

## Statement

### **Urgent Appeal** to Allow All Forms of Humanitarian Aid to Reach Suwayda and Forcibly Displaced Persons

Tuesday 22 July 2025



The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyzes in Syria.

Since July 13, 2025, and up until the date of this statement, the Governorate of Suwayda, in southern Syria, has witnessed a widespread deterioration in the humanitarian and service situations as a result of escalating security tensions and armed violence, followed by widespread unrest that has paralyzed various aspects of civilian life. This has led to the forced displacement of tens of thousands of civilians and the near-total collapse of basic infrastructure, particularly in the health, food, and water sectors, exacerbating the suffering of the most vulnerable groups, especially women, children, the elderly, and the sick.

The United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that over 93,000 civilians have fled the city of Suwayda and a number of its villages, particularly in the northern and western countryside, to more stable areas in the eastern countryside of Daraa Governorate and areas close to the Syrian-Jordanian border, in extremely harsh humanitarian conditions, lacking the minimum requirements for protection and care, amid an urgent need for immediate humanitarian intervention and a coordinated response.

## ALMOST COMPLETE SHUTDOWN OF BASIC SERVICES IN SUWAYDA

Field reports indicate a serious breakdown in basic services in Suwayda Governorate, resulting in a direct violation of residents' rights to food, water, and healthcare, and causing severe humanitarian consequences for civilians. There has been a near-total interruption in electricity, water, and communications networks for more than six consecutive days, along with severely weakened internet service, leading to information isolation that has deprived residents of communication and the ability to request assistance.

Most bakeries and shops have also stopped working, forcing residents to rely on limited household supplies, with no other way to get food. SNHR documented a severe shortage of food and drinking water, as well as incidents of looting and vandalism targeting major stores and markets, further exacerbating the food insecurity of the population.

In the health sector, the National Hospital in the City of Suwayda has been completely shut down due to power cuts and a shortage of medicines and medical supplies, leading to the suspension of dialysis sessions and the inability to treat chronic and emergency cases. Decomposing bodies have also been documented inside the hospital, with no possibility of dealing with them due to the breakdown of refrigeration units and the lack of necessary transportation.

The Salkhad Hospital is currently operating at minimum capacity, amid a real threat of ceasing to provide services, given the shortage of medical staff and supplies, which portends a total collapse of healthcare in the Governorate.

These conditions have resulted in a flagrant violation of the right to health and human dignity, with thousands of civilians living in catastrophic conditions, especially women, children, the elderly, and the sick, amid an almost complete absence of humanitarian response. There have also been reports of civilian bodies lying in the streets, uncollected and unburied at the time of writing, posing a threat to public safety and violating the right to life, and dignity after death.

## HUMANITARIAN AID CONTINUES TO BE HAMPERED

Despite government and community efforts and the efforts of international and UN agencies to secure a humanitarian response, the delivery of aid to affected areas within the province of Suwayda continues to face significant difficulties. Medical and relief convoys have been announced by the Ministries of Health, Social Affairs, and Emergency, and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. However, many of them have been unable to enter due to the unstable security situation, the targeting of some convoys, or restrictions on their movement, especially with the continuation of armed clashes in some areas, in addition to airstrikes by Israeli occupation forces on the city's surroundings, which have disrupted or delayed relief operations.

The decision by Hikmat al-Hajri to refuse entry to the government delegation accompanying the humanitarian convoys also contributed to the obstruction or delay of the delivery of a large part of the ready-made aid, which included vital medical and emergency supplies.

In the same context, Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams have been subjected to several violations while carrying out their relief tasks, including shooting at an ambulance, burning down a relief warehouse, and attacks targeting volunteers, [as well as abductions that included the head of the Syrian Civil Defense Organization \(White Helmets\) in Sweida Governorate](#). Despite these challenges, some convoys managed to enter and distribute a limited amount of aid, amid a lack of sufficient guarantees to ensure the continuity and safety of relief operations.

## Recommendations

Based on the documented serious humanitarian consequences in the Governorate of Suwayda, and in order to protect the fundamental rights of the civilian population, the Syrian Network for Human Rights recommends the following:

### First: To relevant government agencies and official institutions:

- Strengthen urgent humanitarian response efforts and provide technical and logistical support to ensure the delivery of medical and food aid to all affected areas, giving priority to areas with critical needs.
- Ensure the continuity of service and health facilities by securing energy, communications, water, and medical supplies, and coordinating efforts between relevant ministries and local authorities.
- Facilitate the access of relief teams and medical personnel to affected areas, providing the necessary guarantees for their safety and ensuring the smooth flow of their work, without discrimination or delay.
- Support temporary shelters in areas of displacement and provide the necessary resources to improve living conditions and services for displaced persons, particularly in the governorates of Suwayda and Daraa.
- Strengthen coordination with local communities and civil society actors to overcome obstacles that may hinder the response and facilitate field operations on humanitarian and transparent grounds.
- Conduct periodic reviews of public services in the governorate and work to address shortcomings within a well-thought-out emergency plan that takes into account the security and living conditions on the ground.

### Second: To the military and social forces in the Governorate of Suwayda:

- Contribute to facilitating the work of relief convoys and medical teams, ensuring that aid reaches those who need it without hindrance, in accordance with the principles of neutrality and humanitarian independence.
- Strengthen community cooperation to ensure the fair and effective distribution of aid and contribute to alleviating tensions that may hinder the delivery of basic services to civilians.
- Activate the role of local leaders in supporting efforts to calm and control the situation, thereby contributing to the creation of an environment conducive to relief and recovery operations.

### **Third: To national and partner relief organizations:**

- Continue to provide basic services within shelters and host communities, particularly in the areas of primary health care, water, nutrition, and psychosocial support.
- Strengthen field coordination between working teams to avoid duplication and identify real priorities, while conducting regular and updated needs assessments.
- Accurately document field challenges that hinder humanitarian work, with the aim of improving response and increasing the efficiency of humanitarian interventions in the short and medium term.



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*No justice without accountability*

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