

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-001025/25  
to the Commission  
Vangelis Meimarakis (PPE)  
(10 March 2025)**

*Subject:* Concern over recent mass killings in Syria

Recent developments in Syria are extremely worrying, with reports of mass killings of religious minorities, particularly Alawites and Christians, including many Greek Orthodox. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, hundreds of civilians have been executed, while persecution of minorities appears to have intensified following the latest political developments in the country.

The EU is committed to upholding human rights and religious freedom in its international relations, and has established a framework for sanctions against those responsible for human rights violations in Syria. However, the fact that these crimes are continuing requires further action.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to formally condemn the massacres of religious minorities in Syria and call for an international investigation through the UN or other international mechanisms?
2. What further diplomatic or political initiatives can the Commission take to ensure that those responsible for these crimes are held accountable?
3. Does the Commission intend to propose to the Council the imposition of new targeted sanctions on individuals or entities involved in the massacres and persecution of religious minorities in Syria?

Submitted: 10.3.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission  
(30 April 2025)**

The EU has been gravely alarmed by the recent violence in Syria's coastal region, which claimed a high number of victims, including civilians.

On 11 March 2025, the High Representative/Vice-President issued a statement <sup>(1)</sup> on behalf of the EU, strongly condemning the attacks by pro-Assad militias as well as the horrific crimes committed against civilians, many of which were allegedly perpetrated by armed groups supporting the security forces of the transitional authorities.

The EU called for a swift, transparent and impartial investigation to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. It welcomed the transitional authorities' commitments, in particular the establishment of an investigative committee.

It further called on the transitional authorities to allow the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate all violations.

The EU also supports accountability mechanisms in Syria, including the Impartial and Independent Mechanism and the Independent Institution on Missing Persons. Everything must be done to prevent such crimes from happening again.

The EU urges all parties to protect Syrians from all religious and ethnic backgrounds without discrimination. The EU is also in contact with interim authorities and local actors, including civil society, to advocate for an inclusive, peaceful, Syrian-owned and Syrian-led political transition grounded on the respect of international law, human rights, fundamental freedoms, pluralism and tolerance as well as on the values of rule of law and accountability.

The suspension in February 2025 of a number of restrictive measures is part of a gradual, reversible approach. The EU will continue to monitor closely developments on the ground.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Syria: Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the recent wave of violence, 11/03/2025. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/03/11/syria-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-the-recent-wave-of-violence/>