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## 2.1.2. Targeting by non-state armed groups and unidentified actors

Since December 2024, SJAC has documented targeted revenge killings of male individuals allegedly linked to the Assad regime's military or intelligence services. These killings, reportedly carried out by unidentified armed men, are based on the victims' alleged affiliation with the Assad regime and roles in past violations rather than their sectarian affiliation. Victims have included individuals from Sunni, Alawite, and Shia communities and were reportedly targeted for both formal roles in the intelligence and security of the former government or for being informants. These targeted attacks have occurred across multiple governorates including Aleppo, Dar'a, Damascus, Deir Ez Zor, Homs, Hama, and Latakia.[206](#)

During the reference period unidentified gunmen and Salafi-jihadi factions[207](#) carried out assassinations of former members of Assad security forces,[208](#) including members of the Air Force Intelligence, NDF, Liwa al-Quds, and Tiger Forces.[209](#) Such incidents were reported in Homs,[210](#) Aleppo,[211](#) Dar'a[212](#) and Hama governorates.[213](#) One group claiming such attacks is Saraya Ansar al-Sunnah (Supporters of the Sunnah Battalions), a radical Sunni militant jihadist group which emerged in late January 2025[214](#) and is ideologically aligned with ISIL.[215](#) It has vowed to target Alawites, Shia Muslims, and loyalists of the former Assad government.[216](#) The group describes itself as a 'decentralised' network that operates using a 'lone wolf'-style strategy, with members operating independently.[217](#) It has claimed attacks primarily in Homs [218](#) and to a lesser extent in Aleppo, Hama,[219](#) Latakia, and Tartous governorates[220](#) targeting Alawites, including a sheikh and a journalist[221](#) and members of security forces in the Assad government.[222](#)

Another group called Special Accountability Force emerged in April in northern Aleppo governorate claiming that its aim is to eliminate former regime collaborators involved in the human rights violations. A rise in vigilante attacks against former regime collaborators was recorded in the period that followed. Reports documented executions, primarily of Sunni collaborators, in Hama and Aleppo, and attacks against Alawites in Homs city, western Dar'a and Latakia.[223](#) Sources also reported during the reference period that unidentified gunmen often using motorcycles[224](#) carried out assassinations against Alawites accused of supporting the former government[225](#) and having been informants.[226](#)

In June, the interim government issued a fatwa through the Fatwa Council that prohibits revenge killings and extrajudicial retaliation. The fatwa urges citizens to resolve disputes through official legal channels and criminalises acts of retribution.<sup>227</sup> The impact of this measure could not be monitored within the time constraints of this report.

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