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WEEKLY CONFLICT SUMMARY | 24-30 JUNE 2019

WHOLE OF SYRIA SUMMARY

- **NORTHWEST** | Government of Syria (GoS) forces and Hayyat Tahrir Ash-Sham (HTS)-dominated group frontlines remained static in the Idleb enclave this week. Turkish military forces shelled government areas in response to an attack on a Turkish military observation post, while the US conducted a missile attack against a Huras al Din site in western Aleppo governorate.
- **SOUTH & CENTRAL** | Low-level attacks against government-aligned personnel in the central and southern areas of the country continued, while an improvised explosive device (IED) attack occurred in the capital.
- **NORTHEAST** | Despite ongoing Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) security operations in northeast this week, nine IED and small arms fire attacks against military forces along the Euphrates River Valley were recorded.

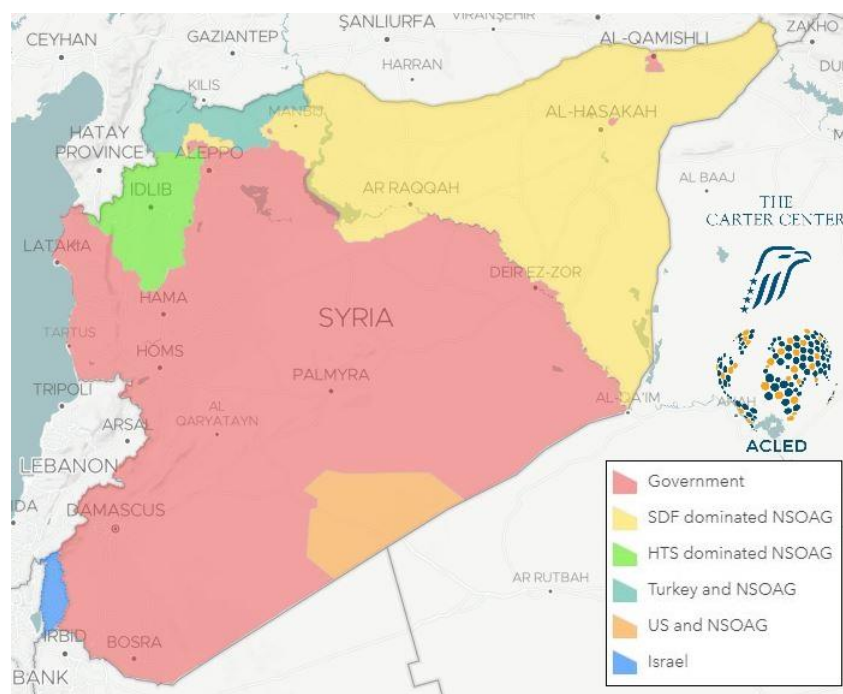


Figure 1: Dominant Actors' Area of Control and Influence in Syria as of 30 June 2019. NSOAG stands for Non-state Organized Armed Groups. For more explanation on our mapping, please see the footnote on page 2.

NORTHWEST SYRIA

Hayyat Tahrir ash Sham and several other opposition groups, including Jaish al Izza, and the National Liberation Front (NLF), continued to hold the Tal Mallah area despite [several](#) government attempts to recapture it this week. Elsewhere, government forces targeted areas in the vicinity of Huwayz, Kafr Nabuda and Hammamyat towns, where frontlines remained static for the third consecutive week (Figure 2).

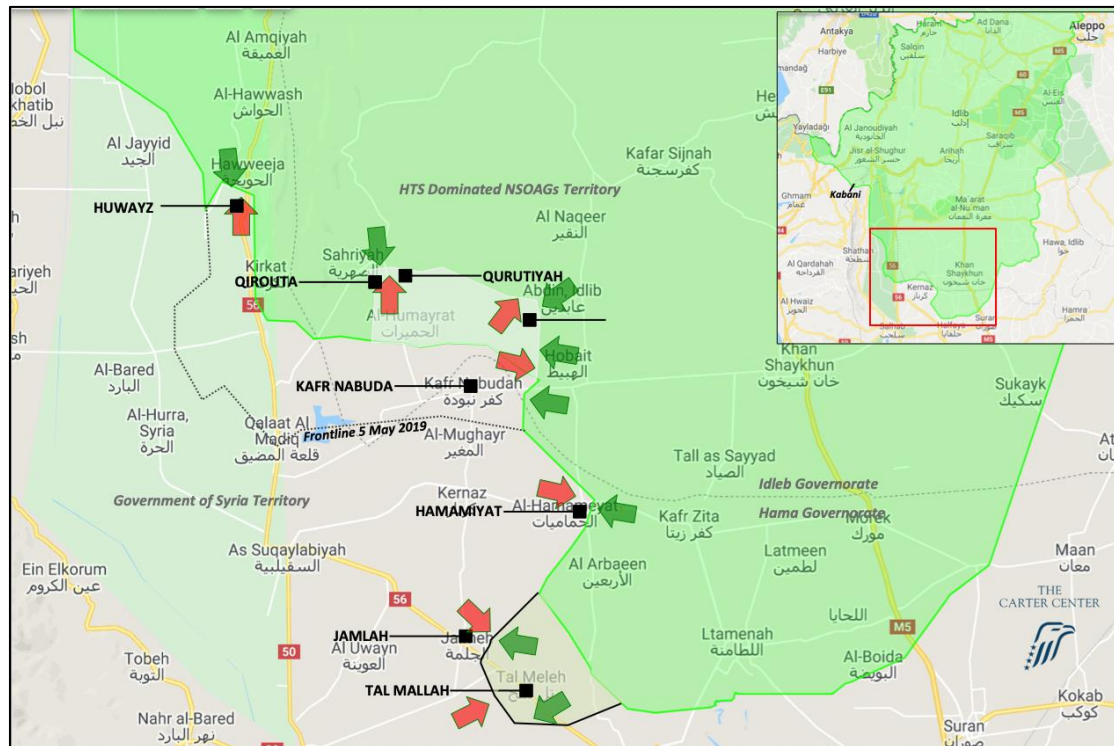


Figure 2: Current Frontlines in the northwest of Syria as of 30 June 2019.

Conflict levels remained elevated, with 273 events reported this week in the Idlib de-escalation zone, resulting in casualties from both sides being recorded. According to pro-government [sources](#), 25 government casualties were reported in an attack in Jibeen near Tal Mallah on 28 June. Pro-opposition sources also [reported](#) small numbers of desertions of government troops from the Hama front.

Elsewhere, a Turkish soldier stationed at a Turkish military observation post on Jebal Shashabo in southwest Idlib was killed [during](#) a government bombardment on the nearby Sheir Maghir area on 27 June. The bombardment prompted a response by Turkish artillery, who targeted government positions in northern

¹ Figure 1 denotes dominant actors' control and influence. Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and Iraqi militias maintain a presence in Syrian government-dominated territory. Non-state organized armed groups (NSOAG), including the Kurdish dominated, US backed SDF and a variety of other groups operate in areas not under Syrian government control. The NSOAG labeled area along the border with Iraq and Jordan is a 55km de-confliction zone, established by the US-led coalition that also includes a number of aligned local armed groups. Data collected is by the publicly available project ACLED.

Hama, as well as Ankara [summoning](#) the Russian ambassador to discuss the event. Despite the seriousness of the event, the same observation post was struck by government shelling two days later, though no casualties were recorded.

As in previous weeks, troop movements from both sides were reported arriving to the Kafr Nabuda/Tir Mallah fronts. On the government side, after last week's [relocation](#) to Kafr Nabuda of the 42nd Brigade of the 4th Division from Kabani town in Latakia governorate,² additional government forces [arrived](#) to nearby Bredeij town on 26 June. At the end of the reporting period, a contingent of National Defense Forces (NDF) [arrived](#) in areas east of Kafr Nabuda and Tal Sakher.

On the other side, several large convoys of Turkish backed National Liberation Front (NLF) forces were also [reported](#) moving to northern Hama this week, in [addition](#) to Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) forces.

Inside the enclave, a pause in aerial activity was [reported](#) by pro government sources for 24 hours on 28 June due to the use of a ground to air missile against a Syrian jet over Idleb a day prior. However, nine aerial bombardments were recorded in Kafr Nobol, Abu Raidi, Latmin, Murak, Kabani, Hazarin, Maraat al Numan, Kafr Uma and Sheikh Mustafa.

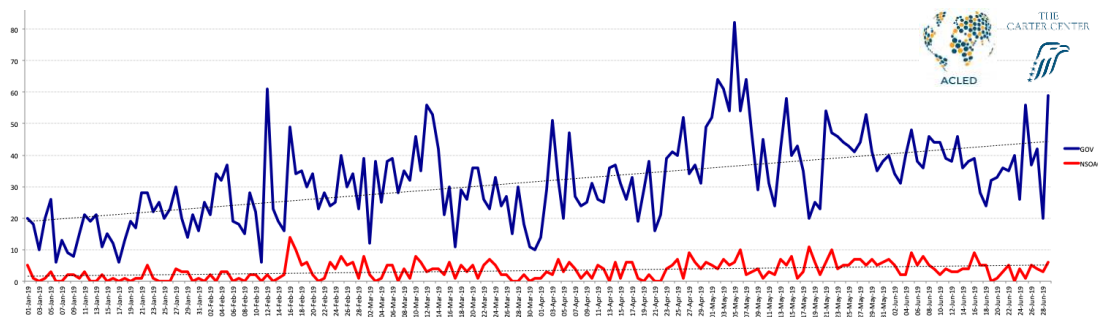


Figure 3: Government and NSOAG (including HTS) Conflict Activity in northwest Syria May to June 2019.

Away from frontlines, nine improvised explosive device (IED) attacks were also recorded within the enclave. Devices detonated in Idleb City (x3), Saraqab (x2), Kafrenwan, Teftnaz, Atareb, Zardana and Mashehad, with all but two targeting HTS and other opposition group vehicles.³ This week's activity continues a trend of such attacks in the past year (Figure 4).

² Itself the site of intense attempts by government forces to retake it in the past month

³ National Liberation Front and Jaish Ahrar.

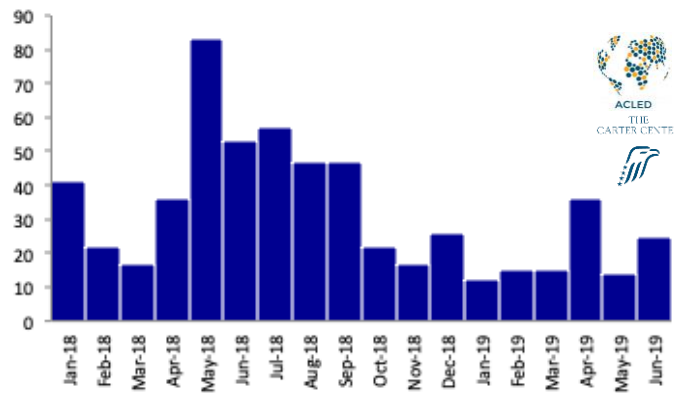


Figure 4: Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Activity in Northwest Syria 2018 - 2019

Outside of the Idlib enclave, government-dominated areas continue to be affected by the violence from inside the pocket. At least five shellings were recorded on Muhradah, Fawru, Tal Salhab, Braideej and Karnaz towns, while [Liwa Fatah](#) and [Huras al Din](#) conducted attacks against fortified government positions in Huwayz and Ashtan. An additional seven settlements have been impacted by HTS and other groups' shelling [according](#) to the Russia Center for Reconciliation of Conflicting Sides.⁴ As has been typical in recent months, Hmemeim Airbase was also [targeted](#) with weaponized drones.

A missile attack (either an [airstrike](#) or [cruise missile](#)) was also recorded against a Huras al Din site in the al-Muhandiseen area of western Aleppo governorate on 30 June. US Central Command later [claimed](#) the attack against the Al Qaeda linked group saying that the group is "plotting external attacks threatening US citizens" partners and civilians. Pro-government sources [reported](#) that 2 Algerians, 1 Tunisian and 1 Egyptian were killed. It was the first recorded US action in Idlib since March 2017.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL SYRIA

Apart from the low-level attacks against government-aligned personnel in southern Syria, at least three small arms fire attack were reported in Jassim, Eastern Karak and Da'el this week. ISIS activity continued in central areas of the country. At least two ambushes against government patrols were recorded in the Tadmor desert, and in the vicinity of [Sokhneh](#) town on 28 and 29 June. Such activity continues despite the GoS sending re-enforcements to the area throughout the year, most recently this [week](#). (Figure 5).

⁴ Sandran, Qinsibba, Kermel, Mammukhiyah in Latakia governorate; al-Jeid in Hama governorate; al-Wiara in Idlib governorate and Aleppo's northwestern suburb (3 times).

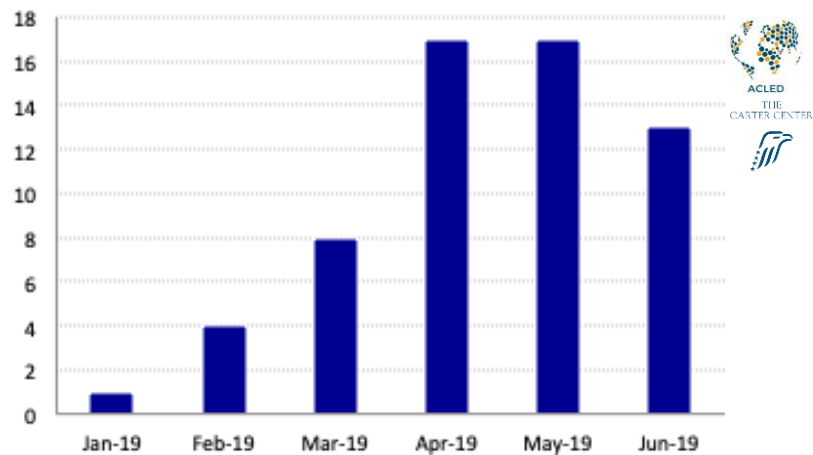


Figure 5: ISIS attacks against Government personnel in Homs, Deir Ez Zor and Raqqa Governorates 2019.

In the west of the capital, an IED detonation occurred on the western end of the Mezzeh Highway on 27 June. The device was planted on a car and injured two civilians [according](#) to local news. This is now the seventh IED attack to occur in the capital in 2019. Five of the seven attacks have occurred since 15 April and come after no such activity in 2018 (Figure 6).

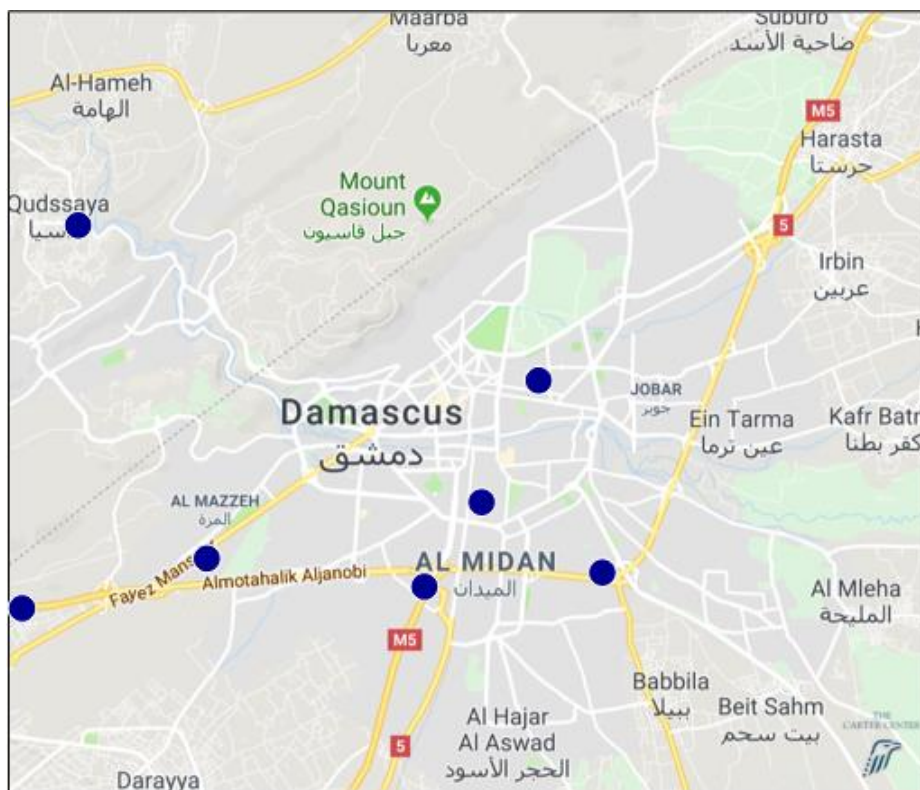


Figure 6: IED activity in Damascus 2019 (approximate locations).

NORTHEAST SYRIA

The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and its allies carried out several security operations this week. At least six raids were recorded in Ar Raqqa, Abu Hamam, Gharanij, Hajin (x2), Tayyana and Abul Nitel against alleged ISIS members. At least 23 people were arrested.

However, despite ongoing security operations that began in May, IED and small arms attacks against military actors in the Euphrates River Valley continue to be reported, with at least nine events recorded in Shiheil, Jadid Bakkara, Thiban, Kasra, Saalu, Raqqa City (x2), Hamrat Balasim and Shadadah.

In a break from previous reporting, only one US-led coalition event was recorded this week when a coalition aircraft conducted a sortie in Atalah village in southern Hassakeh Governorate.