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1. Recent developments in Syria

COMMON ANALYSIS | Last update: December 2025

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: COI Update, 2., 4.; Country Focus July 2025, 1.1., 1.2., 1.3., 1.5., 1.6., 3.1., 5.6.; Country Focus March 2025, 1.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

On 8 December 2024, a 12-day offensive led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and allied Syrian opposition forces resulted in the collapse of the Assad regime, ending over five decades of family rule. A Transitional Government was established on 29 January 2025, with Ahmad al-Sharaa appointed as transitional president. The 2012 constitution was annulled, and core state institutions—including the parliament, military, and security services—were dissolved. Al-Sharaa initiated sweeping reforms, including a general amnesty for Syrian army personnel, the abolition of mandatory conscription, and a reintegration programme for former officials. On 13 March 2025, a Constitutional Declaration was signed, launching a five-year transitional phase. It introduced a strong presidential system with extensive powers and minimal oversight, designated Islam as the president's religion and Islamic jurisprudence as the main legislative source, and affirmed judicial independence and certain freedoms, though without detailed safeguards.

A new cabinet of 23 ministers was announced on 29 March 2025, reflecting ethnic and religious diversity, although some members had prior affiliations with HTS. In May 2025, two national commissions were created: the National Commission for Transitional Justice and the National Commission for the Missing. However, no transitional justice process has begun, and the mandate is limited to crimes committed by the Assad regime. In June 2025, a presidential decree established the Supreme Committee for Elections to oversee the indirect election of 100 parliamentary members and define electoral criteria. Despite these institutional developments, governance remains fragile and incomplete.

Military integration of armed groups into the New Syrian Army of the Transitional Government remains a major challenge. While the Syrian National Army (SNA) is nominally part of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), it continues to operate with varying degrees of autonomy and fragmented command structures. Some armed groups have resisted integration, while others have been rebranded as official MoD units without structural reform. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) remain fully independent, with integration negotiations ongoing. Extremist groups, including ISIL, remain active, and Israeli military operations continue. The new Syrian army comprises former opposition factions and new recruits but lacks meaningful reform. Some

factions, including the SNA, have committed violations against civilians, particularly in coastal and Druze-majority areas.

Security remains volatile. In early March 2025, clashes between pro-Assad groups and Transitional Government forces in Latakia, Tartous, and Hama led to hundreds of civilian deaths, predominantly among Alawites. In July 2025, violence escalated in Sweida following clashes between Druze militias and Bedouin tribal fighters, with further conflict between 14–16 July involving Transitional Government forces, leading to more than a thousand deaths. Both episodes included summary executions by forces linked to the Transitional Government, highlighting ongoing instability and human rights concerns.

Despite the lifting or easing of several sanctions by the UK, US, and EU in May 2025, humanitarian conditions remain dire. Poverty affects 90 % of the population, and 16.5 million people require aid. Infrastructure damage, unemployment, and limited access to services hinder recovery. Although 1.9 million internally displaced persons have returned, 7.4 million remain displaced, and new displacements continue due to ongoing violence and unresolved housing, land, and property issues.

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