



This timeline outlines major chemical weapons (CW) disinformation narratives as well as key events and developments that were incorporated into or distorted by malign state disinformation campaigns.

The methodology employed for compiling the policy timeline on CW allegations was designed to be as detailed and impartial as possible, whilst acknowledging the limitations in available data and sources.

The analysis does not exhaustively cover every relevant document or statement but focuses on key sources that were most relevant and available within the specified timeframe.

SCOPE AND SEARCH PARAMETERS

To construct the timeline, we systematically searched official documents, statements and reports available from national and international governmental archives and websites. The primary focus was on countries that have been central to CW-related claims – either as originators or target's of disinformation- namely China, Russia, Syria, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The following search terms were commonly used in the research process:

- "Alexei Navalny"
- "chem"
- "chemical weapons"
- "chemical weapons + Syria"
- "chemical weapons + Ukraine"
- "Salisbury"
- "Skripal"

SOURCE BREAKDOWN

Our dataset focused on:

1. Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)
 - a. China, Russia, Syria, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States

Available statements from China, Russia, Syria, UK and the US spanning the fourteen-year timeframe 2011 to 2025 were accessed. 2011 was chosen as a start date as it coincided with the onset of the Syrian civil war, which represented the first widespread and systematic use of chemical weapons in recent decades. Materials assessed included national statements and official records from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), including documents from the Executive Council and the Technical Secretariat. These statements were examined for any references to chemical weapons allegations, especially those pertaining to Navalny, Skripal/Salisbury, Syria, US or Ukraine.

2. Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

Although the BWC primarily addresses biological weapons, selected documents from the 2011–2025 period were reviewed for references to chemical weapons within broader discussions of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

3. UNGA First Committee

Statements and reports from the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)'s First Committee (2011-2025) were analysed. Special attention was paid to allegations and discussions related to chemical warfare, particularly those involving Russia, Syria, the United States, and Ukraine. The same key terms were used in the search.

4. UN Security Council Documents

Relevant documentation submitted by China, Russia, Syria, Ukraine, UK, the US, and others was reviewed for CW-related content, including JIM (Joint Investigative Mechanism) and FFM (Fact Finding Mission) reports. These documents were scrutinised for references to chemical weapons allegations in the 2011-2025 timeframe.

5. OSCE (Operation for Security and Co-operation in Europe)

Documentation from 2016 onwards were reviewed. The search terms “chem” and “chemical weapons” were used to identify relevant statements and documentation.

6. Government websites

- a. Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA): The Russian MFA's official website (in English) was searched between 2011-2025 for mentions of “Alexei Navalny”, “chem”, “chemical weapons”, “Salisbury”, “Skripal” focusing on statements and documents that included references to Syria, Alexei Navalny, Salisbury and Ukraine.
- b. Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD): Similarly, the Russian MoD website (in English) was searched for relevant content between 2011-2025, for mentions of “Alexei Navalny”, “chem”, “chemical weapons”, “Salisbury”, “Skripal” focusing on statements and documents that included references to Syria, Alexei Navalny, Salisbury and Ukraine.
- c. Condition (10)(C) Reports: Annual reports required by the US Senate's Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Reports from 2014 to 2025 were analysed for reference to chemical weapons incidents, allegations, and compliance assessments. This period was selected because reports from these years are publicly available online in their entirety, allowing for consistent review.
- d. Annual Threat Assessments (2015-2025): Sections on Chemical and Biological Warfare (CBW) were reviewed in the 2015-2025 timeframe, with emphasis on – China and Russia.
- e. Worldwide Threat Assessments (2015-2018, 2021,2024,2025): Available reports in the 2015-2025 timeframe were reviewed; emphasis was placed on the sections directly relating to Russia.
- f. US Embassy and Treasury Department Websites: Information related to US sanctions imposed on Russia concerning chemical weapons were reviewed.

7. Government and Media Reports

- a. White House Statements (2011-2025): Official White House communications, including press releases and statements were reviewed for references to chemical weapons use or accusations, with a particular focus on Syria, Russia, Salisbury and the Navalny poisoning case.

- b. UK Parliament (2018-2025): Hansard records and official statements were analysed focusing on government responses to the Skripal and Navalny poisonings.
 - c. BBC Panorama & BBC Arabic (2011-2025): Investigative documentaries and reports were reviewed to identify chemical weapons attacks by location and year. Emphasis was placed on verifying the number and nature of attacks reported annually, particularly in Syria.
 - d. Arms Control Association (2011-2025): The Association's public timeline and analysis of chemical weapons use especially in Syria were used to corroborate dates, identify key events and contextualise state and non-state actors alleged use of chemical agents.
8. Russian Media:
- a. RT and TASS (in English): These outlets were selected due to their status as two of the most widely accessed and influential Russian state media organisations. Their coverage provides official perspectives and narratives commonly disseminated by the Russian state. Searches were conducted using keywords; "Alexei Navalny", "chem", "chemical weapons", "Salisbury", "Skripal". Statements alleging chemical weapons use by actors such as the White Helmets were also reviewed.
 - b. Russian Newspapers: Articles mentioning Alexei Navalny were included for additional context. This was not a comprehensive or systematic review of all Russian media coverage but rather a targeted selection of materials considered useful for understanding specific incidents and narratives.

DATA SYNTHESIS AND TIMELINE CREATION

The documents were analysed and the information synthesised in a chronological order of key events and allegations. This approach allowed mapping of the progression of CW allegations from early references in the Syrian conflict in the 2010s to more recent developments involving Russia and Ukraine.





The following steps were taken during the synthesis:

- Documenting the date of each relevant statement or report.
- Categorising each piece of information according to its source (e.g., Russia, Ukraine, United States) and the forum or platform in which it appeared (e.g., national statements to the OPCW, UN Security Council debates, government press releases), as well as its content (e.g., allegations, official denials, statements of support).
- Cross-referencing sources to ensure consistency and to understand the context in which the allegations were made.

LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

While the goal was to be as comprehensive as possible, there were limitations. For example, patent databases were not included in this research due to the challenges of assessing the potential threat level of the technologies described.

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