Syria
Stakeholder Report for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review:
The Death Penalty

Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1996

Syrians for Truth & Justice

and

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty

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The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. Established in 1983, The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications. The Advocates is the primary provider of legal services to low-income asylum seekers in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. In 1991, The Advocates adopted a formal commitment to oppose the death penalty worldwide and organized a death penalty project to provide pro bono assistance on post-conviction appeals, as well as education and advocacy to end capital punishment. The Advocates currently holds a seat on the Steering Committee of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty.

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) is a non-governmental organization comprised of local and global networks of researchers and volunteers dedicated to uncovering human rights violations in Syria. STJ's mission is to document human rights violations perpetrated against Syrians and work towards justice and change. In addition to documenting and reporting human rights violations, STJ implements capacity building projects on related issues, including digital security and civic engagement, and trains the next generation of Syrian human rights activists. STJ's aim is to promote inclusivity and justice to ensure that all Syrians are represented and their human rights secured.

The World Coalition Against the Death Penalty is a membership-based global network committed to strengthening the international dimension of the fight against the death penalty. Established in 2002, its ultimate objective is to obtain the universal abolition of the death penalty. To achieve its goal, the World Coalition advocates for a definitive end to death sentences and executions in those countries where the death penalty is in force. In some countries, it is seeking to obtain a reduction in the use of capital punishment as a first step towards abolition.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report addresses the status of the death penalty in the Syrian Arab Republic and Syria's compliance with related human rights obligations. The situation remains in flux: the transitional government that took power in late 2024 is still establishing its policies, and prospects for full compliance—including treaty ratification and prohibition of cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishments—remain uncertain.

2. The new government has adopted a Constitutional Declaration with transitional justice aims but it has not amended legislation providing for arbitrary application of the death penalty—including laws imposing death sentences for Muslim Brotherhood membership, recidivist drug trafficking, or bearing arms against Syria.

3. The criminal legal system does not guarantee fair trial rights. Appointees in the judiciary are inexperienced, and women attorneys face restrictions.

4. Civil society organizations remain active but constrained by registration requirements; systemic discrimination against minorities, women, and LGBTIQ+ individuals persists.

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

Ratification of & accession to international instruments

Status of Implementation: Noted, Not Implemented

5. In its third-cycle Universal Periodic Review in 2022, Syria noted 6 recommendations to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), aiming at abolition of the death penalty.[1] Syria has not taken any steps toward ratification of OP2.

Human rights education, training & awareness raising

Status of Implementation: Supported, Partially Implemented

6. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported Sri Lanka's recommendation to increase human rights training programs for the justice sector, as well as three other general recommendations on human rights education and awareness-raising.[2]

7. The December 2024 transition facilitated meaningful changes: Syria accepted permanent OHCHR operations—previously denied under Assad[3]—enabling daily engagement and demonstrating "a political will from the government to improve."[4] In July 2025, Syria accepted the European Union's 175 million Euro package to support transitional justice, accountability, and human rights programs.[5]

8. This cooperation created a platform for Syrian organizations to call for legal amendments and increased investment in forensic medicine, including for legal proceedings.[6]

9. Civil society organizations have called for abolition of the death penalty as part of the transition. Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has recommended that Syria repeal all laws that legitimized human rights violations, replace them with legislation that upholds human rights, abolish all military and exceptional courts, and establish independent oversight mechanisms to prevent future violations.[7] Syrians for Truth and Justice reports that key NGOs have held discussions on how to achieve transitional justice in Syria and have submitted proposals, but the current government has "a structural trajectory . . . vulnerable to the reproduction of exclusionary and authoritarian practices . . . [thus] limiting prospects for building legitimate institutions capable of protecting rights and entrenching justice."[8]

10. The civil war disrupted schools' human rights curriculum, and competing factions introduced ideologically aligned curricula.[9]

11. After the fall of the Assad government, the al-Sharaa government sought to standardize education under a national curriculum with mixed implications for human rights. According to STJ, in 2024 authorities introduced changes without public consultation, shifting toward Islamic content—for example, replacing "ruled by the law of justice" with "ruled by God's law."[10] STJ reports that authorities have ignored civil society calls for a curriculum promoting tolerance and respect for human rights.[11]

12. The transitional government's maintenance of Assad-era NGO registration requirements has restrained civil society organizations from independently carrying out human rights education and training. Human Rights Watch documented that the Syrian transitional government reinstated an "umbrella system" requiring international NGOs to operate under a government-approved "national partner" that functions as a third-party regulatory body—a mechanism that previously allowed the Assad government to access beneficiary lists, channel aid according to political priorities, and interfere in donor-funded programming.[12]

Statistics

Status of Implementation: Partially Supported, Partially Implemented

13. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported Ireland's recommendation to disclose and investigate all deaths in custody since 2011,[13] but noted Uruguay's recommendation to provide to UN agencies the records of the names and locations of "persons detained in government-controlled facilities, including those who died during such detention."[14]

14. After the fall of the Assad government, many people hoped to find records of family members whom authorities had detained or forcibly disappeared. STJ reports that many records were destroyed, and families have to pursue a lengthy retrieval process to obtain records that still exist.[15]

15. On 17 May 2025, the transitional government issued Decree No. 19 which created a National Commission for the Missing (NCM) and a Transitional Justice Commission.[16] The NCM has begun searching for victims of forced disappearances,[17] but the status of more than 160,123 people whom the Assad government forcibly disappeared remains unknown.[18]

Access to justice & remedy

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not Implemented

16. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported two recommendations to combat impunity for human rights violations and crimes committed against civilians.[19]

17. In 2025, the transitional authorities signaled an intention to advance accountability for serious crimes by creating the aforementioned NCM and the Transitional Justice Commission.[20] Despite these developments, Syria has fallen short of its commitments. Authorities limited the Commission's mandate to the former Assad government's actions, explicitly excluding violations by other armed actors.[21] As a result, the Commission does not offer any redress to a substantial number of victims.[22] STJ reports that despite Law No. 16 of 2022 on the Prevention of Torture, authorities have not arrested or prosecuted a single individual for acts of torture under the current authorities.[23]

Death penalty

Status of Implementation: Not Accepted, Not Implemented

18. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria noted 10 recommendations to establish a moratorium on the death penalty or make progress toward abolition.[24]

19. The transitional government has not abolished the death penalty.[25] Laws authorizing the death penalty include the Syrian Penal Code No. 148 of 1949, the Military Penal Code, Act No. 2 of 1993 on Narcotics, Act No. 49 of 1980 on Banning the Muslim Brotherhood, Act No. 19 of 2012 (Counterterrorism Act), Legislative Decree No. 20 of 2013 on Criminalizing Abduction, and Act No. 39 of 2023.[26] Capital offences include membership in the Muslim Brotherhood,[27] recidivist drug trafficking,[28] bearing arms against Syria in the ranks of the enemy,[29] and plotting with a foreign state to incite an attack when an attack occurs,[30] as well as for other vague crimes such as "communicating with or providing assistance to the enemy" and "participating in a conspiracy that results in partial or complete destruction of public institutions."[31]

20. Death sentences issued by any Syrian court are preliminary pending appeal and final presidential approval; the President holds absolute authority to approve, reduce, or commute a death sentence.[32] The Clemency Committee issues advisory opinions.[33]

21. The Assad government used military courts to issue large numbers of death sentences, resulting in mass executions. Amnesty International reports that from March 2011 to August 2023, military courts issued at least 14,843 death sentences.[34] Authorities reduced 6,971 of these death sentences to imprisonment with hard labor and executed 7,872 people, including 114 children, 26 women, and 2,021 military personnel.[35] Authorities did not give family members official notification of executions and did not return the bodies of people who had been executed to their families.[36]

22. The opacity of Syria's death penalty record persists into the transitional period: Amnesty International was unable to confirm the number of executions Syria carried out in 2024,[37] but reported that Syria did not carry out any executions in 2025.[38] Amnesty International has been unable to ascertain the number of people under sentence of death in Syrian prisons.[39]

23. STJ has expressed concern that the transitional government will use the death penalty as a political tool, undermining the right to a fair trial.[40] Authorities have historically used broadly worded provisions in the Syrian Penal Code (Legislative Decree No. 148 of 1949) and Anti-Terrorism Law No. 19 of 2012 to justify the execution of political opponents.[41] STJ observes that people in Syria hold complex views of the death penalty and its intersection with "moral, religious, and social considerations that require careful, inclusive discussion."[42]

Prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

Status of Implementation: Accepted, Not Implemented

24. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported several recommendations pertaining to torture, including recommendations to end "torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment," and to criminalize torture. [43]

25. According to SNHR, between March 2011 and June 2024, torture killed more than 15,383 people, including 199 children and 155 women.[44] The fall of the Assad government did not end torture-related deaths: in 2025, 32 people died from torture.[45]

26. STJ reports that Law No. 16 of 2022 on the Prevention of Torture includes an expansive definition of torture, covering "any act or omission that causes severe physical or mental pain and suffering."[46] Nonetheless, according to STJ, authorities have not meaningfully implemented the law. STJ has not found any documented case in which authorities have held a perpetrator accountable, and the government continues to use torture as a tool of repression.[47]

27. STJ reports that authorities engage in torture in detention settings as well as other contexts.[48] Authorities have beaten civilians and subjected them to degrading treatment and psychological abuse during street encounters and at security checkpoints.[49] STJ has

documented that authorities beat civilians with rifle butts, cables, and belts, and also humiliate civilians on the basis of sectarian, religious, or political identity.[50]

Conditions of detention

Status of Implementation: Partially Supported, Not Implemented

28. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria noted or rejected 7 recommendations and supported 5 recommendations relating to improving detention conditions and allowing independent monitoring mechanisms to have unhindered access to all detention facilities.[51] In particular, Syria supported recommendations to "grant humanitarian actors unrestricted access to . . . detention facilities," "grant relevant impartial organizations access to all detention facilities," "[g]uarantee unrestricted access to humanitarian aid, including for people . . . in detention centers," and "enable humanitarian access to places of detention."[52]

29. Despite initial pledges, the transitional government is holding people in detention facilities without formal charges. Reuters has documented that since December 2024, authorities have detained at least 829 people on security grounds; that authorities detain people without charge or a paper trail, subject people to physical abuse and torture, as well as extortion; and that authorities do not always record or investigate custodial deaths.[53]

Arbitrary arrest and detention

Status of Implementation: Partially Supported, Partially Implemented

30. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported two recommendations to cease arbitrary and incommunicado detention and release all arbitrarily detained civilians but noted two others.[54]

31. The Assad administration used a 2011 law to detain people for up to 60 days without charges and to prevent people from challenging the lawfulness of their detention.[55] These practices facilitated arbitrary arrests, suppression of political opposition, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings.

32. The December 2024 regime change triggered mass prisoner releases as opposition groups seized cities and freed detainees.[56] Nonetheless, Human Rights Watch reports that authorities continue to conduct arbitrary detentions, including detentions of journalists and activists, and people continue to die in custody.[57] SNHR reports that even though authorities released 512 people from detention centers in the first quarter of 2026, authorities also carried out 212 new arbitrary arrests and detentions during that period.[58] SNHR found that authorities carried out arrests without judicial warrants and without informing people of the reasons for their arrest or allowing them to appear before a judge.[59]

33. STJ reports that the current administration continues to subject people—especially members of minority groups—to arbitrary arrests. Immediately after the current authorities

took power, they detained Alawite minorities without warrants. According to STJ, authorities engage in arbitrary arrests at Kurdish checkpoints in Northeast Syria[60] and have illegally transferred people to prisons in Türkiye or Iraq, including one incident in January 2026 in which Syrian authorities summarily deported 7,000 detainees to Iraq.[61] In zones that Türkiye and Israel occupy, civil society has documented arbitrary detentions and forced deportations without proper legal protections.[62]

Administration of justice and fair trial

Status of Implementation: Partially Supported, Partially Implemented

34. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported two recommendations to improve judicial independence and to cease trying civilians in military field courts.[63]

35. Under Syria's ordinary court system, the President of the Republic appoints the Supreme Constitutional Court's president.[64] The Assad government maintained formal judicial structures while exercising absolute control over the High Judicial Council and establishing exceptional courts that operated outside normal procedural safeguards.[65]

36. After the March 2011 uprising, the Military Field Court prosecuted people on politicized charges at a mass scale, stripping them of the right to a defense, a public trial, and appeals.[66] The Counterterrorism Court, enacted in 2012, similarly lacked basic procedural protections, with the President holding sole authority to authorize executions or reduce sentences.[67] Over time, the legal structure became a tool for the systemic denial of people's right to a fair trial, including in capital cases.

37. The transitional government has had mixed results in protecting due process rights. On 13 March 2025, it issued a "Constitutional Declaration." Article 48 of the Constitutional Declaration addresses transitional justice and calls for the new state to:

    1) Cancel all exceptional laws that have harmed the Syrian people and are inconsistent with human rights.

    2) Cancel the effects of the unjust rulings issued by the [Counterterrorism] Court that were used to suppress the Syrian people, including the return of confiscated property.[68]

38. Human Rights Watch warns that because the President still retains the power to appoint all seven members of the Supreme Constitutional Court, the Constitutional Declaration "risks consolidating executive control at the expense of fundamental freedoms at a crucial time for Syria's future."[69] Moreover, on 7 July 2026, the transitional President issued Decree No. 149, defining the powers of the Supreme Constitutional Court. The Decree states that the Court is responsible for monitoring the constitutionality of laws and regulations and, in response to a presidential request, must provide advisory opinions on the constitutionality of draft laws. The Decree also mandates that the Court interpret the provisions of the

Constitutional Declaration upon request of either the President or the Speaker of the People's Assembly. This Decree, by which the head of the executive authority purports to determine the duties of the Court, combined with the President's power to appoint all of the members of the Court, undermines the Court's neutrality and independence.

39. In practical terms, the Constitutional Declaration maintains all laws that the transitional government has not expressly repealed, including Legislative Decree No. 148 of 1949 and the Counterterrorism Act.[70] STJ reports that the al-Sharaa government has installed "Sheikhs" as new judicial officers for each governorate, selected through a non-transparent process.[71] STJ reports that some Sheikhs lack any legal background and operate on the basis of unpublished executive instructions that alter laws without public notice.[72] Mr. Anas Mansour Suleiman, appointed as President of the Court of Cassation, lacks a law degree or any prior judicial experience. His appointment stands in stark contrast to the basic requirements for holding a senior judicial office. The transitional government also formally requires that new judges have a sitting judge's official endorsement of good standing and no connection to the Assad government.[73]

40. Two other recent actions demonstrate how the Minister of Justice is violating separation of powers and other legal norms. In 2026, the Minister of Justice issued Ministerial Decision No. 1477, modifying the judicial recess for judges. Yet the Syrian Judicial Authority Law No. 98 of 1961 explicitly governs the judicial recess. The Minister of Justice also issued executive instructions abolishing the judicial stamp tax law (the Judges' Mutual Fund). A minister purporting to amend or repeal existing laws enacted by the legislature via executive decree or circular is highly irregular and such actions are legally invalid, undermining the constitution and the rule of law.

41. The transitional government has also infringed upon the right to effective legal representation.[74] Circular No. 10/2025 (8 October 2025) restricts attorney participation in criminal proceedings, including by permitting authorities to interrogate a person without their counsel present.[75] Syrian lawyers have expressed grave concerns, with one noting that "[w]e are practically returning to previous practices that caused many violations, and this weakens public confidence in justice."[76] Without effective legal intervention, detainees are at risk of false confessions, and lawyers report that prosecutors frequently overcharge their clients.[77]

42. Legal procedures vary significantly by region. In predominantly Kurdish northeastern Syria, a "Social Contract" system is in place that lacks fair trial guarantees such as judicial review and the right to counsel.[78] Three Alawite judges in the coastal governorates have been murdered, and officials have not carried out a sufficient investigation.[79]

43. The justice system also discriminates against women. In the confirmation process, officials subject women judicial candidates to irrelevant questions, including whether or not they "contributed to the revolution." Courts also discriminate against women attorneys for not wearing a hijab, and authorities have denied female lawyers entry to certain public offices to avoid "gender mixing."[80]

Discrimination against women

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

44. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported 17 of 19 recommendations related to women's empowerment, gender-based violence, and ending laws that discriminate on the basis of gender.[81]

45. Women continue to experience violence and transitional authorities exclude them from decision-making in the transitional period.[82] STJ reports that in December 2024, the transitional government freed perpetrators of domestic violence and femicide as part of the process of opening prisons.[83] The definition of rape is not in line with international standards, leaving victims of sexual violence with few avenues for justice.[84]

46. According to STJ, the constitution enables personal status laws that render women subordinate to male authority in matters of marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.[85] STJ reports that many women lack civil documentation such as marriage, death, or divorce certificates, limiting their ability to register children, access government services, or claim their inheritance.[86] STJ further reports that women who are married to people whom authorities have detained or disappeared often cannot report the loss of their spouse, as they typically need a male relative to make such a report. Many of these women are housing insecure because most homes are registered in the husband's name.[87]

Equality and non-discrimination; Racial discrimination; Freedom of thought, conscience & religion; Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI)

Status of Implementation: Partially Accepted, Not Implemented

47. In its third-cycle UPR, Syria supported 5 of 6 recommendations to review laws that discriminate against ethnic or religious minorities, to end discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, and to ensure that minorities may exercise their rights fully.[88] Syria noted all 6 recommendations relating to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.[89] The transitional government has not repealed Assad-era laws restricting religious freedom, including laws criminalizing conversion from Islam and banning Jehovah's Witnesses. The temporary constitution requires that the President be Muslim, designates Islamic jurisprudence as the main source of legislation, and specifies protections for only the three "heavenly religions" (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism).[90]

48. The transitional period has not reduced exclusion of minorities from political and governmental institutions. In the October 2025 indirect partial parliamentary elections, voters elected only 10 individuals from religious and ethnic minorities out of 119 open seats. Authorities did not hold elections in the provinces of Hasakah, Raqqa, and Suwayda, resulting in the political exclusion of Kurdish and Druze communities from parliament.[91]

49. Human rights organizations have reported deaths of civilians in state custody resulting from torture motivated by sectarianism. In August 2025, four Alawites from Homs Province died in detention after security forces arrested them for participating in protests against an attack on an Alawite religious shrine. In January 2026, and an Alawite from Homs Province died in state custody after protesting conditions for Alawites.[92]

50. Article 520 of the Penal Code still prohibits "intercourse against the order [of] nature" and applies to both men and women. The Assad government forced LGBTIQ+ individuals to sign dehumanizing "behavioral compliance" pledges and subjected them to surveillance.[93] Transitional authorities have not improved conditions[94]; within weeks of Assad's fall, homophobic incitement spread on social media.[95] Security forces affiliated with the transitional government have conducted campaigns of arrest and persecution of members of the LGBTIQ+ community.[96] Documented abuses include severe beatings, bodily mutilation, and public harassment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.[97]

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

51. The coauthors suggest the following recommendations for the Government of Syria:

Death penalty

- Abolish the death penalty and replace it with penalties that are fair, proportionate, and consistent with international human rights standards.
- Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming to abolish the death penalty.
- In the interim:
    - Institute a formal moratorium on executions.
    - In collaboration with civil society, launch an inclusive public awareness-raising campaign to promote discussion of human rights concerns relating to the death penalty and the viability of alternatives to the death penalty.
    - Undertake a comprehensive review of all laws authorizing the death penalty with a view to amending or repealing those laws to limit the death penalty to the most serious crimes, defined as intentional killing.
    - Amend Circular No. 10/2025 to ensure that any person suspected of a capital crime has access to well qualified legal counsel from the time of the arrest, including during any interrogations, and through and including any appeals.

    - Ensure that any person sentenced to death has access to counsel to pursue an independent judicial appeals process.

    - Expand transparency for the process of seeking clemency or commutation of death sentences from the President.

- On an annual basis, publish comprehensive data on all on death sentences, executions, and people under sentence of death, disaggregated by date of arrest, date of conviction, sex/gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, crime of conviction, relationship to any codefendants or victims, status of any appeals or other requests for relief, and current location.

- Review and commute any Assad-era sentences issued by the exceptional courts, military courts, and other courts that were based on insufficient legal process or arbitrary detention, prioritizing capital cases in the first instance.

- Ensure that any transitional justice mechanisms prohibit imposition of the death penalty for human rights abuses from the Assad regime and during the civil war.

Other issues

- Expand collaboration with civil society organizations to ensure that the transitional justice process is inclusive and supportive of human rights.

- In collaboration with civil society, mandate that all judicial actors receive human rights training and education.

- Collaborate with civil society to revise the national education curriculum to include promotion of tolerance and respect for human rights.

- Create a safe and enabling environment for civil society organizations working on human rights and dismantle the "umbrella system" relating to international NGOs.

- Provide support and assistance to people seeking records of family members detained or disappeared during the Assad period.

- Expand the mandate of the Transitional Justice Commission to cover alleged human rights violations committed by all parties to the conflict, not only the former Assad government, so that all victims have a formal avenue for redress and accountability.

- In collaboration with civil society and international human rights experts, prioritize training to expedite implementation of Law No. 16 of 2022 on the Prevention of Torture to improve accountability for torture.

- Immediately grant the ICRC and independent monitors unannounced access to all places of detention.

- Conduct independent investigations into all allegations of torture, ill-treatment, and unrecorded deaths in custody occurring since December 2024, and prosecute the perpetrators.

- On an annual basis, publish comprehensive data about all custodial deaths as well as the results or status of any investigations relating to those deaths.

- Immediately release all persons detained without formal charges.

- Cease the practice of arresting people without judicial warrants and without informing people of the reason for their arrest.

- Ensure that any person subject to arrest has timely access to judicial review of the basis for their detention.

- Cease all arbitrary arrests and detentions of journalists and human rights defenders and create a safe and enabling environment for their work.

- Immediately end the practice of summary deportations without judicial review.

- Take concrete steps to expand the independence of the judiciary and to insulate the Supreme Constitutional Court from presidential influence.

- Reform the judicial selection and training process to enhance transparency and collaborate with civil society to improve the qualifications and skills of the judiciary.

- Revise or repeal Circular No. 10/2025 to ensure that all people in conflict with the law have unrestricted access to legal counsel at all times, particularly during interrogation.

- Conduct an independent investigation into the killings of Alawite judges in the coastal governorates.

- End practices that discriminate against women judicial candidates and women attorneys.

- Step up measures to ensure accountability for gender-based violence, including femicide.

- Amend the definition of rape to align it with international standards and ensure that survivors of sexual violence have access to remedies.

- In collaboration with civil society, undertake a thorough review of personal status laws to identify provisions that discriminate against women and prioritize amendments of such provisions.

- Establish legal aid clinics to assist women in obtaining civil documents such as marriage, death, and divorce certificates and to assist women whose spouses are detained or disappeared in retaining their housing.

- Repeal laws criminalizing religious conversion and banning religious organizations.

- Step up efforts to expand representation of religious and ethnic minorities in government.

- Ensure that any permanent constitution guarantees equal protection for all people regardless of religion or ethnicity.

- Conduct prompt, independent investigations into allegations of attacks on Alawite and Druze civilians, and end the pattern of impunity for documented sectarian killings targeting Alawite, Druze, and other minority communities.

- Repeal Article 520 of the Penal Code.

- Prosecute perpetrators of violence against LGBTIQ+ individuals.

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[1] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic* (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.4 Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Brazil); ¶ 133.5 Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and, until then, establish a moratorium on the application of the death penalty (Spain); ¶ 133.6 Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Lithuania); ¶ 133.7 Abolish the death penalty, ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and introduce an immediate moratorium on executions (Iceland); ¶ 133.8 Establish a moratorium on the application of the death penalty, with a view to its eventual abolition, and consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Latvia); ¶ 133.9 Introduce a moratorium on the application of the death penalty, as a first step towards its full abolition, and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Portugal).

[2] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic* (March 31,2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.140 Increase efforts towards providing human rights-related training programmes for the justice sector (Sri Lanka); ¶ 133.223 Further strengthen efforts, in particular through human rights education and awareness-raising campaigns, to protect children from violence of all kinds (Thailand); ¶ 133.230 Consider incorporating human rights elements into school curricula (Ethiopia); ¶ 133.236 Continue education and awareness-raising activities on international human rights treaties to which it is a party (Malaysia).

[3]*Syria: Hope Emerges Amid Ongoing Human Rights Challenges*, UN News, December 3, 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/12/1166498.
[4]*Syria: Hope Emerges Amid Ongoing Human Rights Challenges*, UN News, December 3, 2025, https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/12/1166498
[5] Human Rights Watch*, World Report 2026: Events of 2025* (New York: Human Rights Watch, Feb. 2026), 433, available online at http://www.hrw.org.
[6]*Focused Dialog Session: Opportunities and Challenges in Developing Comprehensive Model of Transitional Justice in Syria*, Syrians for Truth and Justice, April 23, 2025*,* https://stj-sy.org/en/focused-dialog-session-opportunities-and-challenges-in-developing-comprehensive-model-of-transitional-justice-in-syria/; Syrian Network for Human Rights*, The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: Syrian Network for Human Rights, Feb. 2025), 55, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/.
[7] Syrian Network for Human Rights*, The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: Syrian Network for Human Rights, Feb. 2025), 55, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/
[8] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Justice for Life, and Syria Justice and Accountability Centre, Syria's Transition: An Analysis of Selected Decisions and Decrees Issued in 2025* (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Apr. 2026), 3, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syrias-transition-an-analysis-of-selected-decisions-and-decrees-issued-in-2025/.
[9] *Syria: Curriculum Reform… An Ideological Unilateral Decision Lacking Legitimacy*, Syrians for Truth and Justice, May 15, 2025, https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-curriculum-reform-an-ideological-unilateral-decision-lacking-legitimacy/
[10] Syrians for Truth and Justice, Syria*: Curriculum Reform – An Ideological Unilateral Decision Lacking Legitimacy*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, May 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-curriculum-reform-an-ideological-unilateral-decision-lacking-legitimacy/.
[11] Syrians for Truth and Justice and Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights*, Focused Dialog Session: Opportunities and Challenges in Developing Comprehensive Model of Transitional Justice in Syria* (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Apr. 2025), 2, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/focused-dialog-session-opportunities-and-challenges-in-developing-comprehensive-model-of-transitional-justice-in-syria/; Syrian Network for Human Rights*, The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: Syrian Network for Human Rights, Feb. 2025), 56, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/
[12] Human Rights Watch, *Syria: New Government Restricts Aid Operations*, May 12, 2025, https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/05/12/syria-new-government-restricts-aid-operations.
[13] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6 ¶ 133.145 Disclose and investigate deaths in custody since 2011 (Ireland); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (June 1, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6/Add.1, ¶ 133.145.
[14] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.44 Provide records, locations, and names of all persons detained in government-controlled facilities (Uruguay); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (June 1, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6/Add.1, ¶ 133.44.
[15] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syrians for Truth and Justice submits a contribution to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Apr. 2026), 3, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syrians-for-truth-and-justice-submits-a-contribution-to-the-un-working-group-on-enforced-or-involuntary-disappearances/.
[16] Amnesty International, *Truth Still Buried: The Struggle for Justice of Disappeared People's Families in Syria*, (London: Amnesty International, Aug 2025), 8, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0167/2025/en/
[17] Amnesty International, *Truth Still Buried: The Struggle for Justice of Disappeared People's Families in Syria*, (London: Amnesty International, Aug. 2025), 30, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0167/2025/en/

[18] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *SNHR's Monthly Report on Arrests/Detention in Syria*, (United Kingdom: SNHR, Oct. 2025), 1, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/10/02/snhrs-monthly-report-on-arrests-detentions-in-syria-6/

[19] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*: Syrian Arab Republic, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.142 Combat impunity and ensure accountability for serious human rights violations and crimes committed, including sexual and gender-based violence and harassment (Republic of Korea); ¶ 133.143 Establish a national mechanism to identify and hold accountable all perpetrators engaged in human rights violations and abuses, especially arbitrary detention, torture, abduction and enforced disappearance (Poland).

[20] Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2026: Syria*, (New York: Human Rights Watch, Jan. 2025), 428, available online at https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/syria.

[21]Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2026: Syria*, (New York: Human Rights Watch, Jan. 2025), 428, available online at https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/syria.

[22] Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2026: Syria*, (New York: Human Rights Watch, Jan. 2025), 428, available online at https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/syria.

[23] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/.

[24] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review –Syria*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.5 (Spain); ¶ 133.7 (Iceland); ¶ 133.8 Establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a goal of abolition (Latvia); ¶ 133.9 Introduce a death penalty moratorium as a step toward abolition (Portugal); ¶ 133.104 Establish a moratorium as an interim measure before abolishment (Albania); ¶ 133.105 Establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a goal of abolition (Costa Rica); ¶ 133.106 Establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a goal of abolition (Fiji); ¶ 133.103 Abolish the death penalty (Lithuania); ¶ 133.107 (Holy See); ¶ 133.108 Engage in a process aimed at abolishing the death penalty (Romania); Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic* , (June 1, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6/Add.1, ¶ 133.7 ¶ 133.8, ¶ 133.9, ¶ 133.103, ¶ 133.104. ¶ 133.105, ¶ 133.106, ¶ 133.108.

[25] Amnesty International, *The State of the World's Human Rights: April 2026*, (London: Amnesty International, Apr. 2026), 347, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol10/0320/2026/en/

[26] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents: Tens of Thousands of Syrians Executed Without Fair Trial*, (Syrian Network for Human Rights, Feb. 14, 2025), 5-7, available online at https://snhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/R250207E.pdf; Penal Code of Syria, art. 43, No 148 June. 22, 1949.

[27] Law of Syria No. 49, art. 1, Jul, 7, 1980.

[28] Syria Narcotic Drugs Law, art. 39, Law No.2 Apr. 12, 1993.

[29] Syrian Penal Code, art. 263, Law No. 148, June. 22 1949.

[30] Syrian Penal Code, art. 266, Law No. 14, June. 22 1949.

[31] Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), *The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (Beirut: SNHR, February 14, 2025), 5, available online at https://snhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/R250207E.pdf.

[32] Syrian Network for Human Rights*, The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: Syrian Network for Human Rights, Feb. 2025), 8, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/

[33] Syrian Network for Human Rights*, The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: SNHR, Feb. 2025), 8, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/

[34] Amnesty International, *Truth Still Buried: The Struggle for Justice of Disappeared People's Families in Syria*, (London: Amnesty International, Aug 2025), 17, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0167/2025/en/

[35] Amnesty International, *Truth Still Buried: The Struggle for Justice of Disappeared People's Families in Syria*, (London: Amnesty International, Aug 2025), 17, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0167/2025/en/

[36] Amnesty International, *Truth Still Buried: The Struggle for Justice of Disappeared People's Families in Syria*, (London: Amnesty International, Aug 2025), 17, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0167/2025/en/

[37] Amnesty International, *Death Sentences and Executions 2024*, (London: Amnesty International Ltd., May 2025), 28, available online at https://www.amnesty.org.

[38] Amnesty International, *Death sentences and executions 2025*, at 8, 28 (London: Amnesty International, May 2026), 29, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/0778/2026/en/.

[39] Amnesty International, *Death sentences and executions 2025*, at 28 (London: Amnesty International, May 2026), 29, available online at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/0778/2026/en/.

[40] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Pathways to Criminal Accountability in Syria* (STJ, May 14, 2026), 33, available online at https://stj-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Pathways-to-Criminal-Accountability-in-Syria.pdf.

[41] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Death Penalty as a Tool of Political Repression and Elimination of Opponents*, (Paris: STJ, Oct. 10, 2024), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-death-penalty-as-a-tool-of-political-repression-and-elimination-of-opponents/.

[42] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Death Penalty as a Tool of Political Repression and Elimination of Opponents*, (Syrians for Truth and Justice, Oct. 10, 2024), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-death-penalty-as-a-tool-of-political-repression-and-elimination-of-opponents/.

[43] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.24 Adopt actions for the immediate cessation of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including sexual and gender-based violence in places of detention (Chile); ¶ 133.69 Criminalize, in both law and practice, the use of torture and other forms of cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment or punishment, and combat sexual violence (Holy See); ¶ 133.123 Put an end to all acts of torture, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and incommunicado detentions and release activists and human rights defenders arbitrarily detained (Italy).

[44]Syrian Network for Human Rights , *On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture: SNHR has Documented the Death of 15,383 Syrians Under Torture Since March 2011, with 157,287 Still Detained and/or Forcibly Disappeared* (United Kingdom: SNHR, June 2024), available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2024/06/26/on-the-international-day-in-support-of-victims-of-torture-snhr-has-documented-the-death-of-15383-syrians-under-torture-since-march-2011-with-157287-still-detained-and-or-forcibly-disappeared/.

[45] Syrian Network for Human Rights, T*he Fifteenth Annual Report on Human Rights Situation in Syria 2025: Syria's First Year of Transition* (United Kingdom: SNHR, Mar. 2026), 3, available online at: https://snhr.org/blog/2026/03/26/the-fifteenth-annual-report-on-human-rights-situation-in-syria-2025/

[46] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria* (Paris: STJ, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/

[47] Syrians for Truth and Justice and Synergy Association for Victims*, In the Absence of Accountability: Torture as a Systematic Policy in Northern Syria*, (Paris: STJ, June 2024), 6, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/in-the-absence-of-accountability-torture-as-a-systematic-policy-in-northern-syria/; Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/.

[48] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria* (Paris: STJ, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/

[49] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria* (Paris: STJ, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/

[50] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Torture Persists: Testimonies and Indicators Reveal Alarming Incidents in Post-Assad Syria* (Paris: STJ, June 2025), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/torture-persists-testimonies-and-indicators-reveal-alarming-incidents-in-post-assad-syria/

[51] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.15 (Austria); ¶ 133.37 (Canada); ¶ 133.40 (Norway); ¶ 133.55 (Belgium); ¶ 133.117 (Liechtenstein); ¶ 133.154 (Denmark); ¶ 133.154 Release those arbitrarily deprived of their

liberty and allow independent humanitarian organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, unconditional access to all formal, informal and secret detention facilities (Ireland); ¶ 133.162 (France); ¶ 133.171 (Estonia, Finland); ¶ 133.187 (Mexico); ¶ 133.218 (Botswana).

[52] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.117 (Liechtenstein); ¶ 133.171 (Estonia, Finland); ¶ 133.187 (Mexico); ¶ 133.218 (Botswana).

[53] Maggie Michael, *Syrians emptied Assad's prisons. They're filling up again, and abuse is rife*, Reuters Special Report (Dec. 22, 2025), available online at https://www.reuters.com/investigations/syrians-emptied-assads-prisons-theyre-filling-up-again-abuse-is-rife-2025-12-22/.

[54] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic* (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.54 Cease all forms of incommunicado detention and take all feasible measures, in line with Security Council resolution 2474 (2019), to find and reveal the fates of those detained or disappeared (Austria); ¶ 133.121 Put an immediate end to enforced disappearances and arbitrary and incommunicado detention and fully collaborate with the efforts of all actors involved in the process of finding and identifying disappeared persons (Switzerland); ¶ 133.122 Put an end to the practices of arbitrary arrest and detention, abduction, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment (Republic of Korea); ¶ 133.124 Cease the unacceptable practices of unlawful detention, torture and other cruel or inhuman treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence, and immediately release all civilians detained arbitrarily (Australia).

[55] Confidential source at 16-17, 2023, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.

[56] Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2025: Events of 2024* (New York: Human Rights Watch, January 2025), 447, available online at http://www.hrw.org.

[57] Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2026: Events of 2025* (New York: Human Rights Watch, February 2026), 430, available online at http://www.hrw.org.

[58] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *Quarterly Report on Cases of Arbitrary Arrest and Detention in Syria: No Less Than 210 Cases of Arbitrary Arrests and Detentions in the First Quarter of 2026* (Beirut: Syrian Network for Human Rights, Apr. 2026), 9, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2026/04/05/quarterly-report-on-cases-of-arbitrary-arrest-and-detention-in-syria/.

[59] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *Quarterly Report on Cases of Arbitrary Arrest and Detention in Syria: No Less than 210 Cases of Arbitrary Arrests and Detentions in the First Quarter of 2026* (United Kingdom:: SNHR, April 5, 2026), 7–10, available online at https://snhr.org.

[60] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Documentation of Enforced Disappearances and Arbitrary Arrests in the al-Qadam Neighborhood of Damascus* (Paris: STJ, June 23, 2025), 2, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-documentation-of-enforced-disappearances-and-arbitrary-arrests-in-the-al-qadam-neighborhood-of-damascus/16.1; Syrians for Truth and Justice , *Syria: Arrests and Abuse of Kurds During Aleppo Escalation (January 2026)* (Paris: STJ, April 9, 2026), 2, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-arrests-and-abuse-of-kurds-during-aleppo-escalation-january-2026/.

[61] Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Human Rights Update on Syria* (Geneva: OHCHR, April 28, 2026), 2, available online at https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2026/04/human-rights-update-syria.

[62] Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Human Rights Update on Syria* (Geneva: OHCHR, April 28, 2026), 2, available online at https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2026/04/human-rights-update-syria.

[63] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic* (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6/Add.1, ¶ 133.152 Prohibit the trial of civilians in military field courts (Lithuania); ¶ 133.161 Ensure access to, and the independence of, the judicial system in order to provide redress for victims (Holy See).

[64] Mariam Janjalia, *Current Constitutional Law and Court System in the Syrian Arab Republic*, *GlobaLex* (New York: NYU School of Law, March 2025), available online at https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/syria1.html.

[65] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: SNHR, February 14, 2025), 25, available online at https://snhr.org/blog/2025/02/14/the-death-penalty-in-syrian-law-and-its-exploitation-by-the-assad-regime-to-eliminate-dissidents/ Rights

[66] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: SNHR, February 14, 2025), 16-17, available online at https://snhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/R250207E.pdf.
[67] Syrian Network for Human Rights, *The Death Penalty in Syrian Law and Its Exploitation by the Assad Regime to Eliminate Dissidents* (United Kingdom: SNHR, February 14, 2025), 23-27, available online at https://snhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/R250207E.pdf.
[68] Constitutional Declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, Article 48(1)-(2).
[69] Constitutional Declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, Article 47(2); Human Rights Watch, *Syria: Constitutional Declaration Risks Endangering Rights* (Beirut: Human Rights Watch, March 25, 2025), available online at https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/03/25/syria-constitutional-declaration-risks-endangering-rights.
[70] Constitutional Declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, Article 51.
[71] Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), *Syria: The Newly Created Position of "Sheikh/Head of the Judicial Directorate": Entrenching Loyalties at the Expense of Judicial Independence* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, 2025), 2–3, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-the-newly-created-position-of-sheikh-head-of-the-judicial-directorate-entrenching-loyalties-at-the-expense-of-judicial-independence/.
[72] Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), *Syria: The Newly Created Position of "Sheikh/Head of the Judicial Directorate": Entrenching Loyalties at the Expense of Judicial Independence* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Oct. 2025), 2–5, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-the-newly-created-position-of-sheikh-head-of-the-judicial-directorate-entrenching-loyalties-at-the-expense-of-judicial-independence/.
[73] Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), *Syria: The Newly Created Position of "Sheikh/Head of the Judicial Directorate": Entrenching Loyalties at the Expense of Judicial Independence* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Oct. 2025), 4, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-the-newly-created-position-of-sheikh-head-of-the-judicial-directorate-entrenching-loyalties-at-the-expense-of-judicial-independence/.
[74] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Ministry of Interior Circular on Lawyers' "Passive Presence"" During Interrogation: Nominal Safeguards, Limited Protection*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Feb. 2026), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-ministry-of-interior-circular-on-lawyers-passive-presence-during-interrogation-nominal-safeguards-limited-protection/.
[75] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Ministry of Interior Circular on Lawyers' "Passive Presence" During Interrogation: Nominal Safeguards, Limited Protection*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Feb. 2026), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-ministry-of-interior-circular-on-lawyers-passive-presence-during-interrogation-nominal-safeguards-limited-protection/.
[76] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Ministry of Interior Circular on Lawyers' "Passive Presence" During Interrogation: Nominal Safeguards, Limited Protection*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Feb. 2026), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-ministry-of-interior-circular-on-lawyers-passive-presence-during-interrogation-nominal-safeguards-limited-protection/.
[77] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria: Ministry of Interior Circular on Lawyers' "Passive Presence" During Interrogation: Nominal Safeguards, Limited Protection*, (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, Feb. 2026), available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-ministry-of-interior-circular-on-lawyers-passive-presence-during-interrogation-nominal-safeguards-limited-protection/.
[78] Confidential source at 24, 2023, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.
[79] Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), *Syria: Arbitrary and Extrajudicial Killings Target Civilians Ahead of Coastal Violence* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, June 12, 2025), 1–2, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-arbitrary-and-extrajudicial-killings-target-civilians-ahead-of-coastal-violence/.
[80] Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), "*The Unwritten Pass": Employment Exclusion and Discrimination in State Institutions During the Transitional Phase* (Online: Syrians for Truth and Justice, June 2026), 6–8, available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/the-unwritten-pass-employment-exclusion-and-discrimination-in-state-institutions-during-the-transitional-phase/.
[81] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.245 Provide women with the opportunity to fully participate in society including the reconciliation process (Viet Nam); ¶ 133.252 Strengthen laws encouraging public participation of women (Lebanon); ¶ 133.70 Review the Personal Status Law, to remove the provisions that are discriminatory towards women (Czechia); ¶ 133.83 Take steps to prevent sexual and gender-based violence against women, girls, men, boys, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, persons with disabilities and ethnic and religious

minorities, and hold perpetrators thereof accountable (Albania); ¶ 133.84 Remove from the relevant laws the provisions that are discriminatory against women (Estonia); ¶ 133.85 Continue with policy and legislative measures for promoting gender equality and combating gender-based discrimination (India); ¶ 133.87 Take legislative and policy measures to ensure non-discrimination against women and girls, including by withdrawing all reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Finland); ¶ 133.178 Carry out effective measures to combat sexual and gender-based violence and trafficking in women and girls (Nepal); ¶ 133.182 Repeal laws and cease all practices that restrict the rights of individuals to housing, land and property, due to too strict deadlines and undue restrictions based on political affiliation, civil status, gender, lack of identity documents or military service status (Switzerland); ¶ 133.207 Strengthen efforts to address violence against women, children and all persons on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity, including through measures to prevent violence and support survivors and by removing obstacles that prevent access to justice (Fiji); ¶ 133.212 Intensify the fight against gender-based violence and help to overcome the barriers that vulnerable women face in gaining access to care service (Peru); ¶ 133.213 Take further steps to address violence against women and children, including by ensuring the provision of accessible and adequate support services for victims (Philippines); ¶ 133.243 Increase equal participation of women in decision-making (South Sudan); ¶ 133.253 Empower women to participate in decision-making (Italy); ¶ 133.244 Amend the provisions in the Personal Status Law and the Citizenship Law that are discriminatory against women, specifically in the areas of marriage, divorce, inheritance, marital property and the granting of citizenship to children (Sweden); ¶ 133.246 Continue with its efforts to strengthen institutional frameworks to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedom of its people, especially women, children and the most vulnerable (Nigeria); ¶ 133.249 Accelerate efforts to promote and protect the rights of all women and girls, in particular those who have been victims of the armed conflict, ensuring that resources are available for their implementation (Chile); ¶ 133.250 Adopt measures to guarantee the public and political participation of women in national institutions and mechanisms for reconciliation and rectify any provision that fosters discrimination or violence against women and girl (Mexico); ¶ 133.254 Take concrete steps to eliminate sexual abuse and violence in all situations, particularly against women and children (Indonesia).

[82] Human Rights Watch, *Syria*: *Events of 2025* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2025), available online at https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/syria.

[83] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Syria's Transitional Phase: "Honor" Killings Persist Amid Failing Protection and Legal Response* (Paris: Syrians for Truth and Justice, June 19, 2025) available online at https://stj-sy.org/en/syrias-transitional-phase-honor-killings-persist-amid-failing-protection-and-legal-response/.

[84] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Pathways to Criminal Accountability in Syria* (*Syrians for Truth and Justice*, May 14, 2026), 35–36, available online at https://stj-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Pathways-to-Criminal-Accountability-in-Syria.pdf

[85] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Pathways to Criminal Accountability in Syria* (*Syrians for Truth and Justice*, May 14, 2026), 35–36, available online at https://stj-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Pathways-to-Criminal-Accountability-in-Syria.pdf

[86] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Pathways to Criminal Accountability in Syria* (*Syrians for Truth and Justice*, May 14, 2026), 36, available online at https://stj-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Pathways-to-Criminal-Accountability-in-Syria.pdf

[87] Syrians for Truth and Justice, *Pathways to Criminal Accountability in Syria* (*Syrians for Truth and Justice*, May 14, 2026), 36, available online at https://stj-sy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Pathways-to-Criminal-Accountability-in-Syria.pdf

[88] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.83 Take steps to prevent sexual and gender-based violence against women, girls, men, boys, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, persons with disabilities and ethnic and religious minorities, and hold perpetrators thereof accountable (Albania); ¶ 133.**88** Support efforts to resume the work of the Constitutional Committee towards consensus on a constitution that preserves the rights and freedoms of all Syrians without discrimination (Egypt); ¶ 133.**89** Conduct a review of national laws and repeal any provisions that are discriminatory against ethnic and religious minorities (Lithuania); ¶ 133.**90** Preserve coexistence between all cultural and religious components of Syrian society (Lebanon); ¶ 133.**93** Involve fully all religious and ethnic groups in a transparent and inclusive negotiating process with a view to building a peaceful future (Holy See); ¶ 133.**109** Cease all deliberate, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks against civilians and end all restrictions on religious freedoms for Christians and other minorities (Australia).

[89] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.83 Take steps to prevent sexual and gender-based violence against women, girls, men, boys, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, persons with disabilities and ethnic and religious minorities, and hold perpetrators thereof accountable (Albania); ¶ 133.86 Reaffirm its commitment to the principles of equality and non-discrimination, including through the prompt decriminalization of sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex and taking measures to protect homosexual persons from sexual violence and other serious violations of which they are victims (Uruguay); ¶ 133.91 Decriminalize consensual, adult, same-sex relations (Italy); ¶ 133.92 Decriminalize sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex (Iceland); ¶ 133.259 Put an end to the recruitment and use of minors in conflicts and stop attacks against civilians, especially women, lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex populations, persons with disabilities, refugees and minors (Costa Rica); ¶ 133.207 Strengthen efforts to address violence against women, children and all persons on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity, including through measures to prevent violence and support survivors and by removing obstacles that prevent access to justice (Fiji).

[90] Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Syrian Arab Republic*, (March 31, 2022), U.N. Doc. A/HRC/50/6, ¶ 133.89 Conduct a review of national laws and repeal any provisions that are discriminatory against ethnic and religious minorities (Lithuania); ¶ 133.90 Preserve coexistence between all cultural and religious components of Syrian society (Lebanon).

[91] Confidential source at 2, 2026, on file with The Advocates for Human Rights.

[92] *Id.* at 3.

[93] Guardians of Equality Movement, *Syria: The Legal Position on LGBTQIA+ Individuals' "Fear of Entering the Police Station and Not Exiting"* (Winnipeg: Guardians of Equality Movement, May 2026), 5, available online at https://guardiansgem.org/syria-the-legal-position-on-lgbtqia-individuals-fear-of-entering-the-police-station-and-not-exiting/.

[94] Guardians of Equality Movement, *LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Syria After the Fall of the Assad Regime* (Winnipeg: Guardians of Equality Movement, Apr. 2025), 2, available online at https://guardiansgem.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/LGBTQIA-individuals-in-Syria-after-the-fall-of-the-Assad-regime-Report-EN.pdf.

[95] Guardians of Equality Movement, *LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Syria After the Fall of the Assad Regime* (Winnipeg: Guardians of Equality Movement, Apr. 2025), 2, available online at https://guardiansgem.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/LGBTQIA-individuals-in-Syria-after-the-fall-of-the-Assad-regime-Report-EN.pdf.

[96] Guardians of Equality Movement, *LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Syria After the Fall of the Assad Regime* (Winnipeg: Guardians of Equality Movement, Apr. 2025), 2, available online at https://guardiansgem.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/LGBTQIA-individuals-in-Syria-after-the-fall-of-the-Assad-regime-Report-EN.pdf.

[97] Guardians of Equality Movement, *LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Syria After the Fall of the Assad Regime* (Winnipeg: Guardians of Equality Movement, Apr. 2025), 2, available online at https://guardiansgem.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/LGBTQIA-individuals-in-Syria-after-the-fall-of-the-Assad-regime-Report-EN.pdf.