

Syria

17. SYRIA

Contents

Major Changes	1
General Data	1
Arms Trade.....	2
Strategic Assets	5
Armed Forces.....	6
Ground Forces.....	7
Air Force.....	10
Air Defense Forces	13
Navy.....	14

Major Changes

- The Syrian armed forces operate long range rockets (220mm and 302mm). Some of these were handed over to Hizbullah. These are probably being made in Syria, probably according to Russian or Chinese designs.
 - The Syrian navy acquired from Iran C-802 coastal defense missiles, as well as some MIG-S-1800 small patrol boats.
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General Data

Official Name of the State: The Arab Republic of Syria

Head of State: President Bashar al-Assad

Prime Minister: Mohammed Jazi Otri

Minister of Defense: Major General Hassan Turkamani

Chief of General Staff: Major General Ali Habib

Commander of the Air Force: Major General Hazem Khadra'a

Commander of the Navy: Vice Admiral Wa'il Nasser

Area: 185,180 sq. km.

Population: 19,500,000

Syria

Demography

Ethnic groups		
• Arabs	17,608,000	90.3%
• Kurds, Armenians and others	1,892,000	9.7%
Religious groups		
• Sunni Muslims	14,430,000	74.0%
• Alawis, Druze, and Shi'ite Muslims	3,120,000	16.0%
• Christians (Greek Orthodox, Gregorian, Armenian, Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Greek Catholics)	1,950,000	10.0%

Economic Data

		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
• GDP (current prices)	\$ bn	21.9	22.7	22.3	24.0	28.9
• GDP per capita	\$	1,237	1,254	1,200	1,263	1,482
• Real GDP growth	%	5.9	1.1	4.9	4.6	3.5
• Consumer price index	%	1.0	2.6	4.6	7.2	8.0
• External debt	\$ bn	21.5	21.6	21.5	8.0	7.9
Balance of payments						
• Exports fob	\$ bn	6.67	5.76	6.36	7.88	8.22
• Imports fob	\$ bn	4.46	4.43	6.54	8.48	8.91
• Current account balance (including services and income)	\$ bn	1.44	0.73	0.47	0.27	0.71
Government expenditure						
• Total expenditure	\$ bn	7.69	9.07	8.33	8.08	NA
• Defense expenditure	\$ bn	1.35	1.6	1.6	NA	NA
• Real change in defense expenditure	%	1.5	18.5	0.0	NA	NA
• Defense expenditure/GDP	%	6.2	7.0	7.2	NA	NA
Population	m	17.7	18.1	18.6	19.0	19.5
Official exchange rate	S£: \$1	46.3	46.3	48.6	53.4	51.7

Sources: EIU Quarterly Report, EIU Country Profile, IMF International Financial Statistical Yearbook, SIPRI Yearbook

Foreign Military Cooperation

Type	Details
• Foreign forces	Russia (2006)
• Security agreements	Iran, Russia (2006)

Syria

Arms Trade

Arms Procurement and Security Assistance Received

Country	Type	Details
Belarus	• Arms transfers	SA-18 SAMs (2003)
Iran	• Arms transfers • Assistance	C-802 SSM (2007) Promised guarantees for debts to Russia (2003)
	• Cooperation in arms production	Cooperation in production of SSMs (2003)
Iraq	• Arms transfers	Alleged transfer of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2003)
Italy	• Arms transfers	Upgrading T-72 MBTs (2003)
North Korea	• Arms transfers	Scud C/ D SSMs (2004), including assistance in production
Pakistan	• Cooperation in arms production, R&D	nuclear centrifuge technology (2004)
Russia	• Arms transfers	Strelts SAMs (2005 – probably postponed) , Pantsir SAM (2006) , Tunguska SAMs (2006) , upgrading of SA-2 SAMs (2006)
Saudi Arabia	• Assistance	Promised guarantees for debts to Russia (2003)

Arms Sales and Security Assistance Extended

Country	Type	Details
Iraq	• Assistance	\$800 million financial assistance for insurgency groups in Iraq (2004)
Kuwait	• Military training	Officer training (2004)
Lebanon	• Arms transfers • Military training	MRLs for Hizbullah (2006) Officer training (2004)
Palestinian organizations	• Facilities	Training camps of Hamas and Islamic Jihad
Qatar	• Military training	Officer training (2004)
Sudan	• Arms transfers • Military training	Alleged transfers of SSMs (2004) Officer training (2004)
Yemen	• Military training	Officer training (2004)

Syria

Defense Production

	M	P	A
Weapons of mass destruction			
• Production and upgrading of SSMs (in cooperation with North Korea and Iran)		√	√
• Production of chemical and biological agents, chemical warheads for SSMs	√		
Army equipment			
• Upgrading of tanks		√	
• 220mm and 302mm artillery rockets		√	
• Ammunition	√		

Note: M - manufacture (indigenously developed)
P - production under license
A - assembly

Syria

Strategic Assets

NBC Capabilities

Nuclear capability

Basic research. Alleged deal with Russia for a 24 Mw reactor. Deals with China for a 27 kw reactor and with Argentina for a 3 Mw research reactor, are probably cancelled. Party to the NPT; Safeguards agreement with the IAEA in force.

Chemical weapons and protective equipment

Stockpiles of nerve gas, including sarin, mustard, and VX.

There are unconfirmed allegations that Syria received Iraq's stockpile of chemical weapons just before the Iraq war broke out.

Delivery vehicles include chemical warheads for SSMs and aerial bombs.

Personal protective equipment; Soviet-type unit decontamination equipment.

Not a party to the CWC.

Biological weapons

Biological weapons and toxins (unconfirmed). Signed but not ratified the BWC.

Ballistic Missiles

Model	Launchers	Missiles	Since	Notes
• SS-1 (Scud B)	18	200	1974	
• SS-1 (Scud C)	8	80	1992	
• SS-21 (Scarab)	18		1983	
• Scud D	+		2002	
Total	~45			

Note: see also long-range rockets under "Artillery"

Space Assets

Name	Type	Notes
Satellite imaging		
• GORS	Remote sensing	Using images from Cosmos, ERS, Landsat, SPOT satellites

Syria

Armed Forces

Order-of-Battle

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
General data					
• Personnel (regular)	380,000	289,000	289,000	289,000	289,000
• SSM launchers	~45	~45	~45	~45	~45
Ground Forces					
• Divisions	12	12	12	12	12
• Total number of brigades	67	67	67	67	67
• Tanks	3,700 (4,800)	3,700 (4,800)	3,700 (4,800)	3,700 (4,800)	3,700 (4,800)
• APCs/AFVs	5,060	5,060	5,060	5,060	5,060
• Artillery (including MRLs)	~2,600 (~3,000)	~2,600 (~3,000)	3,000 (3,400)	3,274 (3,674)*	3,274 (3,674)
Air Force					
• Combat aircraft	490	450* (490)	450 (490)	350 (490)*	350 (490)
• Transport aircraft	23	23	23	23	23
• Helicopters	225*	225	213 (225)	195 (225)*	195 (225)
Air Defense Forces					
• Heavy SAM batteries	108	108	108	108	108
• Medium SAM batteries	64	64	64	64	64
• Light SAM launchers	55	55	55	55	55
Navy					
• Combat vessels	14	16*	16	16	16
• Patrol craft	8	8	8	8	14

* Due to change in estimate.

Syria

Personnel

	Regular	Reserves	Total
Ground Forces	215,000	100,000	315,000
Air Force	30,000	10,000	40,000
Air Defense	40,000	20,000	60,000
Navy	4,000	2,500	6,500
Total	289,000	132,500	421,500
Paramilitary			
• Gendarmerie	8,000		8,000
• Workers' Militia		100,000	100,000

Ground Forces

Formations

	Corps / armies	Divisions	Independent brigades / groups	Brigades in divisions
All arms	3			
Armored		7	1	3 armd., 1 mech., 1 aty. Each
Mechanized		3	1	2 mech., 2 armd., 1 aty. Each
Republican Guard		1		3 armd, 1 mech., 1 aty.
Infantry/ Special Forces		1	3	
Airborne/ Special Forces			8-10	
Artillery			2	
SSM forces			3	
Anti-tank/ Infantry			2	
Total	3	12	20-22	

Note: One armored division is a reserve unit.

Syria

Tanks

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
MBTs				
High quality				
• T-72(Upgraded)	122	122	2003	Upgraded by an Italian firm
• T-72/T-72M	1,478	1,478	1979/ 1993	
Subtotal	1,600	1,600		
Medium and low quality				
• T-62	1,000	1,000	1974	Some upgraded to MV standard
• T-55/T-54	~2,200	1,100	1957/ 1998	
Subtotal	~3,200	2,100		
Total	~4,800	3,700		

APCs/AFVs

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
APCs				
• BTR-152	560	560	1967	
• BTR-40/50/60	1,000	1,000	1956	
Subtotal	1,560	1,560		
IFVs				
• BMP-1	2,450	2,450	1977	
• BMP-2	100	100	1988	
Subtotal	2,550	2,550		
Reconnaissance				
• BRDM-2	950	950	1978	Also listed under Anti-Tank Weapons
Total	5,060	5,060		

Syria

Artillery				
Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Self-propelled guns and howitzers				
• 152mm 2S3	50	50	1984	
• 122mm 2S1	400	400	1982	
• 122mm D30	36	36	1986	Syrian-made
Subtotal	486	486		
Towed guns and howitzers				
• 180mm S-23	10	10	1975	
• 152mm M-1937	50	50	1987	
• 152mm D-20	20	20	1982	
• 130mm M-46	800	800	1970	
• 122mm D-30	500	500	1984	
• 122mm D-74	400	0		
• 122mm M-1938	150	150	1976	
Subtotal	1,930	1,530		
Mortars, over 160mm				
• 240mm M-240	10	10	1986	
• 160mm M-160	80	80	1976	
Subtotal	90	90		
Mortars, under 160mm				
• 120mm M-1943	700	700	1975	
Rockets				
• 220mm Urgan	+	+	2001	Syrian-made
• 302mm WS-1	+	+	2006	Syrian-made
• FROG-7	18	18	1971	
MRLs				
• 122mm BM-21	250	250	1979	
• 107mm Type 63	200	200	1994	
Subtotal	450	450		
Total	3,674	3,274		

Syria

Logistics and Engineering Equipment

MTU-67 bridging tanks, MT-55 bridging tanks (90), tank-towed bridges, mine-clearing rollers, AFV transporters (800)

Anti-Tank Missiles

Model	launchers	Missiles	Since	Notes
• AT-14 (Kornet)	50	1,500	1998	
• AT-4 (Spigot)	150		1980	
• AT-5 (Spandrel)	40		1995	
• AT-3 (Sagger) SP		3,000	1974	Mounted on BRDM-2 and BMP-1
• MILAN	200		1980	
Total	~3,400			
Future procurement				
• Matis (AT-11)	+			Under negotiation
• Kornet (AT-14)	+			Under negotiation

Air Force

Order-of-Battle

Category	Quantity	In service	Notes
Combat	490	390	
Transport	23	23	
Helicopters	225	195	

Syria

Combat Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Interceptors				
• MiG-29 (Fulcrum)	20	20	1987	
• MiG-25 (Foxbat)	35	35	1980	
• MiG-23 ML/MF	50	50	1974	
Subtotal	105	105		
Ground attack				
• Su-24 (Fencer)	20	20	1988	
• MiG-23 U/BN (Flogger)	56	56	1978	
• Su-20/22 (Fitter C/D)	100	60	1978	
Subtotal	176	136		
Obsolete				
• MiG-21 MF/BIS/U (Fishbed)	~210	150	1966	Some possibly phased out
Total	~490	~390		

Transport Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
• An-24/26 (Coke/Curl)	6	6	1979	
• IL-76 (Candid)	4	4	1983	
• Tu-134	2	2	1985	
• Mystère-Falcon 20/900	3	3	1980	
• Piper Navajo	2	2		
• Yak-40 (Codling)	6	6	1989	
Total	23	23		

Training and Liaison Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Jet trainers				
• L-39 Albatross	90	~40	1980	
Piston/Turbo-prop				
• MBB 223 Flamingo	40	40	1976	
• Mushshak	6	6	1994	
Subtotal	46	46		
Total	136	96		

Syria

Helicopters

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Attack				
• Mi-25 (Hind)	52	~35	1980	
• SA-342 Gazelle	38	38	1976	
Subtotal	90	~70		
Medium transport				
• Mi-8/17 (Hip H)	100	100	1971	
• Mi-2	10	10	1975	
Subtotal	110	110		
Naval combat				
• Ka-28 (Helix)	5	2	1990	
• Mi-14 (Haze)	20	11	1984	
Subtotal	25	13		
Total	225	~195		

Miscellaneous Aircraft

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Reconnaissance				
• MiG-25 R	7	+	1985	
UAVs and mini-UAVs				
• Shmel/ Malachit	+	+		

Advanced Armament

Air-to-air-missiles

AA-2 (610), AA-6 (150), AA-7 (470), AA-8 (1,120), AA-10, AA-11

Air-to-ground-missiles

AS-7, AS-9, AS-10, AS-11, AS-12, AS-14, AT-2, HOT

Note: Number in parentheses refers to the quantity of missiles purchased, not to current inventory levels.

Air Force Infrastructure

Aircraft shelters

In all airfields, for combat aircraft

Military airfields **21**

Abu Duhur, Afis North, Aleppo, Damascus (International), Damascus (Meze), Dir ez-Zor, Dumayr, Hama, Jarah, Khalkhala, Latakia, Marj-royal (Bley), Nassiriyah, al-Qusayr, Rasm al-Aboud, Sayqal, Shayarat, al-Suweida, T-4, Tabaka, Tudmur

Syria

Air Defense Forces

Surface-to-Air Missiles

Model	Batteries	Launchers	Since	Notes
Heavy missiles				
• SA-2 (Guideline)/ SA-3 (Goa)	100		1971	Being upgraded
• SA-5 (Gammon)	8		1983	
Total	108			
Medium missiles				
• SA-8 (Gecko)		56	1982	
• SA-6 (Gainful)	50		1973	
Total	50	56		
Light missiles				
• SA-9 (Gaskin)		20	1975	
• SA-13 (Gopher)		35	1986	
Total		55		
Shoulder-launched missiles				
• SA-7 (Grail)		+	1973	
• SA-14 (Gremlin)		+		
• SA-16 Igla-1		+		
• SA-18 Igla		+	2003	
Future procurement				
• Pechora-2A (SA-2)	+			Upgrading of SA-2
• Pantsir-S1	36			
• Tunguska-M1	6			
• Strelets (SA-18)	+			Under negotiation

Other air Defense Systems

Model	Quantity	In service	Since	Notes
Short-range guns				
• 57mm S-60	700	~400	1973	Partly phased out
• 37mm M-1939	300	0	1973	
• 23mm ZSU 23x4 SP (Gun Dish)	400	400	1977	
• 23mm ZU 23x2	600	~300	1986	
Total	2,000	~1,100		
Radars				
Kolchuga, Long Track, P-14 (Tall King), P-15 (Flat Face), P-12 (Spoon Rest), P-30, P-35, P-80, PRV-13, PRV-16.				

Syria

Navy

Combat Vessels

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
MFPBs			
• Ossa I/II	10	38.6/245	4xSS-N-2C Styx SSM 4x30mm guns 2 old Ossa I returned to service 2003
ASW vessels			
• Petya III	2	81.8/950	3x533 mm 4xRBU 2500 ASW mortars 3x76mm guns 22 mines
Mine warfare vessels			
• Sonya class (Type 1265)	1	48/450	2x30mm guns 2x25mm guns 8 mines
• Yevgenia class	3	24.6/77	2x25mm guns 2x14.5mm MGs
Subtotal	4		
Total	16		

Patrol Craft

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
• Zhuk class (Type 1400M)	8	24/39	4x14.5mm MGs many are not operational
• MIG-S-1800	6	18.7/60	1x20mm gun
Total	14		

Landing Craft

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
• Polnochny B-class LCT (Type 771)	3	75/760	180 troops or 350 tons 2x140mm MRLs 4x30mm guns

Syria

Auxiliary Vessels

Type	Quantity	Length (m.)/ displacement (t.)	Notes/armament
• al-Assad	1	105/3,500	Training ship
• Natya (Type 226)	1	61/804	2xSA-N-5 (Grail) SAMs 4x30mm guns formerly a minesweeper, now converted to oceanographic research
Total	2		

Coastal Defense

Type	Launchers	Since	Notes
Missiles			
• C-802	+	2006	
• SSC-1B Sepal	12		
• SSC-3	12	1966	Armed with SS-N-2C missiles
Total	24		
Guns			
• 130mm	36		

Naval Infrastructure

Naval bases	3		
Latakia, Minat al-Baida, Tartus			
Ship maintenance and repair facilities	1		
Repairs at Latakia			