

# Syria Situation Report: April 23 - 29, 2016

**1 April 26: U.S. to deploy advanced rocket system along Turkish-Syrian border.** The U.S. will deploy an advanced High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) to the Syrian-Turkish border in May in response to continued IS shelling of the border town of Kilis in southern Turkey. IS also posted video claiming to depict its fighters destroying three Turkish Armed Forces T-155 howitzers along the border with anti-tank rockets. The cross-border exchanges come amidst continued clashes in northern Aleppo Province between IS and Turkish-backed opposition groups that have seen IS seize at least three additional villages along the Syrian-Turkish border.

**2 April 27: Airstrike destroys hospital in Aleppo City, killing at least 27 people.**

A pro-regime airstrike struck a hospital associated with the international medical charity Doctors Without Borders, killing 27 civilians including one of the few remaining pediatricians in Aleppo City. The bombing of the hospital comes as part of a recent up tick in pro-regime airstrikes and opposition shelling across Aleppo City that has killed nearly 200 people over the past week.

**3 April 25 - 27: Assassinations target senior Ahrar a-Sham figures in Idlib Province.**

An unidentified bomber detonated an SVEST that killed high-ranking Ahrar a-Sham commander Majed Hussein a-Sadeq in Binnish in Idlib Province on April 25. Later, a roadside IED killed Ahrar a-Sham commander Sa'ud al-Assaf in Masran in Idlib Province on April 27. Opposition groups have attributed a number of similar assassinations to IS ' sleeper cells' operating in the province.

**4 April 25 - 27: Second round of humanitarian aid arrives in northern Homs Province.**

The International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent coordinated a new aid delivery to Rastan and surrounding opposition-held villages in northern Homs Province on April 25. A similar delivery arrived in the nearby town of Talbisa on April 27. Over 120,000 civilians have lived under siege in northern Homs Province since 2012 with limited access to food and medical supplies.

**5 April 25: Russia and Syria sign major deals to restore infrastructure in Syria.** The deals – worth nearly \$1 billion - will begin by funding the restoration of the Tishreen-3 Power Plant near Damascus. Funding will eventually expand to cover electrical infrastructure nationwide as well as the agricultural sector, according to Syrian Prime Minister Wael al-Halqi.

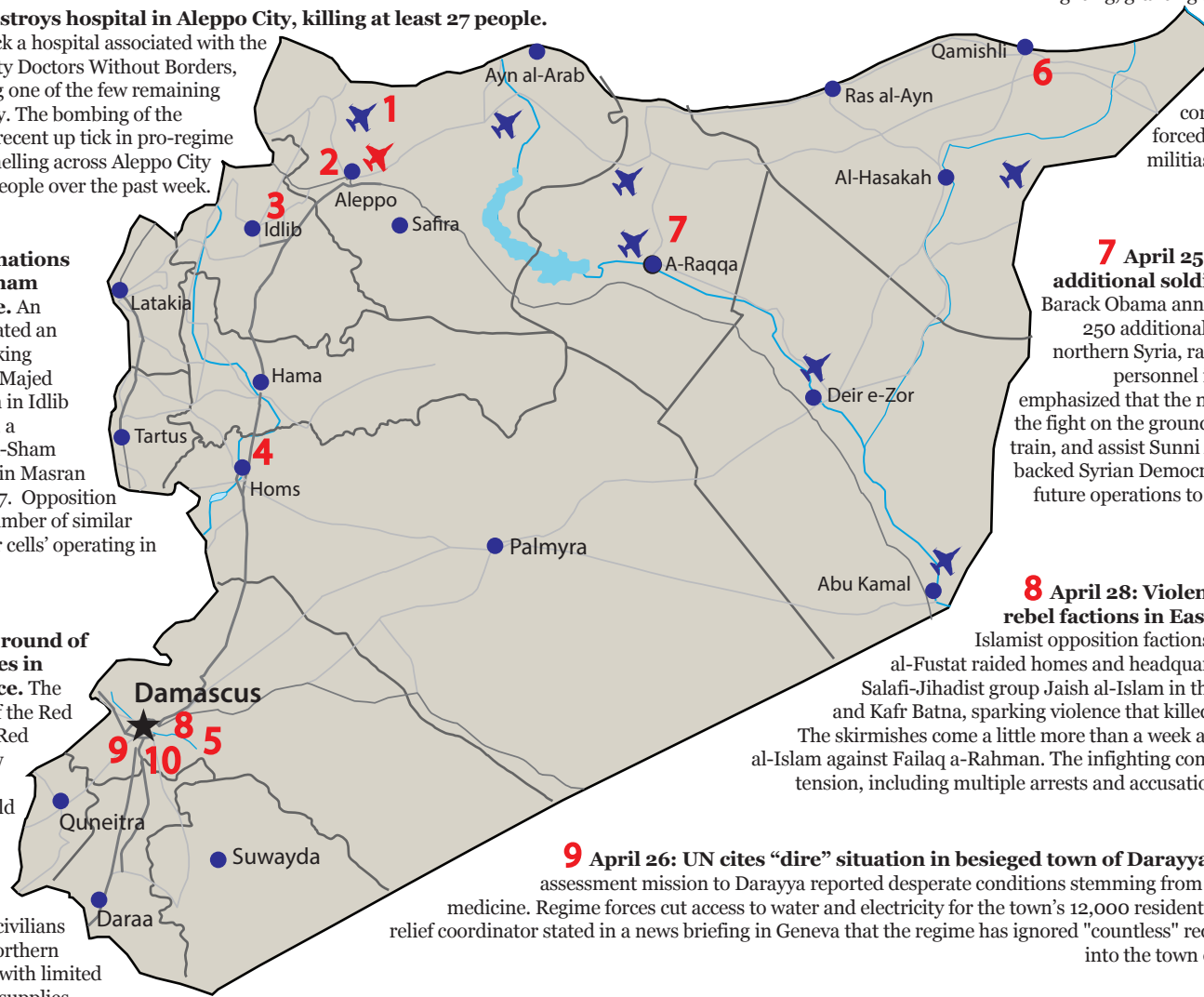
**6 April 24: Syrian Kurds and regime reach ceasefire in Qamishli in Hasaka Province.** A ceasefire between the Syrian Kurdish YPG and pro-regime forces ended three days of clashes that killed dozens on both sides. The agreement preserved the territorial gains made during the fighting, granting the Syrian Kurds control over key tactical including the central prison. The regime agreed to lift the “state of emergency” in the city, pay compensation to civilians, cease forced recruitment into pro-regime militias, and end its “interference in local society”.

**7 April 25: U.S. plans to deploy 250 additional soldiers to Syria.** U.S. President Barack Obama announced his decision to deploy 250 additional Special Operations Forces to northern Syria, raising the total number of U.S. personnel in the country to 300. Obama emphasized that the new forces will “not be leading the fight on the ground” but instead work to recruit, train, and assist Sunni Arab fighters within the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in preparation for future operations to isolate the ISIS stronghold of Ar-Raqqa City.

**8 April 28: Violence erupts between major rebel factions in Eastern Ghouta.** Fighters from Islamist opposition factions Failaq a-Rahman and Jaysh al-Fustat raided homes and headquarters affiliated with dominant Salafi-Jihadist group Jaish al-Islam in the towns of Misraba, Zamalka and Kafr Batna, sparking violence that killed at least thirteen individuals. The skirmishes come a little more than a week after the similar raids by Jaish al-Islam against Failaq a-Rahman. The infighting comes after months of mounting tension, including multiple arrests and accusations of assassination attempts.

**9 April 26: UN cites “dire” situation in besieged town of Darayya outside Damascus.** A UN assessment mission to Darayya reported desperate conditions stemming from a severe shortage of food and medicine. Regime forces cut access to water and electricity for the town’s 12,000 residents in 2013. The UN emergency relief coordinator stated in a news briefing in Geneva that the regime has ignored “countless” requests to for aid to be allowed into the town despite an UN-brokered deal.

**10 April 25: The Islamic State conducts suicide bombing in Damascus.** IS detonated an SVBIED at a checkpoint in the Sayeda Zeinab District of Damascus, killing at least eight people and injuring twenty others. The Sayeda Zeinab Shrine is a major pilgrimage site and key node for Iranian-backed proxy forces operating in Syria. The blast marks the third suicide attack targeting the shrine since January 2016.



● Pro-Regime Forces  
● The Islamic State  
● Kurdish Forces

● Jabhat a-Nusra  
● Opposition Forces

✈ Pro-Regime Airstrike  
✈ Anti-IS Coalition

