

Holiday



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Syria Tactical: Authorities declare national holiday on December 7-8 to mark Liberation Day; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation:

- Syria's Presidential office has announced that all public institutions nationwide will remain closed on December 7-8 on occasion of 'Liberation Day.'
- The December 8 observance marks the first anniversary of the removal of former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.
- To mark the day, a gathering has been scheduled to take place at **Damascus' Ummayad Square** at an unspecified time on December 8.
- Similar celebratory gatherings will also be held in several other governorates, including in Daraa and Latakia from December 6-8.
- According to an unconfirmed report, a state of "high alert" has been prevalent across all government agencies in Syria, with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) reportedly increasing deployment of security personnel to mitigate security incidents.

Source: [SANA](#); [Damascus Governorate](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. On December 8, 2024, the Ha'yat Tahrir al-Sham-led coalition seized control of Damascus by overthrowing then-President Bashar al-Assad. The upcoming holiday and related public gatherings mark the first anniversary of his removal.
2. **FORECAST:** The closures declared as part of the public holiday on December 7-8 will result in disruptions to business continuity through the suspension of government operations and limited commercial activity. Essential services, including health care and banking, will likely remain functional to manage emergencies.
3. **FORECAST:** Given the importance of the occasion and its heightened emotional resonance among citizens, large public gatherings, commemorative rallies, and related events are expected to take place across the country, particularly around prominent public squares and historic sites. These events are expected to draw large crowds, likely in the high hundreds at individual locations. Security presence will be bolstered at key locations to ensure smooth proceedings and adequate crowd management. Significant traffic disruptions are anticipated on major routes and thoroughfares nationwide, including Damascus, as commemorations begin.
4. **FORECAST:** There is a possibility that certain groups, including al-Assad loyalists, anti-government elements, and the Islamic State, will seek to use the commemorative events as an opportunity to carry out attacks and undermine the Syrian government's security apparatus. The underlying risk of such incidents is expected to prompt reinforced security measures at key public squares and government institutions. Security checkpoints and security checks of individuals can be implemented in the vicinity of state celebrations or state addresses.

Recommendations:

1. Those operating or residing in Syria on December 7-8 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance near areas designated for "Liberation Day" celebrations.
2. Allot for disruptions to general business continuity, including closures of public offices due to the slated national holiday.
3. Allot for disruptions due to the possibility of similar commemorative events materializing across the country.