

4.7.1. Government of Syria officials, members of the SAA and pro-government armed groups

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

COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: February 2023

*Minor updates: April 2024

COI summary

[Main COI reference: [Targeting 2022](#), 6, pp. 67-72]

Reported attacks and other acts of violence targeted a variety of individuals affiliated with the GoS. These incidents included (attempted) assassinations of mayors, members of city councils, and of the Dar'a Central Committee. Attacks and assassinations also targeted government employees, including members of intelligence services, police officers, former members of the Baath Party, and persons affiliated with the GoS armed forces or pro-Assad militias. In many of the cases found, the acts were carried out by unidentified armed men in the countryside of Dar'a, (where security deteriorated from June 2019 onwards), and Quneitra governorate. Between January 2020 and the end of 2021, at least nine mayors and one deputy mayor were targeted in assassinations or attempted assassinations. Assassinations of members of pro-GoS forces in Dar'a included the June 2021 killing of a senior Hezbollah leader. Assassination attempts and targeted killings of members of GoS security forces, and of other pro-GoS representatives continued to be reported in Dar'a by recent sources [[Security 2023](#), 2.12.3, p. 149]. It has been reported that security incidents, including attacks on GoS forces, increased in GoS-controlled areas since mid-2022 as the government conducted security and retaliatory policies, forced conscriptions and arbitrary arrests [[Country Focus 2023](#), 1.1.1, p. 12].

Besides attacks by unidentified armed men, ISIL selectively targeted SAA soldiers and other members of the GoS security forces, government employees, Baath Party officials and tribal notables. Such incidents were mostly reported in Raqqa and Deir Ez-Zor (including the Badia region). ISIL reportedly also carried out attacks in Dar'a governorate, where it claimed responsibility for at least 37 attacks between January 2020 and April 2022, which targeted SAA Forces soldiers, members of the intelligence services, Baath Party officials, former opposition fighters, and civilians.

Conclusions and guidance

Do the acts qualify as persecution under Article 9 QD?

Acts reported to be committed against individuals under this profile are of such severe nature that they amount to persecution (e.g. assassination, kidnapping). Certain risks for members of armed forces are inherent to their military status and the ongoing civil war and those would not amount to persecution. However, actions outside the conduct of war could be of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution (e.g. assassination and kidnapping).



What is the level of risk of persecution (well-founded fear)?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, in particular the regional specifics (depending on the presence and activity of anti-government armed groups) and the position and visibility of the individual.

With regard to the risk associated with leaving Syria, in addition to considerations related to [2. The implications of leaving Syria](#), see [4.2.3. Military deserters and defectors](#).



Are the reasons for persecution falling within Article 10 QD (nexus)?

According to available information persecution of this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of (imputed) political opinion.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile (see the chapter [8. Exclusion](#)).

See other topics concerning persons associated with the Government of Syria:

- *4.7.1. Government of Syria officials, members of the SAA and pro-government armed groups*
- [4.7.2. Civilians perceived to be supporting the government](#)

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