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# 2.4.3. Ismailis

The Ismailis (Isma'ilis) are an offshoot of Shia Islam[352] with a population in Syria estimated at around 250 000.[353] They are concentrated in and around the cities of Masyaf[354] and Salamiyah in Hama governorate[355] and Qadmus, in Tartous governorate.[356] Salamiyah, which has the highest concentration of Ismaili,[357] is home to the Syrian National Ismaili Council, and has emerged as a key centre of local governance in eastern Hama following the Assad's ouster. The Ismaili Council, historically unaffiliated with armed groups or regime military leaders, played a crucial mediating role in facilitating the peaceful handover of the area to HTS on 4 December 2024. Since then, the Council has taken on administrative duties, supported civil engagement, operated a volunteer security force alongside local police, and formed a joint civilian-military security committee to address violations.[358]

In the coastal city of Qadmus (Tartous governorate) similar cooperation has developed. According to local Ismailis, volunteers have helped bolster understaffed government police units, receiving small arms support and administrative backing from both the new HTS-aligned leadership and the Assad regime-era mukhtar. However, their collaboration with the new authorities has drawn violent backlash from pro-Assad Alawite factions. In late February and early March, attacks killed three Ismaili volunteers and officials. During the March uprising in the coastal areas, Ismailis in Qadmus protected interim government forces from insurgents and negotiated their safe exit, actions that led to further threats from loyalist communities.[359]

Ismailis were not represented in the transitional government announced in late March.[360]

No additional information was found regarding the treatment of Ismailis by state and non-state actors within the time constraints of this report.

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