

Syria Situation Report: June 18 - 24, 2016

1 June 18-19: Syrian Democratic Forces tighten encirclement of Manbij. The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces seized the western entrance of the key IS-held transit hub of Manbij and advanced to within two kilometers of the city center. IS mounted several failed counterattacks in an attempt to break the siege.

2 June 23: Opposition briefly seizes key border town in Northern Aleppo Province. The Free Syrian Army (FSA)-affiliated Hawar Kilis Operations Room entered the border town of Al-Rai before IS launched a counterattack that expelled opposition forces from the town. Clashes remain ongoing.

3 June 18: Jaysh al-Fatah Operations Room seizes three towns south of Aleppo City.

The Jaysh al-Fatah Operations Room - a coalition that includes Syrian Al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat a-Nusra and Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar a-Sham - seized the towns of Khalasah, Zaytan and Birnah from pro-regime forces following heavy clashes. Activists claimed that the clashes killed at least twenty-five fighters from Lebanese Hezbollah in the group's largest one-time losses since 2013.

4 June 19: Turkish border guards kill eleven civilians in Idlib Province.

Turkish Gendarmes killed up to eleven civilians as they attempted to cross the Syrian-Turkish border near Jisr a-Shughour in Idlib Province. Turkey denied the reports, claiming that the border guards had only fired "warning shots." The exiled Syrian Opposition Coalition and Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar a-Sham both called for an investigation into the incident.

5 June 19: IED detonates in Latakia City. An IED exploded near the Immigration and Passports Directorate of Latakia City.

Unconfirmed reports claimed that the blast wounded Latakia Regional Director Col. Mahmoud Makhlof as well as several of his bodyguards. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

6 June 19: Islamic State counterattack reverses regime gains in A-Raqqa Province. IS launched a counteroffensive against pro-regime forces in Western A-Raqqa Province, recapturing the Thawrah and Sfeiyah Oil Fields while inflicting heavy casualties on pro-regime forces. The counterattack reversed nearly all gains achieved by pro-regime forces since the start of an offensive on June 2.

7 June 23: Islamic State claims to kill three Russian soldiers in Hama Province.

IS claimed to kill three members of the Russian Armed Forces after detonating a roadside IED near their vehicle in Eastern Hama Province, although conflicting accounts claimed that the blast caused only injuries. The claim comes after the Russian Ministry of Defense confirmed the death of an eleventh serviceman on June 19 due to wounds sustained in an ISIS SVBIED attack in Eastern Homs.

8 June 18: President Assad meets with Russian Minister of Defense.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad met with Russian Minister of Defense Sergey Shoigu in Damascus to discuss military-technical cooperation and "some aspects of cooperation in the fight against terrorist groups" in the country. The meeting reportedly came at the order of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Shoigu later inspected the facilities of the Russian Armed Forces at the Bassel al-Assad International Airport in Latakia Province.

9 June 22: President Assad appoints new premier.

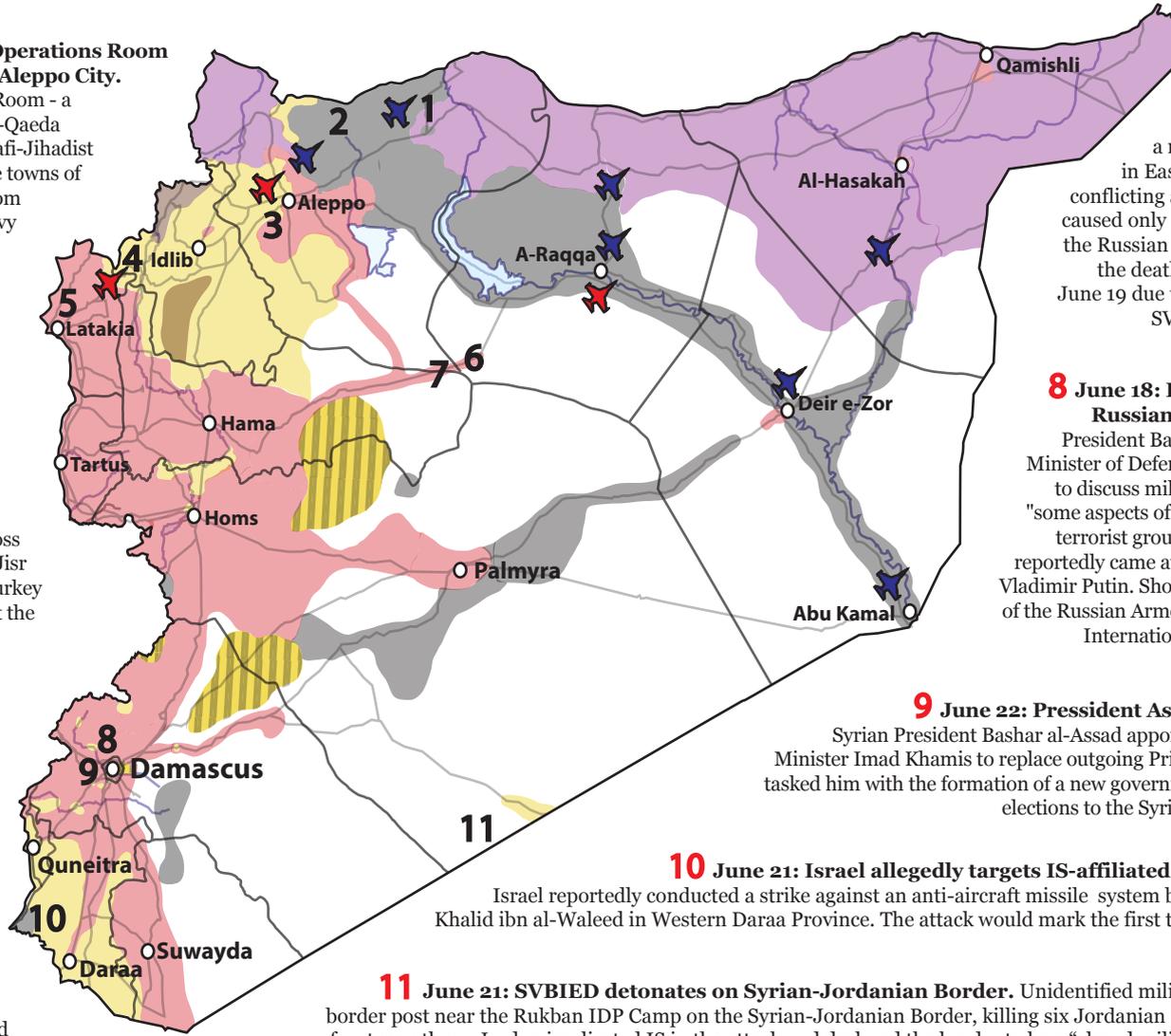
Syrian President Bashar al-Assad appointed EU-sanctioned Electricity Minister Imad Khamis to replace outgoing Prime Minister Wael al-Halqi and tasked him with the formation of a new government. The appointment follows elections to the Syrian Parliament held on April 13.

10 June 21: Israel allegedly targets IS-affiliated faction in Southern Syria.

Israel reportedly conducted a strike against an anti-aircraft missile system belonging to IS-affiliated Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Waleed in Western Daraa Province. The attack would mark the first time Israel targeted IS in Syria.

11 June 21: SVBIED detonates on Syrian-Jordanian Border.

Unidentified militants detonated a SVBIED at a border post near the Rukban IDP Camp on the Syrian-Jordanian Border, killing six Jordanian security officers and wounding fourteen others. Jordan implicated IS in the attack and declared the border to be a "closed military zone" until further notice.



Areas of Control

- Pro-Regime Forces
- The Islamic State
- Kurdish Forces
- Jabhat a-Nusra
- Opposition Forces
- Mixed Control

Airstrikes

- ✈ Pro-Regime
- ✈ Anti-IS Coalition

*Control of Terrain accurate as of 16 JUN 2016

