

## **Introduction**

Germany has been and will continue to be a leading global power in politics, economics, social reform, and progressive legislature. In the turmoil of current times, we have all been challenged, especially those in the Middle East and Europe, to adjust to a rapidly changing political sphere and world in general. We hope that our current involvement and aid in the Syrian civil war will continue and grow. We will continue to take in refugees, are beginning to bring in troops and military support, and are ready to take large steps towards ending the war, ending ISIS, and rebuilding Syria for its people.

## **Key Points**

- Germany hopes to bring a peaceful end to the conflict in Syria that begins with a strong, unilaterally backed cease-fire.
- Germany hopes to install a parliamentary democracy within Syria to bring stability and democracy to the nation
- Germany will continue providing needed humanitarian aid to refugees and civilians in Syria, as well as taking in refugees. The amount of aid and refugees can be discussed.
- Germany will continue to work towards eliminating ISIS and other terrorist groups, possibly to even such extremes as military intervention.

## **Background**

Germany has had a long and nuanced history that spans generations. From the Bronze Age to current day, Germany has grown and matured from humble beginnings of Germanic tribes and the Frankish Empire to the Holy Roman Empire to our present, efficient, effective Federal Parliamentary Republic. The fractured state of our country has historical beginnings, tied most directly to the different ethnic groups present in populations in our early history and the divided Holy Roman Empire. Following the fall of Napoleon and the following Congress of Vienna, the German Confederation was founded, the closest thing in our past that currently resembles our unified German state. United over a shared contempt for our Austrian neighbors, and with the rise of nationalism in Europe, Germany began to coalesce into one people, with a common history, heritage, and culture.

Notably, this begins the role of Otto von Bismarck, a national hero, who was a key leader and government figure in determining the future of Germany following our new independence. Appointed by Kaiser Wilhelm I to be Minister President of Prussia in 1862, he was decisive in finally winning the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. This allowed for the creation of the North German Confederation, the blossoming of great united Germany by cutting Austria out of our land. Closely following our victory over Austria, Bismarck continued to lead Germany in this

unification process by engaging the French in the Franco-Prussian War. Upon our success, the princes of Germany declared the founding of a German Empire in Versailles. This German Empire was a continuation of the fractured state of Germany as it encompassed Prussia and many other smaller, however it was the first time there was a unified Germany.

Bismarck then became the Chancellor of Germany under Emperor, not Kaiser, William I. He built the strength of Germany by creating alliances to solidify us as a political power, isolating France, and working contrary to the popular idea of Prussian aggression and not engaging in war. However, after the tragic death of Emperor William I, Wilhelm II assumed the throne, and was suspicious about the overwhelming influence and power that Bismarck exerted over Germany and its government. He promptly forced Bismarck to resign and brought in a new wave of German policies, that were first and foremost spearheaded by imperialism. Germany entered into the Triple Alliance in 1882, joining with Italy and Austria, and foreshadowing what would become the Central Powers. This alliance was seen as imperative, as all the nations harbored fear of attack from France and Russia.

Our new, larger role in international politics continued as we hosted the infamous Berlin Conference in 1884. This Conference is what paved Germany's that into becoming an imperial power.

The intersection of German and Syrian history also raises the issue of the legacies of the secular radicalism of the Baathist regime in Damascus and how they will affect that success or failure of efforts to integrate Syrian refugees into German society. The million or so Syrians now in Germany presumably despise the Baathist regime of Bashar al-Assad and are open to learning about the rules and norms of a liberal democracy. Yet however much they reject the Assad regime, they and their parents and grandparents lived under a regime that has been hostile to Israel since its founding in 1948, went to war against it then and again in 1967 and 1973 and supported terrorist organizations attacking it. During the Cold War it spread mendacious propaganda in government controlled media about Israel, West Germany, the Western Alliance and the United States.

The chances are good that some sizable proportion of the recent Syrian refugees to Germany despise the state of Israel. Exposed to the propaganda of the Baath regime that regularly compared Israel to Nazi Germany, some undetermined proportion of the refugees will add to the antagonism to Israel that already dominates far leftist and not so far leftist sentiment in Germany. So the path to integration into German society may be via leftist parties that regularly denounce Israel.

The refugees who were adults during the Cold War may remember that Baathist Syria was the lynchpin of the Soviet bloc alliances in the Middle East. They may remember East Germany's passionate support for Syria and the PLO. Moreover, the establishment of diplomatic relations with East Germany in 1969 was based on shared opposition to Zionism and imperialism; East Germany provided arms and military training in the aftermath of the Six Day War of 1967, and there were regular visits to Damascus and to East Berlin by military leaders of both states. East Germany even participated in the Soviet bloc military deliveries to Tartus and

Aleppo during the Yom Kippur War. A thick web of contacts existed between Syrian military officers, university professors, journalists and people active in economic matters and their East German counterparts. It is certainly possible that the last five years of the Assad regime's attack on its own citizens has also undermined the ideas with which it was identified. Yet it also seems likely that some sizable number of a million Syrian refugees will be bringing these ideas with them.

Should that be the case, the Syrian refugees will find themselves in conflict with one of Germany's most important traditions, namely that of "coming to terms with the Nazi past." Every West German and then German Chancellor has adopted a kind of implicit eleventh commandment of German history after Hitler, Nazism and the Holocaust. It is to do no more harm to the Jews and to the state of Israel. The tradition of coming to terms with the Nazi past in Germany has entailed frank discussion of the crimes of the Nazi regime and the facts of the Holocaust. It commits the German government to fight anti-Semitism whatever its source and led to a special relationship with the state of Israel. To be sure, there is criticism of Israel in Germany but to this day there remains a consensus in the German establishment that an honest history of the Holocaust, firm rejection of anti-Semitism and support for the survival of the state of Israel are, as Chancellor Merkel put it in the Knesset in 2008, part of Germany's reason of state. The concern of this historian is that the Syrian migration to Germany since 2015 will add numbers to those in Germany who want to break with this, one of Germany's and Europe's finest traditions.

### **Cross-Border Issues**

The countries bordering Syria are Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Iraq, and Jordan. Prior to current conflict, Turkey had been allies with Syria, but within months of the beginning of conflict, Turkey turned against them. Lebanon and Syria had both gained independence from France and had formed an alliance. Even prior to the Lebanese civil war, Syria's relationship with Israel has been hostile. Iraqis and Syrians had attempted unification to take place under the rule of the Ba'ath Party prior to the violence. Jordanians and Syrians have also had a bad relationship before the acts of conflict had begun because King Abdallah of Jordan had wanted to take control of Syria far before present day.

Now, facing conflict today, we see that Syria's relations with their neighbors has worsened. They have turned the area into a constant warzone. The Israeli and the Syrians have encountered dangers in-air battles, but they are watching carefully and have not had a major amount of participation in battle. Turkey has been sent into a crisis due to the conflict, with many of its inhabitants fleeing and seeking shelter. Jordan on the other hand, is hosting many of the refugees that have fled battle ridden areas and are officially standing for non-interference. Iraq is also holding many of the Syrian refugees which is furthering enfeebling their security. The conflict in Syria is affecting Lebanon the most out of its neighboring lands. War has flowed into Lebanese territory, and many Palestinian and Syrian refugees are currently inhabiting the land. Daily, there are thousands of people fleeing from Syria. Syrians are also fleeing due the drought

taking place right now. The resources of Syria's surrounding territories, and all of the European countries that refugees are flocking to are not limitless. Resources such as water only expendable to a certain point, and with land filling up so quickly, resources are diminishing at an exponential rate.

An estimate of about 450,000 refugees are currently residing in Europe. Prior to the conflict, Syria hosted as many as three times as many refugees as Europe does today, 1.3 million, and consequently understand the burden of refugees. They, as a country have too experienced what many of us are currently experiencing. The constant influx is a burden to us, and it is dividing our nation, however we are devoted to remaining a welcoming place for all. Syria could be doing more to accommodate for this war, seeing as they understand the struggle of being overwhelmed with refugees.

These refugees had flocked to Syria before their civil war which started in 2011. An overwhelming amount of them were from Iraq. During World War II, refugees from Europe, mainly from Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Turkey had sought shelter and safety in Syria. From World War II, until the beginning of uprising in 2011, Syria had been hosting many refugees from other countries who have been forced out of their homes due to warfare.

Many refugees lived in Syria's cities prior to the conflict. There were a large amount of refugees from Iraq who moved into the Syrian cities of Aleppo and Damascus. These refugees moved into the cities because they had come with savings and were able to settle in the urban parts of the country. Syria had an open borders policy which made it easy for these refugees to come into Syrian cities. These more prepared refugees were able to live in Syrian cities instead of in camps like many of the Syrian refugees now.

Syria's borders were not secure prior to the conflict. Many attacks happened along Syria's borders with Turkey and Iraq. The Syrian government has an open borders policy and therefore did not have nearly any security on their borders with the neighboring countries. There has also been the smuggling of weapons and communication devices across the border. As uprisings and conflict started, many countries including Turkey began to make their borders with Syria more secure than they were before.

The countries around Syria including Turkey, Iran, and Jordan all began to increase their security around their borders when conflict started in Syria. Syria did not implement much security on its borders and the responsibility to do so fell on their neighboring countries. Turkey began to regulate the goods going over the border and examining people coming to and from the country. Syria did not have much security on their borders and therefore their neighboring countries had to implement more security on their borders with Syria.

There was an extreme drought in Syria from 2006 to 2009. The lack of water caused many livestock to die and farms to fail. The failing crops and livestock forced farmers to move into the cities. Many citizens were displaced causing homelessness on streets in Syria's cities. Although Syria did try to provide food aid to the citizens the multitude of people moving into the cities caused the start of the uprisings and conflict in Syria.

As mentioned previously, the series of severe droughts between 2007 and 2010 was one of the factors leading up to the conflict. However, the war has significantly worsen the already depleting water supply with the usage of chemical weapons which cause massive water contamination. For example, poisonous gas which is used as a highly brutal method to attack a large population at one time, has also made its way to the water along with food supplies, especially those in the agricultural fields. The internal turmoil in the Syrian Civil War has temporary and permanently displaced many civilians who were forced to flee to neighboring countries including Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. Yet these neighboring countries, themselves already struggling, are unable to provide sufficient aid to these refugees. The refugee camps also lack the 20 liter of water person per day standard.

Terrorists and their beliefs had a profound impact on the already crumbling and unstable government. It must be noted that the Islamic State terrorist were anti-Syrian government. While the resentment of the Syrian inhabitants started in peaceful protests against the government, matters quickly escalate to warfare. Some of the civilians were also attracted to the radical ideologies claimed by ISIS and have joined the terrorist against the Syrian government. To add to the amount of violence, some countries have claimed that some terrorist acts were sponsored by the government itself. In simple words, terrorism has added fuel to the already heated conflict in Syria, and as a result, the civilians pressed between the terrorist and their own government has been dying in great numbers.

Terrorist groups, predominantly ISIS or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria first took roots in Iraq under initial leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Its predecessor are the al-Qaeda's. Soon, its ideas gained many followers who are identified as Jihadists. Since then they have rapidly expanded throughout the Middle East including into Syria. Amidst the internal conflict in the country, ISIS members from Syria has increased significantly throughout the past years.

The most directly affected by the conflict are the civilians living in Syria. Many of ISIS' suicide bombings kill and injure many ordinary civilians and yet, they often come without any warnings. Casualties are extremely hard to prevent as these terrorist are part of highly organized and secretive groups that set up many suicide bombers in one attack to ensure success. In recent years, ISIS controls more than one-third of Syria's land which means that millions of citizens are under ISIS dominated area. Furthermore, classes between the government and ISIS causing the demolition of buildings, infrastructures, and damages to many other essential facilities. Joint effort between countries should be emphasized as recently ISIS has lost a few key area and weakened. The solution comes not from providing shelter for refugees in other countries, yet solving the problem through targeting the conflicts that is causing these refugees to be homeless in the first place.

### **Economic Reconstruction**

Prior to the war's start in March of 2011, the Syrian economy was relatively stable. In fact, the economy could be considered very diverse. The largest and most important sectors were agriculture, industry and excavation, tourism, and retail. The government mainly derived its

revenue from taxes and oil revenue. This sustained the government leading up to the fall of the Assad regime. In the years leading up to the war, Syria experienced a shrink in GDP per capita due to a variety of factors, but primarily environmental factors such as severe drought.

Prior to the war, both the Syrian government and its economy were very centralized. As the civil war began to expand and attract attention from outside entities such as the Russian and US governments, there was a greater push to decentralize and diversify the economy. However this push has seen very little dividends as of yet.

The natural resources were controlled by both the government and private corporations, domestic and foreign. However the large oil industry was primarily controlled by the Syrian government which was sustained primarily by tax revenues and oil profits.

Prior to the civil war, the Syrian government controlled a majority of the copious oil reserves, however with the beginning of the war came an influx of Islamic State fighters. ISIS began seizing oil fields, the profits from which they subsequently relied on as their main source of revenue. ISIS's control of the oil fields has attracted the attention of the US and have become a primary target of bombing raids in their effort to undermine the Islamic State.

The private sector controlled much of the agriculture, retail, and tourism sectors which made up 22%, 23%, and 12% of the economy respectively, prior to the outbreak of the civil war in 2009. These sectors of the economy employed a majority of the citizens in Syria; the oil industry also offered employment to a large number of Syrian citizens

Syria's main exports prior to the war were oil and agricultural products. It's main imports include machinery, transportation vehicles and food. Since the beginning of the civil war, the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have imposed sanctions limiting exports and imports. The goal of these sanctions is to not only choke out ISIS' activity in the area, but also to limit the power of the Assad regime. However it is unclear as to whether the sanctions had any significant effect on either the spread of ISIS or the power of Assad.

The Syrian government's spending on the health sector made up 3.3% of their GDP in 2009. While their spending on the education sector made up 5.1% of their GDP in 2009.

The Syrian government is highly authoritarian in addition to being a minority (Shi'ite government in an 87% Sunni country). The government does not provide any means of equality for Kurdish groups, considering any Kurdish political affiliation illegal. The Syrian constitution requires equal rights and treatment for men and women, however personal status laws as well as the penal code contain provisions that discriminate against women and girls.

There are 6 state-controlled banks in Syria, the largest, The Commercial Bank of Syria (CBS), is as large as the 14 privately-owned banks. Previously, in the populist, socialist government the state-owned banks played a larger role in the state-run economy. However Assad has shifted public assets away from the banks into more capitalistic pockets. Despite the shift, the Syrian banks enjoyed a monopoly on banking services; while the CBS had a monopoly over the budget and revenue of the Syrian State. The increase in private Syrian banks has brought with it an increase in foreign investment, however with that a serious degree of malpractice by bank executives both domestic and international.

Since the conflict has ravaged the Syrian economy, the banks have taken the initiative to step forward to lead an economic reconstruction, beginning with increased interagency cooperation and consolidation.

#### GDP

\$55.8 billion (2015 est.)

\$61.9 billion (2013 est.)

\$97.5 billion (2012 est.)

The above statistics show the extent of the war's effect on the Syrian economy, within 3 years the GDP fell 43%. In addition, inflation rose to over 50% as of June 2016.

Since the worsening of the conflict, outside eyes have had their eyes on Syria's most valuable natural resource - oil. A number of private firms have sought ways to capitalize on the conflict and plunder Syria of its oil. The Israeli government has been the most aggressive in its intent to extract Syrian oil and gas, using its controversial and illegal (by decree of international law) foothold in the Golan Heights as a platform for extraction. In addition its agricultural sector, one of the largest in the country is on the brink of collapse. As support for the sector was removed beginning of the sector, the land has mostly fallen in disrepair meaning shorter and less frequent growing seasons and less extensive irrigation networks.

The war has displaced millions with over a quarter of the population seeking refuge in another country, and even more displaced within Syria. Even if the conflict were to come to a close today, the Syrian economy would still feel serious ramifications from the population decrease.

The conflict in Syria has seen the destruction of much of the existing Syrian capital. This is most evident in places like Aleppo in which the entire city has been destroyed. But also affected are the oil fields, previously a contributor to the Syrian economy. Rebel forces, ISIS especially, have targeted Syrian oil fields as a way to both damage the Syrian economy and generate revenue for their own causes. When ISIS takes over an oil field, it immediately becomes a target for the US military. The capital invested in extracting oil is destroyed both domestically within the conflict to hurt the Syrian government and by the US military in counterinsurgency strikes.

In addition to the millions displaced, hundreds of thousands of children, if not more are not currently in school. It is integral to a developing economy that workers' human capital is increasing so that their economy may grow and diversify; with the an incredible amount of young Syrians not in school, the future Syrian economy will not enjoy the same degree of human capital it did before the war. Many similar countries will surpass Syria in terms of human capital if the trend continues, developing more mature economies with which Syria cannot compete. In addition the migrational patterns have seen many skilled laborers such as doctors flee the country, dipping further into the already dangerously low human capital stock.

Since the conflict began, labor force participation rate has seen a 25% decrease in addition to a 33% increase in unemployment. Before the war broke out the unemployment rate

was abysmal. The unemployment rate for the entire country was a staggering 35.8%; the male unemployment rate was 26.6% and the female unemployment rate a dismal 71.3%.

#### Employment by Sector

Agriculture: 17%

Industry: 16%

Services: 67% (2008 est.)

The majority of the Syrian population is young, displaying a typical population pyramid of a developing nation. The life expectancy of the Syrian population was decent at about 75 years, with women living on average 5 years longer than men. Over 50% of the population is under the age of 25.

### **Governance**

Syria's unstable and rocky government was put into the hands of Egypt's president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, prior to their civil war. Egypt brought a sense of security and stability for the Syrian people. For the following three and a half years Syria became a part of the United Arab Republic. However, after years of debates and quarreling Syria was thrown back onto its previous atypical government. The overarching question which caused deaths, wars, and constant feuds in Syria was: What does it mean to be a Syrian? The majority of those who became Syrians were Arabic speaking Sunni Muslims. The growing influence of nationalism saw being a Muslim Arab as the very definition of Syrian identity. Complication arose when the nationalists proudly believed that diversity was the primary cause of weakness. Their chief task was to integrate the populations into a single political and social structure. However there was a small minority of Syrians who didn't identify as Sunni Muslim and their main goal was to gain equal respect. In addition to this divide there was also a split between the nationalists. The majority of the pre-existing majority believed in the Islamic movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, which argued and fought for the idea that the nation must be Arab Sunni (or "Orthodox") Muslim. The more conservative, affluent, and Westernized minority believed that nationhood had to be built not on a religious but on a territorial base. Thus, the Syrian government prior to the civil war consisted of a constant fight for power between these clashing parties.

We, Germany, believe that even though there were problems with the Syrian government in the past and present we should not be spending time criticizing and discouraging the Syrian people and instead we should be focusing on helping and giving aid to refugees as well as redefining the Syrian constitution. We must focus on the root of the problem which is the lack of a strong political representative or group. We are not stating that diversity is a problem, there is nothing wrong with a country that contains conflicting ideas and beliefs such as ours. However, we do believe that there needs to be structure and rules in place that keep these conflicts from turning into a war. We have already contributed over 13 billion Euro on humanitarian and development aid in the region of Syria. This large amount does not include what was spent on the thousands on top of thousands of refugees who have sought and are still seeking asylum in Germany. The amount of money, energy, time, and space being used to fund and cater to these

refugees that are hopelessly attempting to start a new life in Germany is beginning to exhaust us of our resources. We are always willing to help those in need, however we are not strong enough economically and not large enough to help and hold the never ending string of refugees coming in. This is why it is so important that we come together to create a new and improved constitution that will only bring positive contributions to those in Syria.

The constitution of Syria describes precisely the basic function of the state's government. In addition to this, it dictates Syria's character to be Arab, democratic, and republican. The latest revision to this constitution was in 2012, during the 2011-2012 Syrian uprising. Some changes made were the abolishment of the old article 8 which firmly established the power of the Ba'ath party. In addition to this, it introduced presidential elections and it limited the president's term to 7 years with a maximum of one re-election. Although many positive changes were made in order to try and resolve the rising conflicts, based on Syria's current state right now, we as a country believe that a new constitution will be necessary coming out of the current conflict. There is a desperate need for reforms in the constitution and overall government of Syria.

The form of government that we are advocating for is a parliamentary democracy. This is when the voters elect the parliament, who then form the government. The party with the most votes selects the leader of the government, the Prime minister. The Prime minister has a duty towards the people and the parliament. This form of government helps ensure that not too much power is instilled in an individual which prevents a dictatorship from forming. We believe that as we come out of the conflict much stability will be required and measures need to be taken to prevent another civil war. Parliamentary democracy ensures that the people are making the primary decisions with their votes and are putting the power in a party that they have selected.

Before the conflict, Syrian military had a significant connection to the civilian government. Many pro-reform movements in 2001 had been shut down by the government and military and many of the intellectuals who sparked these calls for change were arrested. Movements that sparked controversy against the government and called for reform were often shut down and the leaders of these movements have been unjustly incarcerated. Over the years internet censorship has also increased and websites such as Amazon, Wikipedia, and Youtube were blocked. The government and military have had much control over civilians and civilian life. As for the current state of affairs, the civil war has created an influx of military presence and a byproduct of this is increased violence. Civilian casualty numbers have skyrocketed and have ultimately led to the refugee crisis, as families have fled their homes for their own safety. Events such as the sarin gas attack that occurred near Damascus in 2013 have threaten the lives of thousands of Syrians and led to one of the biggest crisis we now face as a world, the Syrian refugee crisis.

We believe that external third parties are crucial to ending the conflict and the issues in government. In order to bring order and reforms back into the government, some stability must be found within the internal affairs of Syria. In addition to this the refugee crisis must be handled. Many refugees have been accepted into Germany and other European countries as well the 4.8 million refugees that have fled to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq. We have put

much emphasis in supporting the refugees and have worked on providing humanitarian aid to stabilize the conflict. We believe that the main focus right now is to bring opportunities to the refugees and the people in need. It is only after that is resolved that we will focus on reestablishing the government to provide a stable environment for the people of Syria and the millions that have been displaced. In addition to this, Germany has opposed the ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) through the German intervention against ISIL. Authorized on December 4th, 2015 this mission was to combat the terrorist organization, primarily as a response to the 2015 Paris Attacks. Although much of our involvement in this civil war has mostly been providing aid to all the displaced civilians, when the time comes, which we hope is soon for reconciliation and reestablishment of the government, Germany hopes for a government that will stand for the people and what is best for them as a nation.

### **Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation**

Syria has been monitored for a long time for human rights violations by the Human Rights Watch, who have called them, “among the worst in the world” in terms of human rights. They have been accused of a number of serious violations, such as arresting democracy and human rights activists, censoring websites, detaining bloggers, and imposing travel bans. Arbitrary detention, torture, and disappearances are all widespread and common events in Syria. While their constitution supposedly guarantees women equal rights, they have been found to be discriminatory on multiple occasions. In August 2013, they were suspected of using chemical weapons against their own civilians, with the most serious attack being the Ghouta attacks. The Syrian government also makes use of banned cluster bombs, which Steve Goose, the director of the Arms division at Human Rights Watch, says the Syrian citizens “are paying [for with] the price with their lives and limbs.”

Numerous human rights violations have taken place during the Syrian conflict. Thousands of people have been driven out of their home because of the threat of Islamic rebels and jihadist militants. Also, the Syrian government has committed several heinous war crimes, such as the “systematic killing” of 11,000 detainees, as well as armed forces on both sides of the conflict cutting off water supplies and killing farmers working their fields. It is also estimated that about 60,000 people have died in Syrian prisons since 2011 due to poor conditions or torture. There has also been an enormous amount of casualties and injuries throughout the conflict. A study by the Syrian Centre for Policy Research released in February 2016 estimated the death toll to be 470,000, with 1.9m wounded, which would mean that about 11.5% of the total population of Syria has either been killed or injured.

Also, many diseases that were formerly considered rare have spread in rebel-held areas due to the poor sanitation and living conditions. These diseases include measles, typhoid, hepatitis, dysentery, tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, and leishmaniasis. Overall, the human rights violations that have occurred during this conflict are appalling.

As the Syrian Civil War is still going on, leaders and perpetrators of war crimes have generally not been prosecuted or punished in a civil court for their crimes. However extensive

sanctions against Syria, aimed at weakening the government of Bashar al-Assad and the human rights violations committed by Assad's forces, such as using chemical weapons against his own people, have been internationally condemned. They have been condemned by numerous organizations, such as the Arab League, European Union, the United Nations, and many Western governments. At first, other governments within the Middle East supported the actions of Assad, but as the number of deaths increased, many governments began to change their views. However, despite these international condemnations, there is not a lot of responsibility or punishment for the crimes committed.

Trials generally work well when there is a clear victor on one side that fairly uses trials to punish those who actually committed war crimes. This can be seen in the Nuremberg Trials when the Allied powers punished Nazi leaders in the high command and then imposed a new political order on the country. In the case of the Syrian Civil War however, trials might not be a good solution as it looks like Assad will stay in power and any trials that he will implement against former enemies will be sham trials and basically a purge against anyone not pro-government in Syria.

Therefore a more effective solution to Syria's war crimes would be truth and reconciliation committees, which worked well in Rwanda and South Africa and will be the best solution in Syria as both sides, government as well as rebel, have committed gross atrocities and this way hopefully the victor will not be as vindictive against the losing side. If the truth and reconciliation committees are not chosen as the way to move on from this conflict, trials would be the only other viable option, which would further divide and destroy what remains of Syria as Assad and those in power would use the trials as a political tool to lock up or kill anyone whom they perceive to be a threat.

The ICC is not very effective for a number of reasons. One of the most important reasons why is because they do not actually have a police force to track down criminals that they have warrants for. This makes it an extremely difficult situation, as it is nearly impossible to actually enforce anything, even if it is for a good cause. Also, another problem is that a large amount of important countries are not involved in the treaties, such as China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey and the United States. The United States not being involved is especially concerning, and takes away from the legitimacy of the entire organization, as they are one of the most powerful countries in the world. Another questionable part of the ICC's effectiveness is the number of trials that it has completed. From 2002 to 2012, it opened 28 separate court cases for some of the most serious atrocities in the world, and yet only completed 1. This lack of speed makes the effectiveness extremely questionable in most people's eyes.

Syria is mainly an Islamic country, with about 87% of their population being Muslim, 75% of those Sunni. Christians make up around 10% of the pre-Syrian Civil War population. They actually were a model for diversity in the Middle East, however, after the conflict many minorities have fled the area. Syrian law actually does protect minority communities. People of all religions in Syria can hold public office, except for the the office of President, which is required to practice Islam, although the specific sect is not specified. Before the conflict, Syria

was a very diverse nation, however, many different ethnic groups have been forced to leave the area due to the mounting threats from groups on either side of the conflict.

Many different ethnic groups have been targeted in the Syrian conflict. Almost every minority group in the area was targeted, such as Christians, rebels, Shia Muslims, and Kurds. Thousands of Christians have been forced to move because of the threat of Islamic rebels and jihadist militants, and numerous Christian churches have been attacked by both sides of the conflict. Assyrian communities have also been targeted by Islamist rebels, with many Assyrians taking up arms to defend themselves, with both pro-government and pro-opposition factions forming in the Assyrian community. Many Armenians have also been forced to flee the area due to the conflict.

Animosity between Sunni and Shia Muslims have only grown during the civil war, as the Sunnis, who make up the overwhelming majority of everyone in the country, has always been under the rule of the minority in power, the Shia government of Assad. The Kurds in the region have also had a long history of discrimination, making up about ten percent of the country's population. They are one of the only groups in the Middle East that can be seen as somewhat progressive, fully recognizing women's rights and is one of the true allies of NATO and the United States. They have their own armed forces against their enemies as they have braved genocide and killings for decades in the region, though the situation is complicated by NATO member Turkey despising the Kurds and even having bombed them in the past, as the Kurds inside Turkey have long had a resistance movement against the Kurdish government.

### **Local Security**

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Also, many diseases that were formerly considered rare have spread in rebel-held areas due to the poor sanitation and living conditions. These diseases include measles, typhoid, hepatitis, dysentery, tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, and leishmaniasis. Overall, the human rights violations that have occurred during this conflict are appalling.

As the Syrian Civil War is still going on, leaders and perpetrators of war crimes have generally not been prosecuted or punished in a civil court for their crimes. However extensive sanctions against Syria, aimed at weakening the government of Bashar al-Assad and the human rights violations committed by Assad's forces, such as using chemical weapons against his own people, have been internationally condemned. They have been condemned by numerous organizations, such as the Arab League, European Union, the United Nations, and many Western governments. At first, other governments within the Middle East supported the actions of Assad, but as the number of deaths increased, many governments began to change their views. However, despite these international condemnations, there is not a lot of responsibility or punishment for the crimes committed.

Trials generally work well when there is a clear victor on one side that fairly uses trials to punish those who actually committed war crimes. This can be seen in the Nuremberg Trials when the Allied powers punished Nazi leaders in the high command and then imposed a new political order on the country. In the case of the Syrian Civil War however, trials might not be a good solution as it looks like Assad will stay in power and any trials that he will implement against former enemies will be sham trials and basically a purge against anyone not pro-government in Syria.

Therefore a more effective solution to Syria's war crimes would be truth and reconciliation committees, which worked well in Rwanda and South Africa and will be the best solution in Syria as both sides, government as well as rebel, have committed gross atrocities and this way hopefully the victor will not be as vindictive against the losing side. If the truth and reconciliation committees are not chosen as the way to move on from this conflict, trials would be the only other viable option, which would further divide and destroy what remains of Syria as Assad and those in power would use the trials as a political tool to lock up or kill anyone whom they perceive to be a threat.

The ICC is not very effective for a number of reasons. One of the most important reasons why is because they do not actually have a police force to track down criminals that they have warrants for. This makes it an extremely difficult situation, as it is nearly impossible to actually enforce anything, even if it is for a good cause. Also, another problem is that a large amount of important countries are not involved in the treaties, such as China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey and the United States. The United States not being involved is especially concerning, and takes away from the legitimacy of the entire organization, as they are one of the most powerful countries in the world. Another questionable part of the ICC's effectiveness is the number of

trials that it has completed. From 2002 to 2012, it opened 28 separate court cases for some of the most serious atrocities in the world, and yet only completed 1. This lack of speed makes the effectiveness extremely questionable in most people's eyes.

Syria is mainly an Islamic country, with about 87% of their population being Muslim, 75% of those Sunni. Christians make up around 10% of the pre-Syrian Civil War population. They actually were a model for diversity in the Middle East, however, after the conflict many minorities have fled the area. Syrian law actually does protect minority communities. People of all religions in Syria can hold public office, except for the the office of President, which is required to practice Islam, although the specific sect is not specified. Before the conflict, Syria was a very diverse nation, however, many different ethnic groups have been forced to leave the area due to the mounting threats from groups on either side of the conflict.

Many different ethnic groups have been targeted in the Syrian conflict. Almost every minority group in the area was targeted, such as Christians, rebels, Shia Muslims, and Kurds. Thousands of Christians have been forced to move because of the threat of Islamic rebels and jihadist militants, and numerous Christian churches have been attacked by both sides of the conflict. Assyrian communities have also been targeted by Islamist rebels, with many Assyrians taking up arms to defend themselves, with both pro-government and pro-opposition factions forming in the Assyrian community. Many Armenians have also been forced to flee the area due to the conflict.

Animosity between Sunni and Shia Muslims have only grown during the civil war, as the Sunnis, who make up the overwhelming majority of everyone in the country, has always been under the rule of the minority in power, the Shia government of Assad. The Kurds in the region have also had a long history of discrimination, making up about ten percent of the country's population. They are one of the only groups in the Middle East that can be seen as somewhat progressive, fully recognizing women's rights and is one of the true allies of NATO and the United States. They have their own armed forces against their enemies as they have braved genocide and killings for decades in the region, though the situation is complicated by NATO member Turkey despising the Kurds and even having bombed them in the past, as the Kurds inside Turkey have long had a resistance movement against the Kurdish government.

### **Social Reconstruction**

Before the "Arab Spring," Syria had attempted to make those under its territory into one political and socially integrated identification because its western nationalists believed that diversity was a weakness for the country. However, the nationalists themselves were severely diverse as well because of political, or religious thinking. Islam was assumed to be the "right" religion, specifically Sunni Islam, and anyone who did not believe that religion was not completely a part of the nation since it was argued by another group of nationalists, the major Islamic movement called the Muslim Brotherhood. This was almost a century ago in Syria's history. Yet, closer to the present, there were still not many rights such as that of freedom of speech because it was a threat to the Assad regime.

The civil society did not play much of a role in Syrian daily life since most worked underground and worked under Asma al-Assad, the president's wife, or the president himself, Bashar al-Assad. They could not do much as civil societies were also a threat to the former regime which was known as the Assad regime. At an earlier point in the president's term, doors were open to civil societies and then were closed again later, however, it opened yet again once chaos and violence ensued. Before the conflict, the civil society was mostly in a position where they could not do much in order to help their people considering that they were kept at a minimum and kept in check.

Syria consists of around 70% Sunni Muslims Arabs, who are some of the biggest supporters of the rebel forces against Syria's government. Assyrians consists of around 4% of the population in Syria, they have been harshly discriminated against during the war. Druze make up 3% of the population, they have been discriminated against, to a point where ISIS is killing all Druze. The Druze are also sometimes forced to convert their religion, and if they don't agree, they die. Syria had a lot of ethnic diversity before the war, this is a reason that the war even started.

Citizen rights included the right to a fair trial, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and freedom of movement which is stated in Article 13 of Universal Rights. However, most of these rights were violated by the government, especially freedom of expression since before the civil war, Assad had commanded the imprisonment of several journalists. The Syrians did not have many rights which could be enforced by the government, as the government was the main abuser. Freedom of speech and much more would be a threat to the president and the regime if anyone would dare state anything against him, or pursue propaganda.

Then, earlier in 1970 Hafez al-Assad came into power, since then Syrians have had their human rights violated. The Muslim Brothers tried to assassinate Hafez al-Assad, and when they failed Hafez al-Assad massacred around 600-1000 of the Muslim Brothers. The Syrian government denies this ever happened, saying that a prisoner riot killed the people. At the massacre of Aleppo, reports say that around 1900 people were killed. Hafez al-Assad also caused the Hama massacre, the Syrian government bombed a city, for 3 weeks, where they believed the Muslim Brothers were helping gunmen. Then troops were sent in, arresting many civilians. Around 20-40 thousand civilians were killed in the bombing. Syrian government forces have used sexual violence as a war tactic, kids as young as 12 years old have been raped and/or sexually abused. The syrian government has also not allowed freedom to assemble and freedom to information even since before the war.

Syria is trying to get peace treaties since 2011, mainly by the Arab League. These treaties are still on their way and recently Iraq has joined the talks. WtAdam write more

People did have property rights however their private property rights were weakly protected and even scored on an index 20, one of the worst in the world. Property rights are hard to enforce and in the end the the courts are corrupt and so the citizens do not benefit much for the court as the government infringes on the rights. This has handicapped entrepreneurs and businessmen and many others. Ultimately, the courts have been manipulated to favor those on

the president's side, mostly his inner circle. Yet again, the abuser was the government, and in the end, during the conflict, many ended up homeless, and so those who did have homes left ended up becoming richer, and the poor became much poorer because of manipulated pricing of housing rent.

Many Syrians were homeless and are homeless, and housing was provided by renting out one room houses, or apartments, and the exploitation of that. They were rented out for absurdly high prices because of the many people with the lack of houses. This also leads to economic disparities, and so it would have been very hard for them to even obtain housing.

In our country, we have taken many Syrian refugees and we intend to continue to, however within Syria, it has been somewhat easy, but only with disregard to the dangerous environment. It is fatal to move around to certain cities, and it is mostly just fighting during this time. There is only chaos at the moment however before the conflict the Syrians did have the power for themselves to move around.

The health systems had a low amount invested into them however there was more availability of health services to the people. They were achieving much better equity. Then the mortality rate of live births were 17.9 out of 1000 in 2009 and the maternal mortality rate was 52 out of 100,000. However during the crisis, it had dramatically changed. The education system worked well too. The enrollment rate was 93%. Syria follows a 12 year education system where basic education is 9 years (1-9), and then 3 years of secondary education. Basic education is mandatory. Then during the crisis, schools had been destroyed, and it was at the cost of education.

Now with the war going on, almost half of the Syrian population is affected with mental issues because they have witnessed so much violence and death. Children and women have increasingly developed these mental issues and it is imperative that these mental issues should be treated. There are organizations which treat these issues such as the MFS, or Médecins Sans Frontières, or Doctors Without Borders. They work with individuals, or families who have been affected by the war and give them time.

### **Strategic Security**

We, the Federal Republic of Germany strongly support a ceasefire in the civil war in Syria. It is of the utmost importance that we and our allies will do anything we can to put an end to these hostilities and an end to the endless onslaught of death and destruction. As a result of this conflict, we have gladly opened our arms wide and have taken in many refugees who have taken on the dangerous endeavour to flee Syria. We support the ceasefire not only to deal with the increasing threat of ISIS in the immediate area but to hold up the mission of peace our government gladly supports. We support a ceasefire in Syria under multiple terms. We support the idea of a no fly zone but we do not believe that one can be put in place easily. Before the war there was much civil unrest. Many people in Syria were protesting in the streets and calling for the Assad regime to step down.

Syria and the Middle East were first populated by humans thousands of years ago. Since then many great empires have risen and fallen. Out from these ashes the modern Middle East emerged. Modern day Syria dates back to the 1920s when Syria first gained its freedom from the French. Since that time, it has made many friends and enemies of the over 190 countries. Syria believes in an Arab Homeland with other Arab countries which would suggest why their best allies are Arab countries. Syria has its closest relations with Iran, Russia, China. The U.S, Saudi Arabia, U.K, and France have openly supported the Syrian rebels. Relations with other Arab countries have decreased since the war. Syria has bad relations with Israel because of its many attempts to invade Israel since its creation in the 1940s.

Syria is currently engaged in a series of armed conflicts. The Syrian government is engaged in several non-international armed conflicts against a wide array of rebel groups. There is arguably an international armed conflict between Syria and members of the US-led international coalition and Turkey. Also, there is arguably a military occupation of parts of northern Syria by Turkey. Supported by Hezbollah and Russia, Syria is engaged in a series of non-international armed conflicts on its territory against a wide array of rebel groups, including the Islamic State group, the Free Syrian Army, and Kurdish militia. Since September 2014, Syria is also involved in an international armed conflict with the international coalition led by the United States because they have been targeting the Islamic State group on Syrian territory without the latter's consent. Currently, the coalition led by the United States includes Australia, Belgium, the United Kingdom, France, Jordan, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and our own country, Germany. Turkey became a party to the international armed conflict with Syria in July 2015 after it launched its first airstrikes against Islamic State group targets in Syria and part of Syria's territory is currently occupied by Turkey. We are involved in the non-international armed conflict against the Islamic State group by providing military support to the coalition airstrikes in Iraq. We had joined the military coalition against the Islamic State group in Iraq and in Syria in December 2015 following the French request for assistance after the attacks in Paris in November 2015. On December 4, 2015, our parliament authorized the participation in coalition airstrikes against Islamic State group targets. In particular, we provide air-to-air refueling assistance and reconnaissance flights to the international coalition. There are pre-existing armed conflicts in Iraq and Syria and there is a close link between the action of the our forces and the harm caused to the Islamic State group by coalition airstrikes; and such action takes place to an official decision of the our government. We are also a party to the international armed conflict in Syria because the coalition airstrikes in Syria occur without the consent of the Syrian government. Our cabinet has agreed to join the Syrian war. Chancellor Angela Merkel and Defence Minister Ursula Von der Leyen leave no doubt that the intervention will be a combat mission. Our army plans to send six reconnaissance Tornado aircrafts, air-to-air refuelling planes, a frigate, and up to 1,200 soldiers to Syria. A total of €134 million is to be spent over the coming year on the deployment, the largest intervention currently being conducted by our army. Germany has provided military equipment and training to the Kurdish peshmerga in northern Iraq since 2014 for the ground fight against the Islamic State. This is a major political

step, approved by the German federal parliament, the Bundestag, for a government that has in the past refrained from using our weaponry in regions of conflict and war outside NATO. Most of the 1.3 million asylum seekers applying for asylum in the European Union in 2015 are Syrians and Iraqis, of whom around 900,000 came to our country within a period of nine months. According to the European border agency, Frontex, more than 350,000 people have entered the EU in 2016—thus keeping the our public and policymakers focused on the refugee issue.

Before the Syrian Civil War, the Syrian army was a group of local military forces that were formed by France after the civil war. Syria gained independence in 1946 and since then the military has played a huge role in governance by mounting five military coups--two in 1949, 1954, 1963, 1966, and 1970-- and have fought four wars with Israel and one with Jordan. From 1976 to 2005 the army played a big role in the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, and a major part in suppressing the Islamist uprising in Syria from 1979-1982. There are approximately 30,000-40,000 foreign fighters that are involved in fighting the Syrian Civil War. ISIS poses a huge threat to Syria because at least 19,000 civilians have died due to Syrian Government air attacks and 181 have died in US-led air-strikes against ISIS since 2014. Approximately 2,000 civilians have been killed due to Iraqi military strikes. Syria has become a place of terror for millions of civilians that live there. The threat of death awaits them at every corner. Many Syrians have tried to flee Syria and seek refuge in other countries like Lebanon, Jordan Iraq, Egypt, Sweden, France and the UK. Many try to flee to the US but cannot due to their policies. We have accepted approximately over one million Syrians into our own country, and we hope to take in more. ISIS threatens the integrity of Syria because since many civilians are dying, and others are fleeing, soon there will be no one left in Syria.