

## Sweida, Syria: A Call to Uphold Humane Treatment and Ensure Respect for IHL and IHRL

The IHL Centre expresses deep concern over the distressing reports and documentation emerging from Sweida, Syria, since 11 July 2025, which may amount to serious violations against civilians and other protected groups. The IHL Centre is closely monitoring these developments and reiterates its call on all relevant parties to strictly adhere to their obligations under international law, concerning the protection of civilians and the respect, protection, and fulfilment of human rights.

The IHL Centre reminds all parties that humane treatment is a binding legal obligation, regardless of the status or affiliation of those involved. Many of the practices described in these reports may constitute inhumane treatment, in addition to other violations criminalized under international law, such as extrajudicial killings, hostage-taking, torture, pillage and property destruction, and forced displacement.

Furthermore, the IHL Centre emphasizes that the obligations under international law extend beyond merely refraining from committing violations. They also encompass duties to prevent such acts and to ensure accountability. As the principal duty-bearer under international law, the Syrian state is obligated to prevent violations, protect civilians, and ensure accountability for all abuses committed within its jurisdiction.

It is also important to note that hate speech and incitement to violence, when constituting a genuine motive or contributing factor to the commission of international crimes, may in themselves amount to grounds for holding their perpetrators complicit in such crimes.

Given the disproportionate impact of violence on women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly, heightened protections must be effectively enforced to prevent harm and ensure their safety during armed conflict and from the effects of violent internal disturbances.

The IHL Centre reiterates its previous [call](#) for the provision of due process rights to all individuals, including those accused of serious violations. This includes the prompt initiation of transparent, impartial, and non-discriminatory investigations

that encompass all suspected perpetrators, regardless of their affiliation, and, where appropriate, the prosecution of those responsible in accordance with international standards.

In conclusion, as Syria seeks to establish an effective [transitional justice process](#) aimed at ensuring non-recurrence of violations, achieving justice for all victims, and fostering societal reconciliation, the recent events present significant obstacles. These developments demand immediate interventions grounded in the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights.