



Trump's response to Syrian attack is incoherent: #tellusatoday

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Emma Ashford

April 6, 2017

It's hard not to be shocked by the barbarism and cruelty of Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime, which has repeatedly targeted civilians in Syria's lengthy civil war. Unfortunately, the Trump administration offers no concrete policy solutions to solve this crisis, preferring instead to present criticism of Barack Obama.

Just days after tacitly acknowledging that the U.S. no longer seeks to remove Assad, key officials launched heated denunciations of the Syrian regime's chemical weapons attack and called for action at the United Nations. President Trump himself noted that his "attitude towards Syria and Assad has changed very much" because of the attacks.

However, all the problems that prevented the Obama administration from acting in Syria still exist: disagreements among allies, the potential for conflict with Russia, the importance of the campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, and the near-impossible challenge of protecting civilians in a multisided civil war.

In 2013, Trump tweeted his emphatic support of the Obama administration's decision not to strike Assad for his chemical weapons attacks. His statements today are profoundly hypocritical.

The president's U-turn not only risks breaking his promise to avoid further Middle East entanglements, but the administration's statements about Syria also deny the public the opportunity for an open debate about military intervention. In voting for Trump, many Americans signaled their desire to avoid future Middle Eastern quagmires — they deserve better than this administration's response.

Emma Ashford, Cato Institute; Washington, D.C.

Emma Ashford is a research fellow with expertise in international security and the politics of energy. Her research focuses on the politics and foreign policies of petrostates, particularly in Russia and various Middle Eastern countries.