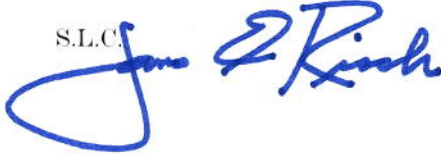


S.L.C. 

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To prohibit any official action to recognize or normalize relations with any Government of Syria that is led by Bashar al-Assad.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To prohibit any official action to recognize or normalize relations with any Government of Syria that is led by Bashar al-Assad.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Assad Regime Anti-
5 Normalization Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATIONS TO THE CAESAR SYRIA CIVILIAN**
7 **PROTECTION ACT.**

8 (a) CAESAR SYRIA CIVILIAN PROTECTION ACT.—
9 Section 7412 of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act
10 of 2019 (title LXXIV of the National Defense Authoriza-

1 tion Act for Fiscal Year 2020; 22 U.S.C. 8791 note) is
2 amended—

3 (1) in subsection (a)—

4 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “the
5 President shall impose” and all that follows
6 through the end of the paragraph and inserting
7 “the President—”

8 “(A) shall impose the sanctions described
9 in subsection (b) with respect to a foreign per-
10 son that the President determines—

11 “(i) knowingly engages, on or after
12 such date of enactment, in an activity de-
13 scribed in paragraph (2);

14 “(ii) is an adult family member of a
15 foreign person described in clause (i), un-
16 less the President determines there is clear
17 and convincing evidence that such adult
18 family member has disassociated them-
19 selves from the foreign person described in
20 such clause and has no history of helping
21 such foreign person conceal assets; or

22 “(iii) is owned or controlled by a for-
23 eign person described in clause (i) or (ii);
24 and

1 “(B) may impose the sanctions described
2 in subsection (b) with respect to a foreign per-
3 son that the President determines knowingly
4 provides, on or after such date of enactment,
5 significant financial, material, or technological
6 support to a foreign person engaging in an ac-
7 tivity described in any of subparagraphs (B)
8 through (H) of paragraph (2);”.

9 (B) in paragraph (2)—

10 (i) in subparagraph (A)—

11 (I) by amending clause (i) to
12 read as follows:

13 “(i) the Government of Syria (includ-
14 ing any entity owned or controlled by the
15 Government of Syria), a senior political
16 figure of the Government of Syria, a mem-
17 ber of the People’s Assembly of Syria, or
18 a senior foreign political figure (as such
19 term is defined in section 101.605 of title
20 31, Code of Federal Regulations) of the
21 Arab Socialist Ba’ath Party of Syria, in-
22 cluding any such senior foreign political
23 figure who is—

24 “(I) a member of the Central
25 Command, Central Committee, or Au-

1 diting and Inspection Committee of
2 such Party; or

3 “(II) a leader of a local branch of
4 such Party;”;

5 (II) in clause (ii), by striking
6 “or” at the end;

7 (III) in clause (iii), by adding
8 “or” after the semicolon; and

9 (IV) by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing:

11 “(iv) Syria Arab Airlines, Cham
12 Wings, or any foreign person owned or
13 controlled by Syria Arab Airlines or Cham
14 Wings;”;

15 (ii) by amending subparagraph (C) to
16 read as follows:

17 “(C) knowingly sells or provides aircraft or
18 spare aircraft parts—

19 “(i) to the Government of Syria; or

20 “(ii) for or on behalf of the Govern-
21 ment of Syria to any foreign person oper-
22 ating in an area directly or indirectly con-
23 trolled by the Government of Syria or for-
24 eign forces associated with the Government
25 of Syria;”;

1 (iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking
2 “or” at the end;

3 (iv) in subparagraph (E)—

4 (I) by striking “construction or
5 engineering services” and inserting
6 “construction, engineering, or com-
7 mercial financial services”; and

8 (II) by striking the period at the
9 end and inserting a semicolon; and

10 (v) by adding at the end the following:

11 “(F) purposefully engages in or directs—

12 “(i) the diversion of goods (including
13 agricultural commodities, food, medicine,
14 and medical devices), or any international
15 humanitarian assistance, intended for the
16 people of Syria; or

17 “(ii) the dealing in proceeds from the
18 sale or resale of such diverted goods or
19 international humanitarian assistance, as
20 the case may be;

21 “(G) knowingly (directly or indirectly) en-
22 gages in or attempts to engage in, the seizure,
23 confiscation, theft, or expropriation for personal
24 gain or political purposes of property, including

1 real property, in Syria or owned by a citizen of
2 Syria;

3 “(H) knowingly (directly or indirectly) en-
4 gages in or attempts to engage in a transaction
5 or transactions for or with such seized, con-
6 fiscated, stolen, or expropriated property de-
7 scribed in subparagraph (G); or

8 “(I) knowingly provides significant finan-
9 cial, material, or technological support to a for-
10 eign person engaging in any activity described
11 in subparagraph (A).”; and

12 (C) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

14 “(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COM-
15 MITTEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional
16 committees’ means—

17 “(i) the Committee on Foreign Rela-
18 tions of the Senate;

19 “(ii) the Committee on Banking,
20 Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

21 “(iii) the Committee on Foreign Af-
22 fairs of the House of Representatives; and

23 “(iv) the Committee on Financial
24 Services of the House of Representatives.

1 “(B) COMMERCIAL FINANCIAL SERV-
2 ICES.—The term ‘commercial financial services’
3 means any transaction between the Government
4 of Syria and a foreign bank or foreign financial
5 institution operating in an area under the con-
6 trol of the Government of Syria that has a valu-
7 ation of more than \$5,000,000.

8 “(C) FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term
9 ‘financial institution’ means a financial institu-
10 tion specified in any of subparagraphs (A)
11 through (K), (M), (N), (P), (R), (T), (Y), or
12 (Z) of section 5312(a)(2) of title 31, United
13 States Code.

14 “(D) SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTION.—The
15 term “‘significant transaction’” includes any
16 natural gas, electricity, or other energy-related
17 transaction.

18 “(E) TRANSACTION.—In making a deter-
19 mination under subparagraph (a)(2)(A), the
20 term ‘transaction’ includes in-kind trans-
21 actions.”; and

22 (2) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(c) CONGRESSIONAL REQUESTS.—Not later than
24 120 days after receiving a request from the chairman and
25 ranking member of 1 of the appropriate congressional

1 committees with respect to whether a foreign person know-
2 ingly engages in an activity described in subsection (a)(2)
3 the President shall—

4 “(1) make the determination specified in sub-
5 section (a)(1) with respect to such foreign person;
6 and

7 “(2) submit, to the chairman and ranking mem-
8 ber who submitted the request, a report with respect
9 to such determination that includes a statement ex-
10 plaining whether the President has imposed or in-
11 tends to impose the sanctions described in sub-
12 section (b) with respect to such foreign person.”.

13 (b) EXTENSION OF SUNSET.—Section 7438 of the
14 Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C.
15 8791 note), is amended by striking “the date that is 5
16 years after the date of the enactment of this Act” and
17 inserting “December 31, 2032”.

18 (c) DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA
19 TRUST FOR DEVELOPMENT.—

20 (1) DEFINED TERM.—In this subsection, the
21 term “appropriate congressional committees”
22 means—

23 (A) the Committee on Armed Services of
24 the Senate;

1 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
2 the Senate;

3 (C) the Committee on Banking, Housing,
4 and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

5 (D) the Committee on Armed Services of
6 the House of Representatives;

7 (E) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
8 the House of Representatives; and

9 (F) the Committee on Financial Services
10 of the House of Representatives.

11 (2) DETERMINATIONS.—Not later than 120
12 days after the enactment of this Act, the President
13 shall—

14 (A) determine whether the nonprofit orga-
15 nization chaired by Asma Al-Assad, the First
16 Lady of Syria, known as the “Syria Trust for
17 Development” meets the criteria for the imposi-
18 tion of sanctions—

19 (i) under section 7412(a) of the Cae-
20 sar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019,
21 as amended by subsection (a);

22 (ii) under Executive Order 13894 (84
23 Fed. Reg. 55851; relating to blocking
24 property and suspending entry of certain

1 persons contributing to the situation in
2 Syria); or

3 (iii) by nature of being owned or con-
4 trolled by a person designated under any
5 executive order or regulation administered
6 by the Office of Foreign Assets Control;
7 and

8 (B) submit to the appropriate congres-
9 sional committees each such determination, in-
10 cluding a justification for the determination.

11 (3) FORM.—The determination made pursuant
12 to paragraph (2)(B) shall be submitted in unclassi-
13 fied form, but the justification specified in such
14 paragraph may be included in a classified annex.
15 The unclassified determination shall be made avail-
16 able on a publicly available website of the Federal
17 government.

18 (d) FINDINGS REGARDING APPLICABILITY WITH RE-
19 SPECT TO SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES, CIAM WINGS AIR-
20 LINES, AND RELATED ENTITIES.—Congress finds the fol-
21 lowing:

22 (1) In 2013, the President identified Syrian
23 Arab Airlines as a blocked instrumentality or con-
24 trolled entity of the Government of Syria and con-
25 currently sanctioned Syrian Arab Airlines pursuant

1 to Executive Order 13224 for acting for or on behalf
2 of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods
3 Force of Iran.

4 (2) In 2016, the President sanctioned Syria-
5 based Cham Wings Airlines pursuant to Executive
6 Order 13582 for having materially assisted, spon-
7 sored, or provided financial, material, or techno-
8 logical support for, or goods or services in support
9 of, the Government of Syria and Syrian Arab Air-
10 lines.

11 (3) Section 7412(a)(2)(A)(iii) of the Caesar
12 Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C.
13 8791 note) mandates the application of sanctions
14 against any foreign person that “knowingly provides
15 significant financial, material, or technological sup-
16 port to, or knowingly engages in a significant trans-
17 action with . . . a foreign person subject to sanc-
18 tions pursuant to the International Emergency Eco-
19 nomic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) with re-
20 spect to Syria or any other provision of law that im-
21 poses sanctions with respect to Syria,” which ap-
22 plies to airport service providers outside of Syria.

23 (e) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this Act, or
24 the application of such provision to any person or cir-
25 cumstance, is found to be unconstitutional, the remainder

1 of this Act, or the application of that provision to other
2 persons or circumstances, shall not be affected.

3 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION OF RECOGNITION OF ASSAD REGIME.**

4 (a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the
5 United States—

6 (1) not to recognize or normalize relations with
7 any Government of Syria that is led by Bashar al-
8 Assad due to the Assad regime's ongoing crimes
9 against the Syrian people, including failure to meet
10 the criteria outlined in section 7431(a) of the Caesar
11 Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C.
12 8791 note);

13 (2) to actively oppose recognition or normaliza-
14 tion of relations by other governments with any Gov-
15 ernment of Syria that is led by Bashar Al-Assad, in-
16 cluding by fully implementing the mandatory pri-
17 mary and secondary sanctions in the Caesar Syria
18 Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (title LXXIV of
19 Public Law 116–92) and Executive Order 13894;
20 and

21 (3) to use the full range of authorities, includ-
22 ing those provided under the Caesar Syria Civilian
23 Protection Act of 2019 and Executive Order 13894,
24 to deter reconstruction activities in areas under the
25 control of Bashar al-Assad.

1 (b) PROHIBITION.—In accordance with subsection
2 (a), no Federal official or employee may take any action,
3 and no Federal funds may be made available, to recognize
4 or otherwise imply, in any manner, United States recogni-
5 tion of Bashar al-Assad or any Government in Syria that
6 is led by Bashar al-Assad.

7 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY STRATEGY TO COUNTER NORMAL-**
8 **IZATION WITH ASSAD REGIME.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
11 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
12 mittees” means—

13 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
14 the Senate;

15 (B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the
16 Senate;

17 (C) the Committee on Banking, Housing,
18 and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

19 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
20 the Senate;

21 (E) the Select Committee on Intelligence
22 of the Senate;

23 (F) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
24 the House of Representatives;

1 (G) the Committee on the Judiciary of the
2 House of Representatives;

3 (H) the Committee on Financial Services
4 of the House of Representatives;

5 (I) the Committee on Appropriations of the
6 House of Representatives; and

7 (J) the Permanent Select Committee on
8 Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

9 (2) COVERED TRANSACTION.—The term “cov-
10 ered transaction” means a transaction, including an
11 investment, grant, contract, or donation (including a
12 loan or other extension of credit) that—

13 (A) is provided by a foreign person located
14 in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt,
15 Jordan, Iraq, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, the
16 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Algeria,
17 Morocco, Libya, or Lebanon; and

18 (B) is received by a person or entity in any
19 area of Syria held by the Assad regime.

20 (b) REPORT AND STRATEGY REQUIRED.—

21 (1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 180 days
22 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and an-
23 nually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary of State,
24 in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury,
25 the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Admin-

1 istration, and the heads of other appropriate Federal
2 departments and agencies, shall submit to the ap-
3 propriate congressional committees a report and
4 strategy to describe and counter actions taken or
5 planned by foreign governments to normalize, en-
6 gage with, or upgrade political, diplomatic, or eco-
7 nomic ties with the regime led by Bashar al-Assad
8 in Syria (referred to in this section as the “Assad
9 regime”).

10 (2) ELEMENTS.—The elements of the report
11 under paragraph (1) shall include—

12 (A) a description of violations of inter-
13 national law and human rights abuses com-
14 mitted by Bashar al-Assad, the Government of
15 the Russian Federation, or the Government of
16 Iran and progress towards justice and account-
17 ability for the Syrian people;

18 (B) a full list of diplomatic meetings at the
19 Ambassador level or above, between the Syrian
20 regime and any representative of the Govern-
21 ments of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates,
22 Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait,
23 the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Algeria,
24 Morocco, Libya, or Lebanon, respectively;

25 (C) a list including an identification of—

1 (i) any single covered transaction ex-
2 ceeding \$500,000; and

3 (ii) any combination of covered trans-
4 actions by the same source that, in aggre-
5 gate, exceed \$500,000 and occur within a
6 single year;

7 (D) for each identified single transaction
8 or aggregate transactions, as the case may be,
9 included in the list described in subparagraph
10 (C), a determination of whether such trans-
11 action subjects any of the parties to the trans-
12 action to sanctions under the Caesar Syria Ci-
13 vilian Protection Act of 2019, as amended by
14 section 2;

15 (E) a description of the steps the United
16 States is taking to actively deter recognition or
17 normalization of relations by other governments
18 with the Assad regime, including specific diplo-
19 matic engagements and use of economic sanc-
20 tions authorized by statutes or implemented
21 through Executive Orders, including—

22 (i) the Caesar Syria Civilian Protec-
23 tion Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note);

1 (ii) the Syria Accountability and Leb-
2 anese Sovereignty Restoration Act (22
3 U.S.C. 2151 note);

4 (iii) the Comprehensive Iran Sanc-
5 tions, Accountability, and Divestment Act
6 of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8501 et seq.);

7 (iv) Executive Order 13894 (84 Fed.
8 Reg. 55851; relating to blocking property
9 and suspending entry of certain persons
10 contributing to the situation in Syria);

11 (v) the Global Magnitsky Human
12 Rights Accountability Act (22 U.S.C.
13 10101 et seq.);

14 (vi) the Countering America's Adver-
15 saries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C.
16 9401 et seq.); and

17 (vii) the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin
18 Designation Act (21 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.);
19 and

20 (F) an assessment of how recognition or
21 normalization of relations by other governments
22 with the Assad regime impacts the national se-
23 curity of the United States, prospects for imple-
24 mentation of the United Nations Security
25 Council Resolution 2254, prospects for justice

1 and accountability for war crimes in Syria, and
2 the benefits derived by the Government of the
3 Russian Federation or the Government of Iran.

4 (c) SCOPE.—The initial report required under sub-
5 section (b) shall address the period beginning on January
6 1, 2021, and ending on the date of the enactment of this
7 Act, and each subsequent report shall address the 1-year
8 period following the conclusion of the scope of the prior
9 report.

10 (d) FORM.—Each report required under subsection
11 (b) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may
12 contain a classified annex. The unclassified section of such
13 a report shall be made publicly available on a website of
14 the United States Federal Government.

15 **SEC. 5. REPORTS ON MANIPULATION OF UNITED NATIONS**
16 **BY ASSAD REGIME IN SYRIA.**

17 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following
19 5 years, the Secretary of State, shall submit a report to
20 the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and
21 the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives describing the manipulation of the United Na-
23 tions by the regime led by Bashar al-Assad in Syria (re-
24 ferred to in this section as the “Assad regime”), includ-
25 ing—

1 (1) a description of conditions, both explicit and
2 implicit, set by the Assad regime with respect to
3 United Nations operations in Syria including with
4 respect to implementing partners, hiring practices,
5 allocation of grants and contracts, and procurement
6 of goods and services;

7 (2) a description of the extent to which the
8 United Nations has rejected or otherwise opposed
9 any of the conditions described in paragraph (1);

10 (3) an identification of officials or employees of
11 the United Nations (including funds, programs and
12 specialized agencies of the United Nations) with ties
13 to the Assad regime, including family ties, or per-
14 sons designated for sanctions by United Nations
15 donor countries;

16 (4) a full account of access restrictions imposed
17 by the Assad regime and the overall impact on the
18 ability of the United Nations to deliver international
19 assistance to target beneficiaries in areas outside re-
20 gime control;

21 (5) a description of ways in which United Na-
22 tions aid improperly benefits the Assad regime and
23 its associates in defiance of basic humanitarian prin-
24 ciples;

1 (6) a description of the due diligence mecha-
2 nisms and vetting procedures in place to ensure enti-
3 ties contracted by the United Nations to ensure
4 goods, supplies, or services provided to Syria do not
5 have links to the Assad regime, known human rights
6 abusers, or persons designated for sanctions by
7 United Nations donor countries;

8 (7) an identification of entities affiliated with
9 the Assad regime, including the Syria Trust for De-
10 velopment and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, for-
11 eign government ministries, and private corporations
12 owned or controlled directly or indirectly by the
13 Assad regime, that have received United Nations
14 funding, contracts, or grants or have otherwise en-
15 tered into a formalized partnership with the United
16 Nations;

17 (8) an assessment of how the Assad regime sets
18 arbitrary or punitive exchange rates to extract fund-
19 ing from the United Nations, as well as the total
20 amount extracted by such means;

21 (9) an assessment of the degree to which the
22 various forms of manipulation described in this sec-
23 tion has resulted in compromises of the humani-
24 tarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impar-
25 tiality, and independence of the United Nations; and

1 (10) a strategy to reduce the ability of the
2 Assad regime to manipulate or otherwise influence
3 the United Nations and other aid operations in
4 Syria and ensure United States and international
5 aid is delivered in a neutral and impartial manner
6 consistent with basic humanitarian principles.