



# SYRIA CRISIS SITUATION REPORT - 4 JANUARY 2025



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## Background:

Nearly 14 years of devastating conflict and crises have decimated the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the Syrian Arab Republic. The protracted crisis has severely damaged critical infrastructure, including health facilities, and caused chronic shortages of medicines, medical equipment and health workers. Nearly half of health facilities in Syria are partially or completely damaged, and the recent upheaval has further weakened the country's infrastructure, leaving many women and girls cut off from critical care.

Syria remains one of the world's largest displacement crises, with more than 13 million people forced from their homes, both within and outside the country. The country faces a challenging and complex road ahead, as it navigates the recent political transition and rebuilding of the country amid continued factionalized fighting in some areas and ongoing Israeli strikes in the southwest.

The fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria, while potentially marking the end of an authoritarian era, would likely lead to a complex set of challenges for Syrians.



# SOCIAL CHALLENGES

## Sectarian and Ethnic Divisions:

Years of war, through the practices of the former regime, deepened divisions between Syria's diverse ethnic and religious communities (e.g., Sunnis, Alawites, Kurds, and Christians).

The former regime sought to instill a spirit of sectarianism to reinforce these divisions between the various sects and ethnicities in Syrian society, ensuring its survival and continued influence and control.

Rebuilding trust between communities and fostering reconciliation will be critical but challenging.

## Return of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) :

- **Displacement:** Syria's displacement crisis remains one of the largest globally, with over 12 million Syrians displaced, including 6.6 million refugees abroad and 6.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The return of these displaced people will require addressing housing, land, and property disputes.

In addition, many areas have been completely destroyed, rendering them uninhabitable and unsafe.



## Trauma and Mental Health Issues:

Over the past fourteen years, the Syrian people, across all age groups, have endured numerous shocks and continue to suffer. They have faced displacement, being caught in crossfire, and living under the constant threat of rocket and artillery bombardments. Additionally, there has been a constant fear of arrest or forced disappearance.

After the fall of the regime, many detainees were released from prisons, having endured various forms of torture. At the same time, many Syrian families have been unable to find any document confirming whether their detained loved ones are still alive or not. And if they are not alive, where are their bodies?

Many Syrian families are living with feelings of shock, loss, and uncertainty, and they are in urgent need of psychological treatment to help individuals cope with and process these emotions. It is essential to assist them in overcoming these feelings, reintegrating into society, and continuing their lives in the best possible way.

One of most challenging issue is Addressing these mental health issues and ensuring access to psychological support will be essential for societal healing.





# ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

## Rebuilding Infrastructure:

The war, which has lasted for over 14 years, has destroyed the infrastructure in Syria. Roads need complete rehabilitation, especially in the areas surrounding cities, to make them safe for use.

The healthcare system has also been severely damaged, In Damascus, these health centers still exist but suffer from severe shortages of basic medical equipment, supplies, and medicine, as well as a significant lack of qualified medical personnel, because with hospitals destroyed and medical professionals displaced or killed.

Years of war have disrupted education for millions of children. Many schools have been destroyed, and those that are still standing need restoration and repairs to become suitable places for students to attend and feel safe.

Rebuilding the education system and addressing the needs of a lost generation will be vital for the country's future.

Numerous public facilities have been completely or partially destroyed, rendering them unfit for use. Rebuilding this infrastructure requires substantial financial investments and technical expertise.



# UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

Syrian society suffers from a significant increase in unemployment, which has been gradually increasing during the 14-year war due to the destruction of infrastructure, agricultural lands, and factories, some of which were seized by loyalists of the former regime, and the destruction that occurred in the country in general after the fall of the regime. Reviving industry, agriculture, and trade is of utmost importance to reduce poverty and improve living standards, which are still suffering from a very significant decline even after more than a month has passed since the fall of the regime. This is due to several factors, including:

- The weakened purchasing power of the majority of the population, as salaries for all employees in the public sector were not disbursed for December 2024 due to ongoing restructuring efforts in state institutions.
- The increase in fuel prices, which has automatically led to higher transportation costs as well as a rise in the prices of all consumer goods.
- The currency devaluation, and skyrocketing inflation. Sanctions and war damage have severely limited economic recovery.

## Dependency on International Aid:

- The initial stages of recovery will likely rely heavily on international aid and donor support. However, prolonged dependency could hinder long-term self-sufficiency.
- Corruption and mismanagement could undermine reconstruction effort.



## Cultural and Identity Challenges:

- Rebuilding Syria's cultural identity after years of propaganda and the promotion of sectarianism during the war will be crucial for achieving national unity. This is especially important for children and teenagers who were born outside Syria or left the country at an early age.
- In addition, preserving Syria's rich cultural heritage and reconstructing historical sites damaged either by bombings, artillery strikes, or the systematic destruction by elements of the former regime is essential for restoring a sense of pride and belonging among its citizens.



## DAMASCUS:

Reports from various sources, including international organizations and news outlets, indicate that significant portions of Damascus have been destroyed during the 14 years of war in Syria. However, precise figures on the extent of the destruction are difficult to obtain due to the ongoing conflict and restrictions on access to information.

Some reports suggest that entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble, while others highlight the damage to specific landmarks and infrastructure. For example, the ancient city of Damascus, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has suffered damage to some of its historic buildings.

It's important to note that the level of destruction varies across different parts of the city, with some areas experiencing more intense fighting and subsequent damage than others





## HOMS:

Reports indicate that large swathes of Homs have been devastated by the 14 years of war in Syria. Entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble, and many historical sites have been damaged or destroyed.

- **Old City of Homs:** This UNESCO World Heritage Site suffered significant damage, with many ancient buildings destroyed or heavily damaged.
- **Residential Areas:** Numerous residential areas, particularly those that were former rebel strongholds, have been extensively destroyed.
- **Infrastructure:** Homs' infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and essential services like water and electricity, has been severely damaged.

While precise figures on the extent of destruction are difficult to obtain due to the ongoing conflict and restrictions on access, it is clear that Homs has suffered immense physical damage.

## ALEPPO:

Aleppo, a city with a rich history dating back thousands of years, has suffered immense destruction during the 14 years of war in Syria. While precise figures are difficult to obtain due to the ongoing conflict and limited access, various sources indicate significant damage:

- **Old City of Aleppo:** A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Old City has been severely impacted. Estimates suggest that around 60% of the historic buildings have been damaged, with 30% completely destroyed.



- **Residential Areas:** Numerous residential neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble due to intense bombardment and fighting. Entire districts have been rendered uninhabitable.
- **Infrastructure:** Critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and power plants, has been heavily damaged or destroyed, severely impacting the lives of the remaining population.
- **Cultural Heritage Sites:** Many historical and cultural sites, such as the Great Mosque of Aleppo and the Citadel of Aleppo, have suffered significant damage.

The Syrian Civil War has had a devastating impact on Aleppo, leaving a lasting scar on its physical and cultural landscape. The city faces a long and arduous road to recovery. Please note that the situation in Aleppo is constantly evolving, and the extent of the destruction may be even greater than currently reported.

## HAMA:

Reports from organizations like Human Rights Watch indicate that extensive destruction occurred in Hama during the 14 years of war in Syria.

- **Neighborhoods:** Entire neighborhoods, such as Mashaal-Arbeen, were completely razed, with estimates suggesting the destruction of at least 145 hectares of residential buildings.
- **Historical Sites:** Some historical and cultural sites suffered damage.

It's important to note that precise figures on the extent of destruction can be difficult to obtain due to the ongoing nature of the conflict and limitations on access to information.



## DEİR EZ-ZOR:

The 14 years war in Syria has had a devastating impact on Deir ez-Zor, causing widespread destruction to the city and surrounding areas. While precise figures are difficult to obtain due to the ongoing conflict and limited access, reports indicate that:

- **Homes:** A significant portion of residential buildings have been damaged or destroyed, leaving many residents homeless.
- **Hospitals and Schools:** Many medical facilities and educational institutions have suffered severe damage, impacting access to healthcare and education.
- **Utilities:** The city's infrastructure, including water, electricity, and sewage systems, has been heavily damaged, disrupting essential services.
- **Businesses:** Many businesses have been destroyed or forced to close, leading to widespread unemployment and economic hardship.
- **Agriculture:** The conflict has disrupted agricultural production, affecting food security and livelihoods.
- **Displacement:** Hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced from their homes, seeking refuge in other parts of Syria or neighboring countries.
- **Humanitarian Needs:** The ongoing conflict has created a humanitarian crisis, with many residents lacking access to basic necessities like food, water, and healthcare.



It's important to note that this is a general overview, and the extent of the destruction varies across different parts of Deir ez-Zor. The situation remains fluid, and the needs of the population continue to be significant.

Several organizations, including the United Nations and international humanitarian agencies, are working to assess the damage and provide assistance to those affected by the conflict. However, the challenges of accessing and operating in conflict zones remain significant.

The fall of Assad's regime would undoubtedly open a new chapter for Syria, but it would not mark the end of the country's challenges. Addressing these issues will require a coordinated effort by Syrians, regional powers, and the international community. Prioritizing reconciliation, justice, and inclusive governance will be critical to ensuring a sustainable and peaceful future for the country.

