

Policy Study

The Fall of the Regime in Syria – Implications for Israel and a Recommended Alternative for Political Discussion

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Background

In December 2024, after nearly 14 years of civil war, the Syrian rebel groups succeeded in overthrowing Bashar al-Assad's regime, ending the Ba'athist regime that had been in power since the 1960s. Since then, the Syrian Liberation Organization, which now controls the country and is led by Abu Mohammad al-Julani (Ahmed Hussein al-Sharaa), has made several attempts to stabilize the situation in Syria, including diplomatic efforts with Western countries. The new leader has already declared that free elections will take place only after a period of about four years, which is necessary to politically, security-wise, and economically stabilize Syria, and to resettle millions of Syria's displaced persons and refugees.

Israel is closely monitoring the new situation in Syria, which presents both threats and opportunities that must be carefully considered. In early 2025, there are two prominent issues that will affect the developments in the Syrian arena, with four scenarios that could affect Israeli interests in different ways. The first involves the extent to which the transitional regime in Syria will lead to the establishment of a regime with Islamic-Salafi features, or alternatively, the extent to which this regime will be characterized by broad consensus and will aim to promote the existence of a society of all its citizens. Such a society,

if it is formed in Syria, would embrace and show tolerance for minorities and may even attempt to establish a regime with semi-democratic characteristics.

The second issue concerns the extent of Turkish intervention within the political-security-economic dynamics in Syria. Currently, the Turks are focused on deploying military forces mainly in the north of the country and against the Kurdish minority. However, there are Turkish calls to expand their presence across the country, which would strengthen Turkish influence on the Syrian regime and deter external actors such as Iran and Israel.

Israeli Interests

Israel has six interests in the context of developments in Syria:

1. Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena.
2. Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah and securing the defense along the Lebanese border.
3. Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs.
4. Opening a channel of communications with the new regime in Damascus, focusing on shared interests.
5. Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory.
6. Preserving and strengthening ties with minority (moderate) groups in Syria.

Analysis of Scenarios

Scenario A

In Syria, a Salafi (Sunni) regime is established, and Turkey deploys military forces across Syria.

In such a case –

1. **Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena** – Iran will struggle to maintain its long-standing influence in Syria, due to both the nature of the Salafi regime in Syria and the increased Turkish presence in the region. The Salafi regime will oversee intelligence operations on Shia groups in Syria and will work to disrupt their ties with Iran. A Salafi regime in Damascus, which presents a significant obstacle to the Iranian presence in Syria, simultaneously offers an opportunity for Sunni countries with economic and political capabilities, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia. These countries seek to influence the future of the region and, among other things, to establish their own influence in Syria. Non-Salafi minority groups in Syria will likely seek external assistance to protect themselves from potential harm by the new Salafi regime in Damascus.

2. **Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah** – Iran will struggle to transfer weapons along the Iran-Syria-Lebanon route to Hezbollah. A Salafi regime, which views Shia Iran as a religious, political, and diplomatic enemy, will not allow the transfer of Iranian weapons to Lebanon through Syria. This is true even if the intention is to act against Israel, which is perceived as a heretical entity religiously with no right to political existence. Moreover, a Salafi regime will benefit from intelligence and other capabilities that Turkey can provide, thereby strengthening its control.
3. **Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs** – Turkish military presence across Syria significantly limits Israel's operational capabilities in Syria and increases the potential for conflict between the two countries. Such a Turkish move is part of Erdogan's vision for establishing Turkish spheres of influence and a new empire. Turkey's involvement throughout Syria may also increase its influence over Syrian state affairs, leading to decisions that serve Turkey's national interests. A Salafi regime in Damascus, which benefited from Turkish assistance in managing the Idlib province (northern Syria) in the past decade, will seek to strengthen ties with Turkey. Such a development could be negative for Israel, especially if the Turks seek to expand their influence throughout Syria and not only focus on activities along its northern border.
4. **Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus** – The likelihood that a new regime in Syria, which is the product of a Salafi-Jihadi ideology (Abu Mohammad al-Julani grew up and was raised in the spirit of this ideology), will establish diplomatic relations with Israel is very low. It should be considered that the regime will encourage its proxy organizations to carry out terrorist acts from Syrian territory against Israel. The likelihood of sustained Western support for dialogue is not high. However, it is possible that countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar may compete for influence.

- 5. Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory** – The Turkish military presence in Syria is both a threat and an opportunity for terrorist organizations operating in southern Syria along the Israeli border. On the one hand, the Turks may turn a blind eye to actions directed against Israel in order to exert pressure on it. On the other hand, the Turks may seek to be the dominant force that prevents developments that could provoke an Israeli response, which might accidentally harm their own military forces.

Additionally, the establishment of a Salafi regime in Damascus could serve as an incentive for Sunni terrorist organizations to operate from the southern Golan Heights against Israel (as was the case with the al-Yarmouk Brigades in the past). In such a case, the dilemma for the Salafi regime in Damascus would be to decide between ideology and domestic issues: whether to act against the “infidels,” including Israel, or to delay such actions in order to focus on the reconstruction of war-torn Syria. In any case, Israel must prepare for a scenario of increased terrorism from Syrian territory toward the country, with a reasonable assessment that the new regime in Syria will not prevent terrorist elements from acting against Israel.

- 6. Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria** – As a Salafi regime takes root in Syria under Turkey’s auspices, with Turkey willing to deploy forces throughout the territory, there will be an increase in requests to Israel from minority groups for protective measures, political sponsorship, and other forms of support. Experience shows that when dominant groups fail to accommodate minorities, this led to internal migration. Additionally, minority groups will seek external support; Such a development could pose a threat to Israel if these groups turn to Iran or—alternatively—an opportunity, if they turn toward Israel.

Summary of Scenario A:

The establishment of a Salafi regime in Syria, alongside extensive deployment and entrenchment of Turkish military forces in the country, represents a maximal threat to Israel. The positive aspects of this scenario relate to the decline of threats stemming from Iranian involvement in the Golan Heights and Lebanon, which, in turn, could weaken the direct threat in the northern arena posed by Shiite actors and contribute to new developments in Lebanon.

However, the establishment of a Salafi regime introduces new threats in several ways. Firstly, there is concern over the resurgence of the ISIS threat, which emerged in the early stages of the Syrian uprising, now potentially reinforced with state resources and legitimacy from certain countries. Additionally, there is a risk of non-state terrorist entities gaining enhanced capabilities with Salafi sponsorship and which could operate in the Golan Heights and possibly even in Lebanon. These strengthened terrorist elements would erode security in the region, encourage other opportunistic terrorist groups to initiate actions against Israel, and undermine the return of displaced Israeli citizens.

A Salafi Sunni regime may also suppress minority groups, leading to a rise in religious-ethnic displacement. This process could prompt appeals to Israel to intervene and protect these relatively moderate groups. Such a situation would pressure Israel to formulate both short-term and long-term strategies—an issue it had avoided until 2024 due to the strategic complexities of the civil war.

Turkish backing of the new Salafi regime, accompanied by the deployment of military forces throughout Syria, could restrict Israel's operational scope. During the Syrian civil war, Israel relied on the Assad regime's delegitimization and agreements with Russia regarding operational boundaries within Syria. In the event of Turkish backing of the new regime in Syria, Israel would need to maintain and strengthen its understandings with the U.S. to counter military threats originating from Syrian territory.

Assessment of Scenario A

Israeli interest	Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena	Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah	Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs	Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus	Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory	Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria
Assessment	5	5	1	1	3	2

* Scale from 1 (representing the worst-case outcome for Israel) to 5 (the best-case outcome)

Scenario B

A national consensus regime is established in Syria, and Turkey limits its military activity to the Turkish-Syrian border.

In such a case –

1. **1. Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena** – Limited Turkish presence, alongside a long-term process to establish a broad consensus to support the new regime in Syria, could encourage Iran to take steps to restore its influence in the Syrian arena. This effort may achieve some success through Shiites who are part of the regime and other minority groups that might also gain political representation. In such a scenario, Iranian attempts to curtail Turkish involvement would likely intensify, potentially leading to an escalation in relations between the two countries. Such an escalation would be particularly likely if Iran perceives its presence in Syria as a top national interest. At the same time, Iran is expected to strengthen its influence in Syria through covert ties with minority groups opposed to the Salafi regime (Shiites, Alawites, Druze). The new regime in Damascus would seek the broadest possible support from regional states and the international community.
2. **2. Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah** – A national consensus regime may hinder decisive actions by the Syrian government against pro-Shiite or pro-Iranian minorities. This situation could facilitate the renewal of weapons smuggling along the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah axis.

3. **Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs** – If Turkey focused solely on the northern part of the country, this could prompt a wider range of measures to limit Turkey's influence in Syria. Firstly, a national consensus regime could encourage greater involvement by democratic Western actors, who would grant it international legitimacy in exchange for political and economic reforms. Secondly, restricting Turkey's operational space in Syria could create room for Israeli activity in the country, allowing for understandings with Turkey regarding zones of influence and action. Such a reality would significantly reduce Turkey's potential threat to Israel as Turkey would be primarily engaged in proactive or responsive security operations against Kurdish groups located along the border between the two countries.
4. **Opening a channel of communications with the new regime in Damascus** – On the face of it, a national consensus regime in Syria could present an opportunity for Israel to open a diplomatic channel. Such a regime, especially if it includes members from Syria's minority groups, would likely receive broader international support due to its non-Salafi nature, potentially allowing Israel to benefit from this development. This would be facilitated by Israel's long-standing ties with Syria's minority groups. In this scenario, it would be advisable to leverage support from the U.S. and Sunni-axis countries to establish relations with the new regime.
5. **Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory** – A national consensus regime would increase the likelihood of public legitimacy for the military in Syria. This has direct implications for Israel, as the new regime in Damascus would seek to establish and enforce sovereignty, including against terrorist elements that could potentially threaten Israel. On the other hand, terrorist groups may thrive during the transitional period, exploiting disagreements over the security framework and taking advantage of emerging opportunities. Israel would face challenges in responding to these forces while Syria is in the process of establishing a national consensus-based transitional government. However, in the long run, the stabilization of a Syrian state-backed military force could reduce

terrorist threats from Syrian territory toward Israel. Such a force would also benefit from professional and material support from Western countries.

6. Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria –

Syria is mired in a difficult and complex economic and social situation after a civil war that has already lasted over a decade. The enormous challenges of rebuilding infrastructure and the economy, the return of Syrian refugees to their homeland, and repaying external debts could lead such a regime to focus on how all domestic elements contribute to building a stable civil society. A minority group seeking an alliance with Israel may find itself trapped in an internal Syrian dilemma, as it would be portrayed as undermining the new order and collaborating with the enemy.

Summary of Scenario B

A scenario involving the establishment of a broad national consensus regime alongside efforts to limit Turkish involvement leads to several conclusions. It seems that Turkey will not prevent the new regime in Syria from rebuilding the country and establishing a broad national-social infrastructure according to its own priorities. However, Turkey will continue to act against the Kurds and suppress any aspirations for autonomy on their part. In this situation, the potential for political power players in Syria, such as the Alawites or Druze, to hold key positions and influence in Syrian society increases. They may use this political power in two opposing directions that could create both threats and opportunities for Israel.

The existence of a transitional regime in Syria increases the possibility for Iran to re-establish footholds in Syria and gradually strengthen Hezbollah. On the other hand, a transitional regime based on national consensus could encourage aid and cooperation with the democratic Western world, and the U.S. and other countries may seek to renew political dialogue between Syria and Israel. Such a scenario would reduce Israel's military freedom of action in Syria and make it more difficult for Israel to maintain covert relations with minority groups in Syria.

Assesment of Scenario B

Israeli interest	Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena	Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah	Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs	Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus	Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory	Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria
Assessment	4	4	4	3	3	2

* Scale from 1 (representing the worst-case outcome for Israel) to 5 (the best-case outcome)

Scenario C

A Salafi regime is established in Syria, and Turkey limits its military activity to the Turkish-Syrian border.

In such a case –

1. **Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena** – Iran will struggle to maintain its long-standing influence in Syria. The Salafi regime will monitor Shiite groups in Syria and work to disrupt their ties with Iran. A Salafi regime in Damascus poses a threat to Iran while also presenting an opportunity for Sunni countries seeking to influence the region's overall dynamics (such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia) to try to establish their own influence in Syria. In this situation, the new regime in Damascus will find it difficult to gain broad support from the international community. Turkey's entrenchment in the northern region could encourage minority groups to turn to Iran to gain protection against the Salafi regime.
2. **Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah** – A Salafi-oriented regime in Damascus would make it very difficult for Iran to maintain its arms transfer route through Syrian territory to Lebanon. The regime's forces would likely work to thwart such transfers as the regime would view the strengthening of Shiite influence, including in Lebanon, as a threat to its stability. However, without direct Turkish support, an increase in available resources, and a corresponding increase in strength of the military in Lebanon, the regime's ability to seal the border is questionable.

3. **Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs** –In view of the Turkish support received in the past decade in managing the Idlib province (northern Syria), a Salafi regime in Damascus will seek to strengthen ties with Turkey. Turkey, for its part, will not intervene in Syria's internal affairs as long as its interests, particularly those along its border with Syria, are maintained. This situation will allow other Sunni countries, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, to increase their influence in Syria. Additionally, a Turkish military presence limited to the northern part of the country could enable a broader range of Israeli action in Syria while establishing understandings with Turkey regarding areas of influence and operation. This reality would significantly reduce the potential Turkish threat to Israel as Turkey would be primarily focused on security operations (either proactive or responsive) against Kurdish groups along the border between the two countries.
4. **Opening a channel of communications with the new regime in Damascus** – The likelihood that a new regime in Syria, which is a product of a Salafi-jihadi ideology (Abu Mohammed al-Julani was raised and trained in this ideology), will maintain diplomatic relations with Israel is very low. It should be considered that this regime will encourage its proxy organizations to carry out terrorist acts from Syrian territory against Israel. The likelihood of sustained support from the West for dialogue is not high. However, it is possible that countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar may compete with each other for influence.
5. **Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory** – The establishment of a Salafi regime in Damascus could serve as an incentive for Sunni terrorist organizations (such as Daesh in the past) to operate from the southern Golan Heights against Israel. The dilemma for the Salafi regime in Damascus would then be to decide between ideology (i.e., acting against the infidels, including Israel) and domestic issues (i.e., rebuilding the war-torn Syrian state). In any case, Israel must prepare for the scenario of increased terrorism from Syrian territory based on a reasonable assessment that the new regime will not prevent Islamic terrorist elements from acting against Israel.

6. **Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria** – As a Salafi regime becomes established in Syria, it is likely that requests to Israel from minority groups for protection, political asylum, and other forms of support will increase. Experience shows that dominant radical groups that did not include minorities led to internal migration. Additionally, minority groups may seek external sources of support, and such developments could pose a threat to Israel (if the appeal is toward Iran) or an opportunity (if the minorities turn toward Israel).

Summary of Scenario C

The scenario of establishing a Salafi regime in Syria and limiting the deployment of Turkish forces to the northern regions creates a complex strategic situation for Israel. The establishment of a Salafi regime poses a new threat in several ways. First, there is concern about the resurgence of a ISIS-like threat that developed in the region at the beginning of the Syrian uprising, alongside state resources and legitimacy from certain countries. Second, there is concern about the strengthening of non-state terrorist groups under the protection of Salafi elements, which could operate in the Golan Heights and potentially even in Lebanon. These groups would destabilize the security of the region, encourage opportunistic terrorist groups to initiate actions, and undermine the return of Israeli refugees.

Another aspect of this situation is that a Sunni Salafi regime could suppress minority groups, encourage the displacement of people based on religious-ethnic grounds, and, as a result, increase the potential for these groups to turn to Israel for protection. This situation would pressure Israel to develop both short-term and long-term strategies—issues that Israel avoided during the years of the Syrian civil war.

Turkey's support for the new Salafi regime, limited to the northern region, will mainly focus on addressing Kurdish challenges. This positioning would allow Israel to expand its operational range, which, during the Syrian civil war, relied on delegitimizing Assad's regime and agreements with Russia regarding operational boundaries in Syria.

Another positive development concerns the removal of threats arising from Iranian involvement in the Golan Heights and Lebanon. These, in turn, could weaken the direct threat from Shiite actors in the northern theater and contribute to a new development in Lebanon. In such a scenario, Israel will need to strengthen understandings with the U.S. in order to counter military threats from Syrian territory.

Assessmnt of Scenario C

Israeli interest	Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena	Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah	Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs	Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus	Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory	Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria
Assessment	4	4	2	1	3	2

* Scale from 1 (representing the worst-case outcome for Israel) to 5 (the best-case outcome)

Scenario D

A national consensus regime is established in Syria, and Turkey deploys military forces throughout Syria.

In such case –

1. **Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena** – The establishment of a broad consensus regime could encourage Iran to initiate steps to restore its influence in the Syrian arena. This move may achieve some success through Shiites, who will be members of the regime, and other minority groups, who may also have political representation. However, extensive Turkish presence could complicate these attempts. There could be an escalation in the relations between the two countries, especially if Iran views its presence in Syria as a priority national interest. At the same time, Iran will likely try to establish its influence in Syria through covert ties with minority groups opposed to the Salafi regime (Shiites, Alawites, Druze). The new regime in Damascus will seek broad support from regional countries and the international community.

2. **Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah** – Turkey will oppose the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah, and therefore, it is likely that it will work to thwart arms shipments from Tehran to Beirut. In general, Turkey will act against armed groups in the Syrian space to ensure maximum military control in areas where it chooses to deploy its forces and will assist in building a new national army for Syria with Turkish sponsorship.
3. **Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs** – The Turkish military presence throughout Syria, which is part of Erdogan's vision to establish Turkish spheres of influence and part of the new empire vision, significantly reduces Israel's operational capabilities in Syria and increases the potential for confrontation between Israel and Turkey. Turkish involvement across Syria may also increase its influence in Syrian state affairs and lead to decisions that serve Turkey's national interests. In this context, other players who wish to be involved in the situation in the country will need to take Turkish interests into account.
4. **Opening a channel of communication with the new regime in Damascus** – A national consensus regime in Syria could present an opportunity for Israel to open a diplomatic channel. Such a regime, especially if it includes members from Syria's minority groups, would likely gain broader international support (due to its non-Salafi nature), which could potentially benefit Israel, given its long-standing connections with Syria's minority groups. Turkey might support such a move if it does not harm its interests in the Syrian arena, but it would thwart such efforts if they are perceived as detrimental to its interests.
5. **Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory** – Turkey's military presence is both a threat and an opportunity for the terrorist organizations operating in southern Syria along the Israeli border. On the one hand, the Turks may turn a blind eye to actions directed against Israel in order to exert pressure on it. On the other hand, the Turks may seek to be the sole authority and thwart any developments that could

lead to an Israeli response that might unintentionally harm their own military forces.

6. **Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria** – Turkey will oppose all Israeli presence, even covert, in Syria. It is likely that Turkey will conduct intelligence operations within groups seeking Israeli assistance, particularly the Kurds, who have historical ties to Jerusalem. Israel will be forced to choose between maintaining these secret channels and confronting Turkey.

Summary of Scenario D

This scenario is based on the assumption that Turkey will encourage the new regime in Syria to rebuild the country and establish a broad national-social infrastructure. However, Turkey will continue to act against the Kurds and suppress their aspirations for self-rule. In this situation, the potential for political power brokers in Syria, such as the Alawites or Druze, to hold key positions and influence in Syrian society increases. They may use this political power in two opposing directions, creating both threats and opportunities for Israel. The existence of an interim regime based on broad consensus in Syria with Turkish sponsorship increases the possibility of broad international support. This situation will reduce Iran's ability to re-establish footholds in Syria and also slow the process of empowering Hezbollah again. On the other hand, such an interim regime could encourage aid and cooperation with the democratic Western world, and it is possible that the U.S. and other countries would seek to renew diplomatic dialogue between Syria and Israel. This scenario would limit Israel's military freedom of action in Syria. At the same time, it would also make it more difficult for Israel to maintain covert relations with minority groups in Syria.

Assessment of Scenario D

Israeli interest	Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena	Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah	Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs	Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus	Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory	Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria
Assessment	5	5	1	2	3	2

* Scale from 1 (representing the worst-case outcome for Israel) to 5 (the best-case outcome)

Discussion and Recommendations

The underlying assumption of this policy research is that any new regime in Syria will focus on domestic issues in the short term due to the significant deterioration in the country's infrastructure, economy, and society. Additionally, Turkey's presence is not necessarily predictable and adversely affects Israel's direct interests in the Syrian arena. Therefore, this document aims to encourage proactive political and security thinking that either initiates or responds to domestic changes in Syria on the one hand and Turkey's actions in this arena on the other. The direct threats to Israel from the Syrian arena and the opportunities arising from developing relationships with minority groups exist within sensitive and dynamic network that can change rapidly, requiring reassessments.

All alternatives assume significant challenges in rebuilding Iranian footholds in this region, including the reconstruction of Hezbollah's power. These variables affect the shift in focus to direct challenges facing Israel regarding friction with Turkey, the nascent Syrian regime, and domestic Syrian actors.

The issue of Turkey's presence does not necessarily require a strategy for direct restraint or escalation against it. It is a variable with high uncertainty. However, the Salafi Islamic element, which is present in a broad range of movements, and many of its representatives which were previously Salafi rebels connected to global radical movements, could encourage actions

against Israel. Such actions in the Golan Heights, at least in the short term, will be affected by the type of regime (Salafi government or a national consensus government) and the extent of Turkish involvement (limited or broad). It can be assumed that in the long term, a Syrian national consensus regime will have the greatest interest in reducing their activity.

The connections that internal Syrian actors are trying to establish with Israel could create political and security opportunities. These connections serve as a counterbalance to the domestic Syrian narrative of leveraging a new Syria toward a confrontational Salafi vision, influencing border stabilization under certain conditions, and possibly even assisting in establishing diplomatic channels for dialogue. However, in all alternatives presented in this policy research, these connections depend on other variables and do not necessarily create significant opportunities for Israel's interests.

Having analyzed the four alternatives that, based on existing data, are realistic, Scenario B—a Syrian regime aiming to create a broad national consensus with limited Turkish presence in northern Syria—is the optimal alternative for Israel. It reduces the threat of Salafi (and other) terrorism and creates a narrow gap for diplomatic dialogue that could serve both Israel's and Syria's interests. Such an alternative would require Israel to allocate intelligence and operational attention to the Syrian arena due to the potential for terrorism from this region toward Israel. In this alternative, the likelihood of a large-scale Turkish military move in Syrian territory—primarily toward the Israeli border—is limited.

The primary disadvantage of this alternative is the greater potential for Iran to attempt to maintain influence in Syria compared to a regime with a Salafi character. To reduce Iranian presence in Syria, Israel would need alliances with regional and international actors to ensure that assistance for Syria's reconstruction would be conditioned on limiting Iran's foothold.

In conclusion, compared to the threats and opportunities of the other alternatives presented above, Scenario B achieves most of Israel's interests. Therefore, Israel should work in collaboration with other actors to promote this development.

Summary of scenario assessments

Israeli interest	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D
Pushing Iran out of the Syrian arena	5	4	4	5
Preventing the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah	5	4	4	5
Reducing Turkish involvement in Syrian affairs	1	4	2	1
Opening a dialogue channel with the new regime in Damascus	1	3	1	2
Thwarting terrorism along the Israeli border from Syrian territory	3	3	3	3
Preserving and strengthening ties with minority groups in Syria	2	2	2	2
Summary score	17	20	16	18

About the authors

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