

These past 10 days have seen a heightened constituency interest in Syria following reports of the Syrian Regime's use of chemical weapons in Douma. I fully appreciate that there are strongly held views and varying levels of comfort in relation to British involvement in air strikes in Syria and those views should be respected but we must also remember that events can change views. I voted against military intervention in Syria in 2013 as I had reservations about what this would achieve, the level of information being provided, intervention in a civil war, who the opposition was we were supporting and importantly, the scope of British involvement.

Events have very much evolved since then. Having again carefully considered the situation, which is a very different scenario from the one we faced in 2013, and listened closely to the Prime Minister's detailed statements to the House of Commons I believe that given all the evidence available, the Prime Minister was right to commit British armed forces to take part in co-ordinated air strikes in Syria alongside France and the US. The use of chemical weapons is utterly abhorrent and there is a clear consensus that the Syrian Regime was responsible for the recent attack in Douma.

The Prime Minister has made clear that the strikes were not about regime change or intervening in the civil war in Syria. Instead, the air strikes were focused on a specific and limited number of military targets deliberately designed to significantly reduce the Syrian Regime's ability to develop and deploy chemical weapons. The Prime Minister has set out the legal basis for the air strikes and explains that this follows extensive but ultimately unsuccessful attempts to resolve the situation through all possible diplomatic channels over a number of years. I don't believe I was wrong in 2013 but times have changed and I think it is right to support action now.