



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



## **Security Council Briefing on the situation in the Middle East (Syria) 12 October 2026**

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

---

I wish to thank the Deputy Special Envoy, Claudio Cordone, and ASG, Mohamed Yahya, for their briefings. I also wish to thank Mr. George Batah of Syrian Youth Empowerment and Mr. Hajir Maalim of Plan International for putting the spotlight of our briefing on education and the protection of children.

Colleagues,

Education must lie at the core of Syria's recovery. As the Greek Prime Minister said in his annual address to the General Assembly last month, Syria is key to the region—as lasting stability in the Middle East, requires a stable and peaceful Syria. A Syria that is inclusive, free from foreign interference and regional rivalries, and where every citizen can and should feel secure.

The new Syrian Authorities have taken steps in this direction. Yet further concrete progress must be demonstrated, particularly when it comes to protecting the rights and security of all religious and ethnic communities.

The recent violence in Suqaylabiyah and Homs is a troubling reminder of the fragility of social cohesion and the continuing security concerns facing Syria's communities. In this context, we have also seen reports of renewed violence affecting the Orthodox Christian community, among others, following earlier incidents this year.

These developments underscore a point Greece has consistently made in this Council: all Syrians must feel genuinely represented, protected and included in the transition process. Syria's recovery cannot be sustainable unless every community—whether religious or ethnic—has confidence that its security, rights and identity are fully respected.

This is particularly important when we consider Syria's children. After years of conflict, millions of Syrian children have lost precious years of education. Schools and educational infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed. Teachers and families have been displaced. Unexploded ordnance continues to threaten children on their way to school and in their communities.

The protection of children must therefore remain at the forefront of our efforts. We welcome the commitment of the Syrian Authorities to engage with the United Nations on a plan to end and prevent grave violations against children, and call for its swift adoption and implementation.

Education is an investment in Syria's social cohesion, resilience and long-term stability. A generation deprived of education risks perpetuating the wounds and divisions of conflict. Syria cannot afford a lost generation of children. Investment in education is therefore an investment in Syria's future, and in its youth.

Syria's recovery will ultimately be measured by the kind of future it offers to Syrian children, boys and girls. They must have schools to attend, teachers to guide them, communities in which they feel safe, and the opportunity to grow up without inheriting the divisions of the past.

We echo the call of the DSC for the authorities to review recent guidelines and assure equal access to higher education free from discrimination.

As a consistent advocate for the protection of Children in Armed Conflict during its Security Council tenure, Greece remains committed to supporting the Syrian people and to working with the UN towards a peaceful, prosperous and inclusive Syria in full respect of its sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and with the rights and freedoms of all its citizens fully safeguarded.

I thank you.