

The Right Solution to the Economic Crisis in Syria: An Analytical View of the Reality and the Islamic Alternative

(Translated)

Al-Rayah Newspaper - Issue 600 - 20/05/2026

By: Ustadh Ahmed Al-Qasas *

The economic crisis in Syria today appears acute and painful for a large number of its people, who are suffering under the weight of poverty, high taxes, and the erosion of purchasing power. With the increasing pace of popular protests demanding radical solutions, urgent and crucial questions arise about the nature of this crisis: Is it an inevitable consequence for a country that has just emerged from a devastating fourteen-year war? Or is the problem far deeper, residing in the systematic structure of state administration and the distribution of its wealth?

This article is an urgent reflection in which there is an attempt to deconstruct the prevailing narratives that justify failure, and to remind those who have forgotten the existence of an economic system in Islam that this system is the radical solution to the economic problem.

The Myth of Resource Scarcity: Syria's True Wealth

The current political discourse tends to justify the escalating crisis by citing a lack of basic resources! However, the geographical and economic reality of present-day Syria proves the exact opposite. Syria does not suffer from a lack of resources necessary to build a strong, independent, and self-sufficient economy. It possesses ample energy resources, particularly oil and gas, especially after regaining control of the eastern regions.

Furthermore, it has enormous untapped potential in alternative energy sources, such as solar power, which is abundant in the desert regions. In addition, there is a clear abundance of raw materials essential for industry, and fertile agricultural land that ensures domestic food security, and opens the door to exports to neighboring countries. And we must not forget the most important asset: the intellectual capital, scientific expertise, and skilled workforce of the people of Syria. All these factors combined confirm beyond any doubt that the real problem in Syria is not a scarcity of resources, but instead the absence of a just economic system capable of effectively managing these resources and distributing them equitably among the people.

The Trap of Replicating Capitalist and Subscription Models

Some parties have long promoted the necessity of replicating international economic models, such as China's, or regional models, such as those of the Gulf States, or the Turkish model, as a lifeline for the Syrian crisis. However, upon closer examination, we find that these models suffer from deep structural flaws incompatible with a genuine and equitable development project.

As for China, despite its massive production and global exports, it builds its export success at the expense of millions of toiling people living in abject poverty to ensure that labor remains extremely cheap. The Gulf states, on the other hand, have subscription, consumer-based economies entirely dependent on the flow of oil revenues. Should this resource run dry, this entire system will collapse, as happened with Venezuela, which possesses the world's largest oil reserves, yet suffers from abject poverty today due to sanctions and the turmoil of its economic system. Even the Turkish model, despite its dynamic initial development, has seen its citizens groaning under the weight of inflation, poverty, and the difficulty of securing housing for the majority of Turks, like any capitalist economy that concentrates wealth in the hands of a few. A successful economy is not measured by the volume of production, but instead by its actual success in distributing wealth, and securing the basic needs of every individual, while allowing everyone the opportunity to fulfill their luxuries, according to their desires and capabilities, in a way that preserves the desired standard of living for society.

The Dangers of Foreign Dependence and Privatizing the Resources of the Ummah

The greatest predicament facing the current Syrian administration is its attempt to blindly integrate into the global capitalist economy, offering the country up for international projects to satisfy American demands and to become part of Vision 2030. This danger is clearly manifested in the move to enact laws that would legalize granting oil extraction concessions to foreign companies, and allow foreigners to own and invest in agricultural land. This approach amounts to nothing less than the systematic plundering of the wealth of the country by foreign parties, transforming the people of Syria and their capabilities into mere laborers and workers for foreign investors.

True independence requires building a self-sufficient economy with a comprehensive economic cycle capable of withstanding any foreign blockade, ensuring the state is not held hostage to foreign will. This aligns with the principle established by the verse, ﴿وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ﴾ **“And never will Allah grant the disbelievers a way of authority over the believers.”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa:141]. History provides a lesson: during the Great Depression of 1930, only those states that were not integral to the global capitalist economic order survived.

Shariah State Treasury Revenues vs. Unjust Tax Collection

Amidst this confusion, the effective solution, the Islamic economic system, is deliberately ignored. This system possesses a comprehensive vision for addressing the imbalance. The golden rule of this system is preventing the monopolization and concentration of wealth, as the Quran states, ﴿كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ﴾ **“So that it will not be a perpetual distribution among the rich from among you.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Hashr: 7]. This divine system fundamentally rejects the arbitrary tax policies practiced today. Taxes imposed on those with limited incomes and the poor, value-added tax, and customs duties are considered, according to Islamic Shariah, to be extortion and theft, forbidden by Islamic Shariah. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, «لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ صَاحِبُ مَكْسٍ» **“The one who collects tax will not enter Paradise.”**

Furthermore, the state's practice of charging exorbitant prices for basic services like electricity and water completely contradicts the Islamic legal classification of these resources as public property belonging to all citizens, based on the hadith, «النَّاسُ شُرَكَاءُ فِي ثَلَاثٍ: الْمَاءِ وَالْكَلْبِ وَالنَّارِ» **“People are partners in three things: water, pasture, and fire.”**

In contrast, the revenues of the state treasury (بيت المال bayt ul-mal) in Islam rely on sound and equitable legitimate sources, such as Zakat, which is levied on wealthy Muslims and distributed to its designated recipients, foremost among them the poor. In addition, there are the enormous revenues generated from public resources such as oil and mines, which should be invested directly for the benefit of the Ummah to finance its needs, not granted as concessions to foreign companies. In the event of an unforeseen deficit arising from insufficient Shariah stipulated permanent revenues, temporary taxation is levied exclusively on wealthy, capable Muslims, and does not touch the pockets of the poor or those with limited incomes in any way.

In conclusion, the economic crisis plaguing Syria is not merely a temporary symptom, but rather a fundamentally political and systemic crisis stemming from foreign dependency. The authorities' insistence on disregarding the Islamic economic system, whether due to inherent ignorance or the execution of political deals with global powers to gain access to the international market, is the root cause of the people's continued suffering and deepening poverty.

The policy of impoverishing nations is an age-old colonialist tool used to control their political decisions and hijack their will. There is no way out of this tunnel and escape from this humiliating dependency except through a genuine societal awareness that insistently demands the implementation of the integrated divine economic system that guarantees justice in the distribution of wealth, protects the Ummah's resources, and achieves its actual independence far from the grinding gears of capitalism and its savage mechanisms.

*** Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir**