

# UNDER THE MACROSCOPE



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## **Stockholm attack: Arrested man was lorry driver, police say**

**A man arrested in Stockholm after Friday's fatal lorry attack is believed to be the driver, Swedish police say.**

The man, who was arrested in the north of the city, has not been named, but Swedish media say he is from Uzbekistan.

Four people were killed and 15 were injured when the lorry crashed into the front of a department store.

Police said they were unable to confirm local television reports of explosives being found inside the truck.

The lorry - hijacked from outside a nearby restaurant - crashed into the front of Ahlens department store in the middle of the afternoon on Drottninggatan (Queen Street), one of the city's main pedestrian thoroughfares.

Eyewitnesses described horrifying scenes outside the store, as bodies and injured people lay on the ground.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven has called it a terrorist attack, with borders tightened at his request.



*Police wanted to speak to this man - a suspect matching his description was later arrested*

The suspect was detained on Friday evening after police released a grainy security camera image of a person of interest dressed in a hooded jacket. A second arrest was reportedly made later.

Police confirmed a man resembling him was arrested in Marsta, 40km (25 miles) north of Stockholm.

"We have investigated several people this evening, who we found interesting in one way or another, and recently we arrested someone we are very interested in," said police investigator Jan Evensson, referring to the Marsta arrest.

Police spokesman Lars Bystrom has since told news agency AFP: "We suspect that the man who was arrested is the perpetrator."

He is being held on suspicion of committing a terrorist crime, the state prosecutor's office said, and is in prolonged detention, according to a police website.



*Emergency services worked late into the night*

The second man, detained in the Hjulsta in the north-west of Stockholm, had links to the man arrested in Marsta, local media reported citing police sources.

Central Stockholm was in lockdown after the incident, with the main station evacuated and metro, central roads and various bus lines shut as well.

City authorities made several spaces, including a number of schools, available as temporary accommodation for those who could not get home because of transport disruptions.

In a speech on Friday night, Prime Minister Lofven said Swedish values of democracy and freedom would not be "undermined by hatred".





*PM Stefan Lofven says the "values we treasure" will not be affected by the attack*

A spokesperson for the British Prime Minister Theresa May said she had spoken to Mr Lofven to express her condolences.

## **Timeline: Vehicle ramming attacks in Europe and the US**

- **14 July 2016, Nice, France:** A man drove a lorry for 2km (1.2 miles) through a large crowd gathered to watch Bastille Day fireworks in Nice. Eighty-six people were killed, and more than 300 injured.
- **28 November 2016, Ohio, United States:** An 18-year-old student rammed his car into a group of pedestrians at Ohio State University and stabbed others. Eleven people were injured before he was shot and killed.
- **19 December 2016, Berlin, Germany:** The attack in Berlin killed 12 people and injured 49, when a man drove a lorry through the crowded Breitscheidplatz Christmas market. So-called Islamic State said one of its "soldiers" carried out the attack.
- **22 March 2017, London, United Kingdom:** Four people died and at least 50 were injured when a car mounted the pavement on London's Westminster bridge and drove at high speed

through pedestrians. The attacker then entered the parliament complex on foot and fatally stabbed a police officer, before being shot.

- **23 March 2017, Antwerp, Belgium:** A man was caught by soldiers after he drove at a crowd. Knives, a non-lethal gun and a dangerous substance were found in his car - but no-one was injured. Terror charges were later dropped.

# Trump launches attack on Syria with 59 Tomahawk missiles

The U.S. military attacked a Syria-government airfield with 59 Tomahawk missiles on Thursday evening.

The missiles targeted the Shayrat air base near Homs, and were in response to a Tuesday chemical weapons attack. Officially announcing the strike, President Donald Trump said the targeted airfield had launched the chemical attack on a rebel-held area, and he called on other nations to oppose Syria's embattled leader.

"On Tuesday, Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad launched a horrible chemical weapons attack on innocent civilians. Using a deadly nerve agent, Assad choked out the lives of helpless men, women and children. It was a slow and brutal death for so many. Even beautiful babies were cruelly murdered in this very barbaric attack," Trump said Thursday night.

A U.S. defense official called the U.S. strike a "one-off," Reuters reported. Nine civilians including four children were killed, the Syrian state news agency claimed, but the Pentagon said civilians were not targeted.



*Trump: Assad choked out the lives of helpless men, women & children*

On Thursday, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Russia had failed to carry out a 2013 agreement to secure Syrian chemical weapons, adding that Moscow was either complicit or incompetent in its ability to uphold that deal.

Tillerson said the U.S. had a high degree of confidence that sarin nerve gas had been used in Tuesday's chemical attack in northern Syria.

The Pentagon released details on the strike, saying it was conducted using Tomahawk missiles launched from the destroyers USS Porter and USS Ross in the eastern Mediterranean.

"A total of 59 (Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles) targeted aircraft, hardened aircraft shelters, petroleum and logistical storage, ammunition supply bunkers, air defense systems, and radars," Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis said in a statement. "As always, the U.S. took extraordinary measures to avoid civilian casualties and to comply with the Law of Armed Conflict."



*US launches missiles at Syrian airfield Thursday, 6 Apr 2017 | 11:00 PM ET | 00:55*



The Pentagon called the U.S. airstrikes a "proportional response to Assad's heinous act." No people were targeted, an official told NBC.

Additionally, Russian forces were notified in advance of the strike, according to the Pentagon. "U.S. military planners took precautions to minimize risk to Russian or Syrian personnel located at the airfield," Davis said.

Still, Tillerson said the U.S. "sought no approval from Moscow."

Syrian armed rebels welcomed the strike. Ahrar al-Sham, an opposition group backed by Gulf states responded: "The armed opposition welcomes any U.S. intervention through surgical strikes that would deter the Assad regime capabilities to kill civilians and shorten the suffering of our people."

Syrian state TV, meanwhile, said, "American aggression targets Syrian military targets with a number of missiles."

Earlier Thursday, Reuters reported that a British diplomat had said the United Nations Security Council would not vote Thursday on a draft resolution to condemn Tuesday's gas attack, but will continue negotiations.

## **Russian response**

Russia's deputy U.N. envoy, Vladimir Safronkov, issued a warning ahead of the U.S. attack.

"We have to think about negative consequences, negative consequences, and all the responsibility if military action occurred will be on shoulders of those who initiated such



*President Donald Trump speaks at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Fla., Thursday, April 6, 2017, after the U.S. fired a barrage of cruise missiles into Syria Thursday night in retaliation for this week's gruesome chemical weapons attack against civilians.*

doubtful and tragic enterprise," Safronkov told reporters when asked about possible U.S. strikes, adding that such consequences could be seen in Iraq and Libya.

The Russian response on Friday morning said the strikes violated international law and would do significant damage to relations between Russia and the U.S. The Russian news agency Interfax reported comments from the Kremlin which said the strikes had happened under a "far-fetched pretext." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that President Vladimir Putin believed the U.S. attacks on Syria showed aggression against a sovereign state.

## **Tuesday's attack in the town of Khan Sheikhoun**

Western countries have blamed President Bashar Assad's armed forces for Tuesday's attack in the town of Khan Sheikhoun. Syria's government has denied responsibility.

Republican U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio appeared to be tweeting about an American offensive action in Syria, posting at 8:44 p.m. ET, "'Be sure of this: The wicked will not go unpunished' Proverbs 11:21 #SyriaChemicalAttack"

The United States, Britain and France proposed a draft U.N. resolution on Tuesday to condemn the attack and press Syria to cooperate with international investigators. Russia said the text was unacceptable, and it proposed a rival draft.

In February, Syrian ally Russia, backed by China, cast its seventh veto to protect Assad's government from council action, blocking a bid by Western powers to impose sanctions over accusations of chemical weapons attacks. China has vetoed six resolutions on Syria.

A Security Council resolution needs nine votes in favor and no vetoes by the United States, Britain, France, Russia or China to pass.

# **Syria war: US launches missile strikes in response to 'chemical attack'**

**The US has carried out a missile strike against a Syrian air base in response to a suspected chemical weapons attack on a rebel-held town.**

Fifty-nine Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from two US Navy ships in the Mediterranean. At least six people are reported to have been killed.

It is the first direct US military action against forces commanded by Syria's president. The Kremlin, which backs Bashar al-Assad, has condemned the strike.

It comes just days after dozens of civilians, including many children, died in the suspected nerve gas attack in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib province.

## **What action has the US taken?**

On the orders of President Donald Trump, Navy destroyers USS Porter and USS Ross fired dozens of cruise missiles at Shayrat airfield in western Homs province at about 04:40 Syrian time (01:40 GMT).

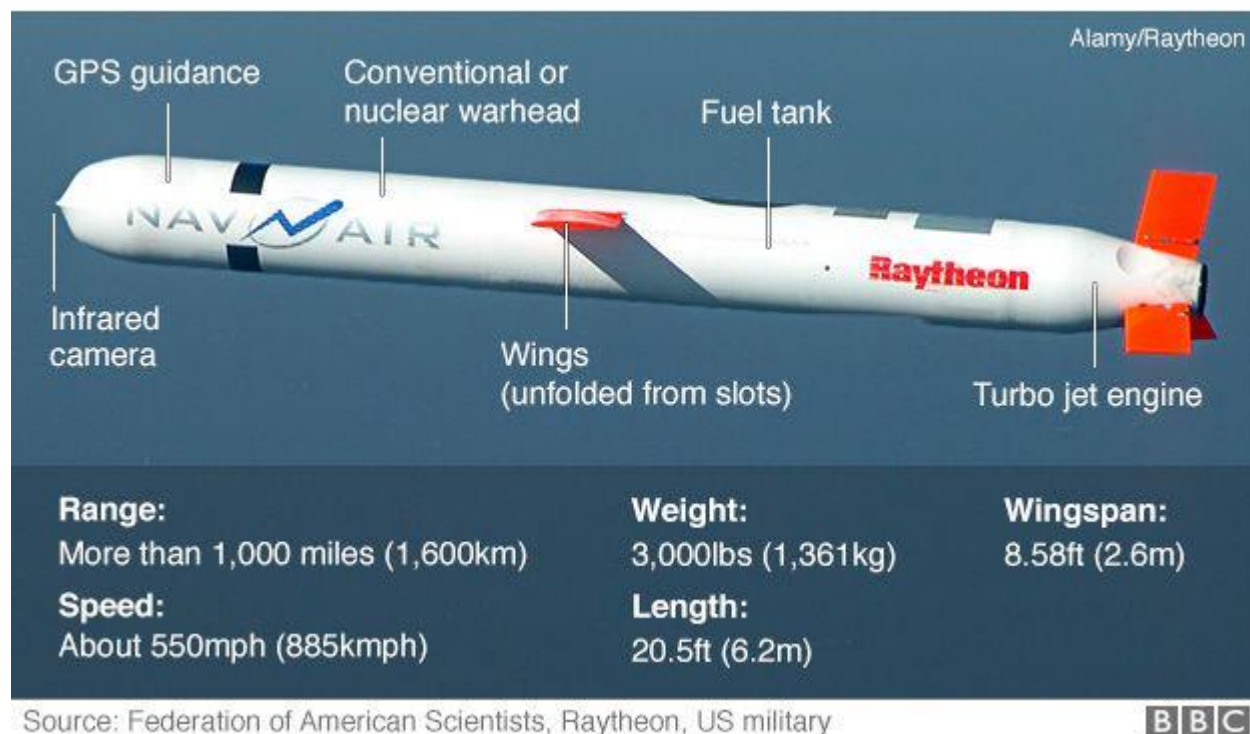
They targeted aircraft, aircraft shelters, storage areas, ammunition supply bunkers and air defence systems at the Syrian government-controlled facility, according to the Pentagon.

It said the base was used to store chemical weapons and that "every precaution" had been taken to avoid casualties.

Speaking from his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, Mr Trump said he had acted in America's "vital national security interest" to prevent the use of chemical weapons.

Mr Trump branded President Assad a "dictator" who had "launched a horrible chemical weapons attack on innocent civilians".

## Tomahawk cruise missile



"Tonight I call on all civilised nations to join us in seeking to end this slaughter and bloodshed in Syria and also to end terrorism of all kinds and all types," he said.



*Trump: "Assad choked out the lives of helpless men, women and children"*



Syrian state media said as many as nine civilians had been killed in the strike, four of them children. The BBC is unable to confirm this information.

A BBC News producer has been sharing reports from people near to the base on social media, with one describing "total devastation".



### **What is different about this strike?**

The US has led a coalition carrying out air strikes against jihadist groups in Syria since 2014 but this is the first time it has targeted government forces.

President Trump has previously spoken out against US military involvement in Syria, instead calling for a greater focus on domestic interests.

Only last week the US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, said Washington was not prioritising the removal of the Syrian president.

However, Mr Trump said "something should happen" against the Syrian leadership following the deaths in Khan Sheikhoun on Tuesday, without giving details.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson also signalled a sudden shift in policy on Thursday, saying that Bashar al-Assad should have no role in a future Syria.



*Rescue workers said many children were among those killed or injured in the suspected chemical attack in Idlib*

## **How has Russia responded?**

The Russia government is one of President Assad's most important allies and its military has been targeting all rebel groups in Syria, including jihadists such as so-called Islamic State but also the more moderate opposition forces that the US and other Western nations have been supporting.

The Pentagon said the Russian military had been informed ahead of the US action.

But the Kremlin reacted angrily to the US strike, which the Syrian army said had caused significant damage.

Meanwhile, the Russian foreign ministry said it was suspending a deal with the US that was designed to prevent clashes in the skies over Syria as the two countries wage different campaigns.

The Syrian authorities accused the US of supporting terrorism by undermining the regime's operations.



Dmitry Peskov, spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin, called it "an act of aggression against a sovereign nation".

## **What impact will the US action have? Analysis by Jon Sopel, BBC North America editor**

Rarely has a policy changed so far and so quickly - and rarely has it been acted upon so swiftly. When President Trump came to office the Syrian leader was seen as a useful ally in the fight against so-called Islamic State. All talk of regime change stopped.

But the chemical weapons attack changed all that. Within two days, the US has reversed its view on President Assad, identified targets and struck.

What we don't know is whether this is a one-off act of retaliation, or the start of something more prolonged against the Assad government. Nor do we know where it leaves relations with Syria's strong ally, Russia.

## **What do we know about the 'chemical attack'?**

At least 80 people died in the assault on the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun in north-western Syria. Hundreds suffered symptoms consistent with reaction to a nerve agent after what the opposition and Western powers said was a Syrian government air strike on the area. White House spokesman said the Trump administration believed "with a high degree of confidence" that the attack had been launched from the Shayrat airfield by warplanes under the command of President Assad.

He also said the White House believed the substance used was the nerve agent Sarin, which is highly toxic and considered 20 times as deadly as cyanide.

The Syrian military denied using any chemical agents, while its ally Russia said an air strike hit a rebel depot full of chemical munitions.

## **What response has there been to the US strike?**

The latest action was welcomed by Syrian opposition group the Syrian National Coalition.

"We hope for more strikes... that these are just the beginning," spokesman Ahmad Ramadan told AFP news agency.

Meanwhile, the UK government called the US strike "an appropriate response to the barbaric chemical weapons attack".

The UN Security Council will hold further talks on Friday as it tries to agree a resolution calling for an investigation into the deaths in Khan Sheikhoun.

Russia has already rejected a Western-backed draft. Moscow has used its veto seven times to block UN resolutions critical of its ally Syria.

## Shell corruption probe: New evidence on oil payments

**The BBC has seen evidence that top executives at Shell knew money paid to the Nigerian government for a vast oil field would be passed to a convicted money-launderer.**

It also had reason to believe that money would be used to pay political bribes.

The deal was concluded while Shell was operating under a probation order for a separate corruption case in Nigeria.

Shell said it did not believe its employees acted illegally.

OPL 245 is an oilfield off the coast of Nigeria whose estimated nine billion barrels of oil are worth nearly half a trillion dollars at today's prices. Shell has been active in Nigeria for nearly 60 years and was keen to acquire the field.

New evidence shows just how far Shell was prepared to go to get its hands on it.

Standing between Shell and its prize was Dan Etete, whose company acquired the rights to OPL 245 for a tiny sum while he was oil minister of Nigeria. He was later convicted of money laundering in a different case.

Shell and the Italian oil company ENI eventually acquired OPL 245 in 2011 - by paying \$1.3bn to the Nigerian government. That's more than the entire health budget of Nigeria but it didn't get spent on public services.

The government promptly passed on more than \$1bn of the money to a company called Malabu, which was controlled by Dan Etete.

Emails obtained by anti-corruption charities Global Witness and Finance Uncovered, and seen by the BBC, show that Shell representatives were negotiating with Etete for a year before the deal was finalised.



In March 2010, an email from a former MI6 officer employed by Shell shows the company believed Etete stood to benefit from the deal.

"Etete can smell the money. If, at 70 years old, he does turn his nose up at 1.2 bill he is completely certifiable and we should then probably just hold out until nature takes its course with him."

That email was forwarded to the then Shell chief executive Peter Voser - one of the most powerful men in the oil business - showing knowledge of Etete's involvement went right to the top.

Representatives of Peter Voser declined to comment.

Shell also had good reason to suspect that hundreds of millions would end up in the pockets of Nigerian politicians including the former President Goodluck Jonathan.

In an email from July, the same Shell employee says Etete's negotiating strategy is "clearly an attempt to deliver significant revenues to GLJ [Goodluck Jonathan] as part of any transaction."

Italian prosecutors allege that \$466m were laundered through a network of Nigerian bureaux de change to facilitate payments to President Jonathan and other politicians.

A spokesperson for Goodluck Jonathan told the BBC that no charges or indictments have been brought or secured against the former president relating to this transaction and described the allegations as a "false narrative".

The BBC is still awaiting comment from Dan Etete, but in the past he has previously denied any wrongdoing.

The controversy around this deal has attracted the attention of law enforcement agencies in Italy and the Netherlands.

In February of 2016 Shell's offices in the Hague were raided and documents removed.

On the day of the raid, the current chief executive, Ben van Beurden called the now former chief financial officer Simon Henry to discuss the raid. That call was recorded by Dutch law enforcement officials and has been heard by the BBC.

On that call, Ben van Beurden said that Shell's own investigation had turned up correspondence from the former MI6 officers which he described as "just pub talk in emails which was stupid but nevertheless it's there" and acknowledged they were "really unhelpful".

## **'Doubled down'**

The emails the BBC has seen seem more than pub talk. They seem to show that a number of Shell executives were aware that a company controlled by Etete would ultimately receive over a billion dollars and were advised by their own employees that the money was likely to end up being paid in political kickbacks.

In a statement Shell said it did not believe that any current or former employees had acted illegally. It also said that if any payments were made by Malabu to government officials then it was done without its knowledge, authorisation or on its behalf.

ENI did not respond to the BBC's request for comment but has previously stated it did not believe that the company or its ENI personnel had been involved in any wrongdoing.

It should be remembered that this deal was concluded just months after Shell had paid \$30m to settle previous allegations of bribery in Nigeria and elsewhere.

As part of a deal to spare the company a damaging criminal conviction in that case, Shell agreed to what was, in effect, a probation order, by giving an undertaking to the US Department of Justice to tighten up its internal controls in order to stay in compliance with America's tough anti-corruption laws.

The question for Shell is what on earth were they doing negotiating with a convicted money launderer, who they suspected might pass the money to the president, months after reaching a previous bribery settlement in the same country.

Matthew Page worked for the US State Department in Nigeria for 15 years. He told the BBC: "At a time when Shell should have been cautious having just settled a previous case, rather than walk away from a deal with clear corruption risks, they doubled down."

Italian courts will decide whether to proceed with criminal proceedings against Shell and its partner ENI on 20 April.

Corruption may be a stubbornly regrettable fact of life in Nigeria. And it may be very difficult to drill for oil there without buying access through corrupt payments to politicians. Western companies - and their investors - have to decide if that is a price worth paying.

Law makers will have to decide whether the weapons they have to stop it are sufficient to deter it.



Under the Macroscopic is a weekly summary of what's happening around the world and what's worth pondering. Stay on top of international and local news with this bulletin produced by the Raffles Economics and Current Affairs Society.

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