

Israeli Druze and Syria's uncertain future

More Druze have applied for Israeli citizenship since the fall of Assad.

Amelie Botbol / Dec. 25, 2024

Nestled in the Golan Heights, the Druze communities that came under Israeli control in 1967 are torn between the hope of reuniting with their loved ones on the other side of the border and anxiety over an uncertain future following the overthrow of the Assad regime.

[...]

Lt. Col. (res.) Stéphane Cohen, head of the OSINT (Open source intelligence) Department at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)'s Data Analytics Center in Tel Aviv, believes unifying Syria will be a challenge.

“For many years, different parties tried to unify Syria, through Ba’athism or Syrian nationalism,” Cohen told JNS. “There are the Kurds on the eastern side of the Euphrates River, the Alawites on the coast, the Druze in the south and the Sunni majority who control Hama, Aleppo and a part of Damascus. It will be difficult for [rebel alliance leader Abu Mohammad] al-Julani to unify Syrians in one state.”

Cohen noted the evolution of al-Julani’s political movement, which, while still anchored in Sunni Islamism, has rebranded itself as a modernizing force.

“Will there be elections in Syria and will they succeed to write a new constitution? And what will that constitution be like?” he asked.

Finally, Cohen said, if the future government does not assert control over the entire territory, there is a risk of a resurgence of groups such as Islamic State and maybe even pro-Iranian groups.

For full article:

<https://www.jns.org/israeli-druze-and-syrias-uncertain-future/>