

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H. RES. 346
OFFERED BY MR. YOHO OF FLORIDA

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas more than 4 years of civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic have resulted in over 250,000 deaths, more than 6,500,000 internally displaced refugees, and at least 4,000,000 people who have fled the country;

Whereas the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic released its report on September 16, 2013, confirming that surface-to-surface rockets containing the nerve agent sarin were used in the Ghouta area of Damascus on August 21, 2013, an attack which killed over 1,400 people according to a United States Government assessment;

Whereas the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council adopted a decision on September 27, 2013, which required Syria to destroy its chemical weapons program by June 30, 2014;

Whereas a White House statement on August 18, 2014, marking the end of destruction operations on the MV Cape Ray said that “serious questions remain with respect to the omissions and discrepancies in Syria’s declaration to the OPCW and about continued allegations of use”;

Whereas chlorine gas attacks in northern Syria have been repeatedly reported since mid-April 2014;

Whereas although chlorine is not required to be declared or destroyed under the Chemical Weapons Convention, its use in warfare is still prohibited under the Convention;

Whereas the OPCW established a Fact-Finding Mission to investigate allegations of the use of weaponized chlorine;

Whereas in the OPCW's second report released on September 10, 2014, the investigators concluded they have "compelling confirmation" that a toxic chemical was used "systematically and repeatedly" as a weapon against villages in northern Syria and that "chlorine, either pure or in mixture" was used in attacks on the villages of Talmanes, Al Tamanah, and Kafr Zeta;

Whereas, on March 6, 2015, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2209 (2015), condemning the use of chlorine gas as a weapon in Syria and that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons including chlorine must be held accountable;

Whereas on August 7, 2015, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2235 (2015) to establish a Joint Investigative Mechanism of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to identify individuals, entities, groups or Governments perpetrating, organizing, sponsoring or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons in Syria;

Whereas in a June 16, 2015, hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Samantha Power, testified that there are alarming and grave reports that the

Assad regime has been turning chlorine into a chemical weapon;

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry stated on June 16, 2015, that he was “absolutely certain” that the Assad regime has used chlorine against his people;

Whereas despite the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2209, the Assad regime has continued its chlorine attacks;

Whereas chemical weapons, including chlorine, are but one of the many heinous and violent methods with which the Assad regime kills its own citizens;

Whereas barrel bombs dropped from helicopters are the primary method of delivery for the Assad regime’s chemical weapons;

Whereas the Assad regime’s control over Syrian airspace facilitates his regime’s use of chlorine gas against his citizens; and

Whereas Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey stated in a letter to Congress that a no-fly zone would result in “the near total elimination of the regime’s ability to bomb opposition strongholds and sustain its forces by air”: Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That the House of Representatives—

- 1 (1) condemns the Assad regime for its atrocities
- 2 against the Syrian people, including its use of chlo-
- 3 rine as a weapon;

1 (2) condemns the use of any toxic chemical, in-
2 cluding chlorine, as a weapon in the Syrian Arab
3 Republic;

4 (3) maintains that those who have engaged in
5 such unlawful actions should be held accountable
6 and urges the President to report to Congress on the
7 use of chemical weapons, including chlorine, in
8 Syria;

9 (4) maintains that no party in Syria should use,
10 develop, produce, acquire, stockpile, retain, or trans-
11 fer chemical weapons, including weapons employing
12 chlorine;

13 (5) calls on the Administration to—

14 (A) continue offering material support to
15 appropriate programs and individuals collecting
16 evidence of the use of chemical weapons inside
17 Syria;

18 (B) assist in the cataloguing and preserva-
19 tion of evidence of use and responsibility of use
20 of chemical weapons; and

21 (C) facilitate the future transfer of evi-
22 dence of the use of chemical weapons to an ap-
23 propriate legal forum for use in prosecuting
24 those responsible for the illegal use of chemical
25 weapons; and

1 (6) urges the United States to work with its al-
2 lies and partners to establish a comprehensive strat-
3 egy regarding Syria which may include the possi-
4 bility of establishing a no-fly zone in Syria.

