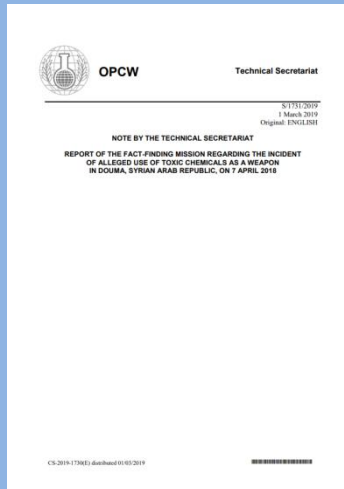


OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: **JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.**



The Foundation for the Study of Democracy has carried out an independent assessment of the **OPCW Report of the fact-finding mission regarding the incident of alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Douma, Syrian Arab Republic, on 7 April 2018.**

We have interviewed:

- 15 witnesses from Douma at the site of the incident;
- 40 members of the White Helmets who provided a detailed description of the methods commonly used by the organization to fake scenes;
- more than 25 people who witnessed the White Helmets staging the chemical attacks.

We have also analyzed publications and videos related to the incident.



OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: **JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTORY LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.**

OPCW REPORT: THE WHITE HELMETS ARE A DECEITFUL SOURCE

8.37 The FFM team requested information about procedures related to deceased patients in the hospital. They were informed that deceased patients normally would be taken to

S/1731/2019
page 21

“Point 200”, a room used as a morgue inside the hospital, where they would be collected by the local council. Subsequent information from witnesses indicated that the **Syrian Civil Defence (SCD)** assisted in this task.

8.38 The team was taken to the **tunnel that had appeared in videos and photographs showing bodies that were reportedly the result of the alleged chemical attack, together with victims of conventional bombing.** At the time of the visit of the FFM team, there were no bodies in the area of the tunnel. Samples for analysis were collected in the tunnel following the sampling plan, **but no chemicals relevant to the allegation were found.**



Paragraph 8.38 of the OPCW Report: “The team was taken to the tunnel that had appeared in videos showing bodies that were reportedly the result of alleged chemical attack.... no chemicals relevant to the allegation were found.”

Given that the White Helmets were the ones disseminating this information and participating in the hospital scene, the OPCW Report effectively establishes that the information provided by the members of the organization is fake and their witnesses are deceitful sources.

**OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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OPCW REPORT: THE WHITE HELMETS ARE A DECEITFUL SOURCE



We went to the Hospital that was filmed by the “White Helmets” in a video where its employees allegedly helped out those suffered a chemical attack. The hospital personnel and Syrian civilians completely refuted these staged rescues.

Doctor Hassan from the Douma Hospital: “On 7 April 2018, about 15 persons were admitted with suffocation symptoms. Those who brought us these people told that they had chemical poisoning. But the medical examination revealed no signs of chemical poisoning. We provided them elementary medical aid and let go home.”

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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METHODS USED BY THE WHITE HELMETS TO STAGE THE CHEMICAL ATTACKS: TESTIMONY
OF THE PARTICIPANTS



Yazan at-Tharazi, 12, fifth form pupil:

“When I lived in Douma, Abu Feraz asked me and my friends: “Care for a city ride?” The five of us went with him. He took us to a medical center where WH members also were. **The doctors covered us with white blankets, told to close our eyes and filmed us as for a movie.** I was paid 200 liras. Next time Abu Feraz told my mother: “We need to film and you may take part and earn some money”.



Rihab Ali Mansour, 36, housewife:

“A man approached me with a proposal to be in the films. I was offered the role of a woman who died in a chemical attack. I was taken to a flat and given a white prayer clothes. I was then told to lie down and smear my mouth with toothpaste, playing dead in a chemical attack. He gave me about 10 dollars in the evening”.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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OF THE PARTICIPANTS



Wafika Hubbiya, 54, housewife:

“I was brought by car to the city of Zamalka and taken to a house. I was given a white blanket, **I lay down on the staircase feigning death in a chemical attack.** In a day or two I got 3000 for this job”.



Omar al Mustafa ibn Muhammed, Aleppo,
41, small business:

“They staged a chemical attack as follows: **they brought children, put them on the floor, simulated the use of chemical weapons, put gas masks on, pushed civilians away, poured water over alleged corpses before them, like the children died in the chemical attack.** I saw this with my own eyes”.

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USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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**METHODS USED BY THE WHITE HELMETS TO STAGE THE CHEMICAL ATTACKS: TESTIMONY
OF THE PARTICIPANTS**



Ahmed Bouweidani, 24, **White Helmets employee in Douma:**
“There were 8 small children in the street, they gave them candies and told they wanted to play with them. **Then they dusted the children with white stuff, seated them in minivans and took to the Hospital. There they filmed the children saying that the children had suffered a chemical attack”.**



Abdurazak Nassan ibn Nuaman, 45, Aleppo:
“From 10 to 15 WH employees took part in this staging. **They gathered area people, poured them over with water and began to cry that the Syrian authorities had used chemical weapons.**
This was not the case, this was just the smell of household chlorine, and the people stood staring around. The White Helmets members had neither gas masks nor gloves on them.”

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USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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METHODS USED BY THE WHITE HELMETS TO STAGE THE CHEMICAL ATTACKS: TESTIMONY
OF THE PARTICIPANTS



Amran Makiah, **member of the White Helmets organization, Duma:**

"We were told that there were victims of the chemical attack, so we should go there. We went there and saw that everything was fine, **nothing special, just a fire, but the White Helmets were taking pictures, filming everything and said that those were the consequences of a chemical attack.**"



Mohammed Al-Mustafa Ibn Hassun, 48 years old, Aleppo, vendor:

"The White Helmets always disseminated information according to which the authorities had used chemical weapons. **It was not true: in fact, we as the inhabitants of that district had never seen or heard of a child that had become victim of a chemical attack.**"

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JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.**

**METHODS USED BY THE WHITE HELMETS TO STAGE THE CHEMICAL ATTACKS: TESTIMONY
OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

The picture on the right features a photo from “The Time” Article “A Photographer Bears Witness to a Suspected Chlorine Attack in Syria” (<http://time.com/syriaeastern-ghouta-suspected-chlorine-attack/>)

We found WH employee Mahmud Bouweidani from this photo and interviewed him exactly on the spot where “The Time” shot was made.

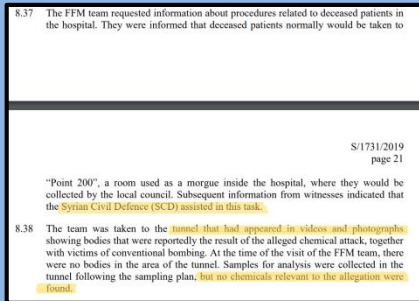


**Mahmud Bouweidani
fully exposed the White Helmets propaganda:**

“We brought one family to the Douma Hospital, representing things as if the Syrian army had used chlorine, but there was actually no gas. I was told to sit down on a bed and hold an oxygen mask on to get the required shot”.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTORY LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

MASS USE BY THE OPCW OF THE DECEITFUL SOURCE



Many witnesses confirmed that fake chemical attacks had been a permanent element of the organization's work. The OPCW Report establishes that the data provided by the White Helmets with regard to the incident at Location 1 (Hospital) are fake. The high standards of the OPCW Report would require characterizing such witnesses as deceitful sources and excluding the information received from them.

The OPCW does the opposite and bases its report predominantly on this deceitful source: the Report refers to the White Helmets under the name of the "Syrian Civil Defence" and the information provided by them 20 times.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

OPCW REPORT: USE OF QUESTIONABLE ANONYMOUS WITNESSES AND FAILURE TO INCLUDE THE TESTIMONY OF REAL WITNESSES IN THE REPORT



8.41 Interviews were held with a total of 39 witnesses, 13 of which were conducted in Damascus. A breakdown of the profiles of the interviewees is given in Table 2.

TABLE 2: PROFILES OF INTERVIEWEES

	Interviewee	Male	Female	Primary Casualty	Secondary Casualty
Treating physician	4	4	0	0	0
Medical support staff	7	6	1	1	0
Witness	28	26	2	9	1
Sampler	0	0	0	0	0
Total	39	36	3	10	1



On 13 February 2019, the BBC Syria producer Riam Dalati tweeted: "In fact, one of the 3 or 4 people filming the scene was Dr Abu Bakr Hanan, a "brute & shifty" doctor affiliated with Jaysh Al-Islam." How many witnesses interviewed by the OPCW were affiliated with Jaysh Al-Islam?

Failure to present a list of witnesses allows us to make an educated guess that the majority of the witnesses interviewed by the OPCW could be affiliated with illegal armed formations interested in providing false information or could be people who were not present at the site of the incident.

At the same time, the OPCW fails to include in the report the testimony of the witnesses whose presence at the site of the incident is confirmed by videos. For instance, out of 17 witnesses present in The Hague at the press conference with 11-year-old Hassan Diab, the OPCW interviewed only 6 people.

The use of questionable anonymous witnesses along with the OPCW's failure to include the testimony of confirmed witnesses in the report casts doubt on both the conclusions of the Report and the OPCW integrity.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

WITHHOLDING OF THE EXPERTS AND THEIR OBJECTIVES

S/1731/2019

page 17

8.29 The team analysed the available material and consulted independent experts in mechanical engineering, ballistics and metallurgy who utilised specialised computer modelling techniques to provide a qualified competent assessment of the trajectory and damage to the cylinders found at Location 2.

The report **withholds the names and qualifications of the experts** only mentioning that they are “independent experts in mechanical engineering, ballistics and metallurgy who utilised specialised computer modelling techniques”. **Withholding of the list of experts raises reasonable doubts about their qualifications.**

The Report of the OPCW mission **does not disclose the objectives and questions** raised with the experts. This gives rise to legitimate **doubts as to whether the experts were instructed to carry out a full analysis of all versions of the events.**

**OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
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DISPOSAL OF THE BODIES BY THE WHITE HELMETS AND THE OPCW'S FAILURE TO DO AUTOPSIES

8.67 Witnesses recounted that the SCD kept bodies inside Location 2 until approximately 9:00 on 8 April, when the shelling ceased. First responders removed the bodies from the building and laid them on the street, in front of the building. The bodies were doused with water and taken to Point One to be prepared for burial. According to several witness reports, the total number of dead from this incident was 43. The total

The OPCW Report indicates that there was **deliberate concealment of the bodies**: the White Helmets took the bodies to "Point One to be prepared for burial". It is evident that the autopsy would unequivocally confirm their claims about chlorine poisoning, as well as enable to identify the bodies and determine the death toll. There could be no other explanation for the concealment by the White Helmets of the bodies of the alleged victims of the chemical attack, other than the fact that **they staged the attack using the bodies of the people who had died in other places or had been killed specifically for fake videos.**

S/1731/2019
page 6

- where possible, and deemed necessary, carry out medical examinations, including autopsies, and collect biomedical samples of those alleged to have been affected;

The mandate of the OPCW Mission explicitly mentions medical examinations and autopsies. The mission's failure to do them raises **doubts with regard to both the quality of the work of the OPCW and its willingness to discover the truth.**

**OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
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THE OPCW'S FAILURE TO ESTABLISH THE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES

- 8.73 The FFM could not establish the precise number of casualties; however, some sources¹⁴ reported that it ranged between 70 and 500. Others sources¹⁵ denied the presence of chemically-related casualties.
- 8.74 The number of dead in relation to alleged chemical exposure is reported by a number of witnesses to be 43, distributed between male, female, adults and children.

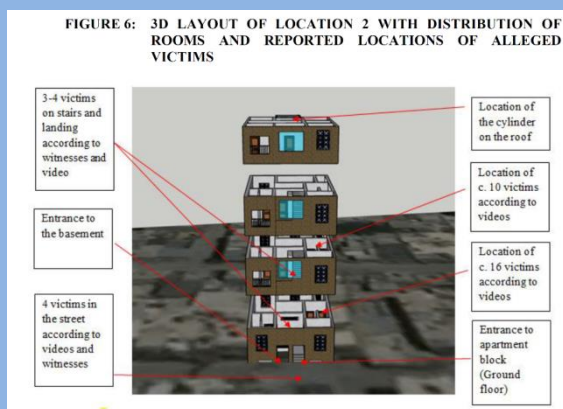
The OPCW Report mentions various numbers of casualties of the alleged chemical attack. In paragraph 8.73 of the OPCW Report, in ranges from 70 to 500 people. This paragraph also cites the sources that deny the presence of chemically-related casualties. **It is evident that these data contradict each other and require an analysis to determine the veracity of these allegations. Then, the sources with false statements should be excluded from further consideration.** It is also obvious that the data cited in paragraph 8.74 contradict the testimony referred to in paragraph 8.73.

The OPCW's failure to analyze the sources to determine their reliability along with the subsequent use of deceitful sources also raises doubts with regard to both the quality of the work of the OPCW and its willingness to discover the truth.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

THE OPCW'S FAILURE TO IDENTIFY THE VICTIMS OF THE ALLEGED CHEMICAL ATTACK

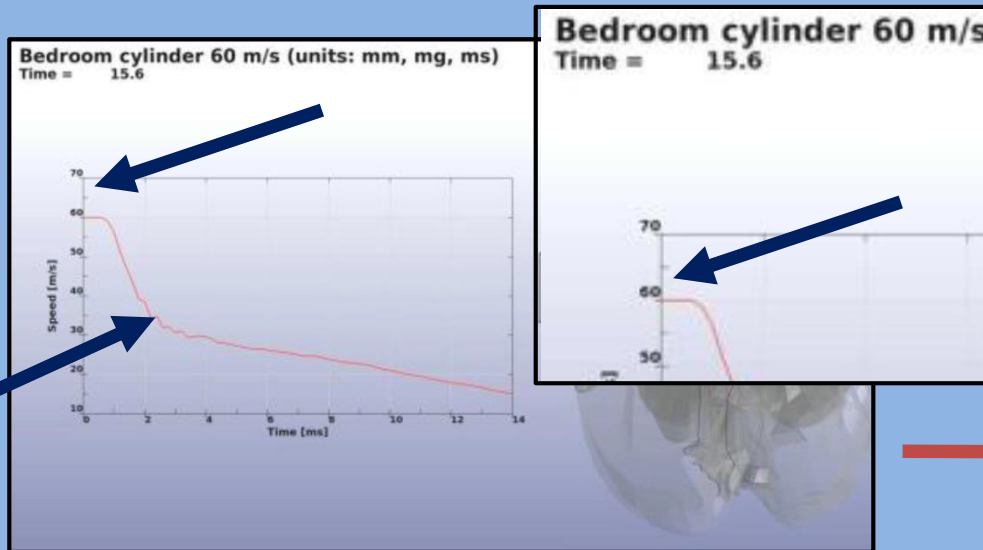
A competent study of the version with airdropped chlorine cylinders would require a list of casualties. In case of Location 2 that involved a cylinder on the roof and 16 bodies in the videos, it would have been easy to make a preliminary list of casualties by questioning local residents and showing them photographs. On the other hand, the fact that the locals could not identify the victims on the photographs would support the version about a staged attack, for which the bodies had been specifically brought from other places. The OPCW Report took almost a year to prepare. Despite this long period of time, the OPCW failed to question local residents. This indicates lack of competence of the organization or a deliberate attempt to conceal the facts confirming the version about a staged attack.



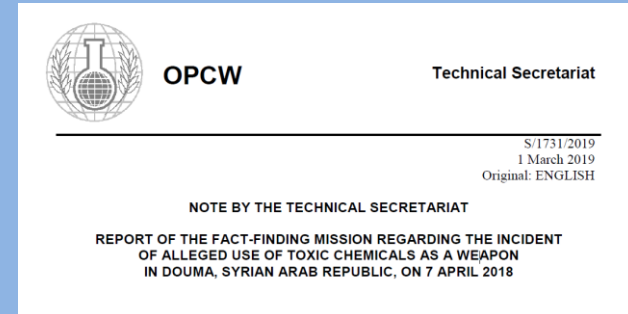
During our interview with 15 witnesses in Douma, none of them could identify the locals that had allegedly fallen victims to the incident involving chemical weapons. Given that the residents of the Syrian cities tend to maintain close contacts, this raises strong doubts as to the veracity of the version about the poisoning of local residents and indirectly substantiates the version, according to which the bodies of the victims had been brought separately.

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

THE OPCW REPORT: LOCATION 4 (“CYLINDER IN THE BEDROOM”)



Misperceptions



8.31 The analyses indicated that the structural damage to the rebar-reinforced concrete terrace at Location 2 was caused by an impacting object with a geometrically symmetric shape and sufficient kinetic energy to cause the observed damage. The analyses indicate that the damage observed on the cylinder found on the roof terrace, the aperture, the balcony, the surrounding rooms, and the rooms underneath and the structure above, is consistent with the creation of the aperture observed in the terrace by the cylinder found in that location.

False conclusions

Paragraph 8.31 of the OPCW Report states the following: “The analyses indicate that the damage observed on the cylinder found on the roof terrace, the aperture, the balcony, the surrounding rooms, and the rooms underneath and the structure above, is consistent with the creation of the aperture observed in the terrace by the cylinder found in that location.” **Lack of precise calculations and consideration of the fact that the Syrian air forces fly at a height of more than 2000 meters for fear of man-portable air-defense system raise certain doubts. The speed of the cylinder near ground should have been more than 60 m/s indicated in the OPCW Report in both models, with and without air drag.**

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED
USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018:
JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

LOCATION 2 ("CYLINDER ON THE ROOF")

LOCATION 4 ("CYLINDER IN THE BEDROOM")



The model with the maximum speed near ground of 60 m/s used by the anonymous OPCW experts **did not account for all the necessary initial conditions (drop height of 2000 meters, drag coefficient, cylinder weight etc.)**. Given these factors, the speed of the cylinders should have been much higher leading to the cylinder breaching the roof at Location 2. **The fact that this was not the case supports the version, according to which the chlorine cylinder had been brought to stage the chemical attack.**

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.

POSITION OF THE BODIES AT LOCATION 2 CONTRADICTS THE OPCW CONCLUSION ABOUT THE USE OF CHLORINE: SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC



8.96 The location, positions and lack of visible trauma on the victims in the videos taken inside the building indicate exposure to a rapidly incapacitating or a highly toxic substance. The victims do not appear to have been in the midst of attempting self-extrication or respiratory protection when they collapsed, indicating a very rapid or instant onset. This type of rapid collapse is indicative of an agent capable of quickly killing or immobilising.

The OPCW Report concludes that at Location 2, with the cylinder on the roof that, according to the OPCW, had been the source of chlorine, “the victims do not appear to have been in the midst of attempting self-extrication or respiratory protection when they collapsed, indicating a very rapid or instant onset. This type of rapid collapse is indicative of an agent capable of quickly killing or immobilising”. However, the described situation **with instant exposure and death of people is indicative of a nerve agent, but not chlorine**. Broken windows in the building near the staircase would have brought the chlorine concentration down even more. Evidence shows, that in the majority of cases involving the release of chlorine people manage to evacuate. Besides, the number of injured significantly exceeds the number of casualties. **The position of the bodies at the second and third floors and the staircase in the videos, as well as the fact that there were no confirmed victims of chlorine in the hospitals are in direct contradiction to the OPCW’s version about the use of chlorine.**

OPCW REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING MISSION REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF ALLEGED USE OF TOXIC CHEMICALS AS A WEAPON IN DOUMA ON 7 APRIL 2018: **JUGGLING OF FACTS, SELF-CONTRADICTION LOGIC, DECEITFUL SOURCES.**

- 1) Notwithstanding the fact that the OPCW Report **effectively exposed the falsity of the statements of the White Helmets** about the events at Location 1 and despite multiple testimonies of the organization's practice to fake chemical attacks, the **OPCW Report is based almost entirely on their claims (with more than 20 references)**;
- 2) The OPCW uses a lot of **questionable anonymous witnesses who are likely affiliated with armed groups and probably were not even present at the site of the incident** and fails to include in the report **the testimonies provided by real witnesses**;
- 3) The **OPCW withholds the names of the experts it referred to**, as well as the **questions** raised with them and the **mathematical model** they have used. All the factors considered support the version, according to which the **chlorine cylinders had been brought from outside**;
- 4) The **OPCW failed to do autopsies of the bodies** of the alleged victims of the chemical attack, and the White Helmets arranged for their disposal;
- 5) The **OPCW failed to identify and even estimate the death toll**, which could have been easily done by questioning local residents;
- 6) The position of the bodies at Location 2 **contradicts the OPCW's conclusion about the use of chlorine**.

The above mentioned facts **refute the conclusions of the OPCW, according to which the chlorine cylinders could have been airdropped by the Syrian air forces and the victims were exposed to chlorine**. They also confirm that the **OPCW has deliberately failed to conduct an impartial assessment of the incident in Douma and raise doubts as to whether the organization is capable of making such assessments in the future**.