

Annex I. Abbreviations and glossary

Following the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, this document has been reviewed and updated. Please consult '[Interim Country Guidance: Syria \(2025\)](#)'

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A

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
Ahrar al-Sham	Sunni Salafist Jihadist armed group active in Syria, particularly Idlib Province; historical 'partner' of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham in Syria
Al-Yarmouk camp	Main refugee camp for Palestinians; located in Damascus
APD (Asylum Procedures Directive)	Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection

B

Baath Party (Syria)	Arab Socialist Baath Party; the ruling political party in Syria headed by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad
Badia	Desert located in Central Syria, south of the Euphrates, specifically in the part of rural Homs, eastern Hama, southern Aleppo, southern Raqqa, and western and southern Deir Ez-Zor

C

CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
COI	Country of origin information
CoI	Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

D

Defector	A defector is a former member of the SAA who has left the SAA and joined an armed opposition group in Syria.
Deserter	A deserter is a former member of the SAA (e.g. a conscript, a non-commissioned officer (corporal or sergeant) or an officer) who has left his post or unit in the SAA without permission.

Draft evader A draft evader is a Syrian male, above the age of 18, who has avoided being drafted into the SAA either by hiding from the Syrian authorities or by fleeing Syria.

E

EU European Union
EUAA European Union Agency for Asylum

F

FES Friedrich Ebert Foundation
FSA Free Syrian Army

G

GoS Government of Syria

H

HAD Hurras al-Din
Hezbollah Lebanese Hezbollah; Lebanese Shia Islamist armed militant group backed by Iran and active on behalf of Assad in Syria
HTS Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham

I

ID Identification documentation
Idlib de-escalation area 'The term 'Idlib de-escalation area' or 'Idlib de-escalation zone' covers the areas controlled by anti-GoS armed groups in Idlib governorate as well as the adjoining, similar areas in western Aleppo and northern Hama and Latakia governorates.'
IDP Internally displaced person
IED Improvised explosive device
IPA Internal Protection Alternative
IRGC Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
ISIL The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Islamic State, or Daesh

J

Jaysh al-Islam Sunni Salafist Jihadist armed opposition group active in Eastern Ghouta outside Damascus; rival of Faylaq al-Rahman

K

KNC Kurdish National Council

L

LGBTIQ

LGBTIQ people are people:
who are attracted to others of their own gender (lesbian, gay) or any gender (bisexual);
whose gender identity and/or expression does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth (trans, non-binary);
who are born with sex characteristics that do not fit the typical definition of male or female (intersex); and
whose identity does not fit into a binary classification of sexuality and/or gender (queer).

M

Military service

‘Military service’ is used broadly to cover both military service and reserve service in the SAA.

Mukhtar

‘Mayor or chief of a village/neighbourhood

N

NDF

National Defence Forces, *Quwat al Difa al Watani*

NGO

Non-governmental organisation

NLF

National Liberation Front

P

PKK

Kurdistan Worker’s Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*)

PYD

Popular Mobilisation Forces

Q

QD (Qualification Directive)

Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted

R

Reservist

A reservist is a Syrian man who has previously completed his mandatory military service in Syria and can still be called up for reserve service in the Syrian Arab Forces

S

SAA	Syrian Arab Army
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
Sharia	The religious law of Islam, Islamic canonical law
SNA	Syrian National Army
SNHR	Syrian Network for Human Rights
Suqour al-Sahara	Desert Hawks; former irregular armed group supportive of Assad in Syria backed by wealthy Syrian Alawites

T

Taqrir	A report
Taswiyat al-Wad'	The process of regulating one's status

U

UN	United Nations
UNCOI	Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNPFA	United Nations Population Fund
UNRWA	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
US	United States of America
USDOS	United States Department of State
UXO	Unexploded ordnance

W

Wasta	Networks of support based on patronage
WFP	UN World Food Programme

Y

YPG	Kurdish People's Protection Units
YPJ	Kurdish Women's Protection Units