



GOMUN 2025 OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

Study Guide

The Security Council

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COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Security Council is the primary body responsible for maintaining international peace and security. Composed of 15 member states—five permanent members with veto power (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms—it has the authority to make binding decisions under international law. The Council addresses global crises by authorizing peacekeeping missions, imposing sanctions, and approving military interventions when necessary. It also plays a role in admitting new UN members and recommending candidates for Secretary-General. Its unique structure and powers make it one of the most influential and controversial organs of the UN system.

Topic: The Syrian Crisis: Challenges and Solutions

Introduction

On 8 December 2024, the world witnessed the end of Bashar Al-Assad's regime in Syria, going on since the year 2000. The rebels officially announced their victory on state television. The swift downfall following the offensive surprised everyone, including the Syrians themselves. With Bashar Al-Assad's escape to Moscow, the 61 years of Ba'athist rule has come to an end in the Middle East, as Syria was the last country whose leaders were Ba'athists. The subsequent taking over by the rebel forces, and the most significant group, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) taking power in the interim government, took the entire world by surprise. One of the most brutal regimes in the region, known for persecuting minorities and using biological warfare on civilians, has been ousted from power in the matter of days.

However, despite the significant changes that took place in December 2024, the Syrian crisis still persists. The new Syrian government, and the President, Ahmed Al-Shaara, who was the leader of the HTS, face accusations over the links of the HTS to the Islamic State. The government also faced accusations of mistreating the local minorities, such as the Druze minority, who have previously risen in insurgency and been backed by Israel intervening in order to protect the Druze factions. The foreign occupations of Syrian territories still have not been addressed. The Israeli Defence Forces continue to operate on Syrian soil and occupy Golan Heights, and the Turkish Armed Forces still control large parts of the northern Syrian border, despite the Kurdish Administration of Syria, known as Rojava, having signed a treaty incorporating Kurdish Syria and the Syrian Democratic Forces, the official government of Syria. While the bloodiest parts of the Syrian Civil War are now over, there still remain numerous factions and sectarians whose desires are not always mutual, and as such, military operations in the country persist, although on a much smaller scale than between 2011 and 2024.

Perhaps the most disastrous of the crisis, however, is the humanitarian aspect. In the heaviest stage of the war, between 2011 and 2024, more than 7 million Syrians have been displaced. More than 600,000 people have lost their lives as a result of the war, with more than one third being civilians. One of the most brutal actions

conducted by the Syrian Army under Bashar Al-Assad was the persistent use of chemical warfare on civilians, an atrocity that has been condemned worldwide. However, the Assad administration denied those accusations. Over 7 million Syrian children are in need of humanitarian assistance, according to UNICEF. The years of war have destroyed cities and villages alike, as well as important infrastructure, which means many Syrians are struggling with basic needs such as water or electricity. Syria is in no easy position. It is still riddled by sectarianism and foreign occupation, and the new government struggles to find supporters on the international stage. During this session, the Security Council of the UN will address these challenges and try to find a lasting solution to finally bring peace and stability to the Syrian people.

Key terms and concepts

Alawites - An Arab ethnoreligious group living in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. They are mostly set apart from other Arab groups due to their belief in Shia Islam, in contrast to the majority in the Levant region, who are Sunni Muslims.

Arab Spring - A series of anti-government, pro-democracy protests, as well as armed rebellions in most Arab countries, which started in 2010 in Tunisia, over corruption charges. The protests quickly spread across the region, and in some parts, lasted until 2012. Their results varied by country, however, they were mostly unsuccessful.

Ba'athism - an ideology propagated by the Ba'ath Party. It advocates for the creation of a single federative Pan-Arab state, with a strong emphasis on socialism, unity, militarism, authoritarianism, and shared culture and language.

Nasserism - the ideology propagated by the second Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser and his followers. It is similar to the Ba'athist ideology, however Nasser's ideology was focused and motivated more by the desire to be independent from Western influence, anti-imperialism, and non-alignment.

Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) - one of the biggest opposition movements in Syria, led the offensive against the Assad regime in December 2024. Its former members currently hold dominant positions in the government. It was designated as a terrorist group by the USA due to its links with Al-Qaeda.

Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria - also known as Rojava, it was one of the factions in the Syrian Civil War, controlling the majority Kurdish regions in Syria, and advocating for the rights of the Kurds. In December 2024, their representatives signed an agreement with the new Syrian government to incorporate the area with the rest of the country on federation-like terms.

Kurds - an ethnic group made up of over 30 million people, the largest ethnic group without a state. They inhabit land spanning from western Iran to northeastern Syria and Turkey. They have a significant military presence in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Mostly made up of rebel militias, they have been designated “terrorists” by Turkey and Iran, and were victims of ethnic cleansing.

Druze - the third largest ethnic and religious minority in Syria, particularly present in the southwest part of the country. They faced persecution from the Assad regime and are also in conflict with the current government. There are more than 600,000 of them residing in Syria.

History of the Topic

From Ancient times to the Medieval era

Syria, as a country located in the Middle East, has a long history dating back to over 3000BC. The first large settlement in Syria was the city state, known as Ebla, which has been recorded to exist in current Syrian territory. It was founded by the Semitic people, who settled in Syria at the time. The territories of Syria were also part of the Mesopotamian dominion until the 6th century BC. Later on, Syria was controlled by the Persian Empire. It remained under Persian control until the conquests of Alexander the Great, in the 4th century BC. It then switched hands

again, becoming a part of the hellenistic Seleucid Empire. After a brief period of Armenian rule, the Roman Empire made its way to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Syria became part of the empire for over 6 centuries.

The Romans turned Antioch into the third biggest city of the Empire, making Syria a cultural and trading hub, connecting Mediterranean sailors with traders from Persia and even India. During the Crisis of the Third Century, Palmyra, one of the most prosperous Syrian cities rose in defiance and created a short-lived Palmyrene Empire under the leadership of queen Zenobia. The emperor Aurelian however, sacked Palmyra and restored Roman control in Syria in 273 AD. During the later years, Syria became part of the Eastern Roman Empire, however it did not lose its significance and its cities were still bustling hubs of trade and commerce.

However, as the influence of the Roman Empire grew weaker, so did their grasp on Syria. In the early years of the 7th century AD, Muslim Arabs, on their quest to spread the Islamic faith, conquered Syria and put it firmly under the control of the Umayyad Empire. It was then that Arabic became the most important language of the country and Islam became the dominant religion. The Arabic leaders developed literature and science, making Syria a center of culture and development.

During the 12th and 13th centuries, Syria and the surrounding regions were conquered by crusader knights from Europe and allowed Christians to settle in the country. However, the crusader kingdoms failed to hold power, and Syria later on returned to the hands of the Arabs, and by the 15th century, Syria became part of the Ottoman Empire under which it would stay until the First World War.

Ottoman Rule

Ottoman Syria was marked by relative stability and prosperity, as the Ottoman authorities allowed cities like Damascus to thrive, thanks to trade as well as religion, seeing as Syria was a key point for the pilgrims on the Hajj (the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca). The Ottomans had a very organized bureaucratic system, with strict regulations on laws and taxes. This was generally beneficial, as the various minorities in Syria, such as Jews, Druze, or Christians living in Syria enjoyed relative peace as long as they obeyed the Ottoman authorities. The Ottomans were focused on maintaining order and prosperity in their Empire, and the authorities did not

interfere with the different cultures' way of life as long as they respected Ottoman laws and taxes.

In the later years of the Ottoman Empire, it experienced a decline, as it turned into a puppet monarchy controlled by the Janissaries (elite Ottoman soldiers) who gained more control over the Ottoman throne as time went on and gained so much power they were able to appoint the Ottoman Emperors as they saw fit. These actions led to the abandonment of the strict regulations which were previously imposed in regions farther from Turkey, like Syria or Egypt, as the power struggles in Turkey left the other parts of the empire forgotten. This gave rise to wealthy families assuming governance, thanks to the power vacuum created by the constant turmoil in the Empire. Local nobles established themselves as "governors" and used their private armies to retain control over smaller cities and small regions. They often disregarded Ottoman rule, and executed their own laws, which led to more persecution for the minorities that previously enjoyed relative peace.

By the 19th century, Syria was a land of contrast. Cities like Aleppo and Damascus were thriving hubs of commerce, culture, art, and religion, however the entire rest of the country was desolate, ruined, and decaying. Small farming villages were the only settlements and more Bedouin (nomadic Arabs) were present due to the declining population.

After a brief invasion attempt by the Egyptian sultan in 1831, stopped thanks to European intervention, the Ottoman Empire gradually resumed control of Syria. However, attempts at implementing a new tax system caused unrest. Tensions also grew between different ethnic and religious minorities, often resulting in clashes between the two. Western influence on the country also grew, as more people from Europe, including Christians and Zionist Jews moved to the region. This attracted European investors who started developing Syria and its surrounding area, spreading western influences in the region. The Europeans constructed a number of railways in the region, and opened schools and universities.

However, by the turn of the 20th century, Ottoman decline was imminent. After the Young Turk Revolution, a movement to constitutionalize the Ottoman Empire, the differences between Arabs and Turks became more pronounced, and it was clear that the two nationalities desired to have ethnic states for themselves

rather than a multinational one. The end of the Ottoman Empire came with the First World War. The Ottoman Empire fought on the side of the Central Powers, who lost the war. A British force in Egypt took over Palestine and marched into Syria in late 1917. The British occupation was welcomed by the Christians and Jews, who saw the British control as a hope for a more "enlightened" governance. The Muslims generally remained loyal to the Empire, however, more nationalist factions sympathized with the Arab Revolt based in Hejaz, aiming to create the first unified Arab state.

At the end of the war, the secret Sykes-Picot agreement, made in 1916, came to life. The British-French plan to divide the former Ottoman Territories was controversial. It virtually disregarded the multi-ethnic structure of the lands, and quite literally drew a "straight line across the map". While the Syrians were open and declaring themselves behind the Hashemite King Faisal, the French and British ignored their demands and at the San Remo conference decided to follow the Sykes-Picot agreement, creating colonial mandates. Syria and Lebanon were to become a French colonial mandate.

Syria as a French Mandate and the First Republic

The French colonial era was marked by large developments in the country, such as new universities, boosting the economy, growing towns, and the further development of infrastructure such as the railways. However, this period also witnessed unrest, especially from the dominant Arab population. The French were unwilling to hand over power to Arabs, as it made them look like they were abandoning the interests of the Christian and Jewish minorities, who felt protected under the French administration. Gradually, the Syrians were enjoying more privileges, such as their own parliament, however they still had to report to the office of the high commissioner, a French official who oversaw the mandate.

By 1936, France was ready to give Syria its independence. While this was not official independence, as France still retained control over matters like the military and economy, the Syrians now had a proper say in the country's matters. However, during the war, the collaborating government known as Vichy France once again took control of Syria, until British and Free French forces liberated it in 1941. Syria then proclaimed its own republic, however it would take until 1946 for all the French forces

to withdraw, which was met with a lot of anger from the Syrians, and for the official recognition of the Syrian Republic by the larger international community.

In 1939, Syria also lost the Hatay province to Turkey, as the majority Turkish population there wished to join the Republic of Turkey. France, who still controlled Syria at the time, decided to grant Hatay to Turkey, seeing it as the best diplomatic move.

In 1948, Syria joined the Arab-Israeli war against Israel. Israel managed to push back the Syrian Army in 1949, and occupied the Golan Heights, which it then returned to Syria. The loss in the war disgraced the army, and caused a coup d'état in Syria, led by two more coups, each conducted by different factions from the military. The third coup was conducted by Alib Shishakli, who lasted in power until 1954. During his reign, the Jabal-Al-Druze uprising was suppressed, an armed revolt of the Druze and small Christian communities against the military government and the disregarding of Druze minorities by the governments. Shishakli was ousted from power in 1954, with the help of the newly created Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party.

During the Suez Crisis, Syria signed a pact with the Soviet Union, giving it a doorway to influence the Middle East. With the rise of president Nasser in Egypt, and his handling of the Suez crisis was well received in Syria. His ideology and the idea of a Pan-Arabic state became more popular in Syria. This led to the creation of the United Arab Republic, with Syria and Egypt becoming one state on the 1st of February 1958. This union, however, was unsuccessful. Syria was unhappy with the Egyptian dominance in the union, and the conflicting economic approaches, Syria being more open market-oriented in contrast to Egypt's centrally controlled system. Syrian discontent with the union led to Syria leaving the union on 28 September 1961, in a coup d'état conducted by Abdul Al-Karim Al-Nahlawi.

Ba'athist Rule of Syria

On 8 March 1963, the Ba'ath Party took power in a coup d'état. Salah Al-Din Al-Bitar, a prominent member of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, became the new prime minister. Ba'athist rule would shape the country for the next 80 years. The

Ba'athist government was a government of totalitarianism. It spread its influence and controlled all aspects of society, propagating its ideology of Arab unity and socialism. Opposition parties were outlawed and critics were harshly suppressed. In 1966, the left-wing of the Ba'athist party came to power, and aligned Syria with the Soviet Union. Ba'athism was also marked by aggressive progressivism mixed with ideas of Arab unity. This led to the outlawing of conservative Muslim groups which opposed the socialist policies of the party. General Salah Jadid condemned the "reactionary stance" of countries like Saudi Arabia, and demanded repressions against Israel, as well as a "people's war" against Zionism. During the Six-Day War against Israel, Syria lost Golan Heights, which are under Israeli occupation to this day.

The Ba'ath party in Syria remained riddled with internal struggles for power and different factions vying for power. This would last until November 1970, when the current defence Minister, Hafez Al-Assad, seized power in a bloodless coup known as the Corrective Movement. This coup was intended to "solidify socialist aims" and "rid Syria of internal turmoil". Hafez Al-Assad assumed power quickly and ruthlessly, creating a totalitarian regime, with himself as the dictator. He infiltrated all aspects of everyday life in Syria. He created a cult of personality revolving around him and the Assad family, intending for the Assad family to rule Syria hereditarily. Hafez Al-Assad's rule was ruthless, with many freedoms removed and opposition being brutally silenced. He introduced the secret police, known as Mukhabarat, which reported rumoured critics of the regime.

In 1973, during the Yom Kippur War, Syria managed to regain some parts of the Golan Heights area from Israel. However, it was soon repelled. Following the war, Hafez Al-Assad sought closer relations with the Soviet Union, which had a lasting impact on the foreign policy, as the two countries became close allies, even after the fall of the Soviet Union and its replacement by Russia. In 1976, Syria intervened in the Lebanese Civil War, to ensure the Maronite Christian Front stayed in Power. The intervention turned into a thirty-year occupation of Lebanon by Syrian military forces. The Syrian army would stay until 2005, exerting major influence on Lebanese politics at the time. Lastly, the Syrian government declared war against Iraq during the First Gulf War in 1990, which improved their relations with the United States.

Meanwhile, in Syria, conservative Sunni Muslims were becoming more unhappy with H. Assad's reign. As a Shia Muslim Alawite, H. Assad favoured Alawites in the government, giving them favors and privileges, which upset some Sunni Arabs, most notably the conservative Muslim Brotherhood, who called for an Islamic Revolution and a strongly conservative government instead of the socialist Ba'athist republic. In 1982, the city of Hama, where the Brotherhood was based, was bombed by Syrian forces. In what became known as the Hama Massacre, between 10,000 and 25,000 civilians have been slaughtered in the city.

Domestically, Hafez Al-Assad continued the economic policy of state-controlled socialism. In the 1970s, due to the oil price boom, the Syrian economy experienced a growth, which led to investments in infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals, and schools. However, the next decade brought a downturn, mostly due to the Iran-Iraq War. This led to limited trade with other Arab states and a decrease in revenue, which allowed the black markets to flourish. To combat this, H. Assad allowed some openness in the market by the 1990s, especially in private sectors. Oil revenue also brought some profit to the country. However, structural problems persisted, especially due to cronyism and nepotism, which meant that most large companies had close links to the government, creating even more widespread corruption.

On 10 July 2000, Bashar Al-Assad, son of Hafez, was elected president, gaining 97% of the vote, according to the Syrian statistics bureau. Bashar Al-Assad continued his father's policies, and created his own cult of personality. While at first, many political thinkers had hopes for change, in the brief thaw known as the Damascus Spring, their hopes were quickly erased as Bashar Al-Assad suppressed pro-reform movements by autumn of 2001. Relations with the USA deteriorated after Syria was accused of developing chemical weapons and harboring Iraqi fugitives, as well as over its links to Hamas and Hezbollah, groups which were considered terrorist by the USA.

In 2004, Syrian Kurds clashed with Arabs in the town of Qamishli. They alleged that the Syrian government encouraged and armed the Arab forces. The second half of the 2000s was marked by a thaw in international relations and an improvement of relations between Syria and countries such as the USA or Israel. There were mentions

of a peace treaty with Israel (the two countries never signed a peace treaty, but only an armistice). Syria reestablished relations with Iraq, and opened relations with the EU.

The Civil War

In March 2011, as part of the Arab Spring, anti-government protests reached Syria. Massive demonstrations took place in Damascus and Deraa. The army's brutal crackdown only fueled the anti-government stance, leading to more and more widespread protests. Some soldiers who refused to fire on the protesters were summarily executed. Some rebels soon began arming and uniting under the organization known as the Free Syrian Army. At the root of the revolution was the conflict between Sunni Arabs, who were opposing the government which was filled with Alawites, a Shia minority. As a result, other Shia militant groups such as Hezbollah, supported the government, while the opposition was supported by Sunni Muslim states.

By 2012, Syria was in a full-on civil war. Tens of thousands of people became displaced, and multiple thousands were dead, mostly civilians. The Free Syrian Army (FSA), created organized battalions and unified under the Supreme Military Council in 2012. Until 2020, the Syrian Armed Forces managed to retain control over key cities and areas. Pro-Assad forces controlled more than one-third of Syria's territory. During that time, the civil war was filled with brutality, perpetrated at the hands of Assad's soldiers. Gas attacks and civilian massacres, such as the Ghoufa chemical attack, which became the deadliest chemical attack of the 21st century. Those actions led to widespread condemnations from the UN, the USA, the EU, and led to Syria's suspension in the Arab League. China and Russia withheld from condemning Syria.

In January 2014, Kurdish-majority cantons in the northeastern edge of the country declared their independence, and rallied under the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, better known as Rojava. This was yet another faction in the already fragmented civil war. Rojava gradually assumed control over larger territories in northeastern Syria. However, most of those are desert regions with only small settlements. Rojava was aided by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a group designated as terrorist by the US, EU, and Turkey. Due

to Rojava's growth, Turkey moved to occupy northern parts of Syria, claiming to protect national interest from the terrorist PKK. The Turkish occupation, however, has been criticised over the alleged ethnic cleansing of the Kurds.

The civil war also gave rise to jihadist groups, most notably the Islamic State (ISIS). Between 2014 and 2019, ISIS controlled large parts of southeastern Syria, around 2015 controlling almost half of Syrian territory, where it executed strict Sharia law, and conducted mass executions of infidels and non conforming groups, such as Kurds. However, efforts of the Syrian government, as well as US strikes and their support to Rojava successfully helped defeat ISIS. By 2019, ISIS was practically non-existent, limited only to small desert guerilla groups conducting spontaneous small-scale attacks.

In late 2015, the Russian government got involved in the civil war, helping Bashar Al-Assad with defeating the Islamic State which had gotten so much control over Syria and Iraq it began to threaten Bashar's control. Thanks to Russian aid, by 2020, Bashar Al-Assad regained control of around two thirds of the country, and relations with his government began to normalize. Between 2020 and 2024, fighting grew smaller as the Free Syrian Army and its allies were encircled and had to resort to hiding. Victory was almost certain for Bashar Al-Assad, and cities like Damascus or Aleppo were going back to living regular lives, although still under the repressive regime.

Rebel Counterattack and the aftermath

On 27 November 2024, the Syrian rebel forces unexpectedly struck again. The attack was a surprise and the HTS swiftly took over a number of settlements in Northern Syria. Two days later, they entered Aleppo, Syria's economic capital. On the following day, they controlled Aleppo and took control of the highway between Damascus and Aleppo, strangling the government's supply lines. The rebels continued pushing towards Homs and Damascus. By 8 December, Assad fled the country, and his Russian allies also pulled back. The swift takeover marked a dramatic change in the power landscape and the status quo which has held on since 2020. This showed a turning point in the war, which took the war by surprise. After seizing Damascus, the rebels created an interim government. By early 2025, this interim

government turned into a proper government, with the president having most of the executive power. Ahmed Al-Sharaa, a former leader of the HTS, became president. He quickly moved to reopen diplomatic relations with the rest of the world, hosting leaders of the EU, USA, and Ukraine.

On 11 March 2025, Al-Sharaa signed an agreement with the Syrian Democratic Forces, the military wing of the Kurdish administration (Rojava), incorporating it into the new Syrian state on principles of a federation. This is a crucial step towards reconstruction and reunification of the culturally fragmented Syria.

However, there are still certain military operations present, albeit small. The new government was accused of persecuting ethnoreligious minorities such as the Druze or the Alawites, the latter partly as revenge on Alawite favoritism during Assad's rule. Druze and Alawite militant groups continue to operate, remaining threats to long-term stability. Israel also crossed the Golan Heights, and occupied parts of Syria, claiming to protect the Druze community. Turkey still occupies the northern border of Syria and the Russian Federation still controls a number of military bases in Syria, albeit their future is uncertain. Underground, loyalist pro-Assad militias are still present and could pose a risk if left unchecked. Despite ousting Bashar Al-Assad from power, deep sectarian clashes, factional divides, and foreign presences (Israel, Turkey, Russia) continue to pose a question to national cohesion.

There is also an urgent need to address the humanitarian consequences of the conflict. Many people migrate into big cities which have already picked themselves up, like Aleppo which now struggles with the influx of refugees. Since Assad's flight, more than 1,000,000 refugees have returned to Syria, and this number is likely to only increase. At the same time, the sectarianism and repressions against the Alawites and Druze caused them to flee. More than 600,000 people have died as a result of the war. Out of that, almost 200,000 were civilian deaths.

The Assad government dealt especially harshly with civilians, massacring them in gas attacks as well as unjustified purges, although these claims were denied by the government. Millions of Syrian children were displaced from their homes. Villages and towns were destroyed by bombing raids over the 13 years of war. There are still over 600,000 refugees living in Jordan, most of them in makeshift refugee

camp. Over 90% of Syrians currently live below the poverty line, and 70% of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance. Organizations such as UNICEF, WFP, or the UNHCR continue aiding Syrian refugees both in Syria and abroad. Syria is still in a weak position.

Timeline

- **3000BC** - First city-state in Syria
- **~500BC** - Syria under the Mesopotamian Empire
- **333BC** - Syria conquered by Alexander the Great, becomes a Hellenistic kingdom
- **64BC** - After a brief period of Armenian rule, Syria falls to Roman general Pompey, becoming a part of the Empire
- **260-273AD** - The Palmyrian Kingdom (later Empire) is formed in the Syrian city of Palmyra, in defiance of the weakening Roman Empire. It is later reconquered by the Emperor Aurelian
- **395AD** - After the division of the Roman Empire, Syria becomes part of the Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire
- **640AD** - Syria falls to Muslim invaders, becomes part of the Islamic Umayyad Empire
- **8-11th Centuries AD** - Syria fractured, different regions and cities administered by different Muslim Arab warlords and princes
- **1086** - Syria conquered by the Seljuk Turks
- **1089-1298** - Syria held by various crusaders' kingdoms
- **13th-16th Centuries** - Syria conquered by Mamelukes
- **1516** - Syria conquered by the Ottoman Empire
- **1516-1918** - Syria under Ottoman control, enjoys relative prosperity. Ottoman bureaucracy brings large revenue, allowing Syria to become a key point between traders from India and European sailors coming through the Mediterranean
- **1917** - A British force enters Syria from Palestine, welcomed by Christian and Jewish parts of the Syrian population as liberators

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- **1920** - Syria becomes a French mandate, the remaining Ottoman territories are split up as per the secret Sykes-Picot agreement from 1916
- **1920-1946** - Syria is a French Mandate, enjoying relative prosperity and authority (after 1936) under French rule, however Arab unrest grows as France refuses to give real power to Syria
- **1936** - Syria gets partial independence, however France still controls military and economic matters
- **1939** - France cedes Hatay province to Turkey, angering Syrians but improving Franco-Turkish relations
- **1941** - British and Free French forces expel Vichy France, allowing Syria to proclaim a Republic
- **1946** - The First Syrian Republic gets international recognition, French soldiers leave the country. The First Republic is marked by political turmoil and issues with forming a government, as well as attempts at coups
- **1948-49** – Syria lost in the Arab-Israeli War, leading to military disgrace and a series of coups, culminating in Adib Shishakli's rule.
- **1954** – Shishakli was ousted with Ba'ath Party support, signaling the rise of Arab socialism in Syrian politics.
- **1956** – During the Suez Crisis, Syria aligned with the Soviet Union, marking the start of Cold War involvement.
- **1958-1961** – Syria joined Egypt in the United Arab Republic, but dissatisfaction with Egyptian dominance led to Syria's withdrawal in a 1961 coup.
- **8 March 1963** – Ba'ath Party seized power in a coup, beginning decades of authoritarian, one-party rule.
- **1966** – Left-wing Ba'athists took over, aligning Syria closely with the Soviet Union and intensifying socialist policies.
- **1967** – Syria lost the Golan Heights to Israel in the Six-Day War, a loss that remains unresolved.
- **November 1970** – Defense Minister Hafez al-Assad seized power in the "Corrective Movement," establishing a hereditary Assad dictatorship.
- **1973** – Syria briefly regained ground in the Yom Kippur War before Israel repelled them, pushing Assad closer to Moscow.

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- **1976–2005** – Syria intervened in Lebanon’s civil war, maintaining military occupation and political dominance there for nearly 30 years.
- **1982** – The Hama Massacre crushed the Muslim Brotherhood uprising, killing up to 25,000 civilians and cementing Assad’s brutal reputation.
- **1990** – Syria joined the US-led coalition in the Gulf War, improving relations with Washington.
- **1990s** – Economic stagnation, corruption, and black-market growth forced Assad to cautiously allow limited market reforms.
- **10 July 2000** – Bashar al-Assad succeeded his father as president, initially raising reform hopes in the “Damascus Spring,” quickly crushed by late 2001.
- **2004** – Ethnic clashes erupted between Syrian Kurds and Arabs in Qamishli, highlighting minority tensions.
- **Mid-2000s** – Relations thawed with the US, EU, and even Israel, but no peace treaty was made due to a quick breakdown in relations over alleged chemical weapons development in Syria, which the government denied.
- **March 2011** – Protests erupted during the Arab Spring; Assad’s crackdown sparked nationwide revolt.
- **2012** – Syria descended into full civil war; the Free Syrian Army formed, and mass displacement began.
- **2013** – Assad forces carried out chemical attacks, including Ghouta, provoking global condemnation but limited intervention.
- **2014** – Kurdish Rojava declared autonomy, while ISIS rose to control nearly half of Syria.
- **2015** – Russia intervened militarily, turning the tide in Assad’s favor.
- **2019** – ISIS collapsed territorially, though guerilla cells persisted.
- **2020–2024** – Assad regained most of Syria, cities like Damascus and Aleppo stabilized, but repression and poverty remained severe.
- **27 November 2024** – Rebels launched a surprise offensive, seizing Aleppo and threatening Damascus.
- **8 December 2024** – Assad fled Syria as rebels established an interim government, marking the collapse of his regime.

- **Early 2025** – Ahmed al-Sharaa became president of a new Syrian government, reopening ties with Western states.
- **11 March 2025** – Agreement with Kurdish forces (Rojava) created a federal Syrian state, signaling efforts at reunification.
- **2025 (ongoing)** – Sectarian clashes, foreign occupations (Turkey, Israel, Russia), and humanitarian crises continue, with over 600,000 dead and millions displaced, leaving Syria fragile despite Assad's downfall.

Past Actions

2011 — Arab League measures and regional pressure

The Arab League suspended Syria's membership, pushed for a ceasefire, sent monitoring teams, and urged Damascus to stop violent repression. Neighbouring states like Saudi Arabia and Qatar began supporting some opposition voices and refugees. This largely failed because violence continued and the government did not fully implement reforms.

2012 — Kofi Annan six-point plan

Kofi Annan's six-point peace plan (ceasefire, humanitarian aid, political talks) and the UN-Arab League Action Group tried to force a stop to fighting and start negotiations. However, the plan failed to stop the war. Ceasefires were often broken and heavy fighting continued.

2012–2013 — International sanctions and diplomatic isolation

The United States, European Union, Canada and other states imposed sanctions on Syrian officials, oil and banks and expelled diplomats to pressure Assad. Sanctions increased diplomatic cost for Damascus but did not end the conflict or force a political transition.

2013 — Chemical weapons disarmament deal

After the large Ghouta attack, the US and Russia negotiated Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and a deal to remove declared chemical stockpiles

under OPCW supervision was made. This was a partial success, many declared weapons were removed and destroyed, reducing immediate risk, but later investigations showed undeclared stocks and continued use in some incidents.

2014–2015 — U.S.-led anti-ISIS coalition

The United States, UK, France and Arab partners created a coalition carrying out airstrikes and supporting local forces (including the Syrian Democratic Forces) to defeat ISIS. This was largely successful against ISIS territorial control, but it did not solve the broader political conflict between Assad and his opponents.

2015 — Russian military intervention

Russia intervened with airpower, advisers and diplomatic support to bolster the Syrian government, retake territory, and shape peace tracks.

2015–2016 — UN Geneva process and peace talks

The United Nations hosted Geneva negotiations for a political transition, involving government and opposition delegations and international mediators. Talks produced proposals and rounds of negotiation but no binding settlement, and fighting continued.

2016 — Astana process

Russia, Turkey and Iran launched the Astana talks to negotiate local ceasefires and create de-escalation zones to reduce violence. But the regime took back most “de-escalated” areas militarily.

2019 — UN Constitutional Committee creation

With UN support, a Constitutional Committee was formed including government, opposition and civil society to draft constitutional changes and a legal path toward elections. This led to partial progress on meetings and drafting, but stalled on implementation and full political acceptance.

2024 — Collapse of the Assad government

Opposition forces launched a fast offensive that captured Damascus and led to Bashar al-Assad's resignation and flight from the country, dramatically changing control on the ground and creating urgent security and humanitarian challenges.

2024–2025 — Reconstruction and humanitarian aid

After the 2024 political change, international donors, the EU and UN agencies offered phased reconstruction plans and larger humanitarian coordination while tying major funds to human-rights protections, safe refugee returns and anti-corruption measures. This unlocked limited projects and scaled emergency relief but kept large reconstruction funding conditional.

Country Positions

People's Republic of China

China's main message from 2011 was that foreign countries should not interfere in Syria and that state sovereignty must be respected. Beijing often used its UN Security Council seat and opposed external attempts to force Assad's removal, frequently joining Russia in vetoing Western-backed UN Security Council resolutions it viewed as one-sided and focused on stability and counter-terrorism rather than supporting one side in the fight. After big changes in Syria at the end of 2024 and into 2025, China became more cautious and pragmatic, keeping diplomacy open to protect its security and commercial interests while warning against foreign fighters and urging a Syrian-led political solution.

The French Republic

France strongly condemned Assad's crackdown in 2011 and pushed early for him to leave, supporting sanctions, humanitarian aid, and measures to document crimes against civilians. After the regime fell in late 2024, France moved toward conditional engagement, offering help for reconstruction and refugees while

insisting on accountability for abuses, protection of minorities, and a clear political transition before fully restoring normal relations.

Russian Federation

Russia was one of Assad's closest backers from 2011, using diplomacy and from 2015, major military support to keep the government in power and to fight groups it labeled terrorists. Moscow said its role was to stop chaos, fight extremism, and preserve Russian influence and bases in Syria, vetoing numerous UN resolutions. When power shifted in late 2024 and 2025, Russia adapted by engaging the new authorities to protect its military facilities and regional interests, while trying to keep ties with local actors and preserve influence across Syria.

The Syrian Arab Republic

From 2011 the Syrian government under Bashar al-Assad rejected large parts of the protest movement, used heavy force against armed and unarmed opponents, and endured long years of war, sanctions, and mass displacement. After the major events of late 2024 and into 2025, The new leadership under Ahmed al-Sharaa promised to re-establish ties with neighbors and began forming a transitional administration, announced a temporary constitution, plans for elections, and faced the large tasks of rebuilding services, returning refugees, and addressing justice and security across the country. By 2025, the Syrian Arab Republic was seeking reconstruction aid, security guarantees, and gradual lifting of sanctions, while trying to balance international demands with maintaining sovereignty and avoiding domination by any single foreign power.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

From 2011 the UK condemned the Syrian government's repression, closed its embassy in Damascus, supported sanctions, and provided large humanitarian and diplomatic backing to the opposition and UN peace efforts. Following the fall of the Assad regime in late 2024 and into 2025 the UK revised some sanctions to help humanitarian work and reconstruction while keeping measures aimed at serious

rights abusers and saying that human rights and an inclusive political transition remain priorities.

United States of America

From 2011 the United States strongly condemned Assad's violent response to protests and pushed for a political change in Syria. Washington led sanctions, supported some opposition groups (Syrian Free Army), and backed international efforts to hold people responsible for war crimes and chemical attacks. As the war went on, U.S. policy shifted toward fighting ISIS, protecting civilians, and giving humanitarian aid while keeping pressure on Assad and his close allies. The U.S. kept military strikes limited, acted against chemical weapons use, and maintained sanctions through 2024 while adjusting some measures in 2025 for humanitarian reasons.

Question a Resolution must answer

- *How can stability be maintained in Syria, and the desires of all ethnic groups living within Syria be satisfied?*
- *How should the ongoing occupation of Golan Heights by Israel and Northern Syria by Turkey be resolved?*
- *How can revanchist ethnic cleansing against Druze and Alawite minorities be prevented?*
- *How can extreme poverty in Syria be resolved?*
- *How should the displacement crisis be resolved in Syria?*
- *What measures should be taken in order to reconstruct Syria and ensure lasting stability?*
- *What measures should be implemented to root out corruption and prevent a new authoritarian regime to take over the weak democratic state?*
- *What measures should be taken to help Syria rebuild its economy?*
- *How should Bashar Al-Assad and his associates be dealt with under international law, in regards to his activities as leader of Syria?*

Conclusion

Even though the Syrian Civil War is over, at least in its most violent stage, new challenges now arise. With large-scale returns of Syrians from exile, the government and the international community needs to address the issues of impoverishment, underdevelopment, and reconstruction of vital infrastructure in order to accommodate the needs of the Syrian population and to rebuild the country's economy, shattered by the civil war, so that Syria may develop and thrive as a new, better country.

Another pressing issue that needs to be addressed is the ethnic tensions and the revanchism against the Druze and Alawite communities who enjoyed prosperity under Assad's reign. These groups now face extreme persecution, and have taken up arms against the new Syrian government, leading to small-scale, but nevertheless violent, clashes in southwestern Syria. The State of Israel and the Republic of Turkey continue to occupy what is lawful Syrian territory. These issues, while maintaining the status quo for now, should also be considered by the delegates.

Lastly, the international community must take a closer look at the charges against Bashar Al-Assad and his closest associates during his reign in Syria, and consider if charges should be pressed under international law to ensure justice is imposed. Since Assad is currently presumed to be in Moscow, the international community should reach an extradition agreement in order to put Assad on trial.

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