



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on December 16, 2024

Assad Releases First Statement Following Government Collapse

Following the collapse of his government, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad released a public statement this morning, the first since fleeing to Moscow, Russia, last week. The Syrian Presidency Telegram channel said they published the statement on social media after several failed attempts to release it through media outlets. In the statement, Assad addressed misinformation around the events of the last two weeks, [posting on Telegram](#):



AP Images
Bashar al-Assad

As terrorism spread across Syria and ultimately reached Damascus on the evening of Saturday 7th December 2024, questions arose about the president's fate and whereabouts. This occurred amidst a flood of misinformation and narratives far removed from the truth, aimed at recasting international terrorism as a liberation revolution for Syria. At such a critical juncture in the nation's history, where truth must take precedence, it is essential to address these distortions. Unfortunately, the prevailing circumstances at the time, including a total communication blackout for security reasons, delayed the release of this statement. This does not replace a detailed account of the events that unfolded, which will be provided when the opportunity allows.

Assad was at the Russian-operated Hmeimim Air Base in Latakia, Syria, when Russian leadership requested his evacuation following drone attacks targeting the airbase the day after [Abu Mohammad al-Julani's](#) forces captured Syria's capital city Damascus:

First, my departure from Syria was neither planned nor did it occur during the final hours of the battles, as some have claimed. On the contrary, I remained in Damascus, carrying out my duties until the early hours of Sunday 8th December 2024. As terrorist forces infiltrated Damascus, I moved to Latakia in coordination with our Russian allies to oversee combat



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operations. Upon arrival at the Hmeimim airbase that morning, it became clear that our forces had completely withdrawn from all battle lines and that the last army positions had fallen. As the field situation in the area continued to deteriorate, the Russian military base itself came under intensified attack by drone strikes. With no viable means of leaving the base, Moscow requested that the base's command arrange an immediate evacuation to Russia on the evening of Sunday 8th December. This took place a day after the fall of Damascus, following the collapse of the final military positions and the resulting paralysis of all remaining state institutions.



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