

Syria Situation Report: August 28 – September 12, 2018

1 Sep 4: Israeli Forces Conduct Airstrikes on Iranian Sites in Hama, Tartus Provinces: The Israeli Air Force reportedly conducted airstrikes targeting pro-regime positions in Masyaf in western Hama province and Wadi al-Uyun in eastern Tartus province. The strikes targeted Iranian-run military positions, killing at least one person. Masyaf is the location of a research center associated with Syria's chemical weapons program, while Israeli media reported that Iran was constructing a surface-to-surface missile facility in Wadi Jahannam, which is approximately 13 miles northwest of Wadi al-Uyun. A large explosion hit Khalkhala Airbase in northern Suwayda province later in the evening. It is unclear whether this explosion was related to the earlier strikes.

2 Sep 8: Russia Drills Amphibious Landings on the Syrian Coast: Russian Marine Special Forces reportedly used helicopters, fast-attack crafts and armored, amphibious vehicles to establish a beachhead on the shores of Latakia province while under Russian air cover. Russia conducted the amphibious landing drill following the conclusion of large-scale Russian naval exercises in the eastern Mediterranean from September 1 - 5.

3 Sep 8 - 10: Idlib Militants Attack Regime Airbases in Response to Increased Pro-Regime Air and Shelling Campaign: Unknown opposition militants launched Grad rockets at pro-regime helicopter and artillery positions in northern Hama province, including the Hama Military Airport. The strikes came in response to a dramatic increase in pro-regime barrel bomb attacks, and continued shelling along western front lines. Russian forces conducted airstrikes near the towns of Kafr Zeita, a-Latameh and Khan Sheikhoun. The United Nations estimated that 30,000 civilians have fled north as a result of the bombardment, and that this number could increase to 800,000 should pro-regime forces launch a ground offensive.

4 Sep 4 - 11: Pro-Regime Forces Continue to Set Conditions for a Potential Idlib Offensive: The Russian Air Force resumed airstrikes in Idlib province on September 4. Dozens of Russian airstrikes between September 4 - 11 were concentrated on western and southern Idlib province as well as northern Hama province. Syrian forces launched a series of barrel bomb attacks along the front line during the same period. Pro-regime forces also dramatically increased shelling attacks on frontline towns and villages.

5 Aug 31 – Sep 7: Coordinated Demonstrations Take Place Across Rebel-Held Northwest: Large demonstrations against a pro-regime offensive in northern Syria were held in dozens of towns across Idlib and western Aleppo provinces. The first set of protests took place on August 31, with the largest demonstration in National Liberation Forces (NLF)-held Maarat a-Numan. A second set of much larger protests took place on September

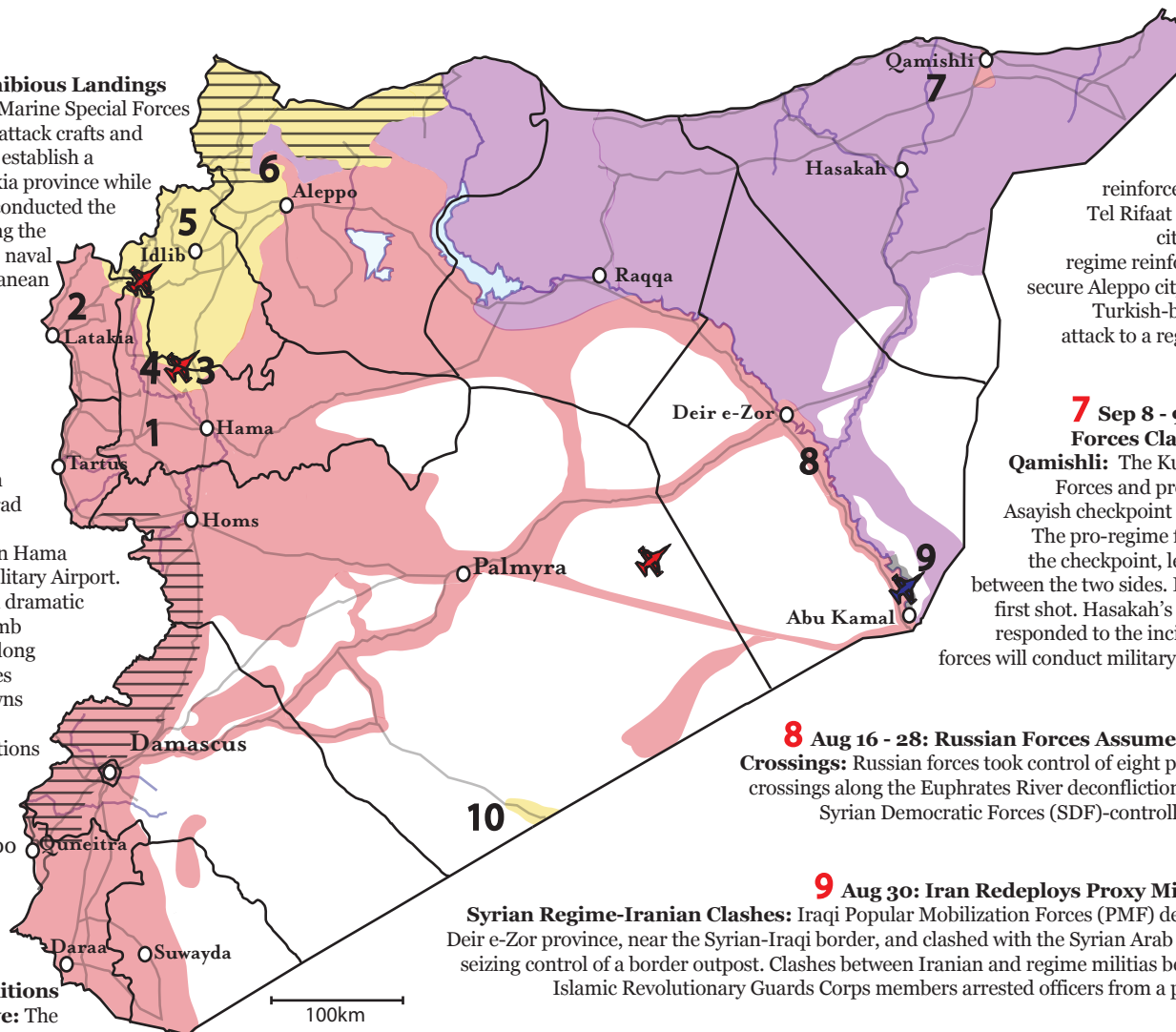
6 Sep 9 - 10: Pro-Regime Reinforcements Deploy to Front Lines with Turkish-protected Euphrates Shield Zone: Unspecified pro-regime reinforcements deployed to the towns of Tel Rifaat and Deir Jamal north of Aleppo city on September 9 - 10. The pro-regime reinforcements are likely intended to secure Aleppo city's northern countryside in case Turkish-backed groups launch a counter-attack to a regime offensive in the northwest.

7 Sep 8 - 9: Kurdish and Pro-Regime Forces Clash amid Rising Tensions in Qamishli: The Kurdish Asayish Internal Security Forces and pro-regime forces clashed near an Asayish checkpoint in Qamishli, Hasakah province. The pro-regime forces reportedly did not stop at the checkpoint, leading to a verbal confrontation between the two sides. It is unclear which side fired the first shot. Hasakah's Syrian regime-backed governor responded to the incident by stating that pro-regime forces will conduct military operations against the Asayish.

8 Aug 16 - 28: Russian Forces Assume Control of Euphrates River Crossings: Russian forces took control of eight pro-regime checkpoints and river crossings along the Euphrates River deconfliction line that separates regime- and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-controlled zones in Deir e-Zor province.

9 Aug 30: Iran Redeploys Proxy Militias to Eastern Syria amid Syrian Regime-Iranian Clashes: Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) deployed to Abu Kamal in eastern Deir e-Zor province, near the Syrian-Iraqi border, and clashed with the Syrian Arab Army's (SAA) 4th Division after seizing control of a border outpost. Clashes between Iranian and regime militias began in Abu Kamal after Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps members arrested officers from a pro-regime militia on August 18.

10 Sep 6 - 11: US Conducts Show of Force near Jordanian-Syrian-Iraqi Border in Response to Russian Warnings: The US-led anti-Islamic State (IS) coalition and US-backed Maghawir a-Thawra rebels conducted live-fire exercises near the US base at a-Tanf in Homs province. Russian officials reportedly warned the US that Russian and other pro-regime forces are ready to launch an attack on militants near a-Tanf.



Areas of Control*

- Pro-Regime Forces
- The Islamic State
- Kurdish Forces
- Opposition Forces
- Mixed Control
- Hay'at Tahrir a-Sham
*Formerly Jabhat a-Nusra

Airstrikes

- ✈ Pro-Regime
- ✈ U.S. / Coalition



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*THIS MAP DOES NOT DEPICT AL-QAEDA CONTROL IN WESTERN SYRIA. ISW IS DEVELOPING A NEW CONTROL OF TERRAIN MAP THAT WILL ASSESS THE FULL EXTENT OF AL-QAEDA PRESENCE IN SYRIA.

*Control of Terrain Accurate as of 13 SEP 2018