



**PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**Security Council Briefing  
on the situation in the Middle East (Syria)  
21 May 2025**

Greece's Statement delivered  
by H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Mr. George Gerapetritis

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At the outset, let me thank Special Envoy Pedersen, dear Geir, as well as OCHA Director Rajasingham for their briefings.

Change is usually gradual and one does not come so often across a seismic shift; The fall of the former regime in Syria, in the beginning of December, was such a shift. Hope was rekindled for the Syrian people, whether residing in their country or spread around the globe. As the Secretary General has said, we must keep this flame of hope alive, despite challenges that could extinguish it.

Today, Syria has a historic opportunity to achieve progress and prosperity and to be a factor of stability for the wider region. Historically tied with the Syrian people, Greece wholeheartedly supports and will continue supporting these efforts. It was in this spirit that I visited Damascus as early as February, and have since taken part in international conferences in Paris and in Brussels. We are ready to contribute more to the reconstruction of Syria and to ensure the preservation of its rich ethnic and religious diversity.

Today, I would like to highlight the following three points:

First, Syria will thrive once a fully inclusive political transition, in line with the principles of UN Security Council Resolution 2254, has been completed.

Syria's wealth and greatness lies in the diversity of its people. A mosaic of different parts, all capable of flourishing together in peace and harmony. In this sense, its transitional government must stay the course of political inclusiveness and openness. One that ensures the protection and integration of all components of Syrian society, be it Christian, Alawite, Druze, or Kurdish. And one that includes the active participation of all Syrians, including women.

Some positive signs, as expressed by Special Envoy Pedersen, need to be further enhanced.

We believe that there is a lot of room for improvement in this regard. The transitional government should ensure full political representation for all Syrians, taking account of the demographic structure of the country and building credible and representative Institutions. Also, the Constitution to follow the Constitutional Declaration must echo the voices of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society, rich in cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. We believe that keeping the National Dialogue alive, with the inclusion of civil society and other voices of all backgrounds, is crucial in this respect.

The agreement reached between the SDF and Damascus on March 10th is valuable, committing the parties to engaging non-violently. We believe addressing issues such as the Tishreen Dam, which constitutes critical infrastructure for ensuring water and energy security, is a positive step. We remain vigilant on the agreement's implementation, hoping it will contribute to regional stability. The transitional Government should ensure that armed groups in the north of the country do not disrupt this process. We call on all regional actors to refrain from violence or inviting escalation in this regard.

The withdrawal of foreign fighters and the integration of all armed groups into national security forces, while ensuring that all terrorist and violent extremist elements are excluded, as part of a wider and robust effort of security sector reform, is a prerequisite for internal security and political stability.

Second: we expect the transitional government to ensure accountability and promote transitional justice. Any regression in this task will prove detrimental. This Council very strongly condemned sectarian violence, culminating in the tragic death of some thousand innocent civilians, mostly Alawites and Christians, in the coastal region in March; and expects the outcome of the Investigative Committee established to be published soon. Perpetrators must be brought to justice and accountability served.

We are equally concerned by the violence that erupted in the South, mostly targeting members of the Druze community. For Syria to turn the page, no effort can be spared to end sectarian violence. It is crucial that the transitional authorities maintain order, ensure control over armed groups, protect all Syrians regardless of their background, and hold all perpetrators accountable without delay, in line with international law norms and standards. Greece calls for a swift, transparent, credible and impartial investigation by the Investigative Committee and for the relevant UN mechanisms to be allowed to also investigate these crimes.

All Syrians should be able to live without fear.

We welcomed the participation of Foreign Minister Shaibani at the General Assembly discussion on the latest report of the Triple-I Mechanism (IIIM), as well as his expressed willingness to cooperate with international mechanisms for promoting accountability. The transitional government owes it to the Syrian people to hold to its word on the following steps, and the world is eager to see their deeds matching their rhetoric.

Which brings me to my third point: all of the above transpires against the backdrop of a truly precarious and challenging economic and security situation. As outlined in the briefings we

listened to today, Syria faces widespread destruction and devastation. For this reason, Greece was among those who pledged their tangible support for Syria's recovery at the 9th Brussels Conference in March. Greece remains committed to supporting Syrians as they rebuild their nation and strive toward a free and democratic future.

Equally, the EU was swift in suspending certain restrictive measures as part of a gradual, conditional and reversible approach to support Syria. We shall continue, ever-vigilant, to closely monitor developments, with the aim to examine further suspensions on the basis of concrete progress on accountability, inclusivity of the political process as well as continuous respect of International Law, the International Law of the Sea and respect of the sovereign rights of neighboring States.

The announcement by President Trump of lifting US sanctions presents a big opportunity for Syria, which has to work closely with all of its neighbors so as to promote regional stability and cooperation.

Supporting Syria is also crucial in a context where the threat of radical groups re-emerging is present, and where foreign fighters may still roam free. Ensuring the viability and security of camps holding ISIS fighters and their relatives in Northeast Syria is critical in this regard.

Ultimately, supporting the stability of Syria will allow its rich and talented diaspora to safely and voluntarily return home, as they deserve.

Last but not least, we would be remiss not to reiterate our full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, which must be fully respected by all, upholding relevant international agreements and UNSC Resolutions. International Law, including for the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as the sovereignty and sovereign rights of neighbouring states must be respected.

Dear colleagues,

In conclusion, Greece wants to see Syria succeed and become a peaceful and prosperous country, to the benefit first and foremost of the Syrian people, but also of the wider region and as symbol for the world at large that a country can indeed make a comeback even from the most adverse circumstances. To get there, we believe its leadership should embrace a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned truly inclusive political transition, promoting accountability, transitional justice and viable reconciliation. We fully support the role of the UN and Special Envoy Pedersen along this track.

Thank you.