

## **Statement by the Political Bureau of the Change for Syria Network on the Security Escalation in Suwayda Governorate**



**The Change for Syria Network expresses profound alarm at the sharp escalation of violence in Suwayda Governorate in recent days. Recurrent clashes and extensive military deployments have caused civilian casualties and heightened fear, underscoring the authorities' enduring reliance on a purely security-centric response to local crises.**

**We mourn the lives lost and unequivocally denounce the ongoing violence. The Syrian authorities bear primary responsibility for this deterioration, bound both legally and morally to safeguard citizens and maintain security. Their failure to provide credible political answers to legitimate local grievances has enabled rogue armed groups—some openly linked to state security services—to launch attacks that endanger civil peace and repeatedly victimize Suwayda's residents.**

**We also caution that state-aligned media are inciting tension by distorting facts, stoking polarization, and recasting isolated clashes as sectarian strife—when what is urgently needed is wisdom, restraint, and a focus on underlying causes, not the exploitation of their effects.**

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**Consistent with our moral and national obligations, we emphasize:**

- 1. All military and security operations in Suwayda Governorate must stop at once, and civilians as well as residential areas must be unconditionally shielded from any attack or violation.**
- 2. An impartial, transparent inquiry should be launched to establish the facts, identify those responsible for the escalation, and hold accountable anyone who used excessive force.**
- 3. Political and security leaders must answer for the rise of violent religious and political extremism—rhetoric that is routinely invoked to justify disproportionate, irresponsible reactions to social or civic activism.**
- 4. State-aligned outlets must forego inflammatory, accusatory language and adopt a tone that defuses tensions instead of inflaming them.**
- 5. We call on all Syrian political actors—without exception—to denounce these abuses and refuse both silence and justification.**
- 6. We also call on local factions and armed actors in Suwayda to uphold their moral and legal obligations to protect civilians, exercise restraint, and refrain from practices or abuses that endanger lives or property. All parties must respect international humanitarian law and place the community's safety above narrow interests.**



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**We categorically oppose any external interference that would compound Syria's turmoil or leverage it for regional gain. Accordingly, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to—the primary responsibility for protecting civilians and restoring security rests with the Syrian authorities—who have repeatedly shirked this sovereign duty, creating a vacuum that rival actors have been quick to exploit.**

**The Damascus authorities' continued reliance on security-only measures underscores the urgent need to recalibrate crisis management—placing the safety and welfare of all Syrians above narrow security calculations. Lasting stability and renewed public trust can be achieved only through an inclusive, participatory political process that upholds every Syrian's dignity and rights.**