



Syria Protest Update, August 29—September 4

By Andie Parry

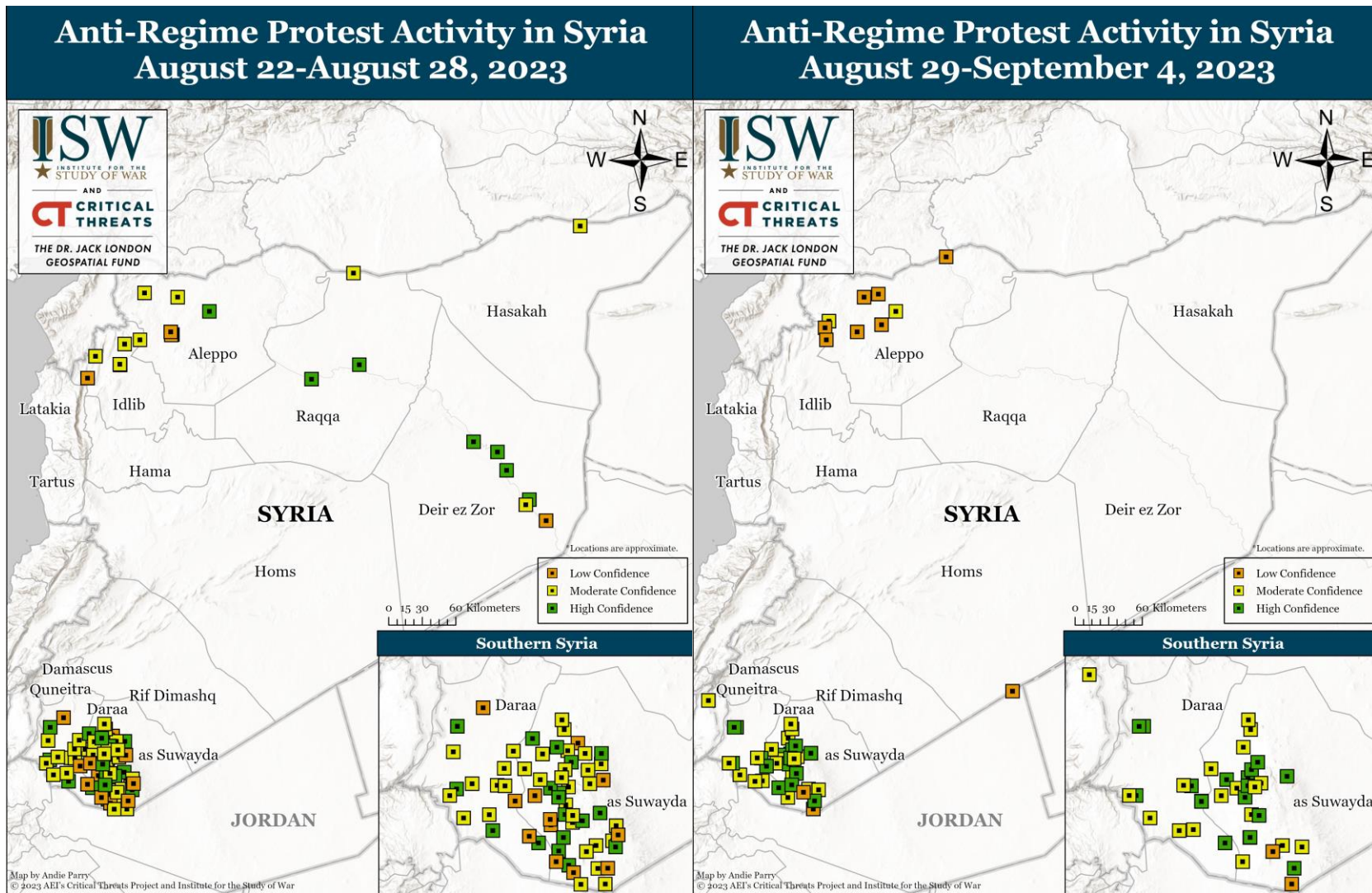
September 6, 2023

Information Cutoff: September 4, 5:00 pm ET

Anti-regime protests have grown and become more organized in Suwayda Province while declining in the rest of Syria. Suwayda Province has become the well-organized center of the anti-regime protest movement as organizers demonstrate a greater ability to direct and sustain constant demonstrations and issue new demands. ISW recorded two instances of limited regime intimidation in Suwayda Province such as threats and firing into the air throughout the movement.¹ Regime suppression and a lack of organizational networks outside the province have resulted in a decline in protest span, frequency, and turnout, however. ISW recorded 11 protests in the rest of regime-held Syria between August 29 and September 4 compared to 43 during the previous week.² This updates ISW's assessment that anti-regime protests are gaining traction in Syria and that the protests could expand during the coming weeks.

- Thousands of demonstrators gathered in Suwayda City on September 1 in the province's largest anti-regime gathering since the 2011 Arab Spring.³ Since September 2, protesters have begun to extend demonstrations late into the night and have set up tents and large banners.⁴ Suwayda protest groups released demands that include the creation of an autonomous region in southern Syria and freedom from the Baath Party.⁵ Not all community and protest leaders support the demands, however.⁶
- Regime force suppressed demonstrations outside of Suwayda Province by arresting protesters, increased security patrols, and live fire.⁷ Most of the regime suppression efforts in Daraa, Deir ez Zor, Homs, and Rif Dimashq provinces occurred shortly after protests broke out last month.⁸ Demonstrations in eastern Syria halted as protest areas became active conflict zones when Arab tribes in Deir ez Zor Province began a full-scale revolt against the Syrian Democratic Forces on August 30.⁹
- Demonstrations in Daraa Province have not displayed signs of consistent organization, such as centralized or coordinated demonstrations and issuing protest demands. The online countrywide Tenth of August movement has adopted new anonymous campaigns since the start of the protest but has not demonstrated a wider ability to organize a sustained civil disobedience movement.¹⁰ The anonymous campaign indicates the participants' current unwillingness to assume significant risk on behalf of the movement.

Demonstrations are occurring in areas of Syria that the regime does not control and outside the country, which could blunt regime efforts to degrade and halt support for the anti-regime protests in Suwayda. Syrians held demonstrations supporting Suwayda occurred in territory held by opposition, Kurdish, and Turkish-backed forces on September 1.¹¹ Some demonstrations merged pro-Suwayda chants with unrelated messages about the Arab tribes' revolt in eastern Syria, however.¹² The Syrian diaspora in the Golan Heights, a refugee camp on the Syrian border, and multiple European cities have also held demonstrations in support of those inside Syria in the past week.¹³



Syrian protests reduced their span between August 29 and September 4 as compared to the previous week. Demonstrations clustered in southern Syria and in non-regime held territory in northwest Syria. The retained high turnout but reduced spread in Suwayda Province is likely a result of better organization there.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1667562270406569>
- 2 <https://www.syriahr.com/%d8%aa%d8%b2%d8%a7%d9%85%d9%86%d8%a7%d9%8b-%d9%85%d8%b9-%d8%a7%d9%86%d8%aa%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b6%d8%a9-%d9%85%d9%87%d8%af-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ab%d9%88%d8%b1%d8%a9-%d8%ae%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%84-%d8%a2%d8%a8/676786/> ; <https://t.me/damascusv011/18157> ; <https://damascusv.com/archives/53525>
- 3 [https://www.facebook.com/Suwayda24/posts/pfbid02Vc7WhTfs8xobzVQhB5r4KZWgWc9CGsefAKK5tWuBTjs5DExF9iYgaEf19HEYu7kti?__cft__\[0\]=AZXWajUKAE1ILy9r59SfY3E0hSJUIhP76FefUqehHmwE9WyuL1SweOGFZaiO8MWFaOOgESi4n3dDS5KcXyJRFJZsNRhrnPj-UXAJZruTknRrD13A1uHMOvA4vQeKU-T9spOf16P9S3htVz8T9yNPEnsbormP1-J3B1U_ODMHnntMumoGhInk5-T1CRQWFboSw&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/Suwayda24/posts/pfbid02Vc7WhTfs8xobzVQhB5r4KZWgWc9CGsefAKK5tWuBTjs5DExF9iYgaEf19HEYu7kti?__cft__[0]=AZXWajUKAE1ILy9r59SfY3E0hSJUIhP76FefUqehHmwE9WyuL1SweOGFZaiO8MWFaOOgESi4n3dDS5KcXyJRFJZsNRhrnPj-UXAJZruTknRrD13A1uHMOvA4vQeKU-T9spOf16P9S3htVz8T9yNPEnsbormP1-J3B1U_ODMHnntMumoGhInk5-T1CRQWFboSw&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R) ; <https://suwayda24.com/?p=21809>
- 4 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=819608449822093> ; <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1322818751932124> ; [https://www.facebook.com/alraased/posts/pfbid02gbnzWV3cmLFT1USarStmGUHmZsua5mmUudhbLhW3CHAh6NTzCkiQIwt8PxeFC9I?__cft__\[0\]=AZVJoIDTZU-dXXslgah1PWkw4dNnpDzcOryFI2Gg97mZrUronFF7PuayGTQeZQBZdLxLGR9s9Ks8aukzIHD5tqf_puBLXscXHnry1e-tfprBmUz0shsGOFseSwpvLa116TXpVfFAHYyobehNVt4N1ni7z_FHTEmoqi5wpPjhuU4GZbCVAhxfgO_98rskPjtwU&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/alraased/posts/pfbid02gbnzWV3cmLFT1USarStmGUHmZsua5mmUudhbLhW3CHAh6NTzCkiQIwt8PxeFC9I?__cft__[0]=AZVJoIDTZU-dXXslgah1PWkw4dNnpDzcOryFI2Gg97mZrUronFF7PuayGTQeZQBZdLxLGR9s9Ks8aukzIHD5tqf_puBLXscXHnry1e-tfprBmUz0shsGOFseSwpvLa116TXpVfFAHYyobehNVt4N1ni7z_FHTEmoqi5wpPjhuU4GZbCVAhxfgO_98rskPjtwU&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)
- 5 <https://damascusv.com/archives/53449> ; <https://www.syria.tv/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84-%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D9%83%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%88%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AA%D8%AC%D9%8A%D9%86> ; <https://suwayda24.com/?p=21766> ;
- 6 <https://twitter.com/OrientNews/status/1696175495228834200>
- 7 <https://www.syriahr.com/%d8%aa%d8%b2%d8%a7%d9%85%d9%86%d8%a7%d9%8b-%d9%85%d8%b9-%d8%a7%d9%86%d8%aa%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b6%d8%a9-%d9%85%d9%87%d8%af-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ab%d9%88%d8%b1%d8%a9-%d8%ae%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%84-%d8%a2%d8%a8/676786/> ; <https://t.me/damascusv011/18157> ; <https://damascusv.com/archives/53525> ; [https://www.facebook.com/Suwayda24/posts/pfbid0n9QxybX1Nz5VJL5ugGJHYhtgmmNV4fVVE2c53fZrtAvoyobz6bJpNL5mPCoJ3tl?__cft__\[0\]=AZWGsEibBf9EuuqJvatU0Fy1H8ZHfLnXYZv9ewaDPouZLxOx6MQJ32WJnoKpz0Bp-jgsV2Q2LdaLoXAPEuoTYiwN28EVoEWeshmZiHkXrvaC_DVimFjPmhtuWYXFcVns6x8zqgi50_4qc0MpXMeGsEZgeSe-oucSnBoXHWqrVNBt8JfYmBt4QjsbNkOvJO6bF7E&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/Suwayda24/posts/pfbid0n9QxybX1Nz5VJL5ugGJHYhtgmmNV4fVVE2c53fZrtAvoyobz6bJpNL5mPCoJ3tl?__cft__[0]=AZWGsEibBf9EuuqJvatU0Fy1H8ZHfLnXYZv9ewaDPouZLxOx6MQJ32WJnoKpz0Bp-jgsV2Q2LdaLoXAPEuoTYiwN28EVoEWeshmZiHkXrvaC_DVimFjPmhtuWYXFcVns6x8zqgi50_4qc0MpXMeGsEZgeSe-oucSnBoXHWqrVNBt8JfYmBt4QjsbNkOvJO6bF7E&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)
- 8 <https://t.me/damascusv011/18157> ; <https://damascusv.com/archives/53525> ; <https://www.syriahr.com/%d8%a7%d9%86%d8%aa%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b6%d8%a9-%d8%ac%d8%a8%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%b1%d8%a8-%d9%88%d8%ad%d9%88%d8%b1%d8%a7%d9%86-%d9%8a%d8%b3%d9%85%d8%b9-%d8%b5%d8%af%d8%a7%d9%87%d8%a7-%d9%81%d9%8a/675109/> ; <https://www.syriahr.com/%d8%a7%d9%86%d8%aa%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b6%d8%a9-%d8%ac%d8%a8%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%b1%d8%a8-%d9%88%d8%ad%d9%88%d8%b1%d8%a7%d9%86-%d9%8a%d8%b3%d9%85%d8%b9-%d8%b5%d8%af%d8%a7%d9%87%d8%a7-%d9%81%d9%8a/675109/> ; <https://twitter.com/HamamIssa7/status/1695807514074333671>
- 9 https://twitter.com/Sada_AlSharqieh/status/1695042907504246972/photo/2 ; <https://www.mei.edu/blog/dangerous-escalation-syrias-deir-ez-zor>
- 10 [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02jtoU2iSLeKTVkTh9eTQnflbvj2nt5JpwS9qN439sqZQJxq1PoL2raKsafety7wt5yAl&id=100095524928763&__cft__\[0\]=AZVDSB64qKXjtPMCZOKlmm4V0FctS8dPH-PsNyAHtpSEYORbPEzIzAnplzaXrzn8hb37Oook33tA4ojC47NqjM0I_4_Eyzc5kzcDIO-T9W94FwI8CHGMdzpAaVhOR53BvdROiV7kTovR7zskO0Ds361qkifUzg2t5Sv53e-uyzLzonPtnRbt6wCuVhCcbRI25zg&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02jtoU2iSLeKTVkTh9eTQnflbvj2nt5JpwS9qN439sqZQJxq1PoL2raKsafety7wt5yAl&id=100095524928763&__cft__[0]=AZVDSB64qKXjtPMCZOKlmm4V0FctS8dPH-PsNyAHtpSEYORbPEzIzAnplzaXrzn8hb37Oook33tA4ojC47NqjM0I_4_Eyzc5kzcDIO-T9W94FwI8CHGMdzpAaVhOR53BvdROiV7kTovR7zskO0Ds361qkifUzg2t5Sv53e-uyzLzonPtnRbt6wCuVhCcbRI25zg&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)
- 11 <https://twitter.com/nahermedia/status/1697593935353274691> ; <https://www.syriahr.com/en/309365/>
- 12 <https://twitter.com/nahermedia/status/1697593935353274691> ; https://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/205345
- 13 https://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/205347 ; https://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/205345 ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQY4hvGZMTk&ab_channel=%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%88%D8%B2-%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A7