



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



**Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East (Syria)
13 February 2026**

Statement delivered by
H.E. Ambassador Aglaia Balta,
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York

Thank you Mr. President.

I would like also to thank OCHA Director Ms. Lisa Doughten for her substantive report and Ms. Muzna Dureid for her clear messages.

We warmly welcome Mr. Cordone's briefing as Deputy Special Envoy for Syria, reaffirming the United Nation's role as a reliable and trusted partner of the Syrian government.

We strongly support a renewed and constructive engagement between Syria and the UN in this regard.

Mr. President,

Syria enters another year with signs of gradual progress toward de-escalation, regional engagement and recovery. 2025 has been a landmark year for Syria. We acknowledge the progress achieved so far.

The path forward must rest on full respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria.

Greece remains ready to engage and contribute to the development and prosperity of the country.

At the same time, significant challenges remain.

In 2026, it is important to promote more efficiently a fully inclusive political process that reflects the country's rich mosaic of communities.

As all Syrians, regardless of their ethnic or religious background, desire to feel fully protected and actively integrated in a pluralistic, inclusive political transition, as well as in the composition of the security forces.

We express the hope and expectation that the filling of the remaining parliamentary seats will compensate for the underrepresented components of the Syrian society.

Without inclusivity and balanced representation, peace will remain fragile and incomplete, as we unfortunately witnessed during the violence against Alawites, Druze and Christians last year.

Recent developments in the Northeast also highlight both risk and opportunity.

As this Council expressed in its latest Press Statement, all actors must work together toward cementing the January 30th Agreement.

Kurds should be fully integrated into Syrian society in a manner that provides them with a sense of protection, security, and with their political and cultural rights safeguarded.

In this direction, the Presidential decree formally recognizing Kurdish identity and incentivizing inclusivity is a most welcome step.

Extremism must be accordingly addressed, so as to avoid any relapse into violence, whether from within or beyond Syrian borders.

Terrorism remains a corrosive force that feeds on instability and prolongs suffering.

Counterterrorism efforts must go in hand with reforms in the security sector, as well as with full and independent access on the ground in order to counter misinformation.

Moreover, the security of the DAESH/ISIS detainee camps must be fully safeguarded.

We express our appreciation for Iraq's decision to temporarily detain ISIL/DAESH terrorists in Iraqi controlled-facilities. Both countries must work together to ensure that no security vacuum emerges.

We also welcome recent initiatives toward regional dialogue, including the agreement between Syria and Lebanon on detainees and progress on border delimitation. Respect for international law, including the international law of the Sea, is crucial in this regard.

Cooperation across the region remains a cornerstone for preventing relapse and advancing reconciliation.

Finally, the path to recovery will falter without urgent and decisive international support, amid a dire humanitarian situation.

Millions live between displacement and despair. Food insecurity is rising. Health systems are overstretched. Basic services continue to erode.

For many, humanitarian assistance is not a bridge to recovery, but the final buffer against collapse. Humanitarian access must be, thus, unhindered.

Conditions for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons, including those displaced in Aleppo and the Northeast, must be also created.

Greece has financially contributed to various humanitarian fields. We are ready to stand by the Syrians and actively participate in the recovery of the country.

In closing, Mr. President,

This Council's visit to Damascus last December was more than symbolic.

It sent a clear message: Syria is not alone.

The United Nations remains indispensable to Syria's path toward reconciliation.

Greece reiterates its strong support for a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned political process based on the key principles listed in Security Council Resolution 2254.

To that end, we strongly believe that the effectiveness of the UN engagement would be further enhanced by the relocation of the Office of the Special Envoy to Damascus and the nomination of a new Special Envoy.

Proximity matters as dialogue requires access.

Greece stands ready to work with all members of this Council to help Syria achieve stability, inclusivity, and a peaceful future based on coexistence.

I thank you.