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by Bashar al-Assad
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Statement by President Bashar al-Assad on the Circumstances Leading to his Departure from Syria
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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 occurend amist 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. Unfortunatl, 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.

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 Lattakia in coordination with our Russian allies to oversee combat

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 Upon arrival at the Hmeimim airbase that morning, it became clear that our forces had completely withdrawn from all battle lines and that the last army positions had fallen.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 8ª 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.

At no point during these events did I consider stepping down or seeking refuge, nor was such a proposal made by any individual or party. The only course of action was to continue fighting against the terrorist onslaught.

I reaffirm that the person who, from the very first day of the war, refused to barter the salvation of his nation for personal gain, or to compromise his people in exchange for numerous offers and enticements is the same person who stood alongside the officers and soldiers of the army on the front lines, just meters from terrorists in the most dangerous and intense battlefields. He is the same person who, during the darkest years of the war, did not leave but remained with his family alongside his people, confronting terrorism under bombardment and the recurring threats of terrorist incursions into the capital over fourteen years of war. Furthermore, the person who has never abandoned the resistance in Palestine and Lebanon, nor betrayed his allies who stood by him, cannot possibly be the same person who would forsake his own people or betray the army and nation to which he belongs.

I have never sought positions for personal gain but have always considered myself as a custodian of a national project, supported by the faith of the Syrian people, who believed in its vision. I have carried an unwavering conviction in their will and ability to protect the state, defend its institutions, and uphold their choices to the very last moment.

When the state falls into the hands of terrorism and the ability to make a meaningful contribution is lost, any position becomes void of purpose, rendering its occupation meaningless. This does not, in any way, diminish my profound sense of belonging to Syria and her people - a bond that remains unshaken by any position or circumstance. It is a belonging filled with hope that Syria will once again be free and independent.

Bashar al-Assad