

ia as it causes Syrians to turn against each other and become somewhat oblivious to their main enemy, which is the Zionist regime. However, what we see on the ground now is that neither the United States nor the Zionist regime is seeking a unified Syria. Their track record over the past 13 years has shown that even before, they wanted parts of Syria to remain under Bashar al-Assad's control, parts under Turkish control, and parts under their own control. They did not see the time as appropriate for Israel to annex parts of Syria to its own territories or the occupied Palestinian territories. Neither did the Israelis want to give some form of recognition, for example, to the Druze, by carving out a territory for them and creating a secure backyard for itself within Syria. The trend we see today, given the interventions by the United States and the Zionist regime, is that some Arab countries are not very keen on a secure Syria either. They had made significant efforts over the past 13 years to disrupt the establishment there.

The Turks play a supportive role in such disruptive actions, too. Currently, Syria is dealing with a weak government and a number of neighbors and international actors who are not very concerned about Syria's fragmentation but rather, in some cases, welcome it.

What sense do you make of the brutal killings of Alawites by rebels affiliated with Sharaa, the moves of the European Union, the UK, and Switzerland in lifting some sanctions on Syria, and the visits of the officials of Western countries?

There was a time when the forces fighting against Bashar al-Assad's regime had a blatantly violent image. No matter how much those who supported them tried to give them a civilized face, they were not very successful. These groups have always operated under various names, such as ISIL, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, and Ahrar al-Sham, most of which have an Islamic background, meaning they claim an Islamic identity, except for a few Kurdish SDF, which are secular. They

came to Syria and became active there, and now the situation has become sectarian. There has always been a kind of institutionalized violence in Syria, even before the developments related to the Arab revolutions. This violence is now being used, unfortunately, in a way that the killing of people is akin to hunters going to the desert and wilderness just to kill their prey. These groups show no defensive or offensive motives; they simply kill any living being they see, with no intention of taking prisoners. They behave in such a way, and the violence seen in recent days will certainly provoke a reaction from the other side when they see that the opposing side is not satisfied with surrender or staying at home but simply wants to kill them wherever they are found, without any reason. This will force them to take arms and see this path as a better option than sitting at home and being killed. This is a highly concerning trend inside Syria, and we will have to see how much Ahmed al-Sharaa can control this situation.



Syrian army personnel gather in Aleppo as they head towards Latakia to join the fight against the fighters allegedly loyal to Syria's ousted leader Bashar al-Assad.
● REUTERS

How do you think the situation in Syria will progress? What will be the outcome of these internal conflicts? Will the thirst for violence be quenched with the killings we are witnessing now?

As I've said, a kind of blood feud and revenge-taking is institutionalized within Syria. So, these killings will lead to further waves of killings. It's impossible to imagine that after the new government comes to power, there will be a general amnesty and that the

people will forget about revenge. But the wave that has started in the last few days is one that will certainly pose a serious challenge to the Syrian government.

The full article first appeared in Persian on Tasnim.

Al-Sharaa exposes his Daesh identity once again

Westerners, Arabs conceal his crimes against Alawites through silence, censorship

International Desk
OPINION

What is noteworthy is the silence of the West and Arab leaders in the face of the bloodbath Ahmed al-Sharaa has unleashed in western Syria. Historical experience across different eras, including the modern times, shows that no matter how much dictators attempt to present themselves as righteous, humanitarian, and peace-seeking before the public, circumstances will inevitably arise that strip away their masks. People will ultimately perceive their true nature with absolute clarity.



Syria's de facto leader Ahmed al-Sharaa (front), also known as Abu Mohammed al-Jolani, is pictured after the overthrow of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on December 23, 2024.
● AMMAR AWAD/REUTERS

Recent days have seen the uprising of Alawites in western Syria — in the cities of Latakia and Tartus — create a situation that exposed the façade Sharaa adopted after seizing Damascus. Immediately after taking control of the capital and settling into the presidential palace, he discarded his Daesh attire. Dressed in a pressed suit and tie, with perfumed hair and face, he appeared before cameras, adopting the posture of an 'advanced liberal democrat.' He mingled with Arab leaders, interacted with unveiled women, welcomed leaders of various religions and sects, and openly declared freedom for all people regardless of group, ethnicity, religion, or sect, asserting that no one had the right to harm them. On his first foreign trip, he trav-

eled to Saudi Arabia. Accompanied by his wife — who had also significantly modernized her appearance — he performed the Hajj pilgrimage. With Mohammed bin Salman's explicit approval, he even entered the Kaaba. The United States waived the \$10 million bounty placed on Sharaa for his crimes during his affiliation with Al-Qaeda and Daesh, establishing friendly ties with him. Arab and Western media outlets worked tirelessly to portray Sharaa's liberal-democratic mask, depicting him as harmless "even to an ant." Behind the scenes of this political theater, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) terrorists, alongside Israeli regime death squads, carried out arrests of dissidents and assassinated nuclear and biological scientists in their homes. Alaw-

ites were slaughtered wherever found. Sharaa's crimes escalated to such extremes that Syrian Alawites had no choice but to rise against the HTS terrorist faction. In recent days, they launched a widespread uprising to liberate Latakia and Tartus. Though Western and Arab cameras recorded these atrocities, their owners deemed it inappropriate to report them or unmask Sharaa's polished façade. However, the people's uprising in northwestern Syria achieved this. When HTS tanks, drones, and terrorists began massacring civilians, Sharaa's true face — that of a bloodthirsty Daesh terrorist and Al-Qaeda murderer — was laid bare once more. Everyone remembered him in his original Daesh and Al-Qaeda garb. The Turkish government, too, became

complicit in his crimes. What remains striking is the West's and Arab leaders' silence toward the bloodbath Sharaa has ignited in western Syria. This very silence has crucially contributed to re-exposing the true faces of Western and Arab leaders — the same ones who remained silent during the Zionist regime's 16 months of war crimes in Gaza yet applauded Sharaa, who falsely declared himself Syria's president through a military coup. This suppression will not mark the end. By rising up in Latakia and Tartus, the Syrian people have made clear they will never tolerate Sharaa and his Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham.

The full article first appeared in Persian in the Jomhuri-e Eslami newspaper.



Smoke rises while members of the Syrian forces ride on a vehicle in Latakia on March 9, 2025.
● KARAM AL-MASRI/REUTERS

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