and was having seizures. And I lost a lot of my hair. I recovered gradually and was able to leave the hospital after 20 days.

**A- How was the treatment? Were all the necessary medical utilities available?**

B- I remember the oxygen mask, the atropin, serums, eye drops and other medication, but not everything was available because of the siege and the large number of victims.

**A- What was the moment that touched most your heart and will rest in your memory?**

B- The most painful moment was when my parents died and when I saw how my surviving brother was suffering the same way I was. What especially drew my attention that day was how people gathered to help each other and how many have tried to comfort me for my family loss.

**A- How would you consider way the international community addressed the catastrophe?**

**Did you receive any help?**

B- They addressed it in a shameful way. After three months I received a small amount of money, that's was it.

**"It is a real humanitarian disaster that is taking place in the besieged areas"**

**A- So who provided more help? Countries and governments or NGOs?**

B- I didn't notice any help from anyone. Real help would come by helping to finish the crisis with a political solution that meets the people's demands. We want to live with honor and we want our children's dreams come true. I say this as a Palestinian refugee who was born and raised in Syria.

**A- How do you personally assess the situation for education, health, services and utilities and development in Eastern Ghouta under the siege?**

B- We don't have anything because of the siege. At least there are some local organizations that try to provide some of these services. But they are very limited.

**A- What do you ask from America and Europe?**

B- I want them to value the Arab human being the same way they value the human being in their countries. We're all humans, we don't want meetings or slogans or statements, they all waste time and raise the number of victims. We want actions.

**A- Why did you stay in Ghouta despite of the siege and the danger?**

B- I want to put all my efforts for the sake of helping the besieged civilians. This is true although everyone is afraid of being detained by the regime.

**A- Is there anything you want to add?**

B- Provide us with help. It is a real humanitarian disaster that is taking place in the besieged areas.

# Stellungnahme eines Überlebenden der Giftgasangriffe auf Halabja vom 15. März 1988

## The Chemical Attacks on Ghouta, Syria – A Year On

"The pictures and scenes from the chemical attack on Ghouta are chillingly similar to those from the attacks on Halabja in 1988. A regime of the same Ba'athist ideology inflicted the suffering on the inhabitants of Halabja as the one that committed the attacks on Syrian civilians in Ghouta last year.



Solidaritätsdemonstration in Halabja, Irakisch-Kurdistan nach den Chemiewaffenangriffen in Syrien  
© Jiyān Foundation

In March 2014 was the memorial-day for 25 years to the attacks on Halabja. Sadly such horrors are not just a matter of past remembrance, but continue to happen, this time in Syria. 25 years ago the technology was not available to send immediate news and reports to the world about the genocidal campaign in Iraq. Today, however, the situation is different. The dreadful pictures and reports from Ghouta were quickly disseminated and seen by many people.

Yet no action was taken to help the victims of the attacks or to hold the regime that perpetuated them accountable. Until now, we have seen adequate responses neither from the United Nations nor from countries, also in Europe, that helped the regimes develop the regimes' chemical arsenals.

Sadly, civilians in Ghouta and many other places remain exposed to the grave risk of being attacked by chemicals weapons, at the mercy of oppressive regimes that act with impunity."

*Falah Muradkhan (fled and survived the chemical attacks on Halabja in 1988.*

*He is the director of WADI in Iraq).*

"As activists for victims of chemical weapons, and survivors of such attacks, we are deeply saddened and angered by the attacks in Ghouta last August and their aftermath. Here in Iraq, we have made repeated efforts to spread the information about the attacks, calling to take action against those responsible and help the harmed. Halabja and the area were attacked 25 years ago, and still there are companies in Europe that built the chemical weapons for Iraq and Syria and were never penalized or even investigated. In Iraq a whole region, with some 100 villages around Halabja was threatened in 1988 with massacre and chemical weapons.

Then, like in Ghouta the regime used chemical weapons against brave civilians. Dictators will continue to do so if not stopped. We must work together for a world free of chemical weapons."

*Dlawar Haidar, Lawyer and director of SPI (White) group - a local network for victims of chemical weapons in Halabja region, Iraq.*

# **Die deutsche Gaslinie/ Kontinuitäten**

**Proliferation von chemischen Massenvernichtungswaffen nach Irak, Syrien & Libyen**

**Der deutsche Exportweltmeister als Todeshändler**

*von Hans Branscheidt*

Am 21. August jährt sich zum ersten Mal der Chemiewaffenangriff des syrischen Regimes auf Gebiete der Opposition in den Vororten von Damaskus. Es wird an diesem Tag nicht an mahneneden Worten fehlen, die das Geschehne unmissverständlich verurteilen. Gerade in Deutschland wird dies auch immer mit den Hinweisen auf die eigne Geschichte geschehen, die im Hinblick auf chemische Waffen eine besondere Verantwortung bedeute. Vermutlich keine Erwähnung wird allerdings finden, das es deutsche Firmen waren, die maßgeblich Assad und andere Despoten der Region mit der Technik und dem Know-How für die Produktion dieser Waffen ausgerüstet haben. Die niederländische Organisation für das Verbot chemischer Waffen, hat seit Herbst 2013 durch Informationen des syrischen Regimes eine detaillierte Liste erstellt, aus der hervorgeht, das deutsche Firmen zwischen 1983 und 1984 in über fünfzig Lieferungen maßgeblich an der Entwicklung des Chemiewaffenprogramms beteiligt waren. Die Bundesregierung, der diese Liste übergeben wurde, weigert sich bis heute die Namen der Firmen zu nennen, mit der Begründung, dass dies für die Firmen Existenzbedrohend sei.

Doch nicht nur in Syrien verdienten deutsche und europäische Firmen viel Geld mit dem Tod. In Libyen etwa bauten deutsche Ingenieure dem Regime Muhammar al-Gadaffis gleich eine ganze Giftgasfabrik. Dies alles ist indes kein Zufall. Klar formuliert wurde die in den 80er Jahren gängige Proliferations-Praxis in einer Äußerung von Gerhard Mertins, einem der Erfahrensten der Waffenexportbranche: »Der größte Rüstungshändler, den wir im Moment haben, ist der verantwortliche Regierungschef, der aber geschickte Täuschungen gutheiñt«. Gemeint war Helmut Schmidt (SPD). Staatssekretär von Wartenberg, später Chef im Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie, und jahrelang für Irak-Geschäft verantwortlich, erklärte dem Bundestag sogar ausdrücklich, »die Veröffentlichung von Ausfuhrwerten nach Empfängerländern kommt nicht in Betracht«. Der diskrete Kunde hieñ Saddam Hussein.

Am 22. September 1980 marschierten irakische Truppen in den Iran ein und eröffneten damit den achtjährigen Golfkrieg. Zum ersten Mal nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg wurde Giftgas in großem Maßstab eingesetzt, an dessen Entwicklung und Produktion deutsche Unternehmen maß-

"Die deutschen Todeskrämer lieferten technischen Sachverstand und Material für die Produktion von Giftgas an den Irak, an Syrien und Libyen. Dabei sollte man erwarten, daß die gegenwärtige Generation von Deutschen, der Schuld ihrer Väter am Vergessen von Millionen Menschen vor gar nicht so langer Zeit bewußt, besonders empfindlich auf die Möglichkeit reagieren würde, Deutsche könnten einem terroristischen Diktator bei Gasmord in irgendeiner Weise helfen."

William Safire,  
1989 in der New York Times

geblich beteiligt waren. Im späten Kriegsjahr 1988 wird der Benutzung dieser Massenvernichtungswaffe eine schlachtentscheidende Rolle zugesprochen.

Schon im April 1987 setzte die irakische Luftwaffe in den kurdischen Regionen Dokan, Arbil und Suleymaniyah sowie gegen die Stadt Quara Dagh Chemiewaffen ein. Im März 1988 wurde die kurdische Stadt Halabja Opfer des bis dahin größten Giftgasangriffs seit dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Zwischen fünf- und zehntausend Menschen starben sofort, weitere starben an den langfristigen Folgen des Nervengaseinsatzes.

Im Frühjahr 1984 meldete die »New York Times«, daß zwei deutsche Unternehmen, die Firmen Karl Kolb und die mit diesem Unternehmen verbundene Pilot Plant aus Dreieich bei Frankfurt/Main,

Laboranlagen »für die Entwicklung von Schädlingsbekämpfungsmitteln« geliefert hätten, die dem Irak zur Produktion von Giftgas dienten.

Die Geschichte der deutsch-irakischen Giftgasproduktion hatte Anfang der achtziger Jahre nördlich von Bagdad, bei Samara, mit dem Bau eines großen Chemiewerks begonnen. Nach offizieller Erklärung der staatlichen irakischen Behörde SEPP (State Establishing for Pesticides Production) sollten hier Pestizide zum »Schutz der Dattelernte« entwickelt werden. Schon die Ausmaße und der Gesamtcharakter der Anlage standen im Widerspruch zu solchen Angaben: »40 Kilometer südlich von Samara haben die Irakis eine Sperrzone in einem räumlichen Ausmaß von 160 Quadratkilometern verordnet, wo nicht fotografiert werden durfte. In dieser Einöde erkennt man ein isoliertes Netzwerk von 40 Kilometern Straßen und Gebäuden«. Von deutscher Seite waren beim Bau dieser Anlage eine große Anzahl von Unternehmen engagiert: Preussag für die Wasseraufbereitung, Heriger für die Gebäude, Hammer (Kleinostheim) für Klimaanlagen, Rhein-Bayern für Labors und Spezial-LKW's und – neben noch anderen – Karl Kolb/Pilot Plant. Für den Einkauf der sensiblen Module dieser gigantischen Einrichtung in der Zeit einer kriegsbedingt niedergehenden Dattelkultivierung wurden eigens europäische Consultings und Konsortien aufgebaut — vor allem die in Hamburg ansässige Firma Water Engineering Trading (W.E.T.).

"Für die Leute in Deutschland ist Giftgas eine ganz furchtbare Sache, Kunden im Ausland stört das nicht."

Dieter Backfisch,  
Geschäftsführer der Firma  
Karl Kolb

Dieses Unternehmen, an dem sowohl ein staatsoffizieller Iraker wie auch deutsche Mitglieder des Bundesnachrichtendienstes beteiligt waren, wurde nach getaner Arbeit aufgelöst. Der »Stern« erwähnt auch eine besonders brisante Lieferung: »Rhein-Bayern lieferte an die Karl Kolb – und die wiederum an den Irak – >acht mobile toxikologische Labors<.« Chemieschulen in sandfarbenen Magirus-LKW's mit Klimaanlagen. Während das liefernde Unternehmen die Gefährte als »normale chemische Labors« bezeichnete, charakterisierte sie der C-

Waffen-Experte Adolf-Henning Frucht wie folgt: »Dieses Gerät ist hervorragend geeignet, um taktische Gemische von verschiedenen chemischen Kampfstoffen bestimmen zu können.«

Bis heute wird diese Schuld gelegnet. Dazu gehört vor allem das Ausklammern der Proliferation, sprich der Mitverantwortung der großen Industriestaaten, an erster Stelle Deutschlands, für die Aufrüstung des Irak mit Massenvernichtungswaffen und deren Einsatz. Allerdings waren es nicht alleine deutsche Firmen, die dem Regime in Bagdad bei seinem chemiewaffenprogramm unter die Arme griffen. Tatkräftige Unterstützung erhielt Saddam auch von anderen westlichen Staaten. So kam eine Untersuchungskommision der Vereinten Nationen im Jahr 2003 zu dem Ergebnis, dass das irakische Chemiewaffenprogramm neben Deutschland (52,6) von Frankreich (16%), Österreich (16%) Spanien (4,4%) ermöglicht wurde. Darüber hinaus haben die Niederlande, die USA und Luxemburg das Programm mit verschiedensten Komponenten erst möglich gemacht.

Auch wenn alle drei genannten Länder, aus unterschiedlichen Gründen, über keine Chemiewaffenprogramme mehr verfügen, so haben die letzten Jahr und Monate deutlich gemacht, dass die Spätfolgen unabsehbar sind. So sollen libysche Islamisten in diesem Jahr Restbestände des Gadaffi Regimes unter ihre Kontrolle gebracht haben. Auch im Irak ist es Islamisten des „Islamischen Staates“ (IS) während ihrer groß angelegten Offensive gelungen, chemische Waffen zu erbeuten. Es gibt mittlerweile glaubwürdige Berichte darüber, dass sie diese im Norden Syriens gegen verfeindete Kurden bereits eingesetzt haben. Und nicht zuletzt setzt das Assad-Regime weiter chemische Waffen ein. Nach einem Bericht der Menschenrechtsorganisation *Human Rights Watch* (HRW), aber auch verschiedenen Oppositionsquellen zu Folge, werden die „Barrel Bombs“ mittlerweile mit Chlorgas gefüllt und abgeworfen.

Diese Ereignisse verdeutlichen, das es nicht möglich ist, die Gefahr einzuhegen, wenn Diktaturen erst einmal im Besitz des Know Hows und der technischen Möglichkeiten sind. Diese Erfahrungen zeigen indes auch, dass die Strategie des Westens auf diese Regime und damit auf vermeintliche Stabilität zu setzen gescheitert sind, ist diese doch eine Illusion.

# AVAAZ-Petition

**Anlässlich des Jahrestages der Giftgasangriffe auf die Vorstädte von Damaskus  
reichen syrische Aktivisten gemeinsam mit Wadi Irak und Wadi Deutschland am 16.8.  
folgende Petition auf der AVAZ-Plattform ein**

On the 21st of August 2013, the Syrian government forces launched a massive chemical weapons attack on the besieged opposition-held areas east and west of Damascus.

The attacks in which the regime used Sarin Gas, targeted several linked densely populated suburban areas and resulted in over 9800 casualties and over 1300 fatalities.

In the aftermath the international community put pressure on Assad's regime and forced it to join the international treaty prohibiting chemical weapons in October 2013.

Despite these diplomatic efforts the Syrian Regime kept on using chemical weapons against civilians in rebel held areas:

In March and April the regime used chlorine gas, especially against three towns and villages in central Syria; Keferzita, al-Teman'a, and Telmans. Human Rights Watch (HRW) investigated these incidents and condemned the Syrian regime for these attacks in a recently published report entitled "Syria: Strong Evidence Government Used Chemicals as a Weapon". According to the HRW report, the attacks killed 11 people and wounded over 500.

Despite the fact that the international community is celebrating getting rid of "most", and not all of the regimes chemical material, very little, if any, attention is paid on the civilian population of the attacks.

The besieged population need help, medically and psychologically. Moreover research needs to be conducted on the long term impacts of this kind of attacks.

Sadly, to this day, there hasn't been any attempt to help those who fell victims. For more than two years the survivors are living under the siege that is laid by the Assad-Regime and pro Iranian militias on these neighborhoods.

Bashar Al Assad and his regime have survived without any punishment.

Not only is the regime still using chemical weapons, it also has cut any connection of the people in the besieged areas from the rest of the world.

We want to shed a light on these crimes, and put pressure on the international community to strip the Syrian regime from these means of mass killing and put Assad and his subordinates before the International Criminal Court, and most important help the chemical attacks victims that have been forgotten by the international community.

In light of these events, we the signers, demand the following:

- Full and unrestricted access to the besieged areas for the United Nations (UN) and other international organizations to start research on the long and short term effects of chemical weapons.**
- The delivery of humanitarian aid should exclusively be conducted and overseen by the UN and other international organizations with no interference of the Syrian regime, in application of the security council resolution No.2139 and 2165.**
- The International Criminal Court (ICC) should officially start an investigation on the chemical attacks not only in Ghouta and name those responsible for the attacks.**
- There is a missing proper reaction from the EU. We demand that the European Union should open its borders for Syrian refugees and also put pressure on the Syrian government to facilitate the safe return of all Syrians to their homeland.**
- We demand the International Community and all activists to put pressure on the Syrian regime to allow Syrians back to regime controlled areas without any limitations.**
- Applying international pressure on Iraqi and Lebanese government and all other responsible governments so that they stop sending militia fighters.**
- Finally, a No-Fly-Zone should be enforced over Syria as well as an arms Embargo enforced, so that the regime is no longer able to throw “barrel bombs”, often mixed with chlorine gas, on civilians.**

# Kontakte:

## Für Kontakte zu den Interviewten:

**Amr al-Fam, Al-Seeraj:** Mail: [Amr.alfaham@gmail.com](mailto:Amr.alfaham@gmail.com) Skype: Amr AL-FA  
oder Thomas von der Osten-Sacken/Kaspar Haller (siehe unten)

## Für Informationen über Hilfsprojekte in den Ghoutas:

**Dr. M., AL-Seeraj,** Skype: Sun Flow (Direktkontakt bitte via Thomas von der Osten-Sacken herstellen)

## Für Informationen betreffend den Irak (Halabja):

**Falah Muradkhan** (WADI e.V./ Iraq project coordinator). Expert on the chemical Attacks in Halabja. Mobil: 00964 770 158 8173/Skype: falah.shakaram.

## Für Informationen betreffend die Situation in Syrien allgemein:

**Thomas von der Osten-Sacken** (WADI e.V.):

Mobil: +49 15156906002 Mail: thomasvdo@yahoo.de

## Für Informationen über die Vernichtung des syrischen Giftgasprogrammes durch die OPCW sowie chemische Kampfstoffe allgemein:

**Kaspar Haller, Green Cross:** 0041 79 825 76 84, kasparhaller@gmail.com



w a d i

# **Zusätzliche Informationsquellen zu den Giftgasangriffen vom 21. August 2014**

**United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.**

[http://www.un.org/disarmament/content/slideshow/Secretary General Report of CW Investigation.pdf](http://www.un.org/disarmament/content/slideshow/Secretary%20General%20Report%20of%20CW%20Investigation.pdf)

**Human Rights Watch: Attacks on Ghouta. Analysis of Alleged Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria:** <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/10/attacks-ghouta-0>

**Human Rights Watch: Syria: Strong Evidence Government Used Chemicals as a Weapon:**  
<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/13/syria-strong-evidence-government-used-chemicals-weapon>