

## Syria's new Leader vows Justice amid sectarian killings



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Syria's interim President Ahmed Sharaa warned that mass killings of Alawites threaten national unity and pledged accountability, even for his own allies. In his first global interview since ousting Bashar al-Assad, Sharaa blamed pro-Assad factions and foreign influences for triggering recent sectarian violence, which has left hundreds dead.

Sharaa confirmed an independent investigation into the killings and vowed swift justice. “Syria is a state of law. No blood should be shed without accountability,” he told Reuters from the Damascus presidential palace. Reports indicate at least 973 Alawite civilians and over 480 fighters and security personnel have died in the violence.

While rejecting criticism from Israel, which has seized Syrian territory since Assad’s removal, Sharaa expressed willingness to restore ties with Moscow, which is negotiating to retain military bases in Syria. He also called for lifting U.S. sanctions but noted no direct engagement with Washington since Donald Trump’s presidency began.

Sharaa acknowledged the economic crisis and Syria’s fractured state, pledging reconciliation efforts, including talks with Kurdish leaders. He downplayed concerns over his past ties to Islamist factions, insisting his government represents all Syrians.

Meanwhile, tensions remain high, with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar backing Sharaa’s government, while Russia and Iran express caution. The United States has condemned “radical Islamist elements” in Syria’s new leadership.

Despite international skepticism, Sharaa vowed to stabilize the country. “We will rectify the situation as much as we can,” he said.