

G7 foreign ministers' statement

From: Global Affairs Canada

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The G7 foreign ministers today issued the following statement:

“We, the G7 foreign ministers, of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union, are united in condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the attack that took place against Sergei and Yulia Skripal, using a nerve agent in Salisbury, United Kingdom, on March 4, 2018. A British police officer and numerous civilians were exposed in the attack and required hospital treatment, and the lives of many more innocent British civilians have been threatened. We express our deepest sympathies to them all and our admiration and support for the U.K. emergency services for their courageous response.

“The United Kingdom has thoroughly briefed G7 partners. We share, and agree with, the U.K.’s assessment that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation was responsible for the attack and that there is no plausible alternative explanation. We condemn Russia’s continued failure to address legitimate requests from the U.K. government, which further underlines its responsibility. We call on Russia to urgently address all questions related to the incident in Salisbury. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has now independently confirmed the findings of the United Kingdom relating to the identity of the toxic chemical that was used in Salisbury. Russia should provide full and complete disclosure of its previously undeclared Novichok program to the OPCW in line with its international obligations.

“This use of a military-grade nerve agent, of a type developed by Russia, constitutes the first offensive use of a nerve agent in Europe since the Second World War and is a grave challenge not only to the security of the United Kingdom but to our shared security. It is an assault on U.K. sovereignty. Any use of chemical weapons by a state party, under any circumstances, is a clear breach of international law and a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is a threat to us all. Their use is abhorrent, completely unacceptable and must be systematically and rigorously condemned. We, participating states of the International Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, stand together against impunity for those who develop or use these weapons, anywhere, any time, under any circumstances.

“The G7 is committed to protecting and promoting the rules-based international system. We stand in unqualified solidarity with the United Kingdom. Our concerns are also heightened against the background of a pattern of earlier irresponsible and destabilizing Russian behaviour, including interference in countries’ democratic systems. We call on Russia to live up to its Chemical Weapons Convention obligations, as well as its responsibilities as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to uphold international peace and security. In order to bring Russia back into the rules-based international system, we will continue to engage with Russia, as appropriate, on addressing regional crises and global challenges.

“The G7 will continue to bolster its capabilities to address hybrid threats, including in the areas of cybersecurity, strategic communication and counter-intelligence. We welcome national action taken to constrain Russian hostile-intelligence activity and to enhance our collective security. The G7 will remain closely focused on this issue and its implications.”

Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2018/04/g7-foreign-ministers-statement.html>