Sweida Prisoner Exchange Frees Dozens, Calms Local Tensions

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Syrian authorities announced Thursday that a prisoner and hostage exchange in the southern province of Sweida resulted in the release of dozens of civilians, as part of ongoing efforts to ease tensions following months of unrest.

Interior Ministry spokesperson Noureddin al-Baba told state media that the operation freed 86 Syrian families, including 25 civilians previously abducted by armed groups. In exchange, 61 detainees held by Syrian authorities were released.

The swap was conducted under the framework of the Amman Agreement, a set of understandings aimed at de-escalating violence in Sweida and restoring a political and peaceful track aligned with Syria's national unity objectives.

Sweida, a predominantly Druze province, has faced repeated instability over the past year, including armed clashes, kidnappings, and road blockades, amid widespread frustration over security conditions and economic hardship. Recent mediation efforts by local leaders and regional actors sought to reduce violence and prevent further escalation.

Officials described Thursday's exchange as a positive step toward stabilizing the province but noted that significant challenges remain, including clarifying the fate of missing persons and addressing broader security concerns. They emphasized that continued dialogue and coordinated local mediation are essential to sustaining peace and fostering reconciliation in the region.