

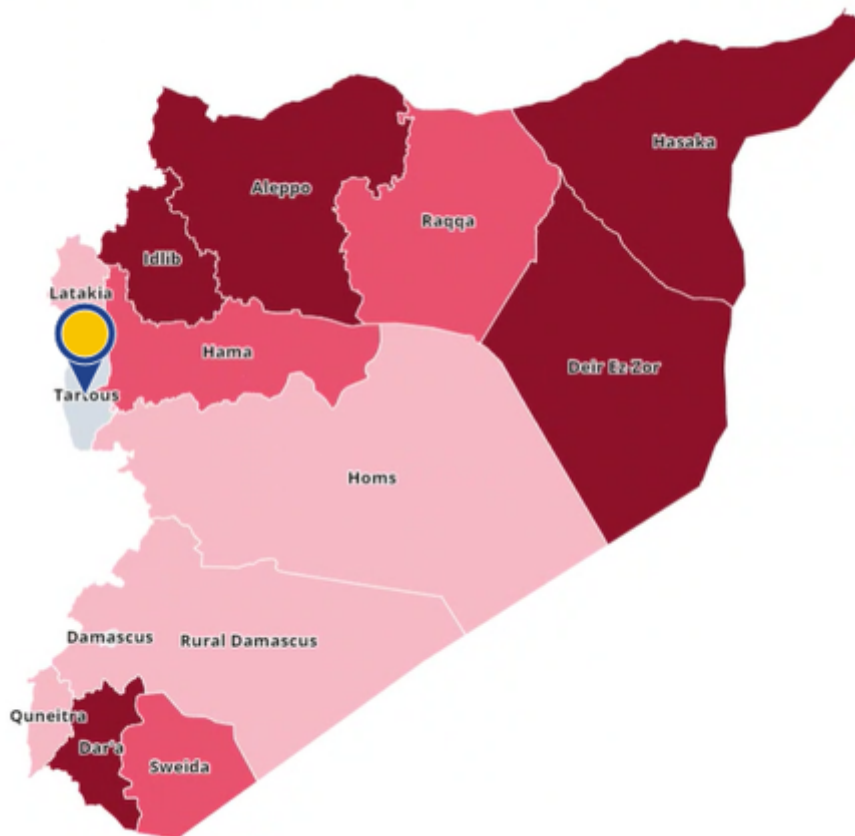
Tartous

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: April 2024

[Main COI reference: [Security 2023](#), 2.5, pp. 123-128; [COI Update 2023](#), 2, pp. 3-10]



General information

Tartous and Latakia governorates form the coastal region of Syria. Tartous governorate borders the Mediterranean Sea in the west, Latakia governorate in the north, the governorates of Hama and Homs to the east, and Lebanon to the south. Tartous consists of five administrative districts: Tartous City, Baniyas, Dreikish, Safita and Sheikh Badr. As of May 2022, UNOCHA estimated the population of Tartous governorate at 948 274 inhabitants.

Background and actors involved in armed confrontations

Since the beginning of the conflict in 2011, the governorate of Tartous has largely been controlled by GoS and experienced no major attacks. However, in 2016, the city of Tartous was targeted by ISIL and in 2017, the seaside promenade of the city was hit by several explosions carried out by suicide bombers [[Security 2020](#), 2.5.2., p. 112; 2.5.3, p. 114].

The governorate is considered a ‘regime stronghold’. However, changes in the traditional pattern of loyalty expressed by Alawites towards the government have been observed, mainly consisting in a series of anti-government protests over the past few years.

During the reference period, the whole of Tartous governorate was under GoS control.

The Russian-led naval facility in the port of Tartous is still operational and it represents the only Russian naval foothold in the Mediterranean, in use since the days of the Soviet Union.

Anti-government armed groups were reportedly not present in the governorate of Tartous.

Nature of violence and examples of incidents

Airstrikes by Israel were documented during the reference period. In August 2022, Israeli airstrikes hit Iranian targets with multiple attacks in proximity of Tartous military naval base. The airstrikes reportedly targeted an air defence base, where Iranian-backed groups were active, killing three soldiers and wounding another three. In March 2023, Israel reportedly launched rocket strikes hitting Tartous countryside. The attack resulted in three military personnel injured.

Few targeted attacks against GoS forces and civilians which led to casualties were also reported.

Incidents: data

Tartous recorded the lowest number of security incidents out of all governorates [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.2, p. 38]. ACLED recorded 6 security incidents (average of 0.1 security incidents per week) in Tartous governorate in the period from 1 August 2022 to 28 July 2023. Of the reported incidents, 3 were coded as ‘explosions/remote violence’, 2 as incidents of ‘violence against civilians’ and 1 as ‘battle’. In the period 1 August – 30 November 2023, 5 security incidents were recorded in Tartous representing an average of 0.3 security incident per week.

Geographical scope

Specific information about the geographical scope of the indiscriminate violence within Tartous was not available at the time of writing.

Civilian fatalities: data

The SNHR did not record any conflict-related civilian fatalities in Tartous between August 2022 and July 2023. Similarly, no civilian fatalities were recorded in August – November 2023 by the same source.

Displacement

As of May 2022, there were 180 735 IDPs in Tartous governorate.

According to UNOCHA, between January and December 2022, approximately 1 000 persons were displaced from Tartous governorate, as well as 3 000 within the governorate. Approximately 3 000 persons were also displaced from other governorates to Tartous. UNOCHA did not record any IDP movement from and to Tartous between January and June 2023. Likewise, no displacement within the governorate has been documented in the same period.

In terms of IDP returns, Tartous was one of the governorates with the fewest recorded returns in 2022. UNOCHA recorded 5 IDP returns to Tartous and 2 000 returnee movements from the governorate in 2022. From January to June 2023, 5 IDP returns from the governorate were recorded.

Further impact on civilians

Tartous is the only governorate where cluster munitions were not extensively used since 2012 [[Security 2022](#), 2.5.3, p. 127]. No death related to landmines have been recorded in Tartous during the reference period.

Looking at the indicators, it can be concluded that in the governorate of **Tartous**, there is, in general, **no real risk** for a civilian to be personally affected within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD.

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