



The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and tribal fighters recaptured Sharqat on September 22. The operation, which launched on September 20, consisted of Coalition-trained Iraqi Army units and Sunni tribal militias. These militias constitute brigades in the Popular Mobilization structure, but are acceptable partners to the Coalition. The operation did not use units from the Counter Terrorism Services (CTS), which have spearheaded all previous successful urban operations to recapture cities from ISIS in 2015 and 2016, such as Qayyarah, Fallujah, and Ramadi. ISW is thus changing the status of Sharqat and its environs to a joint ISF and Sunni Tribal Fighter-held location.

The ISF and tribal fighters have also concentrated clearing operations in the desert on the northern bank of the Euphrates River, north of Ramadi and Hit districts in early September. ISW has not assessed that the ISF has lasting control over this terrain, which remains blank on the map.

ISW has redefined the areas listed previously as under "ISF control with a heavy militia presence." This area, depicted on the map in yellow, is now defined as areas in which Iraqi Shi'a militias are the primary security force, such as around city centers in Salah al-Din. This area also includes places where Shi'a militias compromise the ISF units present, such as Diyala, where the Badr Organization has co-opted the Dijla Operations Command, 5th Iraqi Army Division, and police forces. Shi'a militias have significant presence in southern provinces, but ISW assesses that the ISF, not the militias, still represent the primary hold force in these areas.