



Syria Protection Sector – Flash Update Coastal Areas | 12 March 2025

Recent hostilities in the Coastal areas have resulted in widespread violence, leading to civilian casualties, displacement, and damage to critical infrastructure. A few thousand civilians are believed to have been forced to flee their homes. In addition, attacks on residential areas, healthcare facilities, and schools have severely restricted access to essential services, including medical care and education. Security concerns and access constraints are hindering the ability to deliver life-saving assistance to affected populations.

1. Protection Concerns

- **Targeted Violence:** Reports indicate serious human rights violations and abuses, including arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial killings, and other forms of violence against civilians, including women and children.
- **Tensions between communities:** The ongoing violence has exacerbated communal divisions, raising concerns about further violence and destabilisation. Divisions are further being fuelled by hate speech, both off- and on-line.
- **Psychosocial Impact:** The escalation has triggered significant mental health distress among displaced and affected communities, with limited access to psychosocial support.

2. Humanitarian and Human Rights Safeguards

- **Protection of Civilians:** Parties must comply with legal obligations to prevent harm to civilians or civilian objects and take all necessary measures to prevent any violations and abuses.
- **Freedom of Movement:** Civilians must be granted safe passage to seek refuge, with guarantees against forced displacement and arbitrary restrictions on movement.
- **Dignified treatment of the dead:** Parties must ensure the dignified treatment, identification, and proper burial of the deceased in accordance with international legal standards. The families of the deceased must be notified of their loved ones' passing and the location of their burial.
- **Accountability for Violations:** There is an urgent need for prompt, transparent and impartial investigations into all the killings and other violations to ensure justice and accountability for victims, in line with international law norms and standards.

3. Immediate Protection Priorities

- **Humanitarian Access:** Facilitation of safe and unimpeded access for humanitarian actors to deliver essential services, including food, shelter, and medical care.
- **Protection of Civilians:** Implementation of measures to safeguard civilians, prevent further displacement, and ensure the safety of vulnerable groups.
- **Legal and Psychosocial Support:** Expanded provision of legal aid, documentation services, and mental health support for those affected by violence, detention, or displacement.
- **De-escalation Efforts:** Urgent measures needed to prevent further hostilities, ensure compliance with international legal frameworks and promote social cohesion, access to justice and counter the spread of hate speech.

Call to Action

- **Adherence to Legal Obligations:** All parties must respect IHL and IHRL, ensure civilian protection, and refrain from further violence against civilians and individuals hors de combat.
- **Increased Support for Humanitarian Response:** Additional resources are needed to scale up protection interventions and meet the urgent needs of displaced and conflict-affected populations including needed repairs to critical infrastructure providing water and electricity to the population.

The situation remains highly fluid, requiring continuous monitoring and urgent action to mitigate further humanitarian and protection risks. Further updates will be provided as new information becomes available.

**Protection Sector
12 March 2025**