

Will take own action if UN fails in its duty in Syria, says US

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The United States on Wednesday hinted that it will take its own action in Syria unless the UN Security Council moves to prevent the use of chemical weapons in the war-torn country.

Photo: AP Nikki Haley

“When the United Nations consistently fails in its duty to act collectively, there are times in the life of states that we are compelled to take our own action,” the US ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said.

Haley’s comments came after the UN Security Council convened met to discuss a draft resolution proposed by the US, Britain and France condemning Damascus for the reported use of chemical weapons in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib province on Tuesday.

Russia criticised the draft resolution for being unbalanced and jumping to conclusions. It said the document would have to include several amendments, such as calling on the rebels controlling the area to provide full access to UN investigators and setting an unbiased and comprehensive probe into the incident as the primary goal of the resolution.

“This draft was penned in haste and adopting it would have been irresponsible,” said Russian Deputy Acting envoy to the UN Vladimir Safronkov.

He also blamed Western members of the UN Security Council for unwillingness to investigate previous cases of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, where rebel groups were accused of using toxin agents.

Nikki Haley delivered an emotional speech that included images of children to argue in favor of swift action. The pictures were used in reporting the alleged chemical weapons attack.

She claimed the incident carried “all hallmarks” of an attack by Damascus, adding that the toxin used in the alleged assault was “more deadly” than in previous cases attributed to the Syrian military by Washington.

The US envoy to UN also accused Russia of failing to ensure that there were no chemical weapons in the possession of the Syrian government.

“The truth is that Russia, Iran and (Syrian President) Assad have no interest in peace,” Haley claimed.

In one of the worst chemical bombings in Syria at least 70 people were killed, including 20 innocent children, on Tuesday, the bombing sparked an international outrage on Wednesday and prompted the United Nations to call for a probe into the attack and to view it as a possible war crime.

- (With IANS inputs)