



RUSSIA-SYRIA TALKS: INTERNATIONAL RELATION

NEWS: Russia, Syria to hold further talks on Russian military bases in Syria, TASS reports

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Russia is holding discussions with Syria's new de facto leader, Mohammed al-Jolani, after **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)** ended Assad's 50-year rule. The key issue revolves around Russia's strategic military bases in Syria and HTS's demands, including Assad's handover and reconstruction support.



1. Background: The Syrian Civil War & Russian Intervention

- **Civil War Begins (2011):** Sparked by Arab Spring protests against Bashar al-Assad's regime.
- **Rise of Opposition Groups:**
 - **Free Syrian Army (FSA):** Secular rebels.
 - **Jabhat al-Nusra (Al-Qaeda affiliate):** Later rebranded as HTS.
 - **Islamic State (IS):** Extremist jihadist group.
- **Russian Intervention (2015):**
 - Assad was on the brink of collapse, controlling only Damascus and coastal areas.
 - Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah supported Assad's forces.
 - Major victories: **Aleppo (2016), Homs, and Eastern Ghouta.**



- **Frozen Conflict (Post-2016):** Assad retained power, but Syria remained unstable.

2. Recent Developments: Fall of Assad & Rise of HTS

- **HTS Captures Damascus (2024):**
 - Assad fled to Russia after **five decades of family rule ended**.
 - HTS, led by **Mohammed al-Jolani**, declared control.
- **Power Shift:**
 - **HTS vs. Russia:** Russia previously fought against HTS but now negotiates with it.
 - HTS seeks **legitimacy** as Syria's new governing force.

3. Russia's Strategic Interests in Syria

- **Military Bases:**
 - **Tartous Naval Base:** Russia's only Mediterranean naval base, key for regional dominance.
 - **Hmeimim Air Base:** Crucial for air operations.
- **Geopolitical Influence:**
 - Russia wants to **retain its presence** despite Assad's fall.
 - **Negotiating with HTS** to secure its long-term role in Syria.

4. Demands from Syria's New Leadership

- **HTS's Conditions for Russia:**
 1. **Handing over Bashar al-Assad** to Syrian authorities.
 2. **Reconstruction Support:** Russia must aid **infrastructure rebuilding** to regain trust.
 3. **Economic Compensation** for past war damage.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/russia-syria-to-hold-further-talks-on-russian-military-bases-in-syria-tass-reports/articleshow/117665383.cms?from=mdr>