

Question for written answer E-002135/2025

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 144

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Subject: Lifting of sanctions against Syria

On 20 May 2025, the Council of the European Union¹ decided, surely enough, to lift the economic sanctions against Syria (under the new regime), even though mass-scale massacres by Islamist-affiliated units against the Alawite and Druze minorities have taken place in recent months.

1. What specific criteria and conditions were used to decide to lift the economic sanctions against Syria, and how was it ensured that this decision was not taken prematurely, given the ongoing political and humanitarian challenges in the country?
2. How does the lifting of these sanctions stand in relation to the Union's broader strategic objectives in the region, in particular with regard to stability, human rights – including rights of minorities (such as Christians, Alawites and Druze) – and prevention of a new refugee crisis?
3. To what extent have the Council and Commission consulted with international partners to ensure that this move does not lead to unwanted geopolitical tensions or a worsening of the humanitarian situation, including by monitoring the situation of historical minorities?

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¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/nl/press/press-releases/2025/05/20/syria-council-statement-on-the-lifting-of-eu-economic-sanctions/>