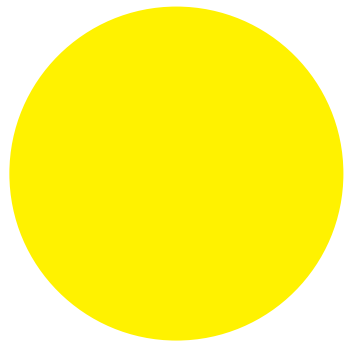


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Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei meets with a group of university students in Tehran, Iran on March 12, 2025. [khamenei.ir](#)



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Surge of terrorism in Syria will come back to haunt West

By Ali Khezrian
Iranian lawmaker

OPINION
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The fall of Bashar al-Assad and the rise of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria have plunged the country into a precarious and deeply troubling situation. A considerable number of HTS militants do not even hold Syrian citizenship, effectively turning them into occupiers rather than legitimate rulers. Moreover, an in-depth examination of the group's history, ideology, and approach makes it abundantly clear that it lacks both the capacity and the legitimacy to establish full control over Syria's diverse factions. HTS simply does not have what it takes to create a

stable and secure environment conducive to economic growth or to foster a thriving social landscape. Unfortunately, Western nations—along with certain regional states—have meddled in Syria's affairs, either directly or indirectly, propping up this group and paving its way to power. They have tried to paint its rule as a natural and logical outcome. But time has made one thing clear: HTS is neither capable of restoring stability nor of preserving Syria's national sovereignty. It has failed to unify the country's different political and social groups under its rule or to provide a free, equitable, and secure space for political, religious, and cultural activities. These concerns have only deepened in recent weeks as HTS has unleashed a brutal wave of violence against Syria's Alawite population. The alarm bells are

ringing for those who placed their trust in this group and effectively handed over Syria's sovereignty to a terrorist organization. The reign of HTS is not just a looming disaster for Syria—it also poses a direct threat to neighboring countries. A group that carries out mass killings of its own people will have no qualms about exporting violence and chaos beyond Syria's borders. Given the gravity of the situation, an emergency meeting of foreign ministers from Syria's neighbors and other West Asian countries must be convened as soon as possible. Lawmakers have already pressed the Iranian Foreign Ministry to initiate such a gathering so that decisive action can be taken before the crisis spirals even further out of control. At this point, Western countries must be called to account. In the early days of

HTS's takeover, their officials rushed to Syria to meet with the group's leaders. Now, they must be asked: What do they have to say about the atrocities and blatant human rights violations taking place on their watch? Are they willing to stand idly by as Syria follows in the tragic footsteps of Gaza and Lebanon, adding yet another chapter to their dark human rights record? Will they continue to turn a blind eye to HTS's crimes and extend their support, or will they finally acknowledge the threat they have helped unleash? If not for the efforts of nations like the Islamic Republic of Iran in combating extremist terrorism, would Europe and the West not already be grappling with the consequences of their own misguided policies? They would be gravely mistaken to think that they can open the door to an anti-security force in the region and

somehow contain the fallout. If anything, empowering such groups will only allow the virus of terrorism to spread like wildfire across the globe. It is only a matter of time before the consequences of this recklessness come back to bite them. Right now, the West is dealing with a terrorist entity of its own making—one that it has propped up in Syria. But rest assured, this group will eventually turn against its former backers. What is truly baffling, however, is why Western governments have not taken any steps to rein in this threat while they still have the chance. If they think this extremist movement will remain confined to West Asia, they are in for a rude awakening. Should they continue to fuel and facilitate terrorism in Syria, it will only be a matter of time before they find themselves in the crosshairs.