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Imperialist puppetry exposed: HTS' 'New Syria' fuels sectarian massacres and Zionist collaboration

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March 19, 2025



March 11 - Alawite refugees cross the al-Nahr al-Kabir river into the Lebanese village of Hekr El Dahri, fleeing the violence of U.S. and Israeli-backed government forces, who have been massacring Alawite and other ethnic minorities.

The illusion has been quickly and violently shattered that the Western-backed Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) overthrow of the Syrian Arab Republic represented a genuine move towards democracy and sovereignty for the Syrian people.

For decades under the rule of the Al-Baath party, Syria enjoyed a secular culture where religious and ethnic minorities were explicitly protected in the constitution and policy. With the collapse of the Assad government and the Syrian Arab Republic more broadly, those secular protections have all but disappeared under HTS rule.

In fact, HTS has gone far beyond the end of legal protections. HTS and affiliated right-wing Islamist militias have launched a series of [massacres](#) against various religious and ethnic minorities in Syria. These vicious attacks have targeted Kurdish, Alawite, Druze, and Christian minority communities in Syria. While the terror campaign began in the towns and villages along the [northwest coast](#), a region with a significant Alawite population, the violence has since spread across the country. HTS terrorists have targeted the [Alawite](#) community in particular not only due to their adherence to Shia Islam but also because Bashar Al-Assad, his family, and many of his supporters are Alawites themselves. The Christian community living in the same region has faced [violence and repression](#) as well.

HTS fighters have also murdered dozens of Druze people in southern Syria, [Kurdish](#) people in northern Syria, and have even [escalated](#) against Lebanese people living along Syria's border. The campaign against ethnic minorities in Syria has actually led to direct conflict between HTS and Lebanon's armed forces. Consequently, over [13,000 people](#) have already fled from Syria to Lebanon.

All the while, HTS has refused to lift a finger to stop Israel from its advances in southern Syria and its continued destruction of all military infrastructure left over from the Assad government. On the contrary, the so-called new democratic government of Syria under HTS has only expressed a desire to be friendly with the Zionist entity. Further, the HTS sham government has already banned public displays of "pro-Iranian" propaganda. All of these policies are clear indicators that HTS's Syria is a complete pawn of the West, meant to keep Syria divided and subservient to imperialism.

And even with all of these massacres against Syrian minority communities, [Zionist-backed Druze leadership](#) and [U.S.-backed Kurdish leadership](#) have still signed agreements to integrate their communities into the racist HTS government. While the Druze and Kurdish people should be free from persecution, this does not change

the nature of deals where militia leaders sell out their communities in exchange for some limited political power inside a Western puppet government.

The terror campaign against Syrian minority communities has triggered organized armed resistance from commanders and troops formerly affiliated with the Syrian Arab Republic. These forces broadly reject U.S. intervention in their country and receive organizational support from allies in Iran and Lebanon.

While progressive resistance to these massacres is a welcome sight, the situation is still regrettable. The imperialist playbook has unfortunately worked in Syria to devastating effect. Just like Libya before it, U.S. military investment in right-wing Islamist militias has spiraled the entirety of Syria into ethnic division, racist violence, and social chaos. All this in a country that was previously relatively stable, even under constant siege via Western sanctions and military intervention.

The tragedy unfolding in Syria highlights more than ever the need for genuine solidarity with progressive nationalist governments who refuse to bend the knee to imperialism.

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