

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

SYRIA TV

FEBRUARY 16, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT

SYRIAN TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT: NAVIGATING STABILIZATION, INTEGRATION, & GLOBAL RE-ENGAGEMENT (FEBRUARY 2026)

CONSOLIDATING AUTHORITY AFTER REGIME COLLAPSE: A FRAGILE BALANCE

US-LED COALITION PHASED WITHDRAWAL

AL-SHADDADI BASE (NE SYRIA)

SYRIAN MILITARY & CENTRAL GOV

INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY & DIPLOMACY

MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE (MSC)

Syrian Forces Secure Al-Shaddadi, Marking Shift in Northeast Authority

Syrian FM Asaad al-Shaibani Joint Delegation: Signaling Progressing Unity, but "Local Rule" Friction Persists

DOMESTIC STABILIZATION & "SOFT" CONTROL MEASURES

RELIGIOUS REGULATION (MINISTRY OF AWQAF)	MEDIA GOVERNANCE (MINISTRY OF INFORMATION)
UNIFIED ISLAMIC DISCOURSE CHARTER Curbing Sectarianism, Promoting Moderate Values, Centralizing Sermons	PROFESSIONAL & ETHICAL CODE OF CONDUCT (82 PAGES) Establishing Standards, Facing "Executive Overreach" Criticism & Press Freedom Backlash

LEGISLATIVE & ECONOMIC PRESSURES (PRE-RAMADAN)

PEOPLE'S COUNCIL ELECTIONS (RAQQA & TABQA) Delayed for Full Regional Representation & "Complete" Body	INFLATION (20%) & LIQUIDITY CRISIS Mounting Price Pressure Despite Jordan Trade Deal; Central Bank Policies Questioned
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TRENDS, HYPOTHESES, & FUTURE OUTLOOK

DEEP DIVE THEMES	AUTONOMY vs. CENTRALIZATION STALEMATE Fragile Peace: "Integration" vs. "Rearranging", Diplomatic Absorption of Kurdish Leaders	INSTITUTIONAL PROFESSIONALIZATION as POWER TOOL Soft Centralization via Codes of Conduct; Societal Distrust of New "Control Mechanisms"	ECONOMIC FRAGILITY & "RAMADAN PRESSURE" Market Disconnect & Dollarization Risk; Urgent Need for Goods to Offset Inflation
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FUTURE LEGISLATIVE & OPERATIONAL PATHWAY

MILITARY INTEGRATION TIMELINE (MEDIUM TERM) Resistance to "Individual Merging" Likely; Compromise "Regional Brigades" Expected	LEGISLATIVE BATTLES (UPCOMING SESSIONS) Debates over "Permanent Election Law" & "Political Parties Law" to Replace Decrees	REPATRIATION CRISIS (AL-HOL CAMP) Tensions Rise over Foreign ISIS Affiliates; Potential Push for "Third-Party Deportation" or "Tribunals"
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LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE: DECREES & DISCUSSIONS

- Unified Islamic Charter, Media Code of Conduct, Decree 13 (Kurdish Rights Base), Decree 53 (Political Affairs Link), Election Committee Decisions

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

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SYRIAN TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT NAVIGATES SDF INTEGRATION, INTERNATIONAL RE- ENGAGEMENT, AND DOMESTIC STABILIZATION MEASURES

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On February 16, 2026, the Syrian transitional government under President Ahmed al-Sharaa focused on consolidating state authority and international legitimacy following the collapse of the previous regime. Key developments included the Syrian military's takeover of the Al-Shaddadi base from the U.S.-led International Coalition, marking a significant step in the phased U.S. withdrawal and the restoration of central authority in the northeast. Concurrently, high-level officials, including Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani, attended the Munich Security Conference alongside SDF and SDC leaders Mazlum Abdi and Ilham Ahmed. While the U.S. and regional partners lauded the integration agreement between the government and the SDF, internal friction persisted regarding the specific nature of "local Kurdish rule" and institutional autonomy versus centralized state control. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Domestic stabilization efforts were underscored by the launch of the "Unified Islamic Discourse Charter," aimed at curbing sectarianism and extremist rhetoric on religious platforms. Additionally, the Ministry of Information released a new "Professional and Ethical Code of Conduct" for media, though it faced criticism from journalist associations for potential executive overreach. Legislatively, the Higher Election Committee initiated preparations for People's Council elections in the newly recovered provinces of Raqqa and Tabqa, justifying the delay in the general council's session as necessary to ensure full regional representation. Economically, the government faced mounting pressure from 20% inflation ahead of Ramadan and a liquidity crisis, even as it secured a comprehensive trade and import agreement with Jordan set to begin in March. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

SDF Integration and U.S. Military Withdrawal

- Syrian government forces officially took control of the Al-Shaddadi military base in Al-Hasakah province from the International Coalition. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio praised the Syrian Government-SDF agreement but warned that implementation would be difficult, calling for similar outreach to Druze, Bedouin, and Alawite communities. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

- SDC leader Ilham Ahmed confirmed military integration has begun, with mutual troop withdrawals from frontlines in Al-Hasakah, though she emphasized that the "Autonomous Administration" has not been formally dissolved but is being "rearranged." ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- Mazlum Abdi advocated for "local Kurdish rule" under Syrian sovereignty, highlighting ongoing disputes with Damascus over terminology and administrative frameworks. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Syria's Return to the International Stage

- The Syrian official delegation participated in the 62nd Munich Security Conference, conducting bilateral meetings with representatives from the U.S., France, Germany, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- Foreign Minister Al-Shaibani used the forum to condemn repeated Israeli air strikes and land incursions in southern Syria, while receiving international support for state-building and stability. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- The inclusion of SDF/SDC leadership in the official Syrian delegation in Munich was viewed by observers as a signal of progressing domestic unity. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Legislative and Governance Reform

- The Higher Election Committee announced preliminary committees for People's Council elections in Raqqa and Tabqa, moving to fill seats that were previously delayed due to security conditions. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

- Official justification for the delay of the first general session of the People's Council was attributed to waiting for the integration of the eastern provinces to ensure a "complete and credible" legislative body. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- The Ministry of Awqaf (Endowments) launched the "Unified Islamic Discourse Charter" to regulate religious sermons and promote moderate, non-sectarian values. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- The Ministry of Information released an 82-page "Code of Conduct" for journalists and content creators, prompting a backlash from the Syrian Journalists Association, which views it as an infringement on press freedom. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Security and Humanitarian Affairs

- Israeli forces conducted multiple incursions into Quneitra province (Jabaat al-Khashab and Ghadir al-Bustan), kidnapping several individuals for interrogation before withdrawing. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- The Syrian government announced plans to relocate the remaining families in Al-Hol camp to a new facility in Akhtarin, Aleppo, aiming to dismantle the camp by the end of 2026. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese reaffirmed a hardline stance against repatriating citizens linked to ISIS from Syrian camps, despite initial reports of a coordinated transfer. ([Source](#))
- A significant drug interdiction in Homs resulted in 111 arrests and the seizure of 1.1 million Captagon pills and 15kg of hashish. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The "Autonomy" vs. "Centralization"

Stalemate: A recurring theme is the deep semantic and structural divide between the central government and the Kurdish leadership. While Damascus talks of "integration" and "merging" individual elements into the military, SDC leadership continues to use terms like "local rule" and "rearranging" rather than "dissolving" institutions. This suggests that the Al-Hasakah agreement is a fragile, tactical peace rather than a settled political resolution. The government is using official state visits (like Munich) to absorb Kurdish leaders into the state structure, effectively stripping them of independent diplomatic standing while granting them "civilian" legitimacy within the Syrian fold. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Institutional Professionalization as a Power Tool:

The simultaneous launch of codes of conduct for both religious and media sectors suggests a strategy of "soft" centralization. By framing these measures as "ethics" and "professionalism," the transitional government is attempting to establish boundaries for public discourse without resorting to the overt violence of the previous regime. However, the pushback from independent journalist groups indicates a deep-seated distrust of the Ministry of Information, reflecting a broader societal anxiety that the "New Syria" might be replicating old control mechanisms under a new guise. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Economic Fragility and the "Ramadan Pressure":

The government's admission that prices are "natural" but "purchasing power is low" highlights a dangerous disconnect. The focus on trade deals with Jordan and Iraq suggests an urgent need to flood the market with goods to offset pre-Ramadan inflation. Howev-

er, the reported "liquidity drying" policy by the Central Bank—where old currency is withdrawn faster than new currency is injected—is alienating merchants and causing a shift toward a dollarized black market, potentially undermining the state's economic authority just as it attempts to stabilize. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK

SDF Integration Timeline: Military integration will likely proceed faster than administrative integration. We can expect the "Individual Merging" of fighters into the Syrian Army to face resistance, leading to the creation of special "Regional Brigades" as a compromise. This will likely necessitate a new legislative framework for the Syrian Defense Ministry to accommodate semi-autonomous units in the medium term. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

Legislative Elections: Once the Raqqa and Tabqa seats are filled, pressure will mount for the first session of the People's Council. The first major legislative battle will likely be over the "Permanent Election Law" and the "Political Parties Law." The current reliance on "Higher Committee" decrees is increasingly viewed as insufficient for a permanent democracy. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))

Repatriation Crisis: As Syria pushes to close Al-Hol, tensions with Western nations like Australia and those in Europe will increase. Syria may begin implementing "deportation to third-party" or "international tribunal" legislation if countries continue to refuse their citizens, potentially seeking U.N. backing to force repatriation or funding for long-term detention centers. ([Source](#))

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The transitional period continues to be governed largely by presidential decrees and Higher Committee decisions, with the primary legislative body (the People's Council) yet to hold its full constitutive session. Recent regulatory actions focused on defining the boundaries of professional and religious life.

BILLS & DECREES DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Unified Islamic Discourse Charter:** A regulatory framework launched by the Ministry of Awqaf to standardize religious rhetoric, eliminate sectarian language, and centralize the management of mosques. ([Source](#), [Source](#), [Source](#))
- **Media Professional and Ethical Code of Conduct:** An 82-page document with 10 articles establishing standards for privacy, data protection, and accountability for journalists and content creators. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- **Decree No. 13:** Previously issued by President al-Sharaa to restore and guarantee the rights of the Kurdish component, frequently cited as the basis for the current integration efforts. ([Source](#))
- **Decree 53:** A controversial administrative order linking the General Secretariat for Political Affairs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interpreted by some as a move to restrict independent political party activity. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- **People's Council Election Committee Decision:** Formalized the preliminary lists for sub-committees in Raqqa and Tabqa to expedite provincial representation. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Munich Security Conference Syrian Delegation Presser:** Foreign Minister al-Shaibani emphasized Syrian sovereignty and the success of internal unity efforts. ([Source](#))
- **Higher Election Committee Press Briefing:** Spokesman Nawwar Najma detailed the logistical challenges of Raqqa elections and the rationale for the parliamentary delay. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- **Minister of Information Launch Event:** Akram Ahmed and Ali Eid defended the new Media Code as a tool for public trust, while the Journalists Association held counter-discussions. ([Source](#), [Source](#))
- **Ministry of Economy Briefing:** Deputy Minister Maher al-Hassan addressed pre-Ramadan price spikes and the transition to a competitive market economy. ([Source](#), [Source](#))

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly

annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that en-

able more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.