



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Briefing on
the Situation in the Middle East (Syria)
Friday 15 May 2026**

Greece's Statement delivered
by H.E. Ambassador Aglaia Balta
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations

Thank you, Mr. President,

I wish to thank Deputy Special Envoy Claudio Cordone and USG Tom Fletcher for briefing on the pressing matters at hand. In the midst of increased regional volatility, Syria's leadership is demonstrating restraint and insulating the country from instability. We commend it for doing so. Against this backdrop, let me stress the following points.

First, the protection and meaningful political participation of all Syrians, including women, and regardless of ethnicity and religion, must be ensured. This applies to political affairs, governance, administration and the security sector. The Syrian Government has repeatedly stated its willingness to live up to these expectations. We would welcome more tangible steps in this direction, making sure that all ethnic and religious communities feel fully represented. Likewise, the delivery of credible transitional justice and accountability is a necessary complement in order for Syria's reconciliation and recovery to proceed on a solid foundation. Progress along this track, with the recent trials and apprehension of those accused of orchestrating the suffering of the Syrian people, is crucial for healing the wounds of the past.

We hope that justice, delivered according to international standards and norms, will bring much needed closure and comfort to the Syrian people. Paying tribute to the victims of the Syrian civil war, we hope for catharsis. Alongside progress made, substantial work still lies ahead, as the latest tensions in a predominantly Greek Orthodox city indicated. Steps aimed at fostering cohesion, including the recognition of Kurdish identity, are welcome. Full implementation of the agreement between Damascus and the SDF must ensue, while all communities, including the Kurds, should see their rights protected in the country's legal system.

Second, Syria will find that it has the good-faith support of the international community, as long as it progresses along a genuinely inclusive political transition. Earlier this week, the first EU-Syria High Level Political Dialogue took place in Brussels. Before this, Cyprus

had hosted an informal Summit between EU and regional leaders, attended by President Al-Shaara. Both occasions indicate the mutual good faith invested by the international community and the Syrian leadership in a Syrian-led transitional process and the country's recovery. Albeit with clear expectations, which Syria needs to live up to; be it on the protection of all Syrians, regardless of background, or the pursuing of good neighbourly relations in full accordance with international law.

In this vein, the recent visit of the Lebanese Prime Minister in Damascus and signs of a willingness to chart a new path in the Syrian-Lebanese relationship are most encouraging. We fully support the compelling vision of a Syria that is at peace with itself and its neighbours, and stress anew our full support for its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

Third, Mr. President, the briefing by USG Fletcher demonstrated once more the serious humanitarian needs in Syria following the devastation of the Syrian civil war, now in the midst of rising energy and food prices because of the war in Iran. With nearly 16 million people in need, the recent launch of the 2026 Humanitarian Peace and Response Plan underscores the urgency required. The protection of children must remain at the vanguard of our efforts. The situation in al Hol and al Roj camps remains deeply concerning as children face poor living conditions and serious risks of radicalization.

Similarly, Syrian schoolchildren have lost far too many school days; hindered by attacks on education facilities and threatened by unexploded ordnance, which render demining efforts crucial. Greece is examining ways to provide Syria with assistance on this front.

In conclusion, Mr. President, Greece remains steadfast in support of a prosperous Syria, where all Syrians feel genuinely represented and protected, worthy of the aspirations of its great people. The UN is a critical partner in this journey—which is why we continue to advocate for the timely relocation of the Special Envoy's Office in Damascus.

I thank you.