Resolution on the need for EU support towards a just transition and reconstruction in Syria

2025/2569(RSP) - 12/03/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 462 votes to 76, with 106 abstentions, a resolution on the need for EU support towards a just transition and reconstruction in Syria.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, Renew and Greens/EFA groups.

Firstly, Parliament praised the bravery, dignity and resilience of the Syrian people, who finally succeeded in overthrowing the cruel Assad dictatorship. It called on the EU to seize this historic opportunity to support a Syrian-led political transition in order to unite and rebuild the country, and to assist Syria in implementing its reconstruction and achieving a just and inclusive political transition. However, Members remain concerned by the high degree of **instability**, both in Syria and in the region. They believe that stability in Syria will come from a **pluralistic political transition** that includes credible representatives of all components of Syrian society and of all geographical areas, that is to say all religious and ethnic communities, women, civil society and peaceful opposition forces.

The Syrian interim government led by Ahmed al-Sharaa is called on to craft a **roadmap** setting out its plan for carrying out the political transition process and improve transparency in respect of Syrian citizens. However, Members expressed **cautious optimism** regarding the behaviour of the caretaker authorities regarding freedom of religion and encouraged them to implement further confidence-building measures.

Deeply worried about the fragile security situation across Syria, particularly the coastal area, Parliament urged the caretaker government to ensure that all military and security appointments are based strictly on professional qualifications, respect for international human rights and humanitarian law, and a commitment to combating terrorism. It also expressed concern regarding the presence of foreign extremist fighters, including European citizens, among the forces that overthrew the Assad regime, and cautions against integrating them permanently into the Syrian security apparatus.

Financing and sanctions

The EU is called on to increase financial support, especially for Syrian civil society organisations as they adapt to shifting operating conditions, with a focus on promoting civic dialogue, notably between ethnic, cultural and religious communities, to foster pluralism, peaceful coexistence and trust within Syrian society.

The resolution welcomed the gradual and conditional **suspension of sanctions** on certain economic sectors and the indefinite extension of humanitarian exemptions in Syria. However, it noted that EU, US, and UK sanctions policies remain an obstacle to reconstruction efforts. It called on the Commission and the Council to engage with other sanctioning countries, particularly the US and UK, and support a full yet **reversible lifting of sectoral sanctions**, especially in the financial sector, to provide a lifeline to the Syrian economy. The report highlighted the issue of over-compliance due to extensive US and UK sanctions, urging the Commission and Member States to provide European businesses and banks with legal assurances to counteract this. It insisted on maintaining individual sanctions against military personnel, officials, and entities linked to the Assad family.

With 7 million people internally displaced and 90% of the Syrian population living in poverty, Parliament welcomed the announcement by the Commission to allocate **EUR 235 million** in new humanitarian support to Syrians and called for the EU and its Member States to sustain humanitarian and development aid efforts and to maintain financial support for neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees. It also invited the EU to explore pathways to **use frozen assets** of the Assad regime for a trust fund for Syrian reconstruction, rehabilitation and compensation of victims. Members are extremely concerned by the suspension of all USAID funding related to Syria or Syrian refugees and by the foreseen non-participation of the US in the next Brussels conference.

Reconstruction and resettlement

The resolution welcomed the decision taken by France to allow refugees to return to Syria and participate in its reconstruction without jeopardising their status, including for 'go-and-see' visits to Syria. It called on the Member States and third countries to urgently replicate this initiative. The Commission is called on to encourage and provide the Member States with guidance and best practice on the implementation of EU law on this issue, including as regards the difference between 'travel' and 're-establishment'. Parliament insisted that all asylum status claims and renewals must be assessed individually and thoroughly.

Support from Tehran and Moscow

Parliament called on Syria to break free from its notorious long-standing alliances with **Tehran and Moscow**, which have brought suffering to the Syrian people and destabilisation to the Middle East and beyond. It called, further, on the caretaker Syrian authorities to bring the Russian military presence in Syria to an end. It also condemned Russia for hosting Bashar alAssad and his family and shielding them from justice, after having obstructed justice by actively interfering in international investigations and vetoing UN Security Council resolutions aimed at addressing the regime's war crimes and their own.

The resolution called on Iran to cease all activities aimed at torpedoing the Syrian caretaker government's political and economic efforts and forcedly altering the status quo.

Members warned against the serious international security risk a sudden **disengagement of the United States** in the region would cause in this uncertain context. They reiterated their call on the Member States to repatriate all their nationals.

Lastly, Parliament condemned those European politicians, including current and former Members of Parliament, who have repeatedly spread pro-Assad narratives and actively engaged in whitewashing the bloody dictatorship. It expressed deep concern regarding the recent invitation by Parliament's Intergroup on Christians in the Middle East of organisations closely linked to EU-sanctioned Assadists.