



## Conseil de sécurité

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ORIGINAL : ANGLAISLETTRE DATÉE DU 17 FÉVRIER 1999, ADRESSÉE AU PRÉSIDENT DU  
CONSEIL DE SÉCURITÉ PAR LE REPRÉSENTANT PERMANENT DU SOUDAN  
AUPRÈS DE L'ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire tenir ci-joint un article publié dans le New York Times le 9 février 1999, intitulé "Les spécialistes n'ont découvert aucun produit chimique servant à fabriquer des armes dans l'usine bombardée au Soudan" (voir annexe).

Les auteurs de l'article ont indiqué que les chimistes américains auxquels le propriétaire de l'usine s'est adressé ont examiné des échantillons de sol, de boues et de débris de l'usine de produits pharmaceutiques Al Shifa détruite en août par des missiles de croisière américains, et n'y ont trouvé la trace d'aucun composé entrant dans la fabrication d'armes chimiques.

Selon l'article, ces conclusions invitent à s'interroger de nouveau sur les allégations des représentants officiels américains selon lesquels l'Empta était présent en trace dans des échantillons de sol prélevés dans l'usine.

L'article a également indiqué que les nouveaux éléments d'information reposent sur 13 échantillons soigneusement catalogués, prélevés dans l'usine détruite et sur son terrain à la fin d'octobre 1998. Le projet d'échantillonnage a été conçu et supervisé par le professeur Thomas D. Tullius, Président du Département de chimie de l'Université de Boston. Le professeur Tullius a déclaré dans une interview qu'"il s'agissait pour nous de prélever de façon minutieuse et scientifique des échantillons en différents endroits et de les faire analyser par l'un des meilleurs laboratoires du monde pour ce genre de travail. Celui-ci a constaté que ces échantillons ne contenaient aucune trace d'Empta ou Empa, son produit de décomposition, que la science permette de détecter".

L'article a également indiqué que le laboratoire avait déterminé qu'aucun des échantillons ne contenait des niveaux détectables d'Empta, non plus que d'Empa, le composé subsidiaire produit rapidement par la dégradation de l'Empta. Comme l'a précisé le professeur Tullius, l'Empta se décompose en quelques jours, tandis que l'Empa demeure dans le sol et reste détectable, même en petites quantités, pendant des semaines ou des mois après contact avec le sol. Indépendamment de l'évaluation des nouveaux échantillons de sol, une société internationale de sécurité, la Kroll Associates, a été engagée par les avocats de M. Idris pour procéder à une évaluation détaillée de la controverse suscitée

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par Al Shifa. Dans son rapport, mis à la disposition du New York Times, la Kroll Associates a fait savoir qu'elle n'avait pu établir aucun lien direct entre M. Idris, le propriétaire de l'usine, et Osama bin Laden.

Les enquêteurs américains de la Kroll ont dit que, lorsqu'ils avaient interrogé les consultants occidentaux employés par l'usine, ils n'avaient pas pu établir que l'usine ait été protégée par de nombreux gardes ou que l'accès à certaines parties secrètes de l'usine, où des armes chimiques auraient pu être fabriquées ou stockées, avait été interdit aux personnes venues de l'extérieur. Le rapport a conclu que l'usine ne fabriquait que des médicaments utilisés en médecine vétérinaire et des produits pharmaceutiques pour la consommation humaine. Al Shifa exportait bien en Iraq, mais la Kroll n'a rien trouvé qui prouve l'existence d'un lien avec Bagdad et les armes chimiques.

L'article ci-joint, qui analyse les conclusions des scientifiques américains qui ont examiné l'usine au mois d'octobre dernier, constitue une nouvelle preuve concluante qui bat en brèche les allégations proférées par le Gouvernement des États-Unis au sujet d'une petite usine pharmaceutique construite pour fabriquer des médicaments dont ont bien besoin les habitants d'un pays du tiers monde auxquels ils peuvent sauver la vie.

Je vous serais obligé de bien vouloir faire distribuer le texte de la présente lettre et de son annexe comme document du Conseil de sécurité.

Le Représentant permanent

(Signé) Elfatih ERWA

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# Experts Find No Arms Chemicals at Bombed Sudan Plant

By JAMES RISEN  
and DAVID JOHNSTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8 — Chemists who examined soil, sludge and debris samples from a Sudanese pharmaceutical plant destroyed in August by American cruise missiles found no traces of chemical weapon compounds, according to a scientist hired by the owner of the plant.

The findings, although prepared privately for lawyers for the owner, who is now seeking redress from the United States, raise new questions about the Government's reliance on tests of soil samples from the site obtained clandestinely by the Central Intelligence Agency. The American officials had said the samples contained traces of Emptia, a precursor used in the production of deadly VX nerve gas.

The United States attacked Al Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum and suspected terrorist training camps near Khartoum, Afghanistan, on Aug. 26 in an effort to curb the activities of the Saudi exile Osama bin Laden after the bombings of two American embassies in East Africa. American officials have said that the bin Laden terrorist network was behind the bombings of the diplomatic missions in Kenya and Tanzania. Mr. bin Laden has denied any role in the bombings.

At the heart of the new evidence are 13 carefully catalogued samples taken from the wrecked plant and its grounds late in October. The sampling project was designed and supervised by Prof. Thomas D. Tullius, chairman of the chemistry department at Boston University.

"The point of what we did was to carefully and scientifically collect samples from a variety of locations and have them analyzed by one of the top laboratories in the world for this kind of work," Professor Tullius said in an interview. "What they found was that in those samples, to the

practical limits of scientific detection, there was no Emptia or Empta, its breakdown product."

In response to the new findings, Clinton Administration officials said they stood by their decision to strike the plant. The officials dismissed the findings of chemists working on behalf of the plant's owner, Saïh Idris, saying that their soil samples were taken long after the United States obtained its soil from the site and long after the bombing and rains could have dispersed incriminating evidence.

Moreover, while they acknowledged that they did not know that Mr.

## Scientists hired by the factory's owner issue their report.

Idris owned the plant at the time of the attack, other American officials say they now have strong evidence linking him to Mr. bin Laden.

"We stand by our evidence indicating the presence of a chemical weapon precursor at this plant," said P. J. Crowley, a spokesman for the National Security Council at the White House. "We stand by our evidence linking this plant to Osama bin Laden's network. We continue to believe that this was an appropriate action to pre-empt Osama bin Laden from further attacks against the United States."

Several ground locations at the plant were surveyed, along with interior sites in the plant that were covered by debris and partly protected from rain. One location, a septic tank, was found intact and provided what Professor Tullius said was a historical record of the chemicals

flushed through the plant drains.

The lab analysis found that none of the samples contained detectable levels of Emptia, nor did they find Empta, the subsidiary compound into which Emptia rapidly breaks down. Empta, Professor Tullius said, breaks down within days, but Empta remains in the soil, and even in small quantities would be detectable for weeks or months after contact with the ground.

In addition to the evaluation of the new soil samples, an international security company, Kroil Associates, was hired by Mr. Idris's lawyers to conduct a detailed review of the Shifa controversy. In their report, made available to The New York Times, Kroil Associates found no evidence of a direct link between Mr. Idris and Mr. bin Laden.

The scientists and investigators were hired by the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, which represents Mr. Idris, a Sudanese-born Saudi businessman. The law firm has a long-held reputation of influence in Democratic circles with partners like Robert Strauss, the former Democratic Party chairman, and Vernon E. Jordan Jr., a close friend of President Clinton.

But its credentials have not benefited Mr. Idris. The firm's lawyers have been flatly rebuffed in their efforts to present their findings to the White House, National Security Council or the Justice, Treasury and Defense Departments.

"We've been confronted with the problem of proving a series of negatives that there was no Empta at the plant and that Idris was not a terrorist," said Mark J. MacDougall, a partner at the law firm. "We think we've done that with evidence that can be admitted in court. But to date responsible officials, including at the White House, have flatly refused to look at the facts. We're sorry about that."

The lawyers have not yet decided

whether they will sue the Government, in what would probably be complex litigation with an uncertain outcome. But nevertheless, Mr. MacDougall said Mr. Idris wanted to clear his name and unfreeze millions of dollars in bank accounts at the Bank of America that the Treasury Department's office of foreign assets control that were blocked after the Shifa attack. In addition, Mr. Idris is seeking millions of dollars to replace the plant.

In interviews with Western consultants to the factory, employees and others, the Kroil investigators said they had found no evidence that the plant had been heavily guarded or that there had been secret areas in the factory off-limits to outsiders, where chemical weapons might have been produced or stored. The report concluded that the plant produced only veterinary medicines and pharmaceuticals for human consumption while Al Shifa did export to Iraq, Kroil found no evidence of a chemical weapons link to Baghdad.

But the Kroil investigation did provide new details about Mr. Idris and confirmed his commercial links to Sudan's Military Industrial Corporation, the Government entity that produces weapons for the Sudanese Army. The United States charged that the corporation was also responsible for chemical weapons production in the country, and that Mr. bin Laden had provided financing for the agency.

The Kroil report determined that Mr. Idris did have links to the corporation, through his other business interests in Sudan, but not through Al Shifa. Kroil investigators said the corporation was a powerful military-based organization that reaches into many parts of the Sudanese economy, including Mr. Idris's business empire.