

**Question for written answer E-002912/2024  
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign  
Affairs and Security Policy**

Rule 144

**Marieke Ehlers (PFE)**

**Subject:** The possible return of European Islamist fighters following the opening of Syrian prisons by HTS rebels

Syrian rebels, led by the group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), announced on Sunday 8 December 2024 that they have taken control of Sednaya prison in Damascus and have released all prisoners<sup>1</sup>.

The released prisoners include members of Islamist militant groups such as Al-Qaeda and IS. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Sednaya prison has been one of the main detention centres for IS prisoners. The prisoners there were not only Syrian nationals; some most likely also have EU nationality.

1. Is the Commission aware of the identity of EU citizens who left for Syria during the Syrian civil war and have not returned to date, or whose deaths have not yet been confirmed?
2. What measures will the Commission and Frontex take to ensure that those released from Syrian prisons who fought in the civil war and hold European citizenship will be denied entry to EU territory?

Submitted: 12.12.2024

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/video/20241209-syria-prisoners-freed-from-infamous-sednaya-jail>.