

A new Syria in the making

One month of unrest and reorganization of the power balance in Syria

Current situation in Syria

The situation in Syria is uncertain. At the end of November **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)**, an Islamist group that was ruling in Idlib) launched an offensive that managed to overthrow the regime and take control of the capital, installing a transitional government. The Kurdish regions in the north (aka Rojava), as well as the **Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES)** which they are part of, are currently under new attacks of Turkish army and its proxy forces. In coordination with the HTS offensive, Turkish proxies occupied the cities of Til Rifat and Manbij, and are also threatening Kobane among many other areas.

End of the regime

The **Ba'ath regime**, which lasted for more than 60 years, collapsed within less than 2 weeks. The main international supporters of Assad were caught off guard, with Russia swamped in Ukraine and Iran focused on Gaza and Lebanon. **Bashar al-Assad** escaped to Moscow, while many regime soldiers abandoned their positions after the HTS offensive. Many Syrians went to the streets to celebrate the fall of the tyrant, toppling statues of Bashar al-Assad and his father Hafez al-Assad. The prisons of the regime were opened, setting free those who suffered the torture and brutality of the regime on their flesh. More than 150.000 bodies of people murdered by the regime have been found in mass graves that are being dug up around those prisons.

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Post-Assad Syria

The leader HTS **Ahmed al-Sharaa (aka al-Jolani)** is consolidating power, trying to gain international legitimacy and to remove the "terrorist" label that still hangs on HTS. They work to present an image of moderate rebels, promising respect for minorities and a stable Syria. But unrest is already happening in several regions, with Christians organizing big protests in Damascus and Alawites, the minority of al-Assad family, rebelling against attacks they are suffering. HTS is negotiating with christian factions, but sending military reinforcements to repress the Alawite uprisings. Their main ally is the **Turkish government**, that already opened a new embassy in Damascus. At the same time they are in negotiations with Kurdish parties and other diplomatic delegations of the DAANES, as well as many international powers, to negotiate the transition of Syria.

Israel occupation in the south

Israel has been bombing weapon depots, air defenses and military research facilities in Syria, ensuring that any new government poses no threat to Israel. After more than 400 air attacks, military authorities claim they have destroyed more than 90% of Syria military capabilities. They also expanded their ground occupation area around the illegally annexed Golan Heights, creating an expanded "security zone" that spreads around the border between Syria and Lebanon. Soldiers and tanks of the **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** are now standing at less than 30 km from Damascus. UN stated that this is illegal, calling for Israel to stop advancing.

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Turkey occupation in the north

The Turkish government has been supporting islamist opposition groups in Syria, from ISIS to HTS, while it was negotiating with Bashar al-Assad at the same time. They also trained and armed a proxy force named **Syrian National Army (SNA)** to fight against the autonomous administration of North-East Syria. Turkish proxies are already occupying Afrin, Azaz and Serekaniye areas, and now they also occupied Tal Rifat and Manbij. They tried to further expand to Kobani, but were repelled. The **Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)** are resisting the occupation. SDF is fighting to prevent further attacks, they recently launched a counter-offensive to liberate Manbij. Clashes between SDF and Turkey/SNA are also taking place on other areas along the front lines.

Resurgence of ISIS

ISIS cells are taking advantage of the instability to recover their lost strength. They raided some army barracks as regime soldiers abandoned their posts, acquiring weapons that they are now using to launch attacks. In the last weeks, more than 150 people have been brutally murdered in the **more than 100 attacks** they conducted in Syria. They are also reorganizing their ranks in Iraq, undermining the work of SDF and the international coalition to stop them. Turkish attacks on the DAANES create a serious security risk, as jihadist threaten to attack the prisons that held **thousands of ISIS fighters**. This would be catastrophic, not just for Syria and middle east but for the whole world.

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Women's resistance in Syria

The **women's revolution** of NE-Syria is an extraordinary process of emancipation and empowerment. Following the initiative of the Kurdish women's movement, many arab women are also taking leading positions in their local and regional councils. A new **Syrian Women's Council** just opened an office in Damascus, bringing together the spirit of revolutionary kurdish women with many other Syrian women that have been a cornerstone of resistance and revolution in Syria for all these years. But HTS is not an example of women's rights. Their years as 'de facto' government in Idlib are not inspiring any trust, since they excluded women from political life and promoted conservative laws against women. **Women in Syria are determined to fight** and resist together against oppression and patriarchy, and will oppose who ever attempts to stop their path to freedom.

Echoes of the Syrian revolution

This is the biggest reorganization of forces that Syria has experienced in the last century. It can be seen as part of broader regional plans supported by international powers like US, Israel and Turkey, who have been working towards Assad's removal for years. It can be seen as a defeat for Russia and Israel, who have been supporting this brutal regime for years. But this kind of geopolitical armchair gaze is denying the agency of millions of Syrians who are fighting for their life and their future. This is a victory for the Syrian peoples who went out to the streets on 2011, who called for revolution and for the fall of the dictator that oppressed them and their country. This revolution is not over, and authoritarian forces are already conspiring with imperialist powers to establish new rulers. The path to freedom is not ending with the fall of one tyrant, it is just a first step. But it is important first step, nevertheless. The regime has fallen, the revolution must go on!