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4.1.5. Southern Syria

The security situation in southern Syria has been characterised by a high degree of complexity as it lacked cohesive military structures.668 While the transitional administration has made some efforts to collect illegal weapons in a region which has seen a large proliferation of arms, 669 armed factions in Dar'a and Sweida in particular have shown little interest to disarm and integrate into the structures of the new unified national army without assurances of protection against external attacks (e.g., from ISIL) and political representation.670 Even though local factions leaders in February 2025 agreed to form a 'Southern Division' as part of the new Syrian army, it was expected that factional and regional disunity would continue to exist in the new division.671 The situation in this region has been further complicated by Israeli military interventions since the fall of Assad, including hundreds of aerial strikes on military targets (e.g., a strike on weapons storages at Sweida military airport, targeted drone strikes in Dar'a, and along the border between Syria and Lebanon) and the seizure of new territory in the Golan Heights.672

For further information on Israel's involvement in southern Syria since November 2024, see section 4.4. of this report.

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