

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2026

Foundation for the Development of Western Syria Hosts Congressional Briefing Marking One-Year Anniversary of Coastal Syria Massacre

Washington, DC – The Foundation for the Development of Western Syria (the “Foundation”) yesterday hosted a congressional briefing in the U.S. House of Representatives to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the March 2025 massacre targeting Alawite and Christian communities in coastal Syria.

The briefing brought together Members of Congress, congressional staff, and leading human rights and foreign policy experts, alongside representatives of Syria’s Alawite, Christian, Druze, and Kurdish communities, as well as prominent Jewish human rights leaders. The discussion was grounded in the scale of the March 2025 atrocities, which killed thousands of Alawite and Christian civilians, displaced tens of thousands, and targeted religious and community institutions across coastal Syria.

The primary objective of the briefing was to place documented evidence and archival records of violations against Alawites, Christians, and other minority communities directly before international decision-makers, ensuring these abuses are formally recognized and acted upon.

The Foundation-sponsored and organized-event focused on educating policymakers about the ongoing plight of minority communities, including continued reports of targeted killings, kidnappings, and trafficking of women, and on advancing a vision for a stable, inclusive, and peaceful Syria where all communities are protected. The Foundation extends its sincere gratitude to Congressman Ryan Mackenzie (R-PA) for his moral clarity and leadership in sponsoring the briefing.

Speakers represented a broad cross-section of Syrian communities and international experts, providing firsthand accounts and policy analysis:

- Congressman Scott Perry (R-PA) expressed concern over the current Syrian regime under Ahmed al-Sharaa, warning that attacks on minorities have intensified following the lifting of U.S. sanctions in December. He cautioned that superficial changes in leadership must not obscure past extremist affiliations and vowed to continue advocating for the protection of all Syrian minorities.
- Congressman Ryan Mackenzie (R-PA) noted that his district is home to one of the largest Syrian diaspora populations in the United States and emphasized the importance of keeping Congress informed to enable meaningful action.
- Sheikh Ghazal Ghazal, spiritual leader of the Alawites, spoke of brotherhood and equality among all people and urged Congress to protect vulnerable minorities, including Alawites and Christians, referencing the bombing of Mar Elias Church. He further outlined key principles for Syria’s future: (1) the need for fundamental political transformation that addresses the root

causes of the Syrian crisis and fulfills the legitimate aspirations of those who took to the streets in peaceful protest; (2) the establishment of a state governed by institutions and a consensual constitution that guarantees justice, equality, and fundamental rights for all citizens; and (3) the adoption of a decentralized political system within a comprehensive federal framework to ensure genuine and equitable participation for all Syrian communities, paving the way for lasting peace and stability.

- Dr. Charles Jacobs, President of the International Freedom Coalition, drew parallels to persecution in other regions and highlighted the enslavement and abuse of minorities and women in Syria.
- Dr. Walid Phares, foreign policy expert and professor of international relations, warned of ongoing jihadist attacks targeting Syria's indigenous populations.
- Mr. Oudai Abouassaf, President of the Druze Global PAC, underscored the suffering of the Druze community under the current regime.
- Mr. Tom Harb, co-chair of the American Mideast Coalition for Democracy, emphasized the continued persecution of Christians in Syria, a land central to early Christianity.
- Ms. Christina Abraham, Executive Director of the Ethnikos Association of Latakia-Antaradus, detailed extensive research published by her organization over the past year on attacks against Alawites and Christians, including the trafficking of women in Syria.
- Dr. Bryson Okeoma, Foreign Minister of the Biafra Republic Government in Exile, expressed solidarity with Syria's minorities and drew comparisons to the suffering of his own Biafran community in West Africa.
- Brig. Gen. Amir Avivi (Ret.) of the Israel Defense Forces described the ongoing violence perpetrated by the Jolani (al-Sharaa) regime against Druze, Alawite, Kurdish, and Christian communities and highlighted Israel's role in protecting vulnerable populations.
- Inana Barakat, Director of the Anat Organization for Justice and Human Rights, delivered a harrowing testimony on the systematic atrocities faced by Syrians and minority communities following the rise of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Her remarks highlighted: (1) the emergence of a more violent regime engaged in systematic sectarian cleansing; (2) documented evidence of approximately 3,500 extrajudicial killings, 10,000 detainees who had surrendered voluntarily, and 100,000 displaced Alawites now in Lebanon; (3) disturbing testimonies of systematic rape and torture, including cases such as Fahd and Layla, used as tools of sectarian intimidation; (4) the risk of radicalizing future generations through extremist educational curricula; and (5) urgent calls for independent international investigative mechanisms, the establishment of protections for minority communities, and full accountability for war crimes under international law.

The briefing elevated urgent concerns within Congress about escalating violence against minorities and underscored the need for sustained U.S. engagement on Syria.

“One year after the massacre, the message from this briefing is clear: the international community cannot look away,” said Mohammad Shabaan, President of the Foundation for the Development of Western Syria. “We brought together voices from across communities and political perspectives to ensure that these crimes are recognized and that concrete steps are taken to protect Syria’s minorities and secure a just and lasting peace.”

The Foundation reiterated its call for an independent international investigation into the March 2025 massacre, robust security guarantees for vulnerable communities, and a comprehensive political framework that safeguards the rights and freedoms of all Syrians. The Foundation will continue engaging with international partners to advance accountability and long-term protections for Syria’s minority communities.

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Disseminated by Tiger Hill Partners, a registered foreign agent, on behalf of the Foundation for the Development of Western Syria through Joseph E. Schmitz PLLC. More information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2026

**Foundation for the Development of Western Syria to Host Congressional Briefing Today
Marking One-Year Anniversary of March 2025 Massacre of Alawites and Christians**

Washington, DC – The Foundation for the Development of Western Syria (the “Foundation”) will host a bipartisan congressional briefing this afternoon on Capitol Hill to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the March 2025 massacre that devastated Alawite and Christian communities across Latakia and Syria’s coastal region.

The briefing will bring together Members of Congress from both political parties, alongside representatives of Syria’s diverse communities – including Alawite, Christian, Druze, and Kurdish leaders – as well as prominent foreign policy and Middle East experts.

The event will honor the victims of the March 2025 atrocities, which claimed thousands of civilian lives, displaced tens of thousands, and targeted religious and community institutions across coastal Syria. It will also serve as a platform to discuss the path forward for a stable, peaceful, and inclusive Syria where all minorities are protected and respected.

Participants will focus on advancing accountability, strengthening protections for vulnerable populations, and supporting an inclusive political framework that preserves Syria’s pluralistic heritage.

“This briefing is an opportunity not only to remember those we lost, but to bring together policymakers and community leaders committed to ensuring that such atrocities are never repeated,” said Mohammad Shabaan, President of the Foundation. “A durable peace in Syria must be built on justice, dignity, and equal rights for all its people.”

The Foundation continues to call for an independent international investigation into the March 2025 massacre, robust security guarantees for minority communities, and a comprehensive political settlement that safeguards the rights and freedoms of all Syrians.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2026

Dangerous Escalation Targeting the Christian Community in Syria and Threatening Civil Peace

Syria – The Foundation for the Development of Western Syria (the “Foundation”) expresses its strongest condemnation of a series of extremist attacks and coordinated movements witnessed across several Syrian provinces. These developments represent a dangerous escalation that threatens Syria’s social fabric and specifically targets the country’s indigenous Christian community.

I. Attack on the City of Al-Suqaylabiyah

According to field sources, a coordinated attack was carried out by armed groups originating from Qalaat al-Madiq, reportedly operating under the protection and support of the so-called “General Security Service.” The assault targeted the Christian-majority city of Al-Suqaylabiyah in the Hama countryside. Local sources in Hama also report that armed groups have destroyed a statue of the Virgin Mary in the Al-Abra neighborhood of Al-Suqaylabiyah. This act of vandalism serves as a direct symbolic assault against the Christian community and underscores the level of targeted incitement.

The Foundation has documented the following:

- **Direct Sectarian Targeting:** Heavy gunfire directed at residential homes, places of worship, and commercial properties, causing widespread fear among civilians.
- **Systematic Looting and Vandalism:** Organized attacks on private property, theft of motorcycles, and destruction of public infrastructure.
- **Risk of Forced Displacement:** These acts constitute a grave threat to the Christian population in the area and raise serious concerns about potential displacement under coercion and violence.

II. Cross-Provincial Escalation Under the “Anti-Alcohol Campaign”

The attack coincided with large-scale hardline Salafi demonstrations across Damascus, Homs, Hama, Idlib, Daraa, and Deir ez-Zor, organized under the banner of the “Anti-Alcohol Campaign.”

These demonstrations appear to be a retaliatory and provocative response to recent protests by Christian and secular communities in Damascus (notably in the Bab Touma district), which called for civil liberties and rejected sectarian policies.

During these events, the Foundation documented:

- **Incendiary Sectarian Rhetoric:** The use of inflammatory and exclusionary slogans, including chants regarding “Return of the Army of Muhammad” and the “Liberation of Gaza” used as a cover for internal incitement.
- **Extremist Symbolism in Public Spaces:** The visible display of ISIS flags in public squares, reportedly without intervention by government security forces.

- **Coordinated Hate Speech Campaigns:** A surge in organized online incitement targeting minority communities and promoting social division against “the other.”
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III. Statement from the Foundation

The Foundation considers these developments a direct threat to Syrian national stability and a resurgence of extremist ideologies that endanger the country’s unity and diversity.

“The targeting of Al-Suqaylabiyah and the spread of sectarian incitement are not isolated incidents. They represent a coordinated assault on the principles of citizenship, pluralism, and coexistence upon which Syria is built. We call upon the international community and human rights organizations to take immediate action to protect civilians and prevent further escalation toward a devastating sectarian conflict.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2026

Foundation for the Development of Western Syria Marks One-Year Anniversary of the March 2025 Massacre of Alawites and Christians in Latakia and Coastal Syria

Washington, DC – The Foundation for the Development of Western Syria (the “Foundation”) today solemnly commemorates the one-year anniversary of the March 2025 massacre that devastated Alawite and Christian communities across Latakia and the broader coastal region of Coastal Syria.

March 2025 stands as one of the darkest chapters in Syria’s modern history. Over a period of days, coordinated attacks targeted civilians in towns and villages stretching from the outskirts of Latakia to rural coastal communities. Armed groups entered residential neighborhoods, executed noncombatants, and forcibly displaced families who had already endured more than a decade of war.

The Scope of the Atrocities

According to documentation gathered by local monitors, clergy, medical personnel, and humanitarian workers:

- Thousands of civilians were killed, the vast majority of them Alawites and Christians.
- Entire families were executed in their homes in rural Latakia province.
- At least 40 churches, monasteries, and religious sites were desecrated, vandalized, or burned.
- Over 25,000 residents were forcibly displaced in a matter of weeks.
- Numerous cases of abduction and enforced disappearance remain unresolved to this day.

Eyewitness accounts describe armed men going door to door, separating men from women and children, and summarily executing community leaders, clergy, and local officials. In several villages, homes were looted and then set ablaze to prevent residents from returning. Survivors reported that emergency medical access was blocked during critical hours, compounding the death toll.

In Christian communities along the coast, ancient churches—symbols of a presence dating back nearly two millennia—were attacked and vandalized. In Alawite-majority villages, entire streets were emptied, leaving behind burned homes and mass graves.

These atrocities occurred despite repeated international pledges to protect Syria’s minority populations and ensure post-conflict stabilization. Instead, vulnerable communities were left exposed to retaliatory violence, extremist reprisals, and sectarian targeting.

A Pattern of Targeted Violence

The March 2025 massacre did not occur in isolation. It followed months of escalating incitement, kidnappings, and targeted killings aimed at terrorizing minority communities in western Syria. Community leaders had warned that hate speech, unchecked militia activity, and the absence of effective security guarantees were creating conditions ripe for mass violence.

The Foundation's own documentation confirms that the attacks were not spontaneous clashes, but rather coordinated assaults that exploited a security vacuum in coastal areas long considered relative safe havens for minorities fleeing violence elsewhere in the country.

A Call for Justice and Stability

One year later, accountability remains elusive. Many perpetrators continue to operate with impunity. Families of the victims have received neither justice nor adequate humanitarian support. Thousands remain displaced, unable to safely return to their homes.

Today, the Foundation renews its call for:

1. **An independent international investigation** into the March 2025 massacre and related atrocities.
2. **Robust security guarantees** for Alawites, Christians, Kurds, Druze, and all minority communities throughout Syria.
3. **Safe and voluntary return mechanisms** for displaced coastal residents.
4. **An inclusive political settlement** that protects the rights, property, and religious freedom of all Syrians.
5. **Clear international red lines** against sectarian violence and demographic engineering.

A Vision for Syria's Future

Syria's strength has always been its pluralism. From the earliest days of Christianity to the centuries-old Alawite presence in the coastal mountains, from Kurdish communities in the northeast to Druze in the south, the country's rich mosaic of faiths and ethnicities is not a weakness but a national treasure.

The Foundation believes that lasting peace in Syria cannot be built on revenge, collective punishment, or sectarian cleansing. It must be built on reconciliation, equal citizenship, and the rule of law.

As we honor the memory of the men, women, and children who lost their lives in March 2025, we affirm that their suffering must not be exploited to deepen divisions. Instead, it must serve as a solemn reminder of the urgent need for peace, stability, and the protection of all minorities.

"On this painful anniversary, we mourn. But we also recommit ourselves to building a Syria where no community lives in fear because of its faith or identity," said Mohammad

Shabaan, President of the Foundation. “The path forward is not sectarianism. It is justice, dignity, and equal protection under the law.”

The Foundation for the Development of Western Syria will host commemorative events in the coming weeks to honor the victims and to advance dialogue among community leaders, policymakers, and international partners committed to safeguarding Syria’s pluralistic heritage.

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