

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20451

Dear Secretary Rubio:

We are writing to request a follow-up briefing to discuss the specifics of the State Department's plans to update U.S. sanctions on Syria. As noted by your response, we mutually recognize Syria's historic opportunity to rebuild in the absence of Assad's repressive rule. We reiterate that this opportunity could be fleeting.

In our previous letter, we highlighted the need to reevaluate our broad sanctions on Syria, which now undermine U.S. objectives and recovery efforts. Our current sanctions not only threaten Syria's economic and social stability but also risk spurring migration, worsening dependency on illicit drug exports, and once again providing inroads for Iran or Russia. We emphasized the importance of near-term changes coupled with a roadmap outlining clear steps Syrian authorities could take to seek removal of sanctions and export controls that the Administration chooses to keep in place.

In light of press reports that the United States has shared with Syrian authorities a list of conditions for partial sanctions relief, we would appreciate clarity on the Department's position that it is "examining further options to support U.S. policy goals, including those mentioned in [our] letter, such as waivers, licenses, and assistance from foreign partners and allies." The response did not provide details and did not describe a timeline for action, which could be critical given the urgency that Secretary Rubio has described.

To better understand the Department's efforts, we request a staff-level briefing to discuss potential measures under consideration and provide further clarity on the following:

1. Which near-term changes to U.S. sanctions initially aimed at the Assad regime does the State Department support?
2. For each U.S. sanctions and export control restriction that the Department supports keeping in place pending actions by Syrian authorities, what is the Department's justification, and to what extent does each measure impede reconstruction?

3. What specifically has the United States communicated to Syrian authorities about actions that the authorities could take in relation to the above measures that the United States intends to keep in place?

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Warren", written over a horizontal line.

Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Joe Wilson", written over a horizontal line.

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress