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US Removes Syria from State Sponsors of Terrorism List

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The United States has officially removed Syria from its list of State Sponsors of Terrorism (SST), ending a designation that Syria had faced since 1979.

The decision marks a major shift in US policy towards post-Assad Syria and is expected to facilitate economic activity, investment and reconstruction.

Key Highlights:

The decision followed a 45-day Congressional review period after US President Donald Trump notified Congress in July 2026 of his intention to rescind Syria's designation.

The US also revoked the terrorist designation of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), formerly known as the al-Nusra Front.

The move removes restrictions associated with Syria's SST status, including certain financial transactions, foreign assistance and defence-related restrictions, potentially improving Syria's access to international finance and investment.

Background:

Syria was designated a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1979. The designation imposed significant economic and diplomatic restrictions on the country.

The development follows the fall of Bashar al-Assad's government in December 2024 and the emergence of Ahmed al-Sharaa as Syria's transitional leader. The US has subsequently sought greater engagement with the new Syrian

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government.

Significance:

Economic recovery: Removal of major restrictions could encourage foreign investment and support Syria's post-war reconstruction.

Diplomatic shift: Indicates a transition in US–Syria relations from isolation towards engagement.

Regional stability: Greater economic integration could contribute to Syria's stabilisation.

International finance: Delisting can facilitate banking and financial transactions involving Syria.

State Sponsors of Terrorism –Fact:

The US State Sponsors of Terrorism designation is a US policy mechanism targeting governments determined to have repeatedly provided support for international terrorism. As of the Syria delisting, Iran, Cuba and North Korea remain on the US list.

Exam Focus Points:

Country Removed: Syria

Removed By: United States

List: State Sponsors of Terrorism

Syria Listed Since: 1979

Date of Removal: 24 August 2026

Key Leader: Ahmed al-Sharaa

Former Leader: Bashar al-Assad

Other Group Delisted: HTS

Strategic Link: Sanctions relief, reconstruction, investment and US–Syria relations