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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(26.9.2025)

The EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and expects all countries to respect sovereign rights of all Member States, in accordance with international law, including customary international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Abstaining from unilateral actions running counter to EU interests, violating international law and Member States' sovereign rights remains an essential requirement to ensure a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean.

On 27 May 2025, the EU lifted all economic sanctions on Syria to support Syria's inclusive political transition and economic recovery¹, while maintaining sanctions related to the Assad regime and introducing additional sanctions against human rights violators and those fuelling instability in Syria. While lifting sanctions, the EU confirmed it will continue to closely monitor the developments on the ground and to engage with the transitional government on the steps it pursues to fulfil the aspirations and safeguard the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Syrians from all ethnic and religious backgrounds, without discrimination².

The EU commends the transitional government's statements vowing to develop peaceful relations with all countries in full respect of international law, including customary international law and UNCLOS³, while such critical issues for EU interests are raised regularly at political level by the High Representative/Vice-President with her counterparts. The EU firmly believes that maritime delimitation disputes need to be settled by peaceful means, notably through good faith negotiations, and in full respect of international law, including UNCLOS.

As recalled by the European Council in June 2025⁴, the Türkiye-Libya Memorandum of Understanding on the delimitation of maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean Sea infringes upon the sovereign rights of third states, does not comply with the customary law based on the Law of the Sea and cannot produce any legal consequences for third states.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/05/28/syria-eu-adopts-legal-acts-to-lift-economic-sanctions-on-syria-enacting-recent-political-agreement/>.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/05/20/syria-council-statement-on-the-lifting-of-eu-economic-sanctions/>.

³ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10688-2025-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/cjtb3oep/20250626-european-council-conclusions-en.pdf>.