

Statement

SNHR a Primary Source of Information in the Report of the Danish Immigration Service on the Security Situation, Return, and the Conditions of Minorities in Syria

The relative improvement in some indicators isn't sufficient in itself to consider return safe and dignified unless it is coupled with actual guarantees for protection, accountability, and the safeguarding of the rights of all the components of the Syrian people

Monday 06 July 2026



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.

Damascus – The Syrian Network for Human Rights:

In June 2026, the Danish Immigration Service issued an updated report titled “Syria - An Update”, which addressed the developments of the situation in Syria during the period extending from January 2026 until the end of May 2026, with a special focus on the security situation, freedom of movement, the conditions of return, the judiciary and the structures of internal security, criticism of the transitional authorities, the conditions of minorities, and a number of related issues in the governorates of Aleppo, Homs, and al-Hasakah.

The report was built on written sources and consultations conducted online with human rights organizations, research institutions, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, legal sources, and journalists inside Syria and abroad. The report aims to provide updated information relevant to the processing of asylum applications, without being decisive in itself in deciding any application, or a substitute for the individual assessment of risks. The report also affirms that it isn't a comprehensive survey, that it doesn't include policy recommendations, and that it should be read in light of other updated and relevant sources.

Reference was made to the reports and information of the Syrian Network for Human Rights **63 times**, to the European Union Agency for Asylum **23 times**, and to Amnesty International 6 times. The report also relied on other international, UN, and local bodies, among them the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, and others.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights sees that the importance of the report isn't limited to the documentation of a number of security and human rights indicators in the transitional phase, but rather extends to what it reveals of the continuation of obstacles that stand in the way of adopting any simplified approach to the question of return. Hence, the existence of a relative improvement in some areas, or in some aspects of movement, isn't sufficient, in itself, to consider return safe and dignified, and it must not be used to justify forced return or to bypass the individual assessment of risks.

With regard to the security situation and freedom of movement, the report stated that the government forces regained full control over the city of Aleppo following the clashes of January 2026 and the withdrawal of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and that the security situation has generally improved in the city, with a relative stability in the urban centers, at a time where the countryside remains more volatile. It also indicated that movement during the day has become easier, with a decline in the number of checkpoints and a decrease in the severity of their procedures compared to before.

As for the governorate of Homs, the report presents a more complicated picture, as it points to the continuation of incidents of violence of a sectarian or retaliatory nature, and to risks affecting some minorities, in addition to the continued activity of the Islamic State organization in the Badia and around Palmyra. At the same time, the report quoted the Syrian Network for Human Rights as saying that movement remains generally possible, and that the security of the roads has witnessed a relative improvement.

On the level of return, the report stated that the governorate of Aleppo witnessed a relatively wide return that included cross-border returnees and internally displaced persons, whereas return to Homs remained limited due to the destruction, the shortage of housing, and the rise in rents. In northeast Syria, the report indicated that the ceasefire led to the Syrian Democratic Forces relinquishing about 80 percent of the territories they used to administer, and that the governorate of al-Hasakah remained relatively stable despite local tensions. However, the Network stressed, in the information the report quoted from it, the continuation of documented fears of the risk of arbitrary detention, or of incommunicado detention, at some of the checkpoints affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces in the city of al-Hasakah and its surroundings, which may amount, when its legal elements are met, to enforced disappearance.

With regard to the judiciary and the structures of internal security, the report points out that the Internal Security Forces have become a central actor in the administration of security, with the continued weakness of the institutional structures and the disparity in the levels of professionalism and discipline between the governorates. It also stated that some civil disputes are handled through the official judiciary and police, alongside tribal mechanisms and reconciliation councils, with the continued influence of corruption and personal relations, though in a manner less overt than it was previously.

With regard to freedom of expression and criticism of the transitional authorities, the report stated that the public sphere has witnessed an improvement compared to the Assad era; however, this improvement doesn't negate the persistence of unofficial red lines, particularly in the issues related to sectarianism, the rights of minorities, and the conduct of the security forces. The report also indicates that Alawites, Druze, and Kurds may face greater dangers when criticizing the authorities or the entities loyal to them, often in the form of harassment or intimidation by loyalist entities, rather than direct official measures.

The report also addressed the effect of the timing of departure from Syria on the treatment of returnees, and concluded that the timing of departure doesn't appear, in itself, to be an influential factor in the authorities' treatment of returnees, though those who left late from areas that were under the former government may face social suspicion or local tensions in some communities. It also pointed to the absence of official legal restrictions on settling in any area of the country, although obtaining housing depends, in practice, on local trust networks and communal relations. As for the appearance or lifestyle that may be perceived as "Western", the sources on which the report relied didn't record a general pattern of harassment or discrimination against returnees for this reason.

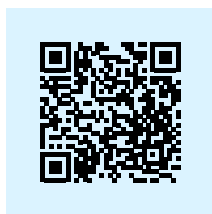
The Syrian Network for Human Rights affirms, in light of these findings, that any serious discussion of return must proceed from the principle of voluntariness, from the guarantees of safety and dignity, from the prohibition of forced return, and from the necessity of conducting an individual and updated assessment of risks in each case separately. It also affirms that justice and accountability, the protection of rights without discrimination, the reform of the institutions of security and the judiciary, and the guarantee of freedom of expression constitute essential conditions for making any return sustainable and defensible from a human rights standpoint.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights calls upon the states that are considering the asylum files of Syrians, including the Danish authorities and the rest of the concerned European states, not to use the indicators of partial improvement to justify return policies that lack the guarantees of protection and dignity, or to take general decisions that bypass the individual assessment of risks. It also calls for the full adherence to the principle of non-refoulement, and for relying on updated and multi-source information that takes into account the difference in conditions between regions, groups, and individuals.

The Network also calls upon the Syrian authorities in the transitional phase to ensure effective oversight of checkpoints and detention centers, to investigate the allegations of arbitrary detention or of incommunicado detention, and to protect freedom of expression. It also calls upon the actors exercising de facto control, including the Syrian Democratic Forces in the areas under their influence, to respect their human rights obligations, to prevent arbitrary detention, to disclose the fate of detainees, and to guarantee their contact with their families and their lawyers.

The Network stresses that the safeguarding of the rights of all the components of the Syrian people, the guarantee of justice and accountability, and the protection of returnees from violations and discrimination are essential elements of any serious human rights approach to the question of return.

The [full report](#) can be accessed via the official website of the Danish Immigration Service.





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No justice without accountability

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