

# OE Quick Guide: Syria



[TRADOC G-2 Intelligence Support Activity \(TRISA\)](#)

Complex Operational Environment and  
Threat Integration Directorate (CTID)





# Operational Environment Quick Guide



## Introduction

Syria, located in the Middle East, is a country in the midst of an internal conflict where between 10,000 and 36,000 civilians (sources vary) have died in the last 20 months. Since about February 2011, repeated uprisings by those who oppose President Bashar al-Assad's regime have occurred throughout much of the country. In response to these demonstrations, the Syrian government has reluctantly granted some additional liberties to the people while simultaneously attempting to suppress the uprisings. The Syrian military and the militia reportedly have used both torture and sexual violence against detainees. The vast majority of Syrians who oppose the Assad regime are not Islamists, but local revolutionaries that seek to end the autocratic regime in their country. UN envoys, initially Kofi Annan and most recently Lakhdar Brahimi, have attempted to mediate between the two sides. One of the latest tries was an attempted ceasefire for the Eid al-Adha holiday weekend, an important Muslim holiday that commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael as proof of obedience to God.

International response to the chaotic situation in Syria has been mixed. Iran and Hezbollah, Syria's closest allies, continue to provide unconditional support for the Assad government. Arab states such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia are providing support to the uprising in hopes of removing the pro-Iranian government, but these countries are not in favor of the installation of any true democratic government. Western countries yearn for the current Syrian regime to fall, but are afraid of the fallout from such an event. The U.S. and its allies do not see any good options to the crisis. Russia claims it is neutral, but vetoed a UN Security Council proposal by the Arab League to condemn the violence and encourage a political transition. Russia and China do not want to see the international community intervene in a sovereign country's internal affairs just because of harsh treatment of its citizens, as it would set a precedent that could come back to haunt these two countries later. The Arab League has called for a joint peacekeeping mission while other countries or organizations want safe zones or humanitarian corridors established for those uprooted by the uprisings. The Alawite minority will most likely continue to back the Assad regime to maintain its influence throughout the country in addition to the fear of retaliation if the majority Sunnis were to take power.

Syria has been under economic sanctions by part of the international community for many years, but these restrictions have not forced the Assad government to drastically change its draconian methods on how Syria deals with its internal problems. In March of this year, Iran provided a tanker ship to transport Syrian oil to China that gave Assad an estimated \$80 million of much-needed currency to keep his government afloat. Unless the international community decides to intervene more than its current level, the Assad regime will likely remain in power for the foreseeable future.

*Cover photo: Syria Map from the CIA*



## Political Variable Manifestations in Syria

While Syria claims to be a republic, it is actually an authoritarian regime headed by a member of the Assad family since 1970. Uprisings by people against the current regime over the last two years have forced the Syrian president to take even more drastic means to remain in power.

- **Centers of Political Power:** The center of Syrian political power is President Bashar al-Assad. His father, Hafiz al-Assad, seized power in Syria in November 1970. When the elder Assad died on 10 June 2000, a popular referendum the following month approved his son, Bashar, as president. Bashar al-Assad has been in control of the government ever since. Due to the uprising in the country that began early in 2011, Bashar has made several cosmetic changes in an attempt to appease those who protest against his regime. The most notable is that the president now can only serve two 7-year terms in office. The change, however, does not take effect until Assad's current term expires in 2014. Thus, Assad can remain in power in Syria until 2028. With the powers granted the president, the Assad family and their associates can rule without significant opposition. The Assad family is from the Alawite minority and the Alawites dominate the government and military in order to retain power over the majority Sunni Muslim population.
- **Type of Government:**
  - Republic, but under an authoritarian regime
  - Capital city: Damascus
  - Administrative divisions: 14 *muhafazat* (provinces);
    - Al Hasakah
    - Al Ladhqiyyah (Latakia)
    - Al Quaytirah
    - Ar Raqqah
    - As Suwayda'
    - Dar'a
    - Dayr az Zawr
    - Dimashq (Damascus)
    - Haleb
    - Hamah
    - Homs (Hims)
    - Idlib
    - Rif Dimashq (Damascus countryside)
    - Tartus
  - Executive Branch:
    - President: Elected every seven years based on a popular referendum. Last election was held 27 May 2007. Recent law passed due the conflict in the country now states that the president is limited to two consecutive terms (14 years), but the law only becomes effective after the completion of the current president's term (May 2014).
    - President appoints the vice-presidents, prime minister, deputy prime ministers, and Council of Ministers. Last Council appointed on 14 April 2011.
  - Legislative Branch:
    - *Majlis al-Shaab* (People's Assembly): Elected by popular vote to four-year terms.
    - Individuals do not run under a political party, but are normally pro-Assad.
    - Last election was 7 May 2012 with next election scheduled for 2016.
  - Judicial Branch: Supreme Judicial Council, headed by the president, appoints and dismisses all judges.



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- Supreme Constitutional Court: Adjudicates electoral disputes; constitutionality of laws and decrees; serves four-year terms; appointed by the president.
- Court of Cassation: High appellate court
- Appeals Court: Intermediate level between the Court of Cassation and local level courts
- Magistrate Courts: Local level
  - Courts of First Instance
  - Juvenile Courts
  - Customs Courts
- Specialized Courts
  - Economic Security Courts: Economic crimes
  - Supreme State Security Court: National security cases
  - Personal Status Courts: Religious court that hears cases related to marriage and divorce
- Key Governmental Leaders:
  - President: Bashar al-Assad since 17 July 2000. Re-elected on 27 May 2007 with 97.6% of the vote
  - Vice-President: Farouk al-Shara since 21 February 2006; oversees foreign policy
  - Vice-President: Najah al-Attar since 23 March 2006; oversees cultural policy
  - Head of Government: Prime Minister Wael al-Halqi since 9 August 2012
- Government Effectiveness and Legitimacy: Until February 2011, the Syrian government was effective and stable as the Assads, both father and son, ruled the country since 1970. Since then, however, many Syrians no longer consider the Assad regime legitimate and have taken to the streets in open warfare against the Assad government. While the minority Alawites consider Assad their legitimate leader, the same cannot be said by the other ethnic groups. Due to the Civil War, the effectiveness of the Assad regime continues to weaken as the regime's hold on power slowly slips from their grasp.
- Domestic Political Issues: The major domestic political issue is the rallies and uprisings against the Assad regime since February 2011. Bashar al-Assad has attempted to crack down on the protestors, but at the same time has made some minor superficial political concessions to placate the dissenters. The international sanctions against Syria have caused inflation, a shortage of goods, and increased animosity against Assad's regime.
- Attitude toward the U.S.: Syria's relationship with the U.S. is lukewarm at best and adversarial at worst. The relationship between the U.S and Syria since 11 September 2011 is strained as the Americans have charged Syria with allowing insurgents to cross its country to enter Iraq. In October 2008, U.S special operations personnel crossed into Syria to kill the head of a Syrian organization smuggling weapons into Iraq that dampened the relations between the two countries even more. Since the U.S. is a major ally of Israel and Syria still wants Israel to return the Golan Heights to them, there is little likelihood of an improved relationship until the Golan Heights issue is resolved.
- Political Parties: Parties with their leaders
  - National Progressive Front (NPF): Dr. Suleiman Qaddah



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- Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba’th) Party (part of the NPF): President Bashar al-Assad
- Socialist Unionist Democratic Party: Fadllah Nasr Al-Din
- Syrian Arab Socialist Union (ASU): Safwan al-Qudsi
- Syrian Communist Party (two branches)
  - Wissal Farha Bakdash
  - Yusuf Rashid Faysal
- Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party: As’ad Hardan
- Unionist Socialist Party: Fayez Ismail
- Opposition parties not legally recognized with leaders, if known:
  - Communist Action Party: Fateh al-Jamous
  - National Democratic Rally: Hasan Abdul-Azim (spokesman for five parties)
    - Arab Democratic Socialist Union Party: Hasan Abdul-Azim
    - Arab Socialist Movement:
    - Democratic Ba’th party: Ibrahim Makhos
    - Democratic People’s Party: Riad al Turk
    - Revolutionary Workers’ Party: Abdul Hafez al Hafez
- Kurdish parties considered illegal with leaders, if known:
  - Azadi Party: Kheirudin Murad
  - Future Party: Masha’l Tammo
  - Kurdish Democratic Alliance (includes four parties)
  - Kurdish Democratic Front (includes three parties)
  - Yekiti Party: Fu’ad Aleyko
- Syrian Democratic Party: Mustafa Qalaaji
- Other Domestic Influential Groups:
  - Arab Human Rights Organization in Syria (AHRO)
  - Damascus Declaration Group: Broad alliance of secular, religious, and Kurdish opposition groups.
  - National Salvation Front: Alliance between former Vice-president Abd al-Halim Khaddam and other small opposition groups in exile, including former members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood
  - Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression: Mazin Darwih
  - Syrian Human Rights Organization: Muhanad al-Hasanji
  - Syrian Human Rights Society (HRAS): Fayez Fawaz
  - Syrian Muslim Brotherhood (SMB): Muhammad Riyad al-Shaqfah who operates in exile in London.
- International Organization and NGOs:
  - ABEDA (Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa)
  - AFESD (Arab Fund for Economic & Social Development)
  - AMF (Arab Monetary Fund)
  - CAEU (Council of Arab Economic Unity)
  - FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN)
  - G-24 (Chapter of the G-77)



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- G-77 (Coalition of developing nations at the UN)
- IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency)
- IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development)
- ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization)
- ICC (International Criminal Court)
- ICRM (International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement)
- IDA (International Development Association of the World Bank)
- IDB (Inter-American Development Bank)
- IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development)
- IFC (International Finance Corporation of the World Bank)
- IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)
- IHO (International Hydrographic Organization)
- ILO (International Labor Organization)
- IMF (International Monetary Fund)
- IMO (International Maritime Organization)
- Interpol (International Criminal Police Organization)
- IOC (International Olympic Committee)
- ISO (International Organization for Standardization)
- ITSO (International Telecommunications Satellite Organization)
- LAS (League of Arab States)
- MIGA (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency)
- NAM (National Association of Manufacturers)
- OAPEC (Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries)
- OIC (Organization of Islamic Corporation)
- UN (United Nations)
- UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade and Development)
- UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization)
- UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organization)
- UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East)
- UNWTO (UN World Tourism Organization)
- WCO (World Customs Organization)
- WFTU (World Federation of Trade Unions)
- WHO (World Health Organization)
- WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization)
- WMO (World Meteorological Organization)
- WTO ((World Trade Organization)—observer status
- Humanitarian organizations active in Syria since the crisis began in February 2011
  - ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development)
  - ACF (Action Contre la Faim)
  - Amel International
  - AVSI (Association of Volunteers in International Service)



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- CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere)
- CLMC (Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre)
- CVT (Center for Victims of Torture)
- CISP/RI (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo del Popoli)
- DRC (Danish Refugee Council)
- HI (Handicap International)
- ICMC (International Catholic Migration Commission)
- IMC (International Medical Corps)
- IOM (International Organization for Migration)
- IRD (International Relief and Development)
- IRC (International Rescue Committee)
- IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities)
- IR (Islamic Relief)
- IRW (Islamic Relief Worldwide)
- JHCO (Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization and Relief)
- Jordan Red Crescent/Qatar Red Crescent
- (JWU-UPP) Jordan Women Union-Un Ponte Per
- Legal Aid
- MD (Médecins du Monde)
- MC (Mercy Corps)
- NHF/IFH (Noor Hussein Foundation)
- NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council)
- PU (Première Urgence)
- RI (Relief International)
- Qandil Sweden
- Save the Children International
- Save the Children Jordan
- TdH (Terre des Hommes)
- UNDP (United Nations Development Program)
- UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
- UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)
- War Child Holland
- WFP (United Nations World Food Program)
- WVI (World Vision International)

### **Military Variable Manifestations in Syria**

Syria operates a fairly large army, one of the largest air forces in the Middle East, and a small navy; but the country also possesses a large reserve force. Approximately 373,200 personnel serve in all branches of the active duty military while another 132,500 serve in the various reserve components. All Syrian males must serve 30 months in the military upon reaching the age of 18 and remain obligated to the reserves until 45 years of age. In 2007, Syria passed several laws related to its military. For the first time, it added exemptions to conscription while instituting better monitoring procedures of those eligible for service. Syrians can also volunteer for military service, but the maximum age for enlistment recently dropped from 52 to 42 years of age. Since February 2011, at least nine Syrian generals have defected, with most seeking asylum in Turkey. Overall, the Syrian military suffers from a shortage of parts and maintenance issues.



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- Military Forces:
  - Army: The Syrian army is composed of two corps headquarters with 10 active duty regular army divisions (7 armored and 3 mechanized infantry); one Republican Guard armored division; and one special forces division along with one reserve armored division that is the headquarters for all the reserve units. While the army has over 4,500 tanks, most are outdated with the newest ones being the T-72M model from the early 1970s. The Republican Guard and the 4th Division are the regime's most loyal units. Most of the 4th Division officers along with the majority of the enlisted soldiers are from the Alawite minority, the president's ethnic group. The Assad regime often uses units from the 4th Division to ensure that other less politically-reliable units do not defect. These 4th Division unit commanders also have the authority to arrest and kill on the spot any soldiers that are suspected of plotting against the current Syrian government. The Syrian army possesses no organic aviation platforms and must rely upon the air force for close air support and transportation, both for logistics and personnel.
    - Active Duty: 300,000 soldiers
    - Reserve Duty: 100,000 soldiers
    - No organic aviation units—Syrian Air Force provides transportation and close air support
    - 2 corps headquarters
    - 7 armored divisions (each about 8,000 personnel at full strength):
      - 3 armored brigades
      - 1 mechanized brigade
      - 1 artillery brigade
    - 3 mechanized infantry divisions (each about 11,000 personnel at full strength)
      - 1 armored brigade
      - 2 mechanized infantry brigades
      - 1 artillery regiment
    - 1 Republican Guard armored division
      - 2 armored brigades
      - 1 mechanized infantry brigade
      - 1 artillery regiment
    - 1 special forces division
      - 10 special forces groups
    - 3 surface-to-surface missile brigades
      - 3 FROG-7 battalions
      - 3 SCUD-B/C battalions
      - 1 SS-21 battalions
    - Independent units
      - 4 infantry brigades
      - 2 anti-tank brigades
      - 2 artillery brigades
      - 1 tank regiment





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- 5 border guard brigades
- Army reserve
  - 1 armored division headquarters
    - 4 armored brigades
    - 2 armored regiments
    - 31 infantry regiments
    - 3 artillery regiments
- Army locations:
  - Army Headquarters: Damascus
  - 1st Corps (deployed on the Israeli border): Damascus
  - 2nd Corps (deployed along the Lebanon border): Zabadani
  - 4th Division: Arida
  - SCUD-C facilities: Aleppo and Hama
  - SSC-1B facility: Qantaran (2 sites)
- Syrian army equipment and weapons table (information as of July 2012):

ARMY					
Armored Vehicles		Artillery/MRL/ Air Defense		Anti-Tank/Missiles	
T-72/72M Main Battle Tank	1400	180-mm S23 Towed Gun	10	AT-3 Sagger SP	410
T-62M/K Main Battle Tank	1000	130-mm M-46 Towed Gun	800	AT-4 Spigot	150
T-55/MV Main Battle Tank (most in storage)	200	122-mm M1931/1937 Towed Gun (in storage)	150	AT-5 Spandrel (BMP-2 mounted)	40
T-54/55 Main Battle Tank	2000	152-mm D-20 Towed Howitzer	70	AT-10 Stabber	800
T-34/85 Main Battle Tank	50	152-mm 2S3 Akatsiya Self-Propelled (SP) Howitzer	50	AT-14 Kornet	1000 (2000 on order)
BRDM-1/2 Scout Car	590	122-mm 2S1 Gvozdika SP Howitzer	400	Milan AT	200
BTR-50/60/70/152 Armored Personnel Carriers	1500	122-mm M1938 Towed Howitzer	150	SA-8 Gecko	14
BMP-1/2/3 Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicle	<2450	122-mm D-30 Towed Howitzer	<550	SA-9 Gaskin	20
		122-mm D30 (mounted on T-34/85 Tank Chasis)	50+	SA-11 Gadfly	20
		240-mm M-240 Mortar	10	SA-13 Gopher	30
		120-mm M1943 Mortar	400	SA-14 Gremlin MANPADS	100
		100-mm KS-19 Towed AD Gun	25	SA-18 Grouse/SA-7 Grail MANPADS	4000
		57-mm S-60 Towed AD Gun	600	FROG-7	18
		23-mm ZU-23-2 Towed AD Gun	600	SS-21 Scarab A	18+
		122-mm BM-21 Grad SP MRL	300	SS-1C/1D SCUD-B/C	18
		107-mm Type 63 MRL	200	SSC-1B Sepal SP	4
				SSC-3 Styx Coastal (vehicle mounted)	6
				SCUD look-a-likes from North Korea	30



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- Air Force: The Syrian Air Force suffers from a lack of spare parts and poor maintenance practices. Almost 50% of its fighters have been taken out of service since 1991. After a MiG-21 fighter pilot defected in June 2012, Syria reduced the number of flights to avoid other defections. The air force is still one of the largest in the Middle East. It provides tactical air support for the Syrian army. Both the air force and the navy maintain anti-submarine helicopters. While there is a separate air defense command that falls under the air force, the army does possess some separate anti-aircraft and short-range surface-to-air missile systems.
  - Active Duty: 70,000 airmen (includes 40,000 in the air defense command)
  - Reserve Duty: 30,000 airmen
  - Active duty squadrons:
    - Fighter/ground attack: 13
    - Fighter: 6
    - Recon: 4
    - Transport: 4
    - Training: 1
    - Attack Helicopter: 5
    - Transport Helicopter: 6
  - Air defense command:
    - Air defense brigades: 2
    - Surface-to-air missile regiments: 1
    - Surface-to-air missile batteries: 150
    - ADA batteries: Unknown
  - Locations:
    - Damascus:
      - Air force headquarters
      - 522 Squadron (An-24, An-26, Il-76)
      - 565 Squadron (Yak-40)
      - 575 Squadron (Falcon 20, Falcon 900)
      - 585 Squadron (Tu-134, B737)
      - 976 Squadron (SA-342)
      - 977 Squadron (SA-342)
    - Abu ad Duhor:
      - 2 Squadron (L-39)
      - 678 Squadron (MiG-23)
      - Unknown Squadron (L-39)
    - Afis:
      - 253 Squadron (Mi-8)
      - 255 Squadron (Mi-8)
    - Al Qusayr:
      - 825 Squadron (MiG-21)



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- 826 Squadron (Unknown)
- An Nasiriya:
  - 695 Squadron (MiG-23)
  - 698 Squadron (MiG-23)
- As Suwayda:
  - 765 Squadron (Mi-24)
  - 766 Squadron (Mi-24)
- Deir Azor:
  - 8 Squadron (MiG-21)
- Dumayr:
  - Unknown Squadron (Su-22)
  - Unknown Squadron (MiG-23)
- Hamah:
  - 679 Squadron (MiG-21)
  - 680 Squadron (MiG-21)
  - Unknown Squadron (MiG-29)
- Jirah:
  - Unknown Squadron (L-39)
- Khalkhalah:
  - 945 Squadron (MiG-21)
  - 946 Squadron (MiG-23)
- Latakia:
  - 618 Squadron (Naval Aviation: Mi-14, KA-25, KA-27)
- Marj As Sultan:
  - 525 Squadron (Mi-8)
  - 537 Squadron (Mi-8)
  - 909 Squadron (Mi-8 VIP)
  - Unknown Squadron (Mi-8)
- Marj Ruhayyil:
  - 54 Squadron (MiG-23)
  - 77 Squadron (MiG-23)
  - 767 Squadron (Mi-24)
- Qabr as Sitt:
  - 532 Squadron (Mi-2, Mi-8)
- Shayrat:
  - 675 Squadron (MiG-23)
  - 677 Squadron (Su-22, Su-20)
  - 685 Squadron (Su-22)
- Rasin el Aboud:
  - 3 Flight Training Squadron (L-39, Flamingo)
- Tiyas:
  - 1 Squadron (MiG-25)



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- 5 Squadron (MiG-25)
- 819 Squadron (Su-24)
- 827 Squadron (Su-22)
- Tabqa:
  - 12 Squadron (MiG-21)
  - 24 Baseflight Brigade (Mi-8)

○ Syrian air force equipment and weapons table (information as of July 2012):

AIR FORCE					
Airplanes		Helicopters		Missiles	
MiG-29A Fulcrum (fighter)	40+	SA-342L Gazelle (gunship)	55	SA-2 Guideline	320
MiG-25PD Foxbat-E (interceptor)	30	Mi-8/17 Hip H (transport)	100	SA-3 Goa	148
MiG-23MF/ML/MS Flogger (interceptor)	70	Mi-2 Hoplite (transport)	20	SA-5 Gammon	44
MiG-23BN Flogger-H (ground attack)	40	Mi-24 Hind (attack/transport)	36	SA-6 Gainful	195
MiG-21H/J Fishbed (fighter)	158	Mi-25 Hind (attack/transport)	50	SA-7A/B Grail	4000
Su-24MK Fencer (fighter)	20	Mi-14 Haze (anti-sub)	16		
Su-22M-2/BKL Fitter-J (fighter)	40	KAA-25 Hormone (anti-sub)	5		
MiG-25RB Foxbat-B (recon)	6				
MiG-21H/J Fishbed (recon)	40				
An-26 Curl (transport)	6				
An-12 Cub (transport)	6				
Il-76 Candid (transport)	4				
Il-14 Crate (transport)	8				
TU-134 Crusty (transport)	4				
Yak-40 Codling (transport)	6				
An-24 Coke (transport)	2				
Falcon 20	2				
Falcon 900	1				
PA-31 Navajo (survey)	2				
MiG-23UM Flogger-C (trainer)	6				
MiG-25PU Foxbat-C (trainer)	2				
MiG-21U/UM Mongol-B (trainer)	20				
MiG-17 Fresco (trainer)	30				
MB-223 Flamingo (trainer)	30				
Mushshak (trainer)	6				
L39Z Alabartos (trainer/light attack)	83 (40 armed)				
L-20 Delphin (trainer)	60				
Pac Shahbaz (trainer)	6				



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- Navy: The Syrian navy is quite small with less than 6,000 personnel between the active and reserve forces. Much of the Syrian fleet is reaching the obsolescence state. Syria wanted to replace its diesel-electric submarines in the early 1990s with more modern ones from Russia, but could not come up with the hard currency necessary to complete the deal. In February 2011, Iran and Syria made a joint announcement that the two countries had agreed to a joint naval training program. Russia maintains a facility at Tartus, the only Russian naval base outside former Soviet territory. If the Ukraine ever decided to stop the Russians from using the bases in its country, Tartus could become the home of the Russian Black Sea fleet. In July 2012, Syria conducted live missile tests from ships and helicopters during a training exercise off its coast to demonstrate that it could defend its shores from a foreign invasion.
  - Active Duty: 3,200 sailors
  - Reserve Duty: 2,500 sailors
  - Small coastal patrol force
  - Coastal artillery
  - Coastal radar surveillance battalions
  - Anti-submarine helicopter units
  - Locations:
    - Navy headquarters: Tartus
    - Al Mina al Bayda
    - Baniyas
    - Latakia
- Syrian naval ships, equipment and weapons table (information as of July 2012):

NAVY					
Ships		Helicopters		Coastal Defense Units	
PETYA III Class (corvette)	2	Mi-14PL Haze-A (anti-sub)	11	Latakia	1
OSA I/II-Class Guided Missile (patrol boat)	16	Ka-28 Helix-A (anti-sub)	2	Baniyas	1
AHUK Class (patrol boat)	8			Hamidieh	1
TIR II (IPS 18) Class (patrol boat)	6			Tarsus	1
SONYA-Class (minesweeper)	1				
Yevgenya-Class (minesweeper)	3				
T-43 (FSU) (minelayer)	1				
NATYA-Class (minelayer)	1				
POLNOCHNY B-Class (landing craft)	3				
Palmyra-Class (French OCEA 35-M design) (hydrographic survey)	1				
AL ASSAD Class (transport/training)	1				
French Arcor 10-M design (survey launch)	1				



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- Chemical Warfare:
  - Syrian government admitted to having chemical weapons in August 2012.
  - Syrian government stated that it would not use chemical weapons against its own people, but did not rule out their use against outsiders.
  - Western countries suspect that Syria has several hundred tons of chemical weapons or their precursors.
  - Locations: Scattered out among possibly 20 different sites.
  - Inventory possibilities:
    - Sarin
    - Mustard
    - Tabun
    - VX
- Government Paramilitary Forces:
  - **National Police Force (gendarmerie):** 8,000 personnel who can perform domestic defense and security duties.
  - **Worker's Militia:** 100,000 personnel connected to the ruling party.
  - **Shabiha:** Strong-armed types from the Alawite minority hyped up on steroids that the Syrian government uses to intimidate the people and opposition groups that have a vested interest in keeping Assad in power (see TRISA Threat Report, "[The Shabiha of Syria](#)").
  - Iranian Revolutionary Guards: 150 senior commanders sent in September 2012 to assist
  - **Fatah al-Islam:**
    - Formed: 26 November 2006 after a split with Fatah Intifada.
    - Leader: Unknown; three leaders killed since 2008.
    - Originally based in Lebanon.
    - Attacks/TTP:
      - 2007: Massive battle with Lebanese army at the Nahr al-Bared Palestinian refugee camp near Tripoli.
    - Size: Unknown
    - Originally Arab fighters that entered Lebanon illegally to fight in the 1975-1991 Lebanese Civil War.
    - May be working as a direct action arm for Syrian intelligence.
- Non-State Paramilitary Forces: Many opposition groups operate throughout the country, but they are too numerous to compile a complete list. The ones listed below appear on governmental websites, are named by major think tank organizations, or names have appeared in several news articles. Some of these organizations serve as umbrella organizations under other organizations such as the Syrian National Council (SNC) or the Free Syrian Army (FSA). The opposition groups often form coalitions for temporary actions against Assad's security forces, but then go their separate ways. Ideological differences between the various groups' leaders prevent the anti-government forces from forming a permanent coalition against the Assad government. This lack of cooperation, however, reduces the opposition groups' effectiveness in its fight against the Syrian security forces. Most of the groups tend to operate in a small



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geographical area, but a few operate in several different areas. Do not equate US unit sizes with the name of the unit in the opposition group's title. An opposition group's "battalion" or "brigade" will normally have much fewer fighters than the US definition of the unit size.

- **Syrian National Council (SNC):**
  - Formed: 2 October 2011
  - Leader: Burhan Ghalioun, exiled Sunni scholar from Homs, Syria
  - Based in Paris; possible office in Istanbul
  - Predominately Sunni with small number of Kurds and Christians
  - Membership includes Syrian Muslim Brotherhood members; grassroots activists and exiled traditional Syrian opposition figures
  - Roughly 300 in the organization
  - Called for the establishment of safe zones and humanitarian corridors in Syria in late December 2011
  - With the Free Syrian Army (FSA), called for a no-fly zone at the same time
  - Recognizes the FSA as the defender of Syrian civilians
- **National Coordination Committee (NCC):**
  - Formed: 17 September 2011
  - Leader: Haytham Manna, long-time opposition figure
  - Based in Damascus
  - Membership includes leftist Syrian parties; traditional Syrian opposition members, but no members of the Syrian brotherhood
  - Less hard-line than SNC, which means that the current regime recognizes the NCC and allows it to operate in Syria
  - No relationship with the FSA due to its military nature
- **Free Syrian Army (FSA)** (Coming soon! TRISA Threat Report, ["The Free Syrian Army: Rifles to MANPADS"](#) providing additional details on the FSA):
  - Formed: 29 July 2011
  - Most active locations: Idlib, Damascus, Homs, Hama, Dar'a, and Aleppo
  - Leaders:
    - General Mustafa al Sheikh: FSA Military Council head since January 2012
    - Colonel Riad al-Asaad: Spokesman/leader who is reportedly located in one of the various refugee camps near the Turkey-Syrian border
  - Attacks/TTP:
    - Ambushes of Syrian military and militia units such as the *Shabiha*
    - Road blocks
    - Direct action against military targets
  - Size: 15,000-20,000 armed members.
  - Contemplated a name change to the Syrian National Army and underwent a major restructuring in September 2012 to gain more international support.
  - Composition: Subscribe to the Salafist view
    - Secular defectors; usually Sunni
    - Muslim Brotherhood affiliates



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- Foreign Salafi-jihadist group members
- Armed civilians
- Some AQ members are known to have infiltrated the group
- Recognizes the SNC as the opposition's political representative
- Originally reportedly enjoyed some support from the Syrian protesters
- Poorly equipped
- Has attracted criminal elements
- Fragmented into local groups
- Syrian National Council cannot establish control over these forces
- **Liwa al-Tawhid (The Brigade of Unity):**
  - Formed: 18 July 2012
  - Most active locations: Aleppo, Damascus and its surrounding area
  - Leaders:
    - Revolutionary Council Head: Abd al-Aziz al-Salameh
    - Operations Director: Abd al-Qader
    - Field Commander: Abd al-Qader al-Saleh
  - Attacks/TTP: Direct action
  - Size: 3,000-8,000 fighters
  - Ideology:
    - Broad commitment to principles of democracy and sectarian coexistence
    - Unlike Jabhat al-Nusra and other groups, it claims to pursue a state of secular citizenship and cross-sectarian equality
  - Part of the FSA
- **Al-Qaeda (AQ):**
  - Formed: August 1988
  - Leader: Emir Ayman al-Zawahiri
  - Most active locations: Worldwide affiliates
  - Size: Unknown
  - Ideology: Establishment of Islamic governments
  - The media has exaggerated AQ's involvement in Syria.
  - Some operatives, possibly 200, have moved from Iraq to Syria, primarily trainers and bomb makers.
  - AQ has made statements that it is in support of the uprisings in Syria.
- **Jabhat al-Nusra li-Ahl al-Sham (Jabhat al-Nusra or The Support Front for the People of Syria):**
  - Formed: January 2012
  - Most active locations: Aleppo, Idlib, and Damascus
  - Leader: "Al-Fateh" (The Conqueror) Abu Mohammed al-Golani
  - Attacks/TTP:
    - 6 January 2012: Suicide attack in al-Midan neighborhood, Damascus





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- 10 February 2012: Double suicide car bombing at a Syrian security forces building, Aleppo
- 17 March 2012: Suicide attack against a police building and air force intelligence headquarters, Damascus
- 20 April 2012: Car bomb at the Qatr al-Nada restaurant in Hama targeting Syrian military personnel
- 20 April 2012 to 5 May 2012: A series of IEDs planted on cars in attempts to assassinate Syrian officials
- 24 April 2012: Bombing of the al-Marjah Square Iranian Cultural Center, Damascus
- 27 April 2012: Suicide attack in al-Midan neighborhood, Damascus
- 5 May 2012: Two IEDs placed under trucks at the Syrian military headquarters, Damascus
- 29 May 2012: Captured and killed 13 men whom they accused of being Syrian security officers, Deir ez-Zor
- 1 June 2012: Bombing of a government security office, Idlib
- 27 June 2012: Raid and bombing of a pro-government Syrian television headquarters, Damascus
- 19 July 2012: Kidnapping and murder of a Syrian television personality, Damascus
- 29 July 2012: Car bombing of a pro-government militia base, Hama
- 10 August 2012: Suicide attack targeting a military security detachment, Hama
- 26 September 2012: Raid on the Syrian Army General Staff headquarters, Damascus
- 3 October 2012: Triple suicide bombing, Aleppo
- Size: Unknown
- Ideology:
  - Connected to AQ; only active militant group to received direct endorsement of pro-AQ online forum administrators and Salafi figures
  - Only prominent opposition faction that openly embraces suicide bombings
  - Quickly reposts proof of authenticity of attacks on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and other electronic media
- **Abdullah Azzam Brigades:**
  - Formed: 2005 as an offshoot of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)
  - Most active locations: Several countries
  - Leader: Majid bin Muhammad al Majid
  - Attacks/TTP:
    - Failed rocket attack on a US warship docked in Aqaba, Jordan
    - Rocket attacks on Israel in 2009 and 2011
    - Attack on a Japanese oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz in 2010



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- Up to September 2012, no claims for any attacks in Syria
- Size: Unknown
- Ideology:
  - Support for the Syrian Revolution
    - Cautioned fighters against attacks that repulse people
    - Avoids major cities because the revolution's popularity is more important than the single target
  - Jabhat Nusra competitor
- **Jabhat Thuwwar Souria (The Syrian Revolutionaries Front):**
  - Formed: 4 June 2012
  - Most active locations: Unknown
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Ideology:
    - Unite opposition factions
    - Establish a new government based on freedom, justice, pluralism, and Islamic jurisprudence
  - Collapsed within hours of its formation as its largest military component, Kata'ib Ahrar al-Sham, chose to leave the organization because of a disagreement over the organization's relationship with the SNC
- **Ittihad Thuwwar Homs (The Homs Revolutionaries' Union):**
  - Formed: May 2012
  - Most active locations: Homs
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Ideology: Nationalist, popularly elected government with an Islamic *marjaiya* (frame of reference)
  - Coalition of 19 non-FSA factions located in the Homs area
  - Claims joint operations with Katibat al-Ansar and Katibat al-Farouq
- **Al-Tawheed Brigade (Tawheed Brigades):**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Aleppo and Idlib
  - Leader: Abu Khalid (pseudonym)
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown; obtains arms from Jordan
  - Size: Unknown
  - Ideology: Similar to AQ; no links to FSA
  - High-level defecting officers not accepted
- **Haqq Division:**
  - Formed: August 2012
  - Most active locations: Homs



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- Leader: Abderrahman Suways, a former paratrooper who spent 12 years in prison for belonging to the Hezb al-Tahrir, a Salafist group. He was released for amnesty reasons early in the Syrian uprisings.
- Attacks/TTP: Unknown
- Size: Unknown
  - Ansar Brigade
  - Atbaa al-Rasould Brigade
  - Baba Amr Martyrs Brigade
  - Al-Fatah al-Mubin Brigade
  - Sadiq Brigades
- **Suleiman Fighting Company:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Idlib and northern Hama
  - Leader: Abu Suleiman al-Hamawi, a former high-security prisoner
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Accused of being involved in non-religious activity
- **Military Council:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Deir al-Zour
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
- **Al-Qaeda Tawheed Brigades:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Deir al-Zour
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Do not confuse with the group with the al-Tawheed Brigade
  - Known to have disintegrated.
- **Open Battalion:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Aleppo
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Salafi Islamists, but not associated with AQ.
  - Includes soldiers who defected and civilian opposition members
- **Dawn of Islam Battalion:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Aleppo



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- Leader: Unknown
- Attacks/TTP: Direct action with armor
- Size: Unknown
- Composed of Salafi Islamists.
- May be the same as the Brigade of Islam or Liwa al-Islam
- [YouTube Video](#): FNN Syria Idlib The Dawn of Islam Battalion shells the Abu Duhoor Airport with a BMP
- **Tajammu-Ansar al-Islam (Gathering of Supporters of Islam):**
  - Formed: 8 August 2012
  - Most active locations: Damascus and its surrounding area
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: 15 August 2012 truck bomb attack on a military building next to a hotel where UN personnel were located
  - Size: Unknown
  - Coalition of seven opposition factions including the Liwa al-Islam
  - Ideology: Unify effort in the Damascus area to overthrow the Assad regime
- **Liwa al-Islam (Islam's Brigade):**
  - Formed: March 2012
  - Most active locations: Douma and Damascus suburbs
  - Leader: Unknown, but prominent Salafist clerics Adnan al-Arouf and Nabil al-Audi are featured prominently in online postings
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
  - Claims to conduct joint operations with the Katibat Shuhadaa Douma (Douma Martyrs Battalion), a local FSA-affiliated unit
  - Ideology:
    - Rebels must fight regime combatants regardless of sect
    - Ethnic cleansing against Alawite civilians
- **Liwa al-Haq (Truth Brigade):**
  - Formed: 11 August 2012
  - Most active locations: Homs
  - Leaders: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP:
  - Size: Unknown
  - Coalition of 3 opposition groups in Homs including the Katibat al-Ansar
  - Ideology: Continue the jihad until an Islamic government replaces the Assad regime
- **Katibat al-Ansar (Supporters' Battalion):**
  - Formed: March 2012
  - Most active locations: Homs
  - Leaders: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown



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- Size: Unknown
- Ideology:
  - Jihad
  - Proper Salafi behavior
- Cooperates with FSA elements and cited that relationship as the key reason to accept the ceasefire demanded by UN Special Envoy Kofi Annan
- **Jabhat Tahrir Souria (Syria Liberation Front or SLF):**
  - Formed: 12 September 2012
  - Most active locations: Several provinces
  - Leaders:
    - Emir: Ahmad Eissa Ahmad Al-Sheikh (Abu Eissa)
    - Spokesman: Mazen Sheikhan (from London)
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: 20,000 fighters
  - Coalition of opposition factions from several provinces including Liwa Saqur al-Sham and Kata'ib Ahrar al-Sham
  - Ideology:
    - Islamic Sharia is its frame of reference
    - Defend all Syrians regardless of sect or ethnicity
- **Liwa Saqur al-Sham (Falcons of Syria Brigade):**
  - Formed: November 2011
  - Most active locations: Idlib and Aleppo
  - Leader: Ahmad Eissa Ahmad Al-Sheikh (Abu Eissa)
  - Attacks/TTP: Claims not to embrace suicide bombings, but plants explosives in cars of unsuspecting people or vehicles of undercover government agents that they explode by remote control
  - Size: 4,000-7,000 fighters
  - Initially claimed on the Internet that they were part of the FSA; later dropped any references to the FSA and sounded more like a Salafist group
  - Ideology:
    - Establish an Islamic state without imposing it on society
    - Proper Islamic behavior
    - Reject the idea of any national or pan-Arab identity
- **Kata'ib Ahrar al-Sham (Ahrar al-Sham; Free Sham; or The Freeman of Syria Battalions):**
  - Formed: January 2012
  - Most active locations: Idlib, Aleppo, Damascus, Lataqia, and Hama
  - Leaders:
    - Emir: Abu Abdullah
    - Spokesman/Military Leader: Abdul-Hassan
    - Osman Karahan
  - Attacks/TTP:
    - Roadside bomb attacks; first one was a truck bomb on 7 June 2012



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- Sophisticated online propaganda; one of the first to regularly update its Facebook page with roadside bombing videos
- Sometimes claims coordinated attacks with FSA unit
- Direct Action:
  - Qawafel al-Shuhada and Ansar al-Haqq Brigades: Idlib Province
  - Al-Tawhid wal-Iman Brigade: Idlib Province
  - Shahba Brigade: Aleppo City
  - Hassane bin Thabet Brigade: Aleppo Province
  - Salhaddin and Abul-Fuda Brigades: Hama City
- Size:
  - Initially claimed 25 rebel brigades throughout Syria; website now lists 60 subordinate units
  - Thousands of fighters, probably one of the largest opposition groups.
  - 500 in the Aleppo area
- Ideology:
  - Waging jihad against Iranian Shiite power projection in order to establish a regional Islamic state
  - Some of its members pledge allegiance to both Ahrar al-Sham and Jabhat al-Nusra
- Known to work with FSA groups and the Jabhat Nusra
- Do not confuse with group with similar name
- **Al-Farouq Brigade:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Homs
  - Leader: Abu Sayeh Juneidi since 6 October 2012 when he replaced the original founder, Abdurrazzaq Tlass, due to a sex scandal
  - Attacks/TTP: Sniping of Syrian military and militia personnel
  - Size: 7,000-10,000 armed members
  - Once was one of the FSA's most active battalions, but balked at the FSA's restructuring plan and instead joined the SLF
  - [YouTube Video](#): Inside Syria's Farouq [sic] Brigade
- **Ansar al-Islam Gathering:**
  - Formed: August 2012
  - Most active locations: Damascus
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: 18 July 2012 bombing that killed Syrian officials including Assad's brother-in-law, Assef Shawkat, and Syrian Defense Minister Dauoud Rajha
  - Size:
    - Few thousand fighters
    - Islam Division that carried out the 18 July 2012 attack
    - Furqan Division: west of Damascus
    - Al-Habib Mustafa Division: Damascus



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- Fursan al-Haqq Brigade: Homs
- Al-Bara bin Malek Brigade: Homs
- Jund Allah Brigade: Homs
- Dhoul-Nourain Brigade: Homs
- Deir al-Zor Revolutionary Council: Deir al-Zor
- Amr ibn al-As Division: Aleppo
- Al-Naser Salaheddin Brigade: Latakia
- **Commission for Civilian Protection (CCP):**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Unknown
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Web site lists 18 CCP-affiliated opposition groups
  - Formed by pro-Muslim Brotherhood members, but claims no special relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood
  - Ideology: Helps armed units inside Syria connect with each other and with sponsors abroad
  - Most members identify themselves as FSA members, but a few consider themselves part of the SLF
- **Al-Bara ibn Malik Battalion:**
  - Formed: Approximately February 2012
  - Most active locations: Unknown
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP:
    - Announced its willingness to employ suicide bombers against Syrian security forces
    - Not taken credit for any attacks or posted video evidence of its attacks despite claiming to have lost martyrs
  - Size: 24 initially
  - Martyrdom brigade
  - Ideology:
    - Pledged allegiance to the FSA
    - Fighting for a free Syrian state
    - Possible association with Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) because of the color of its flag
- **Liwa al-Umma Brigade:**
  - Formed: May 2012
  - Most active locations: Unknown
  - Leader: Irish-born Mahdi al-Harati; led the storming of Muammar Gaddafi's compound in Tripoli in 2011
  - Attacks/TTP: Known to be well organized and highly trained



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- Size: 3,000-6,000 fighters with 20 of the senior leaders from Libya; has demonstrated the ability to incorporate foreign fighters into a cohesive group unlike many of the other opposition groups in Syria
- Ideology: Harati sees himself as a Libyan revolutionary who is helping the Syrian revolution
- **Libyans, Chechnyans, and Afghans:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Aleppo, but have organized attacks in Idlib, Homs, and Damascus.
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
- **Bedouin:**
  - Formed: Unknown
  - Most active locations: Southwest Syria, near the Jordan border.
  - Leader: Unknown
  - Attacks/TTP: Unknown
  - Size: Unknown
- **Other terrorist groups that have operated or currently operate in Syria:**
  - Palestinian Abu Nidal Organization (ANO)
  - Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC)
  - Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)
  - Popular Struggle Front (PSF)
  - Abu Musa Group
  - Al Sa-iqa
  - Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
  - Hamas
  - Kurdish Revolutionary Workers Party (PKK)
  - Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA)
  - Japanese Red Army (JRA)
- **Militias indirectly controlled by Syria in Lebanon:**
  - Hezbollah: Iran requested Hezbollah to send 2,000 of their fighters be sent to Syria, but Hezbollah chose only to send 300 leaders
  - Arab Democratic Party (ADP)
  - Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP)
  - Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party (ABSP)
- Nonmilitary Armed Combatants:
  - Due to the almost continuous conflict over the last two years, many people are armed throughout the country.
- Military Functions (Syrian security forces only):
  - Mission Command: The Syrian president serves as the supreme commander of the armed forces, but has delegated operational control to the Minister of Defense (MOD).





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The MOD doubles as the deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces, who operates through a general staff that includes the heads of the army, air force, and navy. To facilitate command and control throughout the military, the Alawites are overrepresented in the officer corps in proportion to their share of the population (9%). Most of the officers in the army's 4th Division are Alawites and are often used to keep the other less-trustworthy units under control.

- Maneuver: Most of the army units are mechanized infantry and armor that can operate in the desert and semi-arid terrain in Syria.
- INFOWAR: While Syria attempts to control the information flow in the country, the widespread use of satellite dishes reduces the ability of the government to keep information away from its people. In the military itself, Syria possesses limited INFOWAR means at the operational or tactical levels.
- RISTA: Ground units possess reconnaissance elements and would follow old Soviet-style doctrine in their deployment. The air force possesses limited electronic warfare (EW) and reconnaissance platforms including MiG-25RB Foxbat-Bs and MiG-21 H/J Fishbed jets.
- Protection: Large armored formations will reduce the protection of the army found in small unit operations due to the increased likelihood of detection. In August 2012, Syria admitted that it had chemical weapons so it is very likely that soldiers not only train to fight in a chemical environment, but receive training on protecting themselves during a chemical attack.
- Logistics: Due to a shortage of spare parts and maintenance issues throughout the Syrian military, the logistical system is likely to serve as an operational weak point that its opponents could exploit.
- Military Functions (Opposition Groups)
  - Mission Command: The biggest issue for all the opposition groups in Syria is their inability to coordinate their actions. Due to ideological differences, the various groups often refuse to cooperate with each other. The groups will form coalitions due to a shared goal, but then separate when their ideological differences become too great to resolve amicably.
  - Maneuver: Most opposition groups possess only small arms and are limited in their ability to attack government forces. Their lack of equipment greatly diminishes their ability to make any significant attacks. A few groups, however, show that they have captured both tanks and BMPs from government forces that they will then use in their own assaults.
  - INFOWAR: Most of the opposition groups, especially those that maintain contacts outside the country, use social media to conduct an INFOWAR campaign to gain support for their cause. On the tactical level, the lack of equipment makes it very difficult for any of the opposition forces to really conduct INFOWAR attacks directed against the Syrian military. Recently, the U.S. decided to provide \$25 million worth of communications equipment to assist the opposition groups in their struggle against the current Syrian



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- regime. This was in addition to communications equipment already provided by Great Britain.
- RISTA: Most of the opposition groups' RISTA capability is limited to Human Intelligence (HUMINT) as the groups have supporters scattered throughout Syrian society.
  - Protection: The opposition does not have the armored vehicles to face the heavy Syrian armored forces. If the Syrian government does decide to use chemical weapons against their own people, the collateral damage would be significant due to the lack of chemical protective equipment. The UK recently provided \$10 million worth of non-lethal equipment for the opposition fighters that included body armor.
  - Logistics: While the Syrian military has logistical problems, the opposition groups have even greater logistical shortages and issues. Some of Syria's neighbors have pledged to purchase equipment for those involved with the struggle against Assad's regime, but have failed to follow through on that pledge. Other countries feel that any additional arms provided to the opposition groups would only escalate the violence and even cautioned Qatar and Saudi Arabia against funding arms for the protesters.

### Economic Variable Manifestations in Syria

Due to the international sanctions on Syria, the economy is going through a slow collapse. The ruling family continues to prosper because of its ability to shift back and forth between its legal business enterprises and the black market. Indicators of the economy's decline include: an approximately 50% drop in the value of the Syrian pound to the US Dollar between 1 January 2011 and 16 October 2012; a 50% cut in all civil service salaries; skyrocketing prices; fuel shortages; a decline in the availability of basic governmental services; and the need for Iran to provide a ship to transport oil to China in March 2012 to provide a much needed \$80 million boost to the Syrian government (most information below are CIA estimates).

- Unemployment Rate: 12.3% in 2011; up from 8.6% the year before
- Inflation: 4.8% in 2011; up from 4.4% in 2010
- Participation in Global Financial System:
  - GDP: \$107.6 billion in 2011; down from \$111.5 billion in the previous year and approximately the same as 2009
  - GDP Growth: -2% in 2011; down from 3.4% in 2010 and 5.9% in 2009
  - Exports: \$8.112 billion in 2011; down from \$12.27 billion in 2010
  - Imports: \$12.93 billion in 2011; down from \$15.94 billion in 2010
  - Current account balance: \$7.15 billion in 2011; up from -\$367 million in 2010
- Economic Activity:
  - GDP Per Capita rate: \$5,100 in 2011; down from \$5,200 in 2010
- Economic Diversity: Two out of every three Syrians work in the service industry. Only 16% work in industrial jobs, which create over 27% of the country's GDP.
  - GDP Composition (2011 estimates):
    - Agriculture: 16.9%
    - Industry: 27.4%



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- Services: 55.7%
- GDP By Occupation (2008 estimates):
  - Agriculture: 17%
  - Industry: 16%
  - Services: 67%
- Banking and Finance:
  - Central bank discount rate: 0.75% in December 2011; down from 5% in December 2010
  - Commercial bank prime lending rate: 10.5% in December 2011; up from 10% in December 2010
  - Stock of narrow money; \$22.37 billion in December 2011; down from \$22.78 billion in December 2010
  - Stock of broad money: \$46.52 billion in December 2011; down from \$161 billion in December 2009
  - Stock of domestic credit: \$31.84 billion in December 2011; up from \$27.68 billion in December 2010
  - Reserves of foreign exchange and gold: \$14.83 billion in December 2011; down from \$19.52 billion in December 2010
  - External debt: \$7.074 billion in December 2011; down from \$7.295 billion in December 2010
- Illegal Economic Activity:
  - Black-Market: In the chaos that surrounds a country almost in a civil war situation, the black market is thriving. Due to the inflation of the Syrian pound, U.S. dollars are the preferred method of payment. The exchange rate fluctuates almost hourly. Items moved through the black market include:
    - Automobiles
    - Medical apparatuses
    - U.S. Dollars
    - Consumer goods
    - Human organs
  - Trafficking:
    - Drugs: Syria is not a producer of narcotics or precursor chemicals for other drugs. The country, however, is a major transit point for drugs headed to Europe and other Persian Gulf countries. Major drugs that pass through the country include hashish, heroin, and Captagon (fenethylline) which is a synthetic amphetamine. Drug use throughout Syria is not widespread due to its draconian anti-drug laws. According to reports, Syria is doing a much better job now of curtailing drug trafficking than before and this may be from its decision in 2002 to upgrade its counternarcotics unit from an MOI branch to an MOI directorate.
    - Human Trafficking: In June 2012, the U.S. added Syria to its list of nations that were not doing enough to eliminate human trafficking. The report stated that the Syrian government treated victims as criminals or ignored their complaints, weakened security, and made it more difficult to monitor anti-trafficking efforts.



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- In the last two years alone, over 1,800 overseas Filipino workers have left Syria to return home. Up to 80% of these workers were human trafficking victims illegally recruited by employed agencies and often were from 13 to 18 years old.
- Kidnapping: In the midst of the violence over the last two years, kidnappings occur throughout the country. Fighting factions often kidnap members of the other side. Foreigners, especially members of the media, are also potential high-risk kidnapping targets.

### Social Variable Manifestations in Syria

Syria's population is fairly young, with only 3.8% of the population over 64 years of age. Large numbers of unemployed young males, however, makes the country ripe for violence. While 74% of the population is Sunni Muslim, the minority Alawites (a Shi'a sect) are in control of the government and military. This schism between the two Muslim groups makes the country rife for sectarian violence.

- Population: 22,530,746 in July 2012
  - 0-14 years of age: 34.6% (3,990,769 males and 3,793,859 females)
  - 15-64 years: 61.6% (7,059,306 males and 6,828,799 females)
  - 65 years and greater: 3.8% (393,984 males and 464,029 females)
- Population Growth Rate: -0.797% in 2012
- Literacy Rate (2004 census):
  - Total 79.96%
  - Males: 86.0%
  - Females: 73.6%
- Population Movement: 2.5% annual urbanization rate (projected 2010-15)
- Population Distribution (2010):
  - Urban: 56%
  - Rural: 44%
- Demographic Mix: Male/Female Ratio (2011 Estimate)
  - Total Population: 1.03/1.00
  - At Birth: 1.06/1.00
  - <15 years of age: 1.05/1.00
  - 15-64 years of age: 1.03/1.00
  - >65 years of age: 0.85/1.00
- Social Volatility: High (Rampant killing in quasi-civil war)
- Education Level (2007 estimate):
  - Overall: 11 years
  - Males: 12 years
  - Females: 11 years
- Ethnic Diversity:
  - Arab: 90.3%
  - All others (includes Kurds and Armenians): 9.7%



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- Religious Diversity:
  - Sunni Muslim: 74.0%
  - Other Muslim (Alawite, Druze, and others): 16.0%
  - Christian (various denominations): 10.0%
  - Jewish: small communities in Damascus, Al Qamishli, and Aleppo
- Common Languages:
  - Arabic (official)
  - Kurdish
  - Armenian
  - Aramaic
  - Circassian
  - French
  - English
- Criminal Activities:
  - Illegal drugs: Transit point for many illegal drugs headed to Europe
    - Opiates
    - Hashish
    - Cocaine
  - Money laundering due to:
    - Illegal drug trade
    - Weak anti-money laundering controls
    - Bank privatization
- Human Rights: Widely disregarded by the government, including indiscriminate bombing of insurgent groups that causes massive collateral damage to innocent civilians.
- Centers of Social Power: Like most Muslim countries, the family serves as the center of social power. Imams for both the Sunni and Alawite faiths influence how the people feel about a particular subject.
- Dress: Clothing in Syria is much more liberal than in other more conservative Muslim countries. Men and women can both wear traditional clothing or western-style clothing. Syrian businessmen wear suits and ties just as other executives do around the world. In rural areas of the country, there will be more traditional clothing than in the cities. In rural areas, women will often wear a scarf to cover their hair.
- Social Tensions:
  - Sunni majority versus the Alawites who possess the power in the country.
- Major Diseases in Area Include:
  - Vaccine-Preventable Diseases:
    - Measles
    - Mumps
    - Rubella
    - Diphtheria
    - Pertussis
    - Tetanus
    - Poliovirus
  - Hepatitis A
  - Hepatitis B
  - Typhoid
  - Rabies
  - Cutaneous leishmaniasis
  - Visceral leishmaniasis
  - West Nile virus
  - Schistosomiasis
  - Meningococcal

- Hospitals:
  - Damascus
    - Speciality Medical Center, 17 April Street
    - New Medical Center, Misat Square, Bernia Street
    - Dar Al Shifaa' Hospital, Al Adwi
    - The French Hospital, Al Kasa'
    - Al Atfal Children's Hospital, Mezzeh
    - Jaffa Surgery Hospital, Mezzeh
    - Ibn Sina Hospital, Douma
    - Ibn Al Nafees Hospital, Rukn Eddin
    - Assad University Hospital, Mezzeh
    - Al Assadi Hospital, Mezzeh Jabal
  - Aleppo
    - Al Arabi Hospital, Nile Street
    - Al Kalimat Hospital, Razgallah Tahane Street
    - Al Shabah Specialized Hospital, Austrada Aleppo Jadida
    - St. Louis Hospital (Dr. Fruchaud Hospital), Ismaillieh
- Cultural Norms:
  - When a man greets a man, they shake hands.
  - In Syria, "yes" means "maybe" or "it is a possibility," not "okay."
  - Syrian speech is indirect and can sometimes be interpreted as "talking in circles."
  - While the Syrians may ask foreigners about their life, family, or background, it is probably safest to not ask questions about the Syrians' female family members.
  - Expect to discuss business over many cups of tea or Arabic coffee.
  - Syrians use a lot of nonverbal communication, invade a Westerner's personal space, and are often touchy-feely as one man will touch another man's arms.
  - Men would prefer not to deal with females, but there are some Syrian businesswomen.
  - Syrians are often seen as "high strung" and give speeches from the heart.
  - Titles and seniority are important.
- Taboos:
  - DO NOT call on anyone between the hours of 1400 and 1700 unless it is an emergency. This is the Syrian siesta period and is very important to them.
  - DO NOT talk bad about another Syrian when conducting business. Due to the country's small size, the Syrians may be related.
  - DO NOT shake hands with a Syrian woman unless she offers her hand first.
  - DO present and receive business cards with the right hand only; the left hand is considered "unclean."
  - DO NOT give cheap gifts. The value of the gift is equated with the other person's perceived value to you.
  - DO NOT point the toe, heel, or any part of the foot at any person.
  - DO NOT use your foot to move anything as it is regarded as the lowliest body part.
  - DO NOT engage in any public displays of affection as they are completely unacceptable.
  - Homosexuality is against the law.



## Information Variable Manifestations in Syria

- Internet Service Providers:
  - Number: 420; ranked 187th in world in 2010
  - Internet Country Code: .sy
- Flow of Information across the Information Environment: While the Syrian government attempts to restrict the amount of information available to its people, the modern world is making this more difficult. Syrians receive their information from a variety of sources including television, radio, newspapers, and increasingly the Internet. With the availability of information not controlled by the Syrian government, the people now have access to information from a variety of sources and not just their own repressive government.
- Newspapers (all in Arabic):
  - Al Ladhqiya: Al Wehda
  - Dayr az Zawr: Al Furat
  - Damascus:
    - Al Baath
    - Al Maukef al Riadi (Sports)
    - Al Thawra
    - Syria Times
    - Tishreen
  - Halab: Al Jamahir
  - Hamah: Al Baath
  - Homs: Al Ouruba
- TV Stations: 44 total stations
  - State operated TV networks: 2
  - State operated satellite channel: 1
  - Broadcasts in Arabic, English, and French languages
- Radio Stations: 14 AM
  - State operated radio channels: 3
  - Privately owned radio stations:
    - First one began in 2005
    - Cannot transmit news or political content
  - FM Radio Stations:
    - Al Arabiya FM
    - Al Madina FM
    - Arabesque
    - Damascus Radio
    - Farah FM
    - Fann Radio
    - Melody FM
    - MixFM Syria
    - Rotana Style FM
    - Syria Alghad
    - Sham FM
    - VersionFM
    - Voice of People
    - Youth Radio

- Internet Access: The Syrian government controls access to the Internet in its country. There are fears that the government may shut down Internet access to keep the opposition fighters and activists from contacting each other.
  - 4.469 million people (March 2011)
  - Ranked 52nd in the world by the CIA (2009)
  - 19.8% of the population (March 2011)
- Phones:
  - Fair system undergoing improvements and upgrades
  - Expanding to rural areas
  - In 2010, mobile subscribers reach 50% of the adult population
  - Country Code: 963
  - Submarine cable connection to Egypt, Lebanon, and Cyprus
  - Land Lines: 4.069 million
    - 19.9 phones per 100 inhabitants
    - Landlines rose from under 2 million in 2000 to over 4 million in a decade.
  - Cellular phones: 14.3 million (2012)
    - Two primary operators: MTN Syria and Syriate
    - Mobile phone penetration is the second lowest in the Middle East
- Postal Service: National Post Office
  - Operates through subcontractors, especially in the rural areas
  - Delivers letters and small parcels
  - Does not pick-up parcels at the sender's location in order to reduce cost
- INFOWAR:
  - Electronic Warfare: Limited means for the Syrian military as it operates 40 MiG-21 Fishbed H/Js and 6 MiG-25 RB Foxbat-Bs capable of conducting EW
  - Computer Attack: Primarily through the ability of the Syrian government to turn off the Internet inside the country
  - Information Attack: The Syrian government is most likely behind a series of attacks against Facebook users in its country aimed at monitoring and intercepting social networking communications
  - Deception: Any deception used by the Syrian military will likely be low-tech due to the cost of a high-tech deception
  - Physical Destruction: Syria does not possess the sophistication needed to conduct major physical attacks on a network such as those done by the Stuxnet virus
  - Protection and Security Measures: Most likely the Syrian government will pull the plug on the Internet if its decision process determines that the advantages of the decision outweigh any negative publicity
- Intelligence:
  - HUMINT: Human Intelligence (HUMINT) is the most likely way that the Syrian military receives its information. With Alawites scattered throughout the country, government, and military, it is in the best interest of the minority population to provide information to the government that will keep the current regime in power.
  - OSINT: After HUMINT, Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) is probably the most important way for the Syrian army to receive information. With the Internet proliferation over the last generation, it is much easier to collect a large amount of information about any country rapidly.





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- SIGINT: The Syrian military will likely operate with limited Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) capability, especially at the strategic and operational level. The Syrian army possesses no major separate units that concentrate on this area.
- IMINT: Syria has limited means to conduct imagery intelligence (IMINT). The country possesses no organic satellite capability and has limited capability in its air force. Recently, Syria began to use Iranian built UAVs to track the movement of the Syrian Free Army and coordinate indirect fire.
- MASINT: Syria possesses limited means to conduct measurement and signature intelligence (MASINT).

### Infrastructure Variable Manifestations in Syria

- **Town Construction Pattern:** Most Syrian towns exhibit a combination of all four construction patterns: dense, random construction; closed orderly block construction; strip areas; and shantytowns. The older the city, the more likelihood of denser old towns. Rural areas and the periphery of the cities are likely to exhibit the most shantytown construction.
- **Residential Construction:** Many houses and apartments in Syria have balconies. In more open areas, houses will often contain a courtyard with a spring water fountain with citrus trees, grape vines, and flowers where the family entertains guests.
- **Construction Materials:** Syrians use three different types of construction material based on where or how they live. Traditional houses in northwest Syria resemble beehives and are made from mud. The nomadic Bedouins sleep in easily transportable tents and reside primarily in the southern and eastern portions of the country. Non-nomadic Syrians in the south and east usually make their houses from stone.
- **Urban Zones:** Most large Syrian cities contain six of the seven urban zones: city core; core periphery; high-rise residential areas; low-rise residential areas; commercial areas; and industrial areas. Some of these cities may also contain the seventh urban zone—a military-only area. Smaller towns and villages will likely not contain high-rise residential areas or industrial areas.
- **Major Cities (2008):** Syria contains only four cities with a population over 500,000 people. Numbers provided are for the metropolitan area, not the city itself.
  - Aleppo: 2.985 million
  - Damascus (capital): 2.527 million
  - Homs: 1.276 million
  - Hama: 854,000
- **Roads (2008):** Disturbances and road closures can happen at any time. When a car driver hits a pedestrian, the car driver is always legally responsible. Driving at night outside main cities is considered unsafe and should be avoided when possible.
  - Total: 42,351 miles
  - Paved: 38,223 miles
  - Unpaved: 4,128 miles
- **Railroads:** The railroad in Syria dates back to 1895 when the first line opened from Damascus to Beirut, Lebanon. The Syrian Railway operates in the country and currently links only to Turkey.



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Previous lines connected to Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, but were closed due to problems. Problems occur in the railroad system. On 23 July 2011, a train derailed between Aleppo and Damascus, resulting in a fire that killed the engineer and injured several hundred passengers.

- Total: 1,275 miles
- Standard gauge (1.435 M): 1,119 miles
- Narrow gauge (1.050 M): 156 miles
- **Airports:** Syria contains over 99 runways. The number of paved runways in the CIA Factbook is significantly less than those from The Airport Guide (TAG) and Aircraft Charter World.
  - Paved Runways: 39
    - > 10000 Feet: 6
    - 8000-10000 Feet: 23
    - 5000-8000 Feet: 2
    - 3000-5000 Feet: 3
    - < 3000 Feet: 5
  - Unpaved Runways: 70
    - > 10000 Feet: 0
    - 8000-10000 Feet: 0
    - 5000-8000 Feet: 1
    - 3000-5000 Feet: 14
    - < 3000 Feet: 55

AIRPORTS (Not all Runways listed)									
Airport	ACAO	Elvtn (feet)	Latitude	Longitude	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Surface	Other Info	
Abu Ad Duhur	OS57	846	35° 43' 55.79" N	037° 06' 15.17" E	9810	135	PEM	Military	
Al Al	OS73	1214	32° 47' 12.10" N	035° 43' 04;.67 E	4275	95	ASP		
Al Ousayr	OS70	1768	34° 34' 08.60" n	036° 34' 22.20" E	10000	148	PEM	Military	
Aleppo Int	OSAP	1276	36° 10' 50.43" N	037° 13' 27.69: E	9547	148	ASP	Civil & Military	
An Nasiriyah	OS64	2760	33° 55' 05.20" N	036° 51' 56.95" E	9847	144	ASP	Military	
As Suwayda West 1	OS60	2460	32° 42' 18.73" N	036° 24' 46.40" E	9868	150	ASP	Military	
As Suwayda West 2	OS60	2460	32° 42' 18.73" N	036° 24' 46.40" E	9868	98	ASP	Military	
Bassel Al Assad Int	OSLK	157	35° 24' 03.94" N	035° 56' 55.25" E	9175	148	ASP	Civil & Military	
Damascus Int 1	OSDI	2020	33° 24' 41.48" N	036° 30' 56.01" E	11811	148	ASP	Civil & Military	
Damascus Int 2	OSDI	2020	33° 24' 41.48" N	036° 30' 56.01" E	9843	148	ASP	Civil & Military	
Deir Zzor 1	OSDZ	700	35° 17' 07.35" N	040° 10' 33.46" E	11000	148	SAN	Civil & Military	



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Deir Zzor 2	OSDZ	700	35° 17' 07.35" N	040° 10' 33.46" E	9843	148	ASP	Civil & Military
Dumayr 1	OS61	2060	33° 36' 34.64" N	036° 44' 56.24" E	7756	197	GRE	Military
Dumayr 2	OS61	2060	33° 36' 34.64" N	036° 44' 56.24" E	10335	147	CON	Military
Hama	OS58	1014	35° 07' 05.36" N	036° 42' 40.27" E	9130	150	CON	Military
Jirah	OS62	1145	36° 05' 48.28" N	037° 56' 11.26" E	10180	130	ASP	Military
Kamishly	OSKL	1480	37° 01' 31.71" N	041° 11' 47.39" E	6885	150	ASP	Civil
Khalkhalah 1	OS69	2310	33° 03' 40.95 N	036° 33' 08.46" E	9995	148	ASP	Military
Khalkhalah 2	OS69	2310	33° 03' 40.95 N	036° 33' 08.46" E	9190	98	ASP	Military
Marj Ruhayyil 1	OS63	2190	33° 17' 06.10" N	036° 27' 29.01" E	9189	97	ASP	Military
Marj Ruhayyil 2	OS63	2190	33° 17' 06.10" N	036° 27' 29.01" E	9820	150	ASP	Military
Mezze	OS67	2407	33° 28' 39.67" N	036° 13' 24.25" E	9095	148	ASP	Military
Minakh 1	OS71	1613	36° 31' 19.31" N	037° 02' 12.11" E	2794	136	ASP	Civil
Minakh 2	OS71	1613	36° 31' 19.31" N	037° 02' 12.11" E	4866	136	ASP	Civil
Palmyra	OSPR	1322	34° 33' 26.50" N	038° 19' 00.80" E	9449	148	ASP	Civil & Military
Rasin El Aboud	OS66	1207	36° 11' 13.58" N	037° 34' 59.47" E	8305	150	ASP	Military
Sayoal 1	OS68	2300	33° 40' 56.67" N	037° 12' 50.03" E	8209	148	ASP	Military
Sayoal 2	OS68	2300	33° 40' 56.67" N	037° 12' 50.03" E	9820	148	ASP	Military
Shayrat 1	OS565	2726	34° 29' 30.38" N	036° 54' 35.20" E	9770	148	ASP	Military
Shayrat 2	OS565	2726	34° 29' 30.38" N	036° 54' 35.20" E	9810	98	ASP	Military
Tabqa	OS59	1050	35° 45' 17.04" N	038° 34' 00.62" E	9842	131	CON	Civil & Military
Tiyas 1	OS72	1805	34° 31' 21.65" N	037° 37' 49.07" E	10115	170	GRE	Military
Tiyas 2	OS72	1805	34° 31' 21.65" N	037° 37' 49.07" E	10010	170	ASP	Military
Tiyas 3	OS72	1805	34° 31' 21.65" N	037° 37' 49.07" E	8830	180	GRE	Military

- **Telecommunication Architecture:** Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Internet users in Syria increased from 30,000 to 3.935 million--from 0.2% of the population to 17.7%. The latest figures show that 4.469 million Syrians now have Internet access. Syria ranks 187th in the world in terms of Internet hosts, with only 420.
- **Utilities:** Syria produces some crude oil and natural gas, but the country's location makes it strategic for the transportation of energy resources. Since the mid-1990s, Syrian oil production and exports have continued to decline. Syria has recently increased its natural gas production, but will need to import more natural gas to meet its domestic demand.



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- Oil: Because the Syrian government subsidizes oil (\$4 billion in 2010), demand for oil in the country continues to increase. This has caused the amount of oil available for export to decrease, which decreased the country's trade deficit from a positive \$1.9 billion in 2006 to a negative \$100 million by 2008. Syria previously announced plans to phase out these subsidies, but the political turmoil in 2011 caused the government to delay implementation.
  - Production: 387,000 barrels per day (bbl/d) in 2010; down from a peak of 582,000 bbl/d in 1996.
  - Exports by destination (2010):
    - Germany: 32%
    - Italy: 31%
    - France: 11%
    - Holland: 9%
    - Austria: 7%
    - Spain: 5%
    - Turkey: 5%
    - Other: 1%
  - Mediterranean oil export/import terminals:
    - Baniyas (7 berths)
    - Tartous (2 berths)
    - Latakia
  - Oil pipelines: Various oil pipelines, both crude and products, are found throughout the country.
    - Tel Adas-Tartous: 347-miles between the oil fields and the port at Tartous and the oil refinery at Homs
    - Oil products pipelines from the Homs refinery to Syria's major cities
    - Tapline: Built in the 1940s to carry 500,000 bbl/d from Saudi Arabia to an export terminal in Lebanon. Closed because it became uneconomical. Discussions about its rehabilitations occur from time to time.
    - Kirkuk, Iraq to Baniyas, Syria and Tripoli, Lebanon: 500-mile pipeline built in the 1950s to transport 800,000 bbl/d. Rehabilitated in 2003 but closed in 2003 due to the war in Iraq. June 2011 agreement between Syria and Iraq was to repair the old system and build two new ones to carry 1.5 million bbl/d of heavy crude and 1.25 million bbl/d of light crude from Iraq.
- Natural Gas: Until 2008, Syria produced enough natural gas to meet its domestic needs. Since then, however, Syria must import natural gas to meet its requirements. All Syrian oil-fired power plants have been converted to use natural gas. Syria has opened its offshore territory for natural gas development.
  - Reserves: 8.5 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) as of 1 January 2011
  - Production (2009): 219 billion cubic feet per year (Bcf/y); down from a peak of 252 Bcf/y in 2004
  - Natural gas pipelines: With the completion of its first export gas pipeline to Lebanon in 2003, Syria thought it would become a natural gas exporter. Increased domestic consumption put an end to those plans and the country is now a natural gas importer.



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- Arab Gas Pipeline (AGP): Transports Egyptian natural gas to Jordan and Syria through one pipeline and, through separate spurs, to Israel and Lebanon. Since February 2011, the Syrian section has been shut down due to terrorist attacks. In 2009, Syria and Turkey agreed to build sections of pipe to connect the AGP between their countries by 2011. This agreement allowed Syria to receive between 17.5 and 35 Bcf/y of Turkish gas for the five years of the agreement.
- Azerbaijani Gas Pipeline: In June 2010, Azerbaijan agreed to supply Syria with 35 bcf/y by early 2012, increasing to 70 bcf/y by 2015, but only if the AGP extension through Turkey was completed. The open fighting in Syria has delayed the completion of this project.
- Islamic Gas Pipeline: In July 2011, the countries of Syria, Iran, and Iraq agreed to construct a 3100-mile pipeline that would transport 1.4 Tcf/y from Iran's South Pars field to Europe via Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. This pipeline will take between three to five years to build, so the earliest it will become operational is in 2014 and the latest is 2016.
- Electricity: Syria no longer produces any electricity by oil as all of its power plants have been converted to natural gas.
  - Production: 40.80 billion kilowatt-hours per year
  - Consumption: 29.09 billion kilowatt-hours per year
  - Access (January 2009): 92.7% of the population
- Sanitized Water:
  - Urban population access: 95%
  - Rural population access: 64% to 80% (sources vary)
- Modern Sewage Disposal:
  - Overall (2010): 95%
  - Urban population access (2002): 96%; decrease from 97% in 1996
  - Rural population access (2010): 93%; increase from 56% in 1996
- Key Industries:
  - Petroleum
  - Textiles
  - Food processing
  - Beverages
  - Tobacco
  - Phosphate rock mining
  - Cement
  - Oil seed crushing
  - Car assembly
- Environmental Concerns:
  - Deforestation
  - Overgrazing
  - Soil erosion
  - Desertification
  - Water pollution
    - Raw sewage
    - Petroleum refinery wastes



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- Insufficient potable water
- Ports:
  - Baniyas
  - Latakia
  - Tartus (Russian naval base)
- Agriculture:
  - Land Use (2005):
    - Arable land: 24.8%
    - Permanent crops: 4.47%
    - Other: 70.73%
  - Agricultural products:
    - Wheat
    - Barley
    - Cotton
    - Lentils
    - Chickpeas
    - Olives
    - Sugar beets
    - Beef
    - Mutton
    - Eggs
    - Poultry
    - Milk
- Pollution: Air pollution occurs throughout the country. People are upset with garbage disposal methods. Water, noise, and light pollution also occur at high levels.

## Physical Environment Variable Manifestations in Syria

- Boundaries: 1,519 miles
  - Coastline: 120
  - Iraq: 376
  - Israel: 76
  - Jordan: 233
  - Lebanon: 233
  - Turkey: 510
- Border Disputes:
  - Golan Heights: Israel has 41 settlements in the area that it took from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day War. Israel offered to return the land later, in return for a peace, but Syria refused. Since the Golan Heights is an important part of the area's watershed and Israel receives water from sources there, Israel may not now want to return the territory to Syria. The Golan Heights also offers military advantages for the side that holds them.
  - Hatay Province, Turkey: When the French left Syria, the area was given to Turkey. Even today on Syria's official maps, the area is shown as *Liwa' aliskenderun* instead of the Turkish name, and as part of Syria instead of Turkey.
  - Lebanon-Syria Border: When Lebanon and Syria gained independence, the countries never established an official border between them because no boundary had ever existed during the French colonial period. A joint Lebanese-Syrian committee worked during the 1950s to come up with a border that was presented in 1964, but neither side accepted the recommendations. Syria occupies much of the disputed land that comprises the land in northeast and southeast Lebanon claimed by the Lebanese government. Syria even sets up checkpoints that prevent Lebanese citizens from reaching their own land. In 2008, the two countries established diplomatic relations for



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the first time and one of the points of business, still uncompleted, is the demarcation of the border.

- Sheb'aa Farms: This is a small lightly-inhabited area occupied by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War. At the time Israel considered the area Syrian, but some records indicate that back in the 1920s some inhabitants regarded themselves as Lebanese. Until Israel withdraws from the area, Syria refuses to negotiate with Lebanon about ownership of the disputed area.
- Bodies of water: Mediterranean Sea
- Terrain: Primarily semi-arid and desert plateau with a narrow coastal plain where the country borders the Mediterranean Sea. There are also some small mountains in the western part of the country.
- Climate: Mostly desert with hot, dry, and sunny summers from June to August. Mild and rainy winters occur from December to February along the Mediterranean coast. Some parts of the country, such as Damascus can experience cold weather with periodic snow or sleet in the winter.
- Rivers:
  - Barada River: feeds an oasis where the capital of Damascus is located.
- Natural Disasters:
  - Dust storms
  - Sandstorms
  - Volcanism (two active volcanoes, but neither has erupted in centuries)
- Natural Resources:

○ Petroleum	○ Iron
○ Phosphates	○ Rock salt
○ Chrome	○ Marble
○ Manganese	○ Gypsum
○ Asphalt	○ Hydropower

## Time Variable Manifestations in Syria

- View of Time: Syrians do not view time the same way as the Western world. Syrians are much more relaxed about deadlines. They often arrived 30 minutes late for an appointment, except for job interviews. Syrians will often use the terms *In Shallah* and *Bokra* in their dealings with Westerners. The former means “god willing” and the latter means “tomorrow.” The phrase, “In Shallah, Bokra,” basically means “maybe tomorrow.” Business deals take a long time to put together, often over meals and drinks (tea or coffee) as the Syrians want to get to know the person before completing the business transaction. Syrians take an afternoon break between 1400 and 1700 every day. People should not contact Syrians during this time period unless it is an emergency, as the country regards its siesta as almost sacred. Most Syrian transportation services do not run on time.



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- Work Day Length:
  - Government offices: 0800-1400 daily except Friday and holidays; post offices remain open later in larger cities and sometimes on Fridays
  - Private offices: 1000-1400, 1600-2100 except Friday and holidays
  - Restaurants: 1200-2400
  - Cafes: may open earlier and close later than restaurants
  - Shops: 0900-1330 and 1600-2100 in summer; 0900-1330 and 1600-2000 in winter; often closed on Fridays and holidays
  - Work week: Sunday-Thursday
  - Weekend: Friday-Saturday to observe Jumu'ah prayers
- Key Holidays:
  - New Year's Day: 1 January 2014
  - Mawlid An Nabi (The Prophet's Birthday): changes based on lunar calendar (24 January 2013)
  - Revolution Day: 8 March 2013
  - Mother's Day: 21 March 2013
  - Easter (Gregorian/Western): changes based on lunar calendar (31 March 2013)
  - Independence Day: 17 April 2013
  - Labor Day: 1 May 2013
  - Martyr's Day: 6 May 2013
  - Start of Ramadan: changes based on lunar calendar (9 July 2013)
  - Eid-UI-Fitr (End of Ramadan): changes based on lunar calendar (8 August 2013)
  - Eid-UI-Adha (Festival of the Sacrifice): changes based on lunar calendar (begins 15 October 2013, usually a 3-day holiday)
  - Christmas Day: 25 December 2013

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