

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 12, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio:

Thank you for your strong leadership in advancing peace and for giving the Syrian people the chance to pursue renewed stability and prosperity. President Trump's bold decision to lift Assad-era sanctions has given Syria an opportunity to rebuild while keeping pressure on those responsible for past atrocities.

Despite encouraging initial promises by the al-Sharra government to protect all of Syria's religious and ethnic minorities, we are concerned by reports of continued targeted violence and humanitarian suffering affecting the Druze and Christian religious minorities in Syria's As-Suwayda Governorate.

As the Trump Administration continues to work with partners in the region on this growing crisis, we ask that humanitarian corridors are prioritized in conversations with leaders in the region. Specifically, a corridor that enables the Druze community near Hader to move freely and safely between Hader and Suwayda and permits the rapid delivery of humanitarian supplies to an estimated 750,000 people in need of emergency relief.

In July, clashes between Druze militias, defending the Druze and Christian populations in the region, and Bedouin groups escalated into widespread bloodshed, killing hundreds and prompting intervention by Syrian government forces. While government forces were deployed to stabilize the region, reports implicate government-affiliated fighters in summary executions and arbitrary killings of Druze civilians.¹ Among those killed was Hosam Saraya, an American citizen who was executed alongside his family members in As Suwayda.²

President Trump took bold action to bring the initial fighting to a close. However, localized violence has not ceased. According to both human rights experts and open-source intelligence, government forces have continued to deliberately target Druze and Christian civilians to subject them to executions, extrajudicial killings, abductions, looting, destruction of

¹ William Christou, "'Shot in the Head, as If Executed': Four Days of Violence End with Hundreds Dead in Southern Syria," *The Guardian*, July 18, 2025

² Victoria Beaulé and Bill Hutchinson, "American Killed in Syria amid Growing Sectarian Violence, State Department Says," *ABC News*, July 22, 2025.

property, and sexual violence.³ Figures from the Syrian Human Rights Observatory indicate 765 civilians, including 69 women and 15 children, have been extrajudicially killed by Syrian government forces since July.⁴ Among those killed are over two dozen medical staff from Suwayda National Hospital who were executed by government-affiliated fighters in August.⁵

Survivors of these encounters have faced public humiliation and intimidation. In July, a video surfaced of a Druze elder being taunted by government fighters. These fighters forcibly shaved off his mustache, a sacred symbol of religious devotion among Druze clerics, in what can only be described as an act of deliberate humiliation.⁶

In addition, over 100 Druze women and girls have been abducted by government fighters, with around 80 still in captivity as of August 21, 2025.⁷ Many of these women and girls have been subjected to sexual abuse and torture, and some have even been executed following their abuse.

These atrocities illustrate that the violence in As-Suwayda is not simply the product of sectarian clashes, but a sustained campaign of intimidation and terror directed at the Druze and Christian communities. Unless this violence and intimidation are stopped, the Druze and Christian communities will continue to suffer, and other religious minority groups will only continue to lose confidence in the Syrian government's promises to protect them.

The continued military presence of As-Suwayda by government forces has also hindered the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance into the region. The July clashes and subsequent localized violence have disrupted access to food, water, medical care, electricity, fuel, and shelter, leaving the population highly dependent upon humanitarian convoys for survival, and food shortages have been exacerbated by one of the worst droughts the country has experienced in decades.^{8 9}

³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Syria: UN Experts Alarmed by Attacks on Druze Communities, Including Sexual Violence against Women and Girls," OHCHR, August 21, 2025.

⁴ "New death toll | 1,990 people killed, including 765 executed by members of the Ministries of Defense and Interior in Al-Suwaiaa", Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, August 27, 2025.

⁵ Christina Goldbaum and Sanjana Varghese, "This Video Shows Medical Volunteer Executed Amid Unrest in Southern Syria". The New York Times. 11 August 11, 2025.

⁶ Agence France Presse "After Viral Humiliation, Druze Elder's Family Taunted Over Fate," Barron's, July 16, 2025.

⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Syria: UN Experts Alarmed."

⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross, "ICRC Response in Southern Syria: Operational Update," International Committee of the Red Cross, August 21, 2025.

⁹ Abby Sewell and Omar Sanadiki, "Worst Drought in Decades Threatening Syria's Fragile Recovery from Years of Civil War," ABC News, September 4, 2025.

Despite limited progress, we believe the Syrian government needs to do more to ensure the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance. While a small number of Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) aid convoys have been allowed into Al-Suwayda, other convoys have been turned away by pro-government fighters, and many corridors into the governorate remain closed.¹⁰

On August 21, 2025, United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher stated, “We need better humanitarian and commercial access. And most of all, we need safety.”¹¹ The message is clear: given that many Druze and Christian communities are solely reliant on humanitarian assistance, safe humanitarian corridors must be opened.

We strongly believe the Syrian government needs to do more to put a stop to the targeted violence against members of the Druze and Christian communities and to bring much-needed humanitarian aid into the region. The longer the violence and humanitarian crisis persist, the more skeptical we grow of the new government’s commitment to deliver on its promises to protect all Syrians.

We are confident that you will take all necessary steps to put an end to these atrocities and coordinate with our allies and the Syrian government to allow for the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance into areas under blockade or facing acute shortages.

President Trump was right to suspend Assad-era sanctions and give Syria a chance to start a new chapter, and we share his vision of a peaceful, inclusive Syria, where all religious and ethnic communities can live free from fear and deprivation. We stand ready to support efforts toward that vision and welcome further engagement with you and your team.

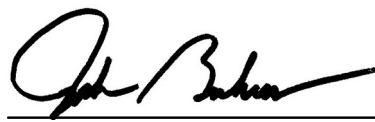
Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



Josh Brecheen
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
Member of Congress




Sheri Biggs
Member of Congress





Tim Walberg
Member of Congress

¹⁰ “Amid reports of the closure of Busra Al-Sham crossing | Commercial convoy returned via Damascus- Al-Suwaiaa highway”, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, August 31, 2025.


¹¹ United Nations, “Syria: Political Transition on ‘a Knife-Edge’ amid Military Skirmishes,” UN News, August 21, 2025.

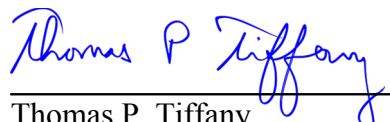

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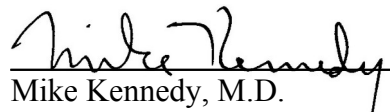

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