



# Institute for the Documentation of Human Rights Violations against Religious Minorities in the Levant

WHERE SILENCE ENDS AND JUSTICE BEGINS

## **Human Rights Report: Attack on Al-Suqaylabiyah, Syria & Subsequent Developments**

Date of Incident: March 27, 2026

Location: Al-Suqaylabiyah (also spelled Suqaylabiyah), Hama Governorate, Syria

Affected Population: Greek Orthodox Christian community  
Report Updated: March 29, 2026

### **I. Executive Summary**

On the night of March 27, 2026, a coordinated sectarian attack was carried out against the Christian-majority city of Al-Suqaylabiyah in the Hama countryside. Armed groups originating from the nearby town of Qalaat al-Madiq entered the city, firing heavy weapons, looting property, and terrorizing residents [<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260327650107/en/>].

The incident has raised existential fears among the Christian community in Syria, with human rights organizations and political groups calling for international intervention and accountability [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>]. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East has condemned the attack, stating that it cannot be dismissed as an "isolated incident" given the accompanying acts of violence, intimidation, and targeting of religious symbols [<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-891502>].

New developments since the attack include: official Syrian government announcements of a "reconciliation" and the release of detainees [<https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/>]; statements from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a Greek Member of the European Parliament calling for action [<https://www.protothema.gr/politics/article/1795430/anisuhia-apo-tis-epitheseis-se-hristianiki-koinotita-sti-suria-parakolouthoume-stena-tin-upothesi-leei-to-upex/>]; and growing international concern over the pattern of near-daily attacks targeting Christians in the region [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

This report documents the events, the local and international responses, official government statements, and provides context on Al-Suqaylabiyah as a historically Christian city facing an existential threat.

## **II. Detailed Account of the Initial Attack**

According to witness testimony and field sources documented by multiple organizations, the attack unfolded in six distinct stages.

### **1. Initial Harassment**

Two men from the nearby town of Qalaat al-Madiq, riding motorcycles, harassed Christian girls on Al-Mashwar Street in Al-Suqaylabiyah. A confrontation ensued between the assailants and local youths. One of the attackers brandished a grenade and threatened residents before fleeing.

Source: Syriac Press, 2026

[<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>]

### **2. Arrests of Local Youths**

The two men returned with General Security patrols and identified several local young men who had confronted them. These individuals were subsequently detained by security forces.

Sources:

Syriac Press, 2026

[<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>]

Syriac Union Party, 2026

[<https://hawarnews.com/en/syriac-union-party-condemns-sqelbiya-events-calls-for-urgent-measures-to-enhance-stability>]

### **3. Armed Assault on the City**

Following the arrests, a large group of armed men on motorcycles entered Al-Suqaylabiyah from Qalaat al-Madiq. Witnesses reported heavy gunfire directed at residential homes, places of worship, and commercial properties. Shops were looted, vehicles vandalized, and there were attempts to storm residential buildings.

Witness Testimony: Liyan Dweir, a clothes shop owner, told the Associated Press: "We passed through a state of terror, fear, and panic." His shop was riddled with bullets and suffered heavy damage, and his children were terrified during the hours-long assault [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].

Additional Testimony: Another resident, Nafeh al-Nader, reported that young men broke the gate of his house and kicked a diesel heater, setting a room on fire. They tried to set another room on fire but were unsuccessful after a neighbor rushed for help and was hit with a stick by one of the attackers [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].

Sources:

Foundation for the Development of Western Syria, 2026  
[<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260327650107/en/>]

Syriac Press, 2026  
[<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>]

#### 4. Symbolic Vandalism and Targeting Religious Sites

Local sources reported that armed groups destroyed a statue of the Virgin Mary in the Al-Abra neighborhood of Al-Suqaylabiyah, a direct symbolic assault against the Christian community. Additionally, the sanctuary of the Virgin Mary was shot at during the attack [<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christianois-syrias-pyrovolisian-to-iero-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcheio-antiocheias-videos/>].

Source: Foundation for the Development of Western Syria, 2026  
[<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260327650107/en/>]

#### 5. Security Force Inaction

According to witnesses, General Security forces present during the attack did not intervene to stop or arrest the attackers. Order was only partially restored after reinforcement units arrived from surrounding areas in the early hours of March 28. Rather than arresting the attackers, General Security detained four young men from Al-Suqaylabiyah [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>].

Source: Syriac Press, 2026  
[<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>]

#### 6. Community Protest and General Strike

Between approximately 1:00 a.m. and 3:30 a.m., residents staged a sit-in protest. The four local youths initially detained were released. The community subsequently declared a three-day general strike, closing shops in protest. Hundreds of residents marched through the streets on Saturday demanding accountability and declaring a strike until the perpetrators are punished [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].

Source: Syriac Press, 2026

[\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/\]](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/)

### III. Official Syrian Government Statement and "Reconciliation"

On March 28, 2026, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), the official state news agency, reported that local authorities in Hama province had reached a "reconciliation" following the incident [\[https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/\]](https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/).

According to the official statement:

- Brigadier General Mulham al-Shantout, head of internal security in Hama, told SANA that security forces held a meeting with bishops and community leaders from the al-Ghab region to coordinate efforts to contain tensions and address the aftermath of the incident [\[https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/\]](https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/).
- The discussions led to a resolution through reconciliation [\[https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/\]](https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/).
- Several detainees were released after it was confirmed they were not directly involved, while the primary involved person remains in custody [\[https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/\]](https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/).
- Investigations are ongoing in accordance with legal procedures to determine further action [\[https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/\]](https://sana.sy/en/syria/2306020/).

However, this official account has been met with skepticism by human rights organizations and community representatives. The Universal Syriac Union Party noted that "internal security forces arrested a number of young men from the city who defended themselves, while no decisive action was taken against the attackers"

[\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/\]](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/).

A source told SyriacPress that reports about a reconciliation agreement between the residents of Suqaylabiyah and Qalaat al-Madiq are unfounded

[\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/\]](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/).

### IV. Broader Pattern of Violence: Near-Daily Targeting of Christians

Crucially, the March 27 attack is not an isolated incident. According to SyriacPress, "in what has become an almost daily scene, Christians in the town of Suqaylabiyah are subjected to harassment and provocation by groups of armed young men riding motorcycles coming from nearby areas" [\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/\]](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/).

A source told SyriacPress that over the past ten days, Suqaylabiyah has witnessed similar events and attacks, not only from Qalaat al-Madiq, but also from other neighboring areas [\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/\]](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/).

The Universal Syriac Union Party (USUP) stated that what happened "cannot be separated from the series of repeated attacks targeting areas with a distinct Christian character, amid a clear absence of accountability," raising serious questions about the performance of security and military institutions [\[https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-](https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-)

[party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/](#)].

## **V. Responses to the Attack**

### **A. Responses Inside Syria**

Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East

In a significant statement, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate condemned what took place in Al-Suqaylabiyah, arguing that what happened could not be reduced to the description of an "isolated incident," given the accompanying acts of violence, intimidation, and gunfire that affected religious symbols and property [<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-891502>].

The Patriarchate called for:

- An official investigation into the events
- The arrest and prosecution of all those involved
- Compensation for those who suffered material damage
- Guarantees that such attacks would not be repeated
- The state, through its official institutions, to assume full responsibility for maintaining peace, including control of illegal weapons

[<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christiano-i-tis-syrias-pyrovolis-an-to-iero-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcho-antiocheias-videos/>]

Demonstrations in Damascus

Christians in Damascus organized gatherings in front of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, protesting and condemning the recent events in Al-Suqaylabiyah. Protesters held signs denouncing the violence against civilians and calling for the protection of Christians in Syria [<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christiano-i-tis-syrias-pyrovolis-an-to-iero-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcho-antiocheias-videos/>].

Syriac Union Party

In a written statement issued on March 28, 2026, the Syriac Union Party's executive body condemned the attacks and warned of efforts to drag the city into sectarian conflict. The party called on the Syrian interim government to:

- Reconsider governance mechanisms to respect the country's pluralistic nature
- Ensure equal treatment of all components of Syrian society
- Hold accountable those who undermine security in a transparent and public manner
- Allow members of the Christian community to join the Internal Security Forces and participate in protecting their areas in coordination with the Ministry of Interior

Full statement available at:

[<https://hawarnews.com/en/syriac-union-party-condemns-sqelbiya-events-calls-for-urgent-measures-to-enhance-stability>]

Universal Syriac Union Party (USUP) - Lebanon

The USUP issued a statement strongly condemning "the serious attacks that targeted the city of Suqaylabiyah," stating that these attacks represent "a scene reflecting a worrying escalation of

a violent approach bearing the hallmarks of ISIS-like exclusionary ideology targeting Christians and all minorities in Syria” [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

The USUP warned that the continuation of these violations without a real deterrent “portends a dangerous slide toward sectarian conflict and threatens what remains of Syria’s national fabric based on pluralism and coexistence” [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

#### Local Community Demands

Protesters in Al-Suqaylabiyah raised demands including:

- The removal of weapons from the city
- Compensation for those affected
- The opening of a transparent investigation
- The holding accountable of those responsible for damage to public and private property

[<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-891502>]

#### Syrian Interim Government

Government forces brought reinforcements into Al-Suqaylabiyah, calming the violence. Syria’s interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa’s government has condemned attacks on minorities, but many accuse it of looking the other way or being unable to control the armed groups it is trying to absorb [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].

## **B. Responses Outside Syria**

#### Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement expressing concern over the situation:

“We are following closely with concern the situation in al Suqaylabiyah, a predominantly Greek Orthodox city. We take note of the Syrian Government’s announcement on the investigation of the incidents that recently took place in the city and we call for its swift implementation. We repeat our call for a peaceful and inclusive transition that guarantees the rights of all Syrians, regardless of religious or ethnic background. Christians remain a historical and integral part of Syria’s diverse society.”

[<https://www.protothema.gr/politics/article/1795430/anisuhia-apo-tis-epitheseis-se-hristianiki-koinotita-sti-suria-parakolouthoume-stena-tin-upothesi-leei-to-upex/>]

#### Greek Member of the European Parliament Nikolas Farantouris

On March 28, 2026, MEP Nikolas Farantouris (member of the European Parliament’s security and defense committee) issued an urgent statement regarding “massacres and pogroms in Christian neighborhoods near Latakia, in the Valley of the Christians, and the city of Suqaylabiyah” [<https://www.newsbreak.gr/geopolitiki-amyna/993004/farantouris-ellinorthodoxon-syria/>].

Farantouris stated: “The information I am receiving is dramatic and we cannot pretend not to see. Greece, the EU, and the international community must stand against the persecution and

violence of the al-Jolani regime” [<https://www.newsbreak.gr/geopolitiki-amyna/993004/farantoyris-ellinorthodoxon-syria/>].

He announced that on Monday, March 30, he would intervene with the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Policy, demanding an investigation into the events and the initiation of a démarche to the Syrian government [<https://www.newsbreak.gr/geopolitiki-amyna/993004/farantoyris-ellinorthodoxon-syria/>].

European Syriac Union (ESU)

The ESU issued an urgent appeal to the United States, the European Union, France, and Germany to intervene and protect Syria's Christians [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/esu-on-the-violence-in-suqaylabiyah-failure-to-take-immediate-measures-will-not-only-endanger-syria-but-also-increase-the-threat-of-extremism-in-europe/>].

The ESU warned: "For about a year and a half, since the beginning of Ahmed al-Sharaa's rise to power in Syria, all the peoples of the country have slipped into a spiral of violence. What is happening has turned into a clear humanitarian tragedy unfolding before the eyes of the international community" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/esu-on-the-violence-in-suqaylabiyah-failure-to-take-immediate-measures-will-not-only-endanger-syria-but-also-increase-the-threat-of-extremism-in-europe/>].

The ESU further stated: "Initially, thousands of innocent Alawites were brutally killed. Then the Druze community was targeted and subjected to violent attacks. At the same time, the pressure on Christians did not stop but intensified, and recently, attacks on Christians in the town of Suqaylabiyah, Hama region, have reached a worrying level" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/esu-on-the-violence-in-suqaylabiyah-failure-to-take-immediate-measures-will-not-only-endanger-syria-but-also-increase-the-threat-of-extremism-in-europe/>].

In a direct address to Christians in Syria, the ESU declared: "From this point on, there is no option but to protect yourselves and ensure your own security. No one should be trusted. We have not learned the lessons of 1915; we are subjected every day to attacks, threats, and assaults. It is time to say 'enough'" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>].

Failure to take immediate measures, the ESU warned, "will not only endanger Syria, but this environment of extremism and violence will pose an increasing threat to the world, especially Europe" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/esu-on-the-violence-in-suqaylabiyah-failure-to-take-immediate-measures-will-not-only-endanger-syria-but-also-increase-the-threat-of-extremism-in-europe/>].

Foundation for the Development of Western Syria

The Foundation expressed its strongest condemnation of the attack and called upon the international community and human rights organizations to take immediate action to protect civilians and prevent further escalation toward a devastating sectarian conflict [<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260327650107/en/>].

Universal Syriac Union Party (USUP)

The USUP explicitly called for immediate and effective international protection for Christians and all minorities in Syria, under international supervision to ensure their safety and preserve their historical presence. It also demanded transparent and independent investigations into the events in Al-Suqaylabiyah and other attacks, stressing the need to hold all those involved accountable without exception [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

The USUP denounced "the ongoing international silence," stating that "the silence of the international community is no longer acceptable, and any failure to take real action amounts to indirect complicity in these crimes" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

## VI. Overview of Al-Suqaylabiyah as a Christian City

Al-Suqaylabiyah (Arabic: السقيلية) is a city in western Syria's Hama Governorate, located approximately 48 kilometers (30 miles) from the city of Hama. Its inhabitants are overwhelmingly Greek Orthodox Christians [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].

### Historical Background

The city's name derives from the ancient Hellenistic city of Seleucia ad Belum, which was located nearby. The modern town was established in the mid-to-late 19th century during the late Ottoman period by Greek Orthodox Christians who emigrated from the Hauran region in southern Syria and from villages in the Syrian coastal mountains [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].

During the 1860 civil conflict in Syria, local Bedouin tribes attacked Al-Suqaylabiyah. In 1879, the German orientalist Eduard Sachau noted it was a Christian village of 100 houses with 200 riflemen [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].

### Christian Identity and Religious Sites

Al-Suqaylabiyah is notable for its Christian heritage:

- The main church is the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul in the Sultaniya neighborhood, built in the neo-Byzantine style in 1994 with capacity for 600 parishioners [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].
- The city is also home to a monastery dedicated to the Dormition of the Lady [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].
- In July 2020, the Syrian government announced a plan to build a replica of the Hagia Sophia in Al-Suqaylabiyah with Russian assistance [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].

### Role During the Civil War

During the Syrian civil war, Al-Suqaylabiyah was held by a Christian militia known as Quwat al-Ghadab affiliated with the Syrian Republican Guard in support of the Fallen Government. According to reports, the militia claimed to have had 163 "martyrs" between 2013 and 2016 [<https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>]. The city remained pro-government and was a frontline location facing insurgent-held areas to the northwest [<https://www.aymennjawad.org/2018/12/suqaylabiyah-in-north-hama-interview>].

## VII. Christian Presence in Syria: An Existential Threat

The attack on Al-Suqaylabiyah is part of a broader, deeply concerning trend for Christians in Syria, who face an existential threat to their continued presence in the country.

### A History of Recent Violence

Since the fall of the Assad government in late 2024, Christians have been targeted in multiple attacks:

- December 2024: Arsonists set fire to a Christmas tree in Al-Suqaylabiyah, an act condemned by local HTS leaders [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].
- June 2025: A suicide bombing at a church outside Damascus killed 25 people and wounded dozens. Initially, many Christians were willing to give the new authorities a chance, but the situation worsened significantly after this attack [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].
- March 2026: The coordinated sectarian attack documented in this report represents the latest escalation in near-daily targeting of Christians in Al-Suqaylabiyah [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/suqaylabiyah-unrest-raises-existential-fears-among-christians/>].

### Pattern of Systematic Targeting

The European Syriac Union has characterized the situation as "systematic attacks against civilians from various religions and ethnic backgrounds, especially Christians," carried out by the government "in cooperation with armed groups affiliated with it and some tribal militias" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/28/esu-on-the-violence-in-suqaylabiyah-failure-to-take-immediate-measures-will-not-only-endanger-syria-but-also-increase-the-threat-of-extremism-in-europe/>].

The Universal Syriac Union Party warned that the continued targeting of Christians and minorities in Syria "will lead to serious consequences, foremost among them an accelerated pace of migration and a threat to the historical presence of our peoples in their land," affirming that Christians in Syria "have always been and will remain an essential component in building the state and true partners in its future" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

### Current Sentiment: Existential Fear

Many Christians feel increasingly targeted and alienated. Following the December 2024 Christmas tree burning in Al-Suqaylabiyah, one protester stated: "If we're not allowed to live our Christian faith in our country, as we used to, then we don't belong here anymore" [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Suqaylabiyah>].

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch has confirmed that it is monitoring events that affect "the Christian presence in Syria" and has emphasized the need to move "from words to action" in protecting this presence [<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christiano-i-tis-syrias-pyrovolisano-to-iero-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcho-antiocheias-videos/>].

### Broader Context of Minority Targeting

Since the fall of Assad in December 2024, members of the country's Alawite, Druze, and Christian minorities have been subjected to attacks by gunmen loyal to the country's new Islamist rulers. Hundreds of people have been killed, including Alawites in Syria's coastal region in March 2025 and Druze in the southern province of Sweida in July 2025 [<https://apnews.com/article/syria-christians-sectarian-attacks-suqaylabiyah-d3c66fd9713084c1fbab0c307c77bcf9>].

The Universal Syriac Union Party has warned that these attacks "cannot be separated from the series of repeated attacks targeting areas with a distinct Christian character, amid a clear absence of accountability," raising serious questions about the performance of security and military institutions [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

## VIII. Recommendations

Based on the documented violations, human rights organizations have issued the following recommendations:

1. Immediate International Protection: The Universal Syriac Union Party has called for immediate and effective international protection for Christians and all minorities in Syria, under international supervision to ensure their safety and preserve their historical presence [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].
2. Accountability and Investigation: Transparent and independent investigations into the events in Al-Suqaylabiyah and other attacks, with all those involved held accountable without exception [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].
3. Inclusive Security Forces: Allow members of minority communities, including Christians, to join the Internal Security Forces to protect their own areas, as called for by the Syriac Union Party [<https://hawarnews.com/en/syriac-union-party-condemns-sqelbiya-events-calls-for-urgent-measures-to-enhance-stability>] and the Universal Syriac Union Party [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].
4. Arms Control: The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate has called for the state, through its official institutions, to assume full responsibility for maintaining peace, including control of illegal weapons [<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christiano-i-tis-syrias-pyrovolis-an-to-ier-o-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcho-antiocheias-videos/>].
5. Compensation for Victims: The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate has called for compensation for those who have suffered material damage [<https://hellasjournal.com/2026/03/stochoi-islamistikon-epitheseon-oi-christiano-i-tis-syrias-pyrovolis-an-to-ier-o-tis-panagias-diamartyria-brosta-sto-patriarcho-antiocheias-videos/>].
6. End International Silence: The Universal Syriac Union Party has denounced "the ongoing international silence," stating that "the silence of the international community is no longer acceptable, and any failure to take real action amounts to indirect complicity in these crimes" [<https://syriacpress.com/blog/2026/03/29/universal-syriac-union-party-suqaylabiyah-under-fire-and-ongoing-violations-expose-state-inaction-urgent-international-protection-for-minorities-in-syria/>].

## IX. Conclusion

The attack on Al-Suqaylabiyah on March 27, 2026, represents a dangerous escalation in sectarian violence targeting Syria's Christian community. The documented failure of security forces to intervene, the coordinated nature of the assault, the targeting of religious symbols including the shooting of the Virgin Mary sanctuary, and the subsequent calls from Christian organizations for self-protection all point to a deepening crisis for religious minorities in Syria who face an existential threat to their continued presence in the country.

Crucially, this is not an isolated incident. According to multiple sources, Christians in Suqaylabiyah face near-daily harassment and attacks from neighboring areas, with a pattern of

violence that has escalated over the past ten days. The Syrian government's announcement of a "reconciliation" has been met with skepticism, and community sources deny that any genuine agreement has been reached.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch has emphasized that these events cannot be dismissed as "isolated incidents" and has called for moving "from words to action" to protect Christians in Syria. The Greek government has expressed concern, and a Greek MEP has announced plans to bring the issue before the European Commission.

The international community and the Syrian interim government must take immediate action to protect civilians, ensure accountability, and preserve Syria's pluralistic social fabric before the Christian presence in Syria, which has existed for nearly two millennia, is irrevocably diminished.

Report compiled on March 29, 2026

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