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WEEKLY CONFLICT SUMMARY | 12 - 18 July 2021

SYRIA SUMMARY

- Fighting between the Government of Syria (GoS) armed forces and armed opposition groups continue as civilians are displaced by the violence.
- A GoS military official threatens to destroy the Omari Mosque as the siege continues in Dara'a city.
- U.S. armed forces and the predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces continue anti-ISIS operations in northeast Syria.

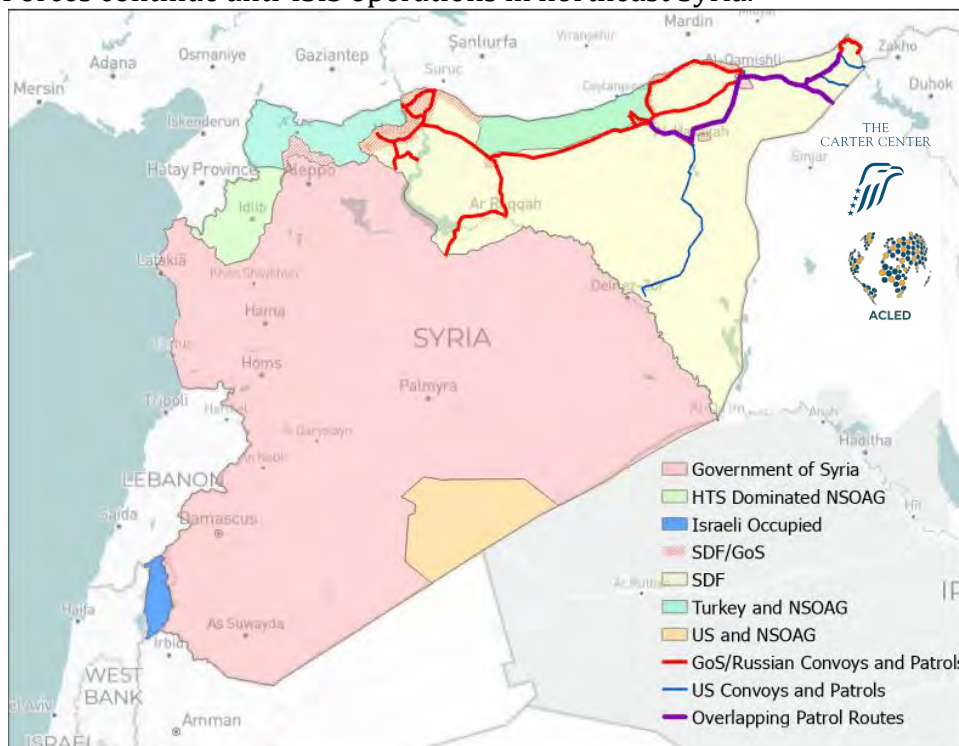


Figure 1: Dominant actors' area of control and influence in Syria as of 18 July 2021. NSOAG stands for Non-state Organized Armed Groups. Also, please see footnote 1.

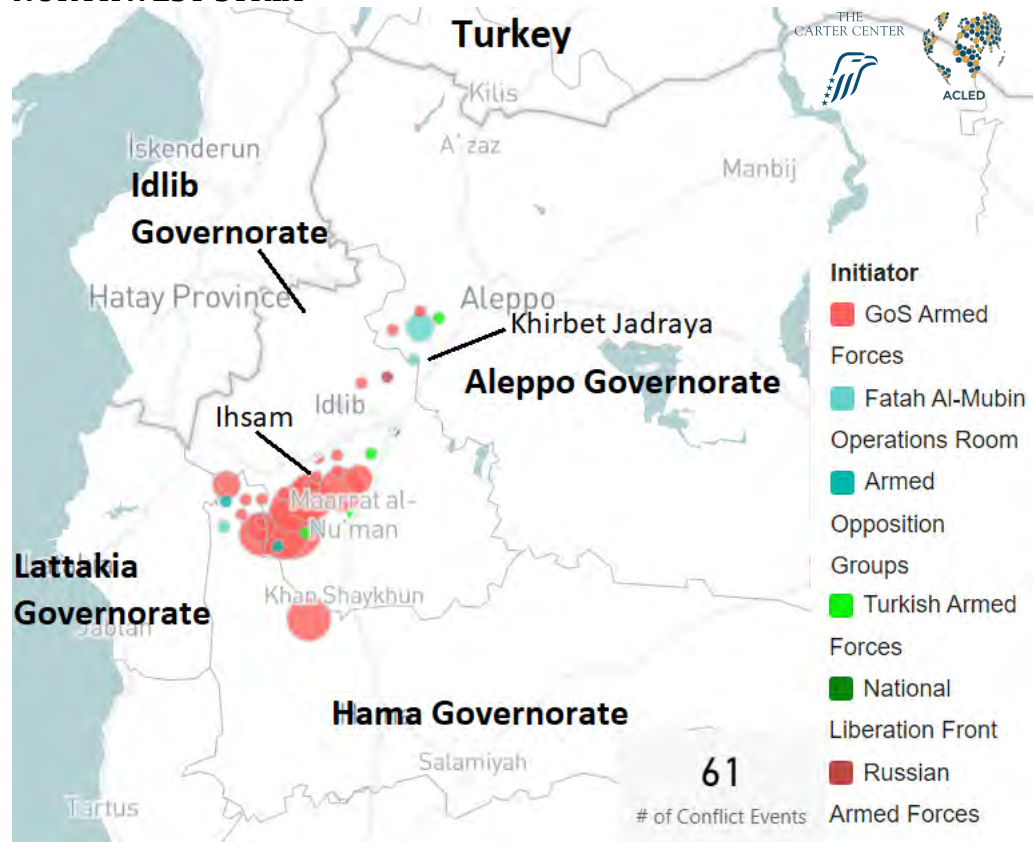
NORTHWEST SYRIA¹

Figure 2: Conflict between GoS armed forces and their allies on the one side and armed opposition groups and their allies on the other between 12-18 July 2021. Largest bubble represents 5 conflict events. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

Conflict in Northwest Syria

Violence continued in northwest Syria. Fighting between Government of Syria (GoS) armed forces and their allies on the one side and armed opposition groups on the other side has been concentrated in the frontline areas near Jabal al-Zawiyah, Idlib Governorate. In recent weeks, violence has escalated along the frontlines of northwest Syria, with both Russia and Turkey taking a more active role in the fighting.

12 July

GoS armed forces shelled the Jabal al-Zawiyah area, Idlib Governorate, reportedly killing 2 Turkish-backed opposition National Liberation Front fighters.²

¹ Figure 1 depicts areas of the dominant actors' control and influence. While "control" is a relative term in a complex, dynamic conflict, territorial control is defined as an entity having power over use of force as well as civil/administrative functions in an area. Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah maintain a presence in Syrian government-controlled territory. Non-state organized armed groups (NSOAG), including the Kurdish-dominated SDF and Turkish-backed opposition groups operate in areas not under GoS control. The area along the junction of the Syrian 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. Patrols are also depicted in the map to show the presence of actors that may have influence in an area. This is particularly relevant as US and Russian forces regularly patrol towns and routes in the northeast. While they do not control local administration or local forces, there is an assumption of a high degree of coordination with local de facto authorities. Data collected is by the publicly available project [ACLED](#).

² <https://alwatan.sy/archives/265623>

14 July

The Fatah Al-Mubin Operations Room³ shelled GoS armed forces in Khirbet Jadraya and Miznaz, western Aleppo Governorate.⁴

18 July

GoS armed forces shelling killed six civilians in Ihsam, Idlib Governorate.⁵ The increase of shelling along the frontlines have reportedly caused the wave of displacement in Idlib Governorate.⁶

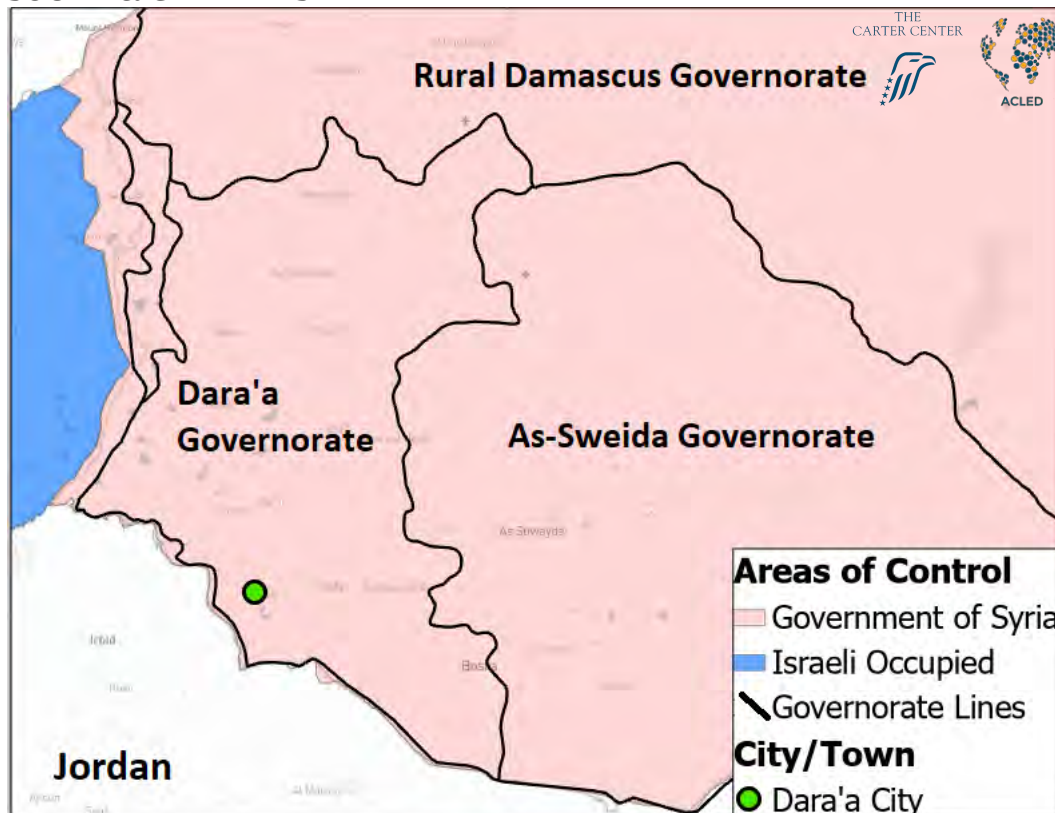
SOUTH & CENTRAL SYRIA

Figure 3: Dara'a city in Dara'a Governorate. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

Siege of Dara'a City

In Dara'a and Quneitra Governorates, some former opposition commanders gained prominence by leading influential political and paramilitary groups, occasionally leading to tensions with GoS armed forces and officials. This tension is exacerbated by attacks carried out by unidentified perpetrators targeting GoS officers and former opposition commanders. Since 24 June, GoS and Russian armed forces have sieged Dara'a al-Balad, a suburb in Dara'a city.

12 July

³ A coalition of armed opposition groups, including Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, The Turkish-backed opposition National Liberation Front, and Jaysh al-Izza.

⁴ <https://npasyria.com/en/62292/>

⁵ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/493621>

⁶ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/493677>

Russian negotiators met with some members of the Central Committee of Dara'a and inspected conditions in Dara'a al-Balad.⁷

16 July

A Syrian Red Crescent aid convoy entered Dara'a al-Balad for the first time since the siege began.⁸

17 July

The head of GoS Military Security for southern Syria, Brigadier General Louay Al-Ali threatened to destroy the famous Omari Mosque if the Central Committee did not turn in weapons and wanted individuals.⁹ The next day, the Central Committee condemned Ali's remarks and called for the end to the siege.¹⁰

NORTHEAST SYRIA

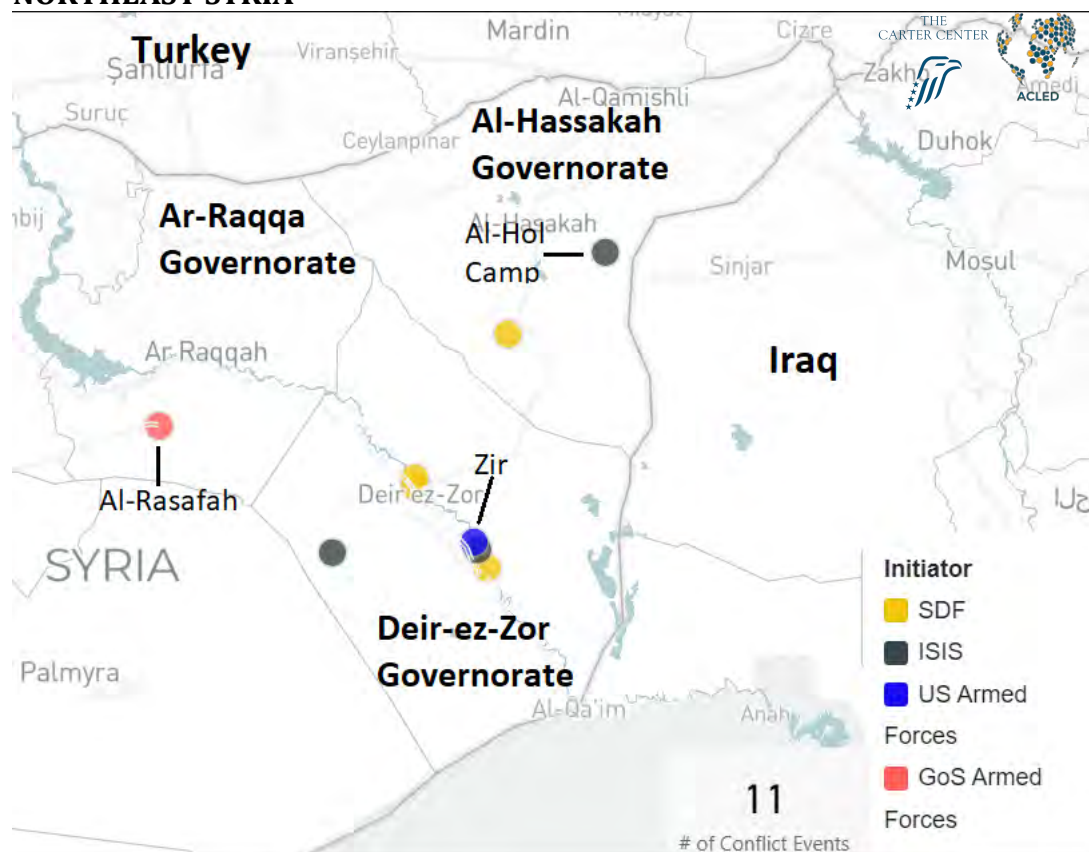


Figure 4: Reported conflict events involving ISIS in northeast Syria between 12-18 July 2021. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

The Battle Against ISIS

ISIS continued to be active in the Badia desert region of central and northeast Syria. ISIS has launched high-casualty attacks against the GoS armed forces and its allies. Multiple operations against ISIS have had limited success. Operations by the

⁷ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/492635>, <https://www.horanfree.com/?p=9383>

⁸ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/493417>

⁹ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/493539>

¹⁰ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/493705>

predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have exacerbated tensions with Arab tribes in territories under their control.

12 July

Suspected ISIS fighters killed an Iraqi refugee in Al-Hol camp, Al-Hassakah Governorate.¹¹

13 July

GoS armed forces and GoS-backed militias clashed with ISIS near Al-Rasafah, southwest Ar-Raqqa Governorate. 6 GoS soldiers were killed in the clashes.¹²

15 July

U.S. armed forces and the SDF arrested two ISIS fighters, including an ISIS leader in Zir, Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.¹³

For earlier weekly conflict summaries, please click [here](#). For an interactive map of historical areas of control in Syria, please click [here](#).

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¹¹ <https://npasyria.com/en/62189/>

¹² <https://alwatan.sy/archives/266010>

¹³ <https://npasyria.com/en/62393/>