



KING'S ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2026

The International Criminal Court

THE PROSECUTOR V. Bashar Al Assad

By Yusuf Mahafzah

Original: **English**

No: **Court 01**

Name-**KAMUN-01**

Date: **February 2026**

TRIAL CHAMBER I

Before:

Judge Yusuf Mahafzah

SITUATION REGARDING THE COUNTRY

IN THE CASE OF

THE PROSECUTOR V. Bashar Al Assad

Under Seal

CASE DOCUMENTS

--	--	--



INDICTMENT

The Prosecutor of the Full Court Name hereby charges Defendant Bashar Al Assad with the following offenses under the Rome Statute:

COUNT 1: That the defendant, Bashar Al Assad, in his capacity as a position of President of the Syrian Arab Republic, has committed **CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY** against the Prosecution.

COUNT 2: That the defendant, Bashar Al Assad, in his capacity as a position of President of the Syrian Arab Republic, has committed **CRIME OF AGGRESSION** against the Prosecution.

The defendant, Bashar Al Assad, has pleaded **NOT GUILTY** to this charge.

Witnesses:

For the Prosecution:

Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria

Syrian, Former Colonel in the Syrian Arab Army; Spokesperson for the Free Syrian Army (defector)

Dr. Åke Sellström

Swedish, Former Head of UN Mission to Investigate Chemical Weapons in Syria

Layla Hassan

Syrian, Civilian survivor of the Ghouta chemical attack

For the Defense:

Maher Hafaz Al Assad

Syrian, Commander of the Syrian Army's elite 4th Armoured Division; second-in-command in military matters

Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban

Syrian, Political and Media Adviser to Bashar al-Assad; former ambassador and government spokesperson

General Ali Abdullah Ayoub

Syrian, Former Syrian Minister of Defense

Note on the Witnesses: Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria, Maher Hafaz Al Assad, and Dr. Åke Sellström, Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban, Layla Hassan, General Ali Abdullah Ayoub are based on actual public figures. The Court would like to disclaim that the affidavits do not reflect anything the witnesses have ever said in the past, or any opinions that they might hold. The affidavits were written for the purpose of debate and use in trial. The arrest and indictment of the Defendant in this trial is hypothetical, and only serves the educational purposes of KAMUN'26 and the



International Criminal Court. The witnesses may be called in any order, and witnesses do not have to be acted out by delegates of the same gender.

FACTS STIPULATED

Protests began on March 15, 2011, across Syria as part of broader regional protests that called for political reforms. President Bashar al-Assad, who had been president since July 2000, was faced by protests for greater political freedoms, economic transformation, and an end to corruption. What triggered the protests to start is some words that got written on the wall of a school; a few kids vandalized the school during the time of the Arab spring writing "your time has come doctor". This have been targeted to Bashar Al Assad as he is referred to as the doctor, and it was at a time where many Arab leader were going down, These kids have been executed by the government which triggered the protests. The protests gradually translated into armed combat when opposition forces organized resistance against the state, and military units found it difficult to hold on to key positions.

During the ensuing conflict, government troops and opposition groups carried out military actions across the nation. Main city centers, like Homs, Aleppo, and Eastern Ghouta, were under siege, combat, and even in waves of intense battles. Humanitarian accounts report that civilians were affected by such operations, including displacement, wounding, and killing.

During 2013-2018, there were a series of attacks involving chemical weapons such as sarin and chlorine. The attacks caused casualties among civilians and the world's attention. Targeted attacks, forced displacement, and detention of fighters against civilians by both sides have been blamed.

Bashar al-Assad's government concentrated political and military control, employing supporting military units, like those commanded by his brother Maher al-Assad, to seize territory.

Opposition forces also took over some territory, resulting in a chaotic and fragmented war.

Global and regional powers were engaged through military invasion, diplomatic bargaining, and humanitarian intervention.

Syrian Civil War resulted in widespread humanitarian crises, including hundreds of thousands of deaths, millions of displaced persons, and infrastructure devastated. Throughout all these years, Assad's regime was marked by efforts to maintain authority and organize internal as well as outside pressures, with the war remaining contested between different actors in the nation.



Timeline of Major events

- 2000: Bashar al-Assad becomes President of Syria after his father, Hafez al-Assad, dies.
- 2011: Protests start in the city of Daraa during the Arab Spring. The government uses force, and protests spread, turning into a civil war.
- 2012: Fighting grows worse. Big battles happen in Homs and Aleppo. Soldiers leave the army to form the Free Syrian Army.
- 2013: A chemical attack in Eastern Ghouta kills hundreds of people. A UN report confirms sarin gas was used.
- 2014: ISIS rises and takes over large areas. The Syrian government responds with heavy bombing in rebel areas.
- 2015: Russia begins helping Assad directly with airstrikes and troops.
- 2016: After months of fighting, government forces retake Aleppo, a major turning point in the war.
- 2017: A chemical attack in Khan Shaykhun kills dozens. The U.S. responds with missile strikes on a Syrian airbase.
- 2018: Government forces retake Eastern Ghouta. Reports of more chemical attacks follow. By this time, hundreds of thousands have been killed and millions forced to flee their homes.

**Affidavit of Witness Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria****WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION**

I, Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria, being duly sworn, on oath, state as follows:

My name is Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria. Born in a Syrian village north of Hama, some 210 km north of Damascus. In my youth, I entered the Syrian Arab Army and was promoted over a period of more than 20 years until reaching the rank of Colonel. In this time, I was stationed in a variety of Syrian cities, such as Homs and Aleppo, and became very well familiar with those regions. Later, I worked as a spokesman for the Free Syrian Army after deserting from the forces of the government in 2012. In this capacity, I broadcasted combat reports, filed dispatches regarding conditions within Syria, and consulted for foreign agencies and foreign journalists. My own military qualifications, together with my subsequent experience working for the opposition forces, give me an insider's viewpoint regarding the Syrian Army and a clear picture concerning the experiences of the civilian populace throughout the conflict."

When initially protests had broken out in Daraa, we were operating out of a camp not very far from the city. I can remember the orders coming from Damascus: use force to disperse demonstrators. I was stunned because at this point, we were not up against armed fighters, but youths chanting slogans in the streets, waving banners, and crying out for reforms. I saw tanks roll into the city and fire warning shots that echoed through the narrow streets, the smell of burnt rubber from barricades drifting into the air. I heard screams from women inside their own doors as soldiers chased youths through alleys. That was when I also wondered about the orders we were giving.

By summer of 2012, the violence had become open warfare. I was tasked with operations around Aleppo. Those old city quarters that would normally be lined with stalls selling colorful fabrics and spices became battle zones. I can recall walking through streets where buildings loomed as empty shells, with stone walls blackened by shellfire. A scent of dust and gunpowder clung around the air, and quietness reigned apart from the thunder of shellfire in the distance. Orders went out for cutting off supply of water and electricity from districts held by opposition fighters, though there were also civilians at home there. These measures caused huge hardship, and for me there was no means of rationalizing them alongside responsibility for the protection of the Syrian people.

In the morning of the Ghouta chemical attack, I was no longer a member of Assad's army but had close sources that described the scene. They told me of body-lined streets that were immobile, and most of them children. Eyewitnesses spoke of a foul, burning smell in the air and seeing foam around the mouths of the dead. The reports that I got were unanimous and horrific: people suffocating in their location of standing, and no visible injuries. I spoke later, as a spokesman for the Free Syrian Army, bringing this attack into focus. It was one of the most obvious clues for me that Assad's regime was not afraid to use any weapon, regardless of its severity, in order for it to maintain power.

The longer that conflict raged, the more areas it affected. I worked out of Idlib, out of Homs, and even from the Turkish border. I interviewed families that walked for days carrying small bundles of clothing. I remember one woman carrying a photo of her son that was taken by the security



forces. She held out the photo in her trembling hands and asked me whether she had seen him, and I had no answer. The weight of stories like this one made me feel like this conflict was killing not only lives, but the very fabric that was Syrian.

When I look at the years that I served, I am at odds between pride in the country and mourning for what it has endured. Once, I believed that the Syrian Army was there to protect the Syrian people, but under Bashar al-Assad's command, I watched that task turn into a means of killing those very citizens. My own life was changed the minute that I resolved that I would defect, that I would abandon comrades, career, and even home because I was unable to comply with the orders that were given. I have the memories of neighborhoods leveled, of innocents pleading for help, and of families destroyed. These aren't statistics and figures, they are real human beings whose pain was a direct result of decisions made at the very deepest levels of government. That is why today, I believe that my story needs to be told here

The information above is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed,

Colonel Abdul Hamid Zakaria.

Subscribed and sworn before me on this, the day of Month, year.

The affidavit was initially written in Hungarian. It was translated by a third-party source.

Affidavit of witness Maher Hafez Al Assad

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

I, Maher Al Assad, being duly sworn, by oath, state as follows:

My name is Maher Hafaz al-Assad. Born in Damascus, Syria, in 1967, I am the younger brother of Bashar al-Assad. For most of my adult life, I have been Commander of the Syrian Army's 4th Armoured Division, one of the country's best units. My career has been one of dedication solely to the military and defending the Syrian state against internal and external threats. My experience is not only that of a military man, yet also a man who has seen the best and worst of decades of violence in our part of the world.

When protests began in Syria in March of 2011, I was in charge of military operations within and around Damascus. We watched demonstrations turn violent in certain sections, and armed men emerged into the streets. I can remember getting word that police stations were assaulted and



weapons disappeared. We had one order: establish order and protect citizens from violence. A commander's task was mine to make sure that neighborhoods became safe areas. I personally inspected checkpoints, walked through streets where tensions were high, and spoke to my men and instructed them that their mission was not killing innocent citizens but protecting the country.

Even during the escalation of the conflict, militias took control of entire towns and districts. In Aleppo and Homs, we witnessed bombings, assassinations, and murder of local authorities for not cooperating with militias. I can vividly remember standing in a rooftop observation point in Aleppo and hearing explosions echo through the old city while observing the smoke emanating from government and civilian areas. This was a terrible scene for everyone. In this situation, there was fighting by our men for the recapture of areas and for protection of the people that stayed there. We had civilians come through checkpoints for assistance for food, water, or passage, and I told my men to accommodate them as much as we were able.

When we learned of the chemical attack at Ghouta, we were all stunned. We had some reports from the ground, yet to this date, I personally think that there was no involvement of the Syrian Army in any kind of attack. We know how much our command forbids the use of munitions, and we had no directive for the usage of chemical munitions. We remember the outrage and terror that was sparked worldwide, and the damage it caused to the reputation of our country, but we think other stakeholders in this war may have been involved.

During 2016, much of my effort was dedicated to shuttling between Damascus and battlefields. I talked to soldiers for whom months passed without their seeing their families. I shook hands with mothers and fathers whose children died. War is savage, and Syria was sandwiched between local and international efforts. Even in the midst of destruction, my responsibility was always keeping the state stable, preventing further growth by militias, and ensuring that civilian Syrians would yet live in their own homes without fear of a revolt by militias.

I speak today not only as a commander, but also as a Syrian who has felt the pain of this conflict. My brother, Bashar al-Assad, is held responsible for decisions that many of us individually and collectively made for the defense of our country. I cannot forget cruel acts that the Syrian people have suffered, yet neither can I forget the threat that we posed armed militias, foreign intervention, and instability at our borders. My own life has been one of service to the Syrian army and to Syria. History, in my opinion, will prove that we struggled for the survival of our country and not for its downfall.



The information above is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed,

Maher Al Assad

The affidavit was initially written in English.



Affidavit of Witness Dr. Ake Sellstrom
WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

I, Dr. Ake Sellstrom, being duly sworn, on oath, state as follows:

My name is Dr. Ake Sellstrom. Born in Sweden in the year 1948, for much of my career, I have worked in the field involving chemical weapons and arms control. My doctorate was in biology and later specialized in the analysis of toxic agents and weapons of mass destruction. I have worked for many years as a senior scientist at the Swedish Defence Research Agency. During much of my career, I have worked for the United Nations in many missions involving chemical weapons, including those involving inspection missions in Iraq in the 1990s. In the year 2013, I was appointed Head of the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. My employment took me directly into Syria during the conflict, where I was responsible for heading a team of international experts for the purpose of investigating allegations involving the use of chemical weapons.

In emergency instructions issued August 21, 2013, I was told to bring my team and investigate reports of a huge chemical attack in Eastern Ghouta, just outside Damascus. When we arrived, the air was heavy with dust and smoke, and rubble from destroyed buildings lined the streets. We interviewed survivors, who described a sharp, stinging smell and sudden death of family members without visible injuries. Some described children frothing at the mouth and dying within a few minutes. I went personally to medical facilities where dozens of bodies were laid out, wrapped in white covers. Physicians also took us through samples they had collected tainted clothing and soil from the sites of attacks.

My team and I worked day and night after doing field visits looking at the evidence. We tested pieces of rockets, laboratory-tested samples, and cross-matched medical symptoms against known chemical agents. Test results confirmed the presence of sarin gas, a nerve weapon that is prohibited by international law. The rockets that we recovered were a type that was very much like systems that the Syrian military was using at this time. While we did not have a mandate to assign responsibility, the extent of the attack, the delivery systems involved, and access required to deliver those systems all spoke loudly to a level of responsibility at the state level. Aside from Ghouta, we also analyzed other potential attacks, including those at Khan al-Assal, Jobar, and Ashrafiyah Sahnaya. In some of these incidents, again, we found that there was deployment of lethal toxins like sarin and chlorine. In each of the incidents, we noted the identical symptoms



among casualties constricted pupils, respiratory failure, and seizures. In Jobar, I can recollect survivors recounting that the gas seemed to seep into underground tunnels, leaving combatants and noncombatants equally incapable of breathing. The consistency of these outcomes confirmed the conclusion that chemical weapons were consistently deployed during the conflict. My role as a scientist is not that of giving political opinions, rather that of providing facts based on evidence. My investigations uncovered that chemical weapons, one of the most inhumane weapons of war, had been used more than once in Syria. Those attacks killed thousands or irreparably hurt. Personally, for me, memories of Ghouta are intense bodies of children next to each other, dead, without any wound marks. Those are images that stay engraved into one's mind. Whoever initiated or authorized this type of weapon chose means that inflicted huge tortures among innocents. It is in my mission, in my opinion, to testify in order that those facts be understood and that this type of weapon no longer be combat instruments.

The information above is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed,

DR. AKE SELLSTROM

Subscribed and sworn before me on this, the 30th of July, 1914.

Affidavit of Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

I, Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban, being duly sworn, on oath, state as follows:



My name is Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban. Born in Homs, Syria, in 1953, I studied English Literature at Damascus University and went on for a Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom. I have taught as a professor at Damascus University and worked as a translator and writer and have authored and published books and articles covering literature, politics, and the Arab world. I have also worked for many years as the Political and Media Adviser to the President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad. In addition, I have represented Syria at the United Nations and other international forums. My work in life has consisted of working for the public, for education, and for bringing the voice of Syria to the world.

When protests began in Syria in 2011, I was in Damascus working as adviser to the President. I remember the capital tension, young people gathering in the streets, demanding reforms, and citizens fearing instability. The President's Office was informed of both peaceful demonstrations and armed attacks against police and government installations. My responsibility at the time was explaining Syria's position for foreign journalists. Speaking with journalists almost daily, I tried explaining that there were certainly demonstrations, yet also armed militias taking the chance to escalate violence.

During those years, I commuted between Damascus and a series of international conference meetings. I regularly met Syrian displaced families. I remember interviewing a Syrian mother in Homs, crying and explaining that her house was lost due to shellfire from armed opposition fighters. Those voices rarely found a way into the international media, yet for me, at least, they characterized the conflict. In my role as adviser, I labored at driving home the message that the regime was not fighting its citizens, yet fighting groups that were armed and funded by foreign governments.

We have all been shaken by the report of the chemical attack in Ghouta. Personally, I fielded calls from foreign diplomats and reporters demanding answers. I showed, and I believe till date, that the Syrian state was not guilty of that attack. Utilizing those weapons went against everything that we stood for at that moment, especially because there were international observers within Damascus. I remember the rage within me knowing how quickly responsibility was assigned without due investigation.

When the fight became more heated, I represented Syria at several world forums. I addressed journalists, diplomats, and human rights representatives and informed them that Syria was devastated by terrorists. I informed them about the atrocities that armed men inflicted on civilian crowds that were abducted, assassinated, and had entire districts targeted. I distinctly remember the testimonies of kids at school in Aleppo that were hit by mortars while they were inside their classrooms. My message was always one and the same: Syria was not fighting against its citizens, it was defending them from terrorists.

Since I'm Syrian, I've shouldered the responsibility for teaching the world about the history of my country. I know there was a wrong turn in the course of the war. No nation ends up in this level of ruin without harm. But also that President Bashar al-Assad was presented with a choice: watch Syria fall into anarchy, or do whatever it took in his power to maintain the state. My work



and my life have been for the sake of clarifying this truth. This trial, in my head, has to consider Syria not only as a tale of conflict, but through the voices of those that worked frantically hard at keeping the nation afloat when it was at the very precipice.

The above information is true to the best of my knowledge,

Signed,

Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban

Subscribed and sworn before me on this.

Affidavit of Layla Hassan

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

I, Layla Hassan, being duly sworn, on oath, state as follows:

My name is Layla Hassan. I was born in 1986 in Douma, a town in Eastern Ghouta northeast of Damascus by some 10 km. I grew up there surrounded by family members, and until the war, I was a teacher at a local elementary school. My home for most of my life was Douma, a vibrant



town that housed markets, fruit vendors, and narrow lanes that children played in. In August 2013, my world and that of many other neighbors was changed forever.

That morning, I woke up to an unfamiliar smell, stinging and sour in the atmosphere. It was not the smell of bombardment or gunpowder smoke, for which we had unfortunately become attuned, but something chemical, like heavy cleaning solutions and burning. I ran out and found neighbors collapsing to the ground, some trembling violently, while some stayed rigid. Children screamed froth from their lips, their small bodies shaking. I remember a boy no more than eight years old, his eyes open and yet not alive, his face pale. People screamed, “Gas! Gas!” as they sprayed water over those affected, but nothing helped. The sprawled silence that followed was more terrifying hundreds of people died in a matter of minutes.

Later that day, Hospitals and basements were packed. I walked my younger cousin through the streets her body was limp, her breath was light. The air in the clinic was heavy with the smell of sweat and chlorine. Physicians worked frantically, drenching people in water and vinegar and doing all that they possibly could. I heard the crying mothers begging the physicians to save their children, yet the vast majority of children never awakened. My cousin died in my arms before anyone was able to come. The memory of her drifting away persists within me every single day.

The Weeks After, Fear was rampant in every place after the attack. Most of the families buried their dead in unofficial graves since they did not know how to provide them with honorable rites. The neighborhood that was once a center of laughter and activity was a muted, oppressive place. Douma evacuated in droves, and those remaining emerged carrying what was left. I stayed for a while, but weeping mothers and the smell of bodies laid out in the summer heat made it uninhabitable. Subsequently, I also evacuated carrying what was remaining of the family.

My world was lost that day. I lost a cousin, a class of students, neighbors, and home. I no longer live in Douma, and I no longer teach. Instead, I am left with the memory of what it was that I and everyone else saw: the gas, the bodies of the dead, the terror that we all were. These acts did not happen by coincidence they are a direct result of decisions made by those in power. I want the world to know what happened in Ghouta, because the dead cannot speak. I am a voice for them, and I beg that through me recounting what happened, justice is found.

The above information is true to the best of my knowledge,

Signed,



Layla Hassan

Subscribed and sworn before me on this.

Affidavit of Ali Abdullah Ayoub

WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

I, Ali Ayoub, being duly sworn, on oath, state as follows:



My name is Ali Abdullah Ayoub. My birthplace is Latakia, Syria. My year of birth is 1952. My service was dedicated to the military for the rest of my life, and I advanced through the Syrian Arab Army's ranks. During the years of service, I served in different command positions and subsequently was Chief of the General Staff of the Army and later Minister of Defense. Military service has encompassed my whole life, and my duty has always been safeguarding the sovereignty of Syria and protecting its citizens from any internal or foreign threat.

the time instability began in Syria in March of 2011, I was a senior officer. Even now, I can remember how quickly protests became violent. Armed militias began attacking checkpoints, kidnapping soldiers, and looting weapon depots. As a commander, it was extremely clear what was expected of me: upholding order and not allowing Syria to descend into anarchy. I can remember walking through Homs those days and hearing shots echoing through streets once lined with markets and children's laughter. The city smelled of smoke and burning tires, and families huddled indoors in terror. In those conditions, we needed to move quickly and preserve the country from falling apart.

Syria at this time was not just facing unrest but an inflow of foreign-backed armed opposition militias. I was once at a strategic meeting in Damascus, where we studied maps marked with districts controlled by militants. We had a mission of winning those districts back. I also went through a front line not very far from Aleppo and talked to soldiers who lost men to roadside bombings and sniper shots. They wore dusty uniforms, weary faces, yet stood their ground. We were not fighting civilians but heavily-armed militias that took civilian areas as covers. This made the battle difficult and gruesome, yet we had a mission of bringing order.

When there had been allegations of chemical weapon use, it was a surprise for me. Throughout all those years of service, the Syrian Army had not once been told that it should use those weapons. I was at briefings when it was actually stated that those weapons would not be used. I was also very much aware that a considerable portion of the opposition forces had access to use of chemicals and tunnels that could spread them. Even though I don't rule out the suffering of Ghouta and other regions, personally, I think that the Syrian Army was not guilty. Stringency in our command and control system would have never allowed that.

Throughout the conflict, I personally worked in Damascus and later elsewhere. I would often venture out among troops at ground level, having a cup of tea among temporary shelters. I listened while the families came and asked for protection from kidnappings and killings by extremist militias. I watched children running barefoot through debris, their eyes alive with



terror. Those images remained in my mind. They cautioned me every day that the mission of the Army was to maintain the country whole while those that loathed it would attempt to fracture it.

My whole life has been for the sake of serving Syria and I know the sacrifices that the citizens and the soldiers have made. I don't deny the damage that this war has caused, but also know that we acted under circumstances that were impossible, and we had enemies inside and outside. My President, Bashar al-Assad, is accused of committing crimes, but I personally saw that his guidelines were for preserving Syria, not for destroying it. The decisions that we took were not an easy task for us, but we did it for safeguarding our nation. This is the truth that I appear before this court for.

The above information is true to the best of my knowledge,

Signed,

Ali Ayoub

Subscribed and sworn before me on this.