



## **Lukashevich Notes Internet Reports that Videos of Alleged Syrian Gas Victims Were Posted Before Attack Took Place**

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Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexandr Lukashevich indicated, on Friday, that Moscow continues to characterize the alleged Aug. 21 chemical attack outside Damascus as "alleged."

"We're getting more new evidence that this criminal act was of a provocative nature," he stressed, according to Russia Today. "In particular, there are reports circulating on the Internet, in particular that the materials of the incident and accusations against government troops had been posted for several hours before the so-called attack. Thus, it was a pre-planned action." This is likely a reference to the postings on the website Islamic Invitation Turkey, which we reported on yesterday. Lukashevich went on to say that the Damascus chemical attack accusations indicate the launch of "another anti-Syrian propaganda wave" and, in this context, the calls on the UN Security Council to immediately use force in Syria "heard from some EU capitals" are "unacceptable."

Lukashevich added that Assad's government has demonstrated a "constructive approach" to the chemical weapons issue by allowing UN experts into the country, but the opposition is not sending similar signals. "This directly impedes the objective investigation of allegations of possible cases of chemical weapons use in Syria, which is called for by a number of countries and which the Russian side supports," Lukashevich noted. The Russian Foreign Ministry, he added, "strongly appeals to those who should put pressure on the opposition, making it take the necessary steps in order to ensure the full realization of the objectives of the international expert mission."

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