Statement by Minister of State Serap Güler prior to her departure for Syria

2026-06-15

Minister of State Serap Güler issued the following statement today (15 June) prior to her departure for Syria:

Germany and Syria are indeed linked by a special relationship. During the Assad dictatorship and the war in Syria, Germany always stood by the side of the Syrian people. We condemned the regime up until the moment that it fell. For many years, we provided support to the civilian population in Syria and to Syria’s opposition. We also offered refuge to more than one million people who fled Syria to escape repression by the Assad regime.

Now, we are witnessing the possible dawn of a new Syria, and we want the full breadth and depth of the relationship between our countries to be leveraged toward this end. Germany has a paramount interest in a stable Syria that lives in peace with its neighbours and offers its citizens the prospect of peace and a life in security and dignity – a Syria that finally provides a stable and secure environment, legal certainty and economic opportunities. These are also conditions that would give many of the Syrians who have sought refuge elsewhere, including in Germany, the opportunity to return. Germany and Europe are supporting the Syrian Government and the people in Syria as they travel down this difficult but also very promising path.

The rebuilding of Syria’s economy after decades of war is also a great opportunity for German businesses. The Syrian Government has announced it intends to open the country’s economy as well as modernise its administration and infrastructure and thereby create an attractive and secure environment for investment by foreign companies. There is increased interest within the German business community in Syria, and one of my goals during this trip is to campaign for more investment and trade.

During my visit to the country, I will discuss this with representatives of Syria’s Government, business sector, civil society and its various minority groups. For the first time since the fall of the Assad dictatorship, our German Government delegation will also visit several regions beyond Damascus, including the coastal cities of Tartus and Latakia, as well as Syria’s former economic hub Aleppo, many parts of which today lie in ruins.

In our view, an inclusive transition process is key to stabilising the country and giving it a peaceful future. This process must take into account the rights of all regional, social, religious and ethnic groups in Syria and must grant them equal political participation. That includes in particular the convening in the near future of the People’s Assembly that must represent the interests of all Syrians, from all parts of the population, so that it can serve as a platform for a peaceful debate – with equal rights for all – on the future of Syria.

Background information:

The visit by Minister of State Güler follows closely on the visit by President al-Sharaa to Federal Chancellor Merz on 30 March 2026 and Foreign Minister Wadephul’s visit to Syria in October 2025. It is taking place just over one and a half years after the overthrow of Syria’s dictator Bashar al-Assad on 8 December 2024 and the end of the war in Syria, which the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights estimates killed more than 600,000 people. More than twelve million people – more than half of the Syrian population – either fled Syria during the war or became internally displaced. More than one million refugees from Syria found refuge in Germany.

For many years, Germany has been one of the largest donors of humanitarian assistance for Syria and has helped meet basic needs for food, healthcare and housing. What is more, Germany provides the largest share of funding, via the Federal Foreign Office, to the Syria Recovery Trust Fund (SRTF), which implements, among other things, local healthcare, reconstruction and financial aid projects.

The Federal Government also supports activities via the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in the spheres of health, infrastructure rehabilitation, education, water, local economic development, good governance and the rule of law. The private sector is incorporated into these activities to ensure sustainable economic development and the creation of job opportunities.

Other focuses of Germany’s support for Syria are assisting and mentoring efforts toward an inclusive and peaceful political transition and transitional justice.

When Federal Chancellor Merz received Syrian President al-Sharaa on 30 March 2026 during his first official visit to Berlin, Chancellor Merz pledged to continue Germany’s support for a stable and prosperous Syria. For more information:

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