

<u>Israel's Continued Attacks on Syria Are a Deliberate Effort to Try to Destabilize the New Government in</u>

Damascus

Israel has continued to launch attacks on Syria, including the capital city of Damascus, where it hit a compound this week that houses the Ministry of Defense as well as areas near the presidential palace. What was already evident as a result of repeated instances like this in recent months has only become more glaringly obvious – that this is a deliberate effort to try to destabilize the new Syrian government, undermine its legitimacy, and sow havoc and discord. Since the overthrowing of the Assad regime, Israel's constant military attacks and intervention are plainly aimed at threatening Syria's delicate political transition. The actions also represent a blatant violation of Syria's territorial integrity and risk devolving into further regional conflict. With the attacks, the Israeli government is leaving no doubts regarding its desire to subvert and weaken the Syrian state, and this harmful interference in the country's internal affairs deserves heavy condemnation.

Israeli officials have long misleadingly attempted to justify their military interventions in Syria under the guise of "protecting the Druze minority," as was the case when they carried out a series of attacks back in May as well. However, many Druze figures have understandably accused Israel of trying to stoke divisions in order to advance its own expansionist aspirations in the region. They have also rejected any form of foreign intervention and reaffirmed their support for a unified Syrian state. For impartial observers, it is undeniable that Israel is seeking to exploit the Druze as a political tool in an effort to provide an excuse for its bellicose attacks against Syria. In actuality, these military strikes and violations of Syrian sovereignty are clearly meant to be destabilizing to the new government in Damascus. The pattern of Israeli behavior in the aftermath of the Assad regime's ousting is proof of this and has included not only the launching of hundreds of attacks on Syria, but also the illegal seizure of a United Nations-patrolled buffer zone in Syrian territory along the border with the already unlawfully occupied Golan Heights.

The United States has even expressed its opposition to the continued Israeli attacks on Syria, with State Department officials remarking that the U.S. does not support the strikes and voicing their displeasure and concern. This is a notably differing tone from May when the United States failed to speak out against the dangerous Israeli aggression. A coalition of twelve countries in the region also issued a joint statement supporting Syria's sovereignty and condemning foreign interference. Meanwhile, Syrian leader Ahmed al-Sharaa has denounced Israel's actions for seeking to fracture the country, pointing to the fact that Israel has consistently targeted the new government's stability and created discord following the fall of the former regime. In this time since last December, the transitional government in Syria has already been facing the challenge of governance and it is lamentable that after all of the suffering that Syrian citizens faced under the previous oppressive regime, Israel is attempting to derail the prospect of stability and perpetuate conflict in the region.