

Lesson Plan: An Attack on Syria- What would you do?

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/lesson-plan-attack-syria

Syrian Chemical Weapons Attack Alarms International Community *August 26, 2013*



by Allison McCartney

In Syria, reports of a massive chemical weapon attack outside Damascus have put the rest of the world on high alert. The attack is estimated to have killed between 500 and 1,000 people.

“Any use of chemical weapons anywhere by anybody under any circumstances would violate international law,” said United National Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in a press conference. “Such a crime against humanity should result in serious consequences for the perpetrator.”

However, President Obama also urged caution in the situation, saying, “If the U.S. goes in and attacks another country without a U.N. mandate and without clear evidence that can be presented, then there are questions in terms of whether international law supports it, do we have the coalition to make it work?”

Syrian youth have been particularly hard-hit by the ongoing violence in their country.

“Last year around this time, we had 70,000 Syrian refugee children. Today, we have reached one million,” said Yoka Brandt of UNICEF.

It is believed another two million children have been displaced inside Syria. Many say they just want to go home.

“I want to return to Syria, to live in peace and to go back to school,” said one child. “I want to be able to play with my old friends again, just like before. I want our country to be safe, safe enough to live in and for it to be prosperous again.”

Lesson Plan: An Attack on Syria- What would you do?

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/lesson-plan-attack-syria

Syrian Refugee Youths Settle into Permanent Camp Life *August 8, 2013*



by Allison McCartney

In a little over a year, the Syrian refugee camp known as Zaatari has grown from a dusty patch of the Jordanian desert to a home to roughly 120,000 people. They are just some of the more than one million people who have fled the civil war in Syria.

However, with no end to the Syrian conflict in sight, many of the camp's residents are starting to realize they will not be going home any time soon.

"In the last couple of months, Zaatari has taken on an air of permanence," reports Lindsey Hilsum of Independent Television News.

Engineers have installed a new transformer to provide some electricity to the camp. Bright lights now illuminate a central shopping "street" that residents call the Champs Elysees after the famous center in Paris.

However, many residents, particularly the youth, are unhappy with life in the tent city. The stress of having escaped a war zone and now living in a refugee camp is taking its toll.

"These children have lived for a particularly long time in levels of stress that are incredibly profound. So, when that happens, there's a part of your brain that goes, you have experienced too much," says United Nations (UN) aid worker Jane MacPhail. "It turns itself off. You go into survivor mode."

Lesson Plan: An Attack on Syria- What would you do?

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/lesson-plan-attack-syria

Obama Approves Military Assistance for Syrian Rebels *June 17, 2013*



by Allison McCartney

The Obama administration announced this week that the U.S. will increase military assistance to forces opposing the Syrian regime of Bashar al Assad.

Louay Meqdad of the rebel Free Syria Army greeted the decision warmly, saying “We need all the weapons that they can offer for us. The international community, they should — they should use all their powers to help us, because we need help.”

However, members of the international community expressed worry that the move could help increase violence in the region, and that weapons could fall into the hands of militant extremist groups.

“Providing arms to either side wouldn’t address this current situation,” said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. “There is no such military solution. Only political solution can address this issue sustainably.”

U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes tried to calm fear Friday, saying, “We have relationships today in Syria that we didn’t have six months ago that gives us greater certainty, not just that we can get stuff into the country, but also that we can put it in the right hands, so that it’s not falling into the hands of extremists.”