

SYRIA

A NEW ERA?

JPS

Jordanian Politics & Society Magazine

معهد
السياسة والمجتمع
Politics & Society Institute



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Issue 3, June 2025

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“ ABOUT JPS

There is often a significant gap between political transformations, both domestic and international, and the knowledge produced by researchers, academics, and specialists regarding social issues and phenomena. Despite the proliferation of many journals in the human and social sciences, there is a shortage of publications that provide deep, research-based knowledge and perspectives, that offer valuable alternatives and recommendations to decision-makers across various policy dimensions.

The Jordanian Politics & Society Magazine (JPS), published periodically by the Politics and Society Institute, aims to fill this gap. JPS serves as a scientific platform dedicated to fostering rigorous intellectual debate on issues related to domestic and foreign policies at regional and international levels, with a particular focus on the Jordanian political landscape. The magazine emphasizes the development of scientific and intellectual concepts to address various real-world variables and promotes the exchange of ideas and interactive efforts among specialists.

Note

The views and opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of neither PSI nor the Editors.

Prospects in a New Era of Azerbaijan-Syria Relations

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Azerbaijan and Syria share a deep bond rooted in historical and cultural ties. This bond traces back to the era of the Silk Road and has continued through the pre- and post-independence periods in Azerbaijan. The people of the two nations have long been connected through trade routes, diplomatic engagement, and cultural integration, fostering shared values and mutual understanding.

Diplomatic relations between Syria and Azerbaijan were officially established on March 28, 1992. On April 11, 1997, President Heydar Aliyev signed a decree establishing the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Damascus, and it officially commenced operations on May 16, 2008. However, diplomatic relations were suspended seventeen years later. The indefinite cessation of Azerbaijan's diplomatic mission in Syria was linked to the deteriorating security environment and the complex military-political conditions prevailing in the country at the time.

Unfortunately, under the former Syrian regime, relations with Azerbaijan did not reach a stable level due to a number of factors. Among them were the anti-Azerbaijani and anti-Turkish stance of the Armenian diaspora in Syria, as well as the friendly ties between Syria and Armenia, a country with which Azerbaijan had a conflict. The former Syrian regime also posed challenges for Azerbaijan in various international organisations and refrained from adopting a clear stance on issues concerning Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. During that period, under the Assad regime, Syrian representatives made statements contrary to the principle of Muslim unity within the framework of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, of which Azerbaijan is a member.

However, it is important to emphasize that the actions of the previous regime did not reflect the sentiments of the Syrian people towards Azerbaijan.

Bilateral relations entered a new phase in Syria following the change in leadership on December 8, 2024, creating new opportunities for the advancement of cooperation between the two countries. Following a twelve-year hiatus, the resumption of operations by the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Damascus represented a new step forward in diplomatic engagement.

Two days after the overthrow of the Bashar al-Assad regime, on December 10, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan issued a statement expressing hope for the restoration of bilateral relations between the two countries. This step represented the initial phase of efforts to strengthen bilateral ties at various levels. Then, on December 29, Deputy Foreign Minister Yalchin Rafiyev visited Damascus and met with Syria's transitional Foreign Minister, Asaad Hassan al-Shaibani. Rafiyev confirmed Azerbaijan's support for Syria alongside Türkiye during this critical time. Al-Shaibani stressed the importance of Azerbaijan's liberation of its territories for regional peace and praised Azerbaijan's support, especially through its partnership with Türkiye.



Baku is interested in Syria's post-war reconstruction, and hopes to use its expertise in infrastructure, energy, and construction to support.

Following the Deputy Minister's visit to Damascus, Azerbaijan dispatched its first humanitarian aid convoy to Syria. The convoy comprised ten trucks carrying approximately two hundred tons of food and essential supplies. This humanitarian assistance was delivered upon the instruction of President Ilham Aliyev, with the aim of supporting the population affected by the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

On February 28, the second batch of humanitarian aid from Azerbaijan was sent to Syria. Representatives of the Azerbaijani embassy participated in the aid distribution event held at a camp for internally displaced persons in the village of Karakopru, Aleppo. Then on March 28, the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Syria organized an iftar dinner in the capital, Damascus, for one thousand orphaned children.

One of the main reasoning behind Azerbaijan's normalization of relations with the new administration in Syria was the spirit of Islamic solidarity and the humanitarian aid extended in response to the crisis in the country. These steps helped strengthen the historical and cultural bonds between the two peoples. At the same time, the removal of obstacles that had arisen due to the former Syrian regime's close ties with Armenia created new opportunities for cooperation with the new leadership. This allowed Baku to pursue a more balanced and effective policy in the region. It should also be noted that Azerbaijan has stood shoulder to shoulder with Türkiye on the Syrian issue and declared this position from the very beginning. This stance has also been reflected during visits and meetings held in recent months.



Given Syria's water scarcity and climate challenges, Azerbaijan can be a key partner in smart agriculture and resource management. Its expertise in modern farming technologies for semi-arid areas offers real opportunities for collaboration, crucial for Syria's food security and rural development.

Notably, on February 13, during the presentation of credentials by Birol Akgün, Türkiye's newly appointed Ambassador to Azerbaijan, President Ilham Aliyev stated that Azerbaijan would continue to stand alongside Türkiye on the Syrian issue: "From the very beginning, Azerbaijan has declared that it stands with Türkiye on the Syrian issue. Azerbaijan is also ready to contribute, in coordination with Türkiye, to ensuring stability and security in Syria, as well as to addressing humanitarian challenges".

Azerbaijan plays an active role in energy security and regional cooperation as a strategic bridge between the Middle East and Central Asia. Through transport corridors and energy projects, it has been able to expand its economic and political influence.

Baku is interested in Syria's post-war reconstruction, and hopes to use its expertise in infrastructure, energy, and construction to support. In terms of Muslim solidarity, Azerbaijan emphasizes cooperation in social development, education, and healthcare. Together with Türkiye, Azerbaijan is committed to supporting Syria's stability and regional reintegration.

Given Syria's water scarcity and climate challenges, Azerbaijan can be a key partner in smart agriculture

and resource management. Its expertise in modern farming technologies for semi-arid areas offers real opportunities for collaboration, crucial for Syria's food security and rural development. Additionally, Azerbaijan can support Syria's oil and gas sector with technical assistance and investment for energy field rehabilitation and new exploration.

Azerbaijan's active role within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, along with its independent and balanced foreign policy in the Middle East, positions it as a credible and effective mediator on sensitive matters. This unique diplomatic posture enables Azerbaijan to serve as a trusted partner and intermediary in the region which could be used to Syria's benefit.

The first meeting between President Aliyev and Syrian President al-Sharaa provided provided a spark for bilateral relations. During the meeting, President Aliyev noted that Azerbaijan is ready to take part in the reconstruction process essential for strengthening stability in Syria.

For his part, al-Sharaa expressed his gratitude to President Aliyev for the support extended by Azerbaijan. He also emphasized the importance of Azerbaijan's continued support to Syria in the areas of energy, infrastructure, and security.

On May 4, a high-level Azerbaijani delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Samir Sharifov paid an official visit to Syria. The visit aimed to support Syria's post-conflict reconstruction and explore cooperation in sectors such as the economy, energy, culture, and education. al-Sharaa thanked Azerbaijan for the swift mission, highlighting the shared challenges to territorial integrity. He noted that Azerbaijan's successful recovery post-wars could serve as a model for Syria. Where this visit marks a new phase in Azerbaijan-Syria relations, strengthening mutual solidarity and paving the way for long-term cooperation.

A favorable environment has emerged to elevate cooperation between the two countries to a new level and enrich it with substantive content. The recent steps taken will contribute positively to Azerbaijan-Syria relations, and the resumption of the embassy's operations will advance bilateral ties.

“ ABOUT PSI

Politics and Society Institute (PSI), is a Jordanian nonprofit, policy and research organization established to advance practical research, innovative ideas and realistic solutions toward building a more prosperous Jordan and a stable region.

The Institute is an independent organization that aims to deepen the understanding of public policy and decision-making processes and to build a better knowledge platform of domestic and regional dynamics that will define our future.

The Institute advances its mission guided by the values of the rule of law, civil society, good governance, and moderation. It provides an innovative, integrated, and global approach to its analysis of complex trends and transformations with particular attention to youth dynamics.

The Institute aims to provide practical solutions, based on up-to-date studies and research in political, economic, security, and social fields. The Institute hopes to define future trends for Jordan and the region through its analysis and projections, focusing on the impact of accelerating transformations on the politics and societies of the Middle East.

By bringing together experts and thinkers from various disciplines and regions, the institute hopes to be able to build ideas and solutions through current and relevant research and integrated analysis that can help policymakers advance national interests and build a more stable region by effectively responding to complex challenges and rapid transformations.

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