

Syria Situation Report: November 10 - November 18, 2016

1 November 14: EU Expands Sanctions on Regime Officials: The European Union (EU) added eighteen regime-affiliated individuals to its sanctions list due to their involvement in "violent repression against the civilian population" in the Syrian Civil War. The targeted individuals include thirteen cabinet members, four ministers of state, and the governor of the Syrian Central Bank. The sanctions follow similar sanctions placed on ten additional regime-affiliated individuals in OCT 2016 in response to continued military operations by pro-regime forces against opposition-held districts of Aleppo City.

2 November 11: OPCW Passes Resolution Condemning Syria For Use of Chemical Weapons:

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council passed a draft resolution proposed by Spain condemning both ISIS and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Civil War. The resolution also granted a mandate for the OPCW to conduct twice-yearly inspections at facilities in Barzeh and Jamrayah outside Damascus where international inspectors have found traces of undeclared nerve agents.

3 November 11: Hezbollah Holds Military Parade in Syria Featuring Armored Vehicles From U.S.:

Lebanese Hezbollah held a military parade in Qusayr in Homs Province near the Syrian-Lebanese Border during its annual commemoration of 'Martyrs Day'. The parade notably featured several U.S. M113 Armored Personnel Carriers, raising concerns that the vehicles had been sourced from the Lebanese Army. Anonymous security sources claimed that the vehicles had been seized from the now-defunct South Lebanon Army backed by Israel in 2000.

4 November 10: White House Authorizes Expanded Operations Targeting Al-Qaeda in Syria:

U.S. President Barack Obama reportedly issued an order in OCT 2016 granting Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) greater authorities and intelligence resources to target Jabhat Fatah a-Sham (JFS) - the successor of Syrian Al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat a-Nusra. The U.S. has since conducted at least four major airstrikes targeting leaders in Jabhat Fatah a-Sham in Idlib Province, according to anonymous defense officials. The U.S. State Department also amended the Foreign Terrorist Organization Designation of Jabhat a-Nusra on November 10 to include Jabhat Fatah a-Sham as well as its related names and aliases.

5 November 11 - 12: Pro-Regime Forces Reverse Opposition Offensive in Aleppo City: Pro-regime forces recaptured Minyan and Dahiya al-Assad District on the southwestern outskirts of Aleppo City following heavy clashes with opposition forces. The gains mark the reversal of nearly all gains made by opposition forces since the start of a new offensive to break the pro-regime siege of Aleppo City on October 28.

6 November 14 - 15: Russia Resumes Air Campaign Targeting Aleppo City:

Russian Minister of Defense Sergey Shoigu announced the start of a "major operation" allegedly against ISIS and Al-Qaeda in Idlib and Homs Provinces. The operation included sorties by Su-33 'Flanker-D' fighter jets launched from the Russian Aircraft Carrier 'Admiral Kuznetsov' in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea as well as cruise missile strikes by naval warships and strategic bombers. Local activists also reported the resumption of intense airstrikes against opposition-held districts of Aleppo City. The Russian Ministry of Defense confirmed the loss of one carrier-based MiG-29KUBR 'Fulcrum-D' fighter jet due to an unspecified mechanical failure.

7 November 13 - 16: Opposition Infighting Erupts in Northern Aleppo Province:

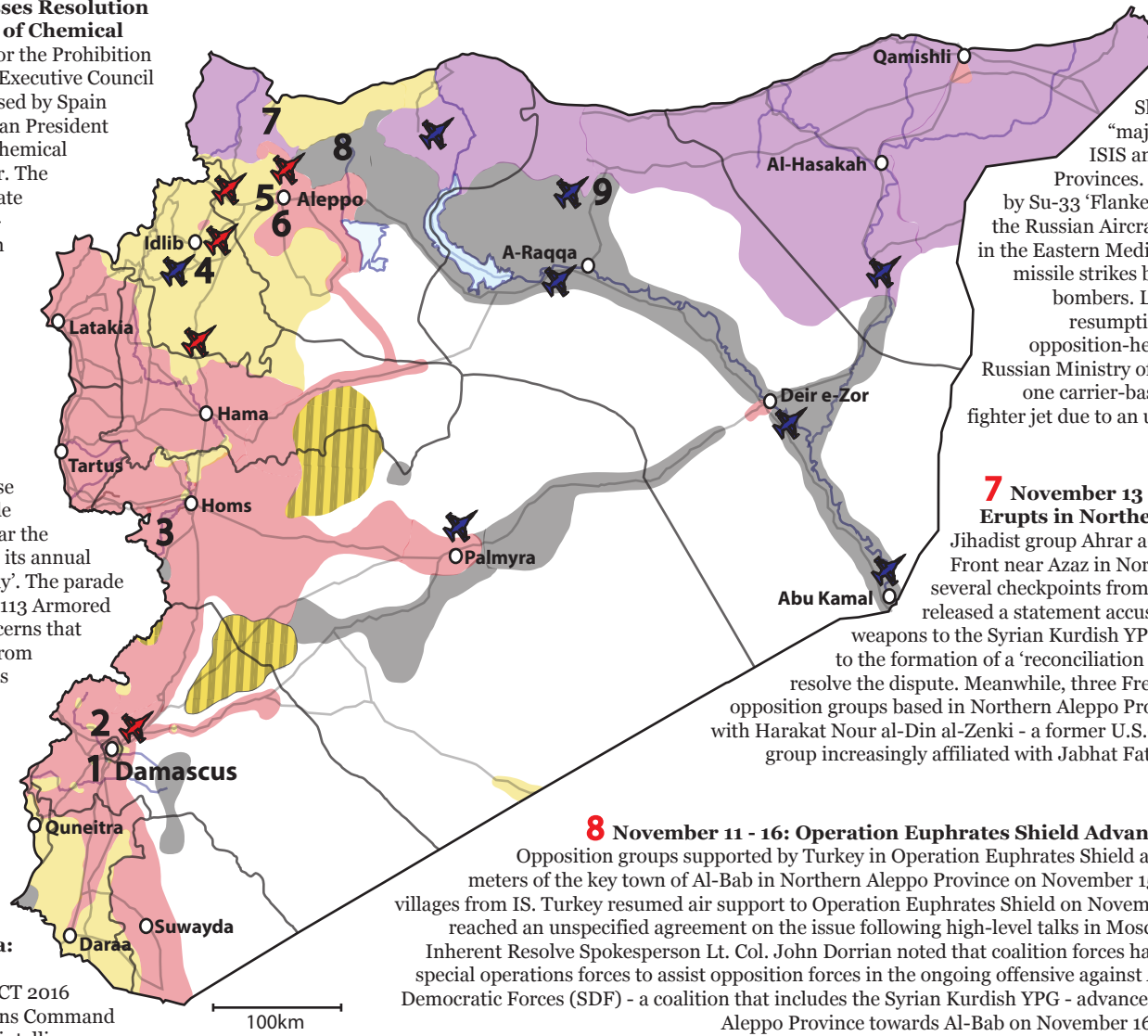
Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar a-Sham clashed with the Levant Front near Azaz in Northern Aleppo Province, seizing several checkpoints from the group. Ahrar a-Sham later released a statement accusing the Levant Front of selling weapons to the Syrian Kurdish YPG. The two groups later agreed to the formation of a 'reconciliation committee' on November 15 to resolve the dispute. Meanwhile, three Free Syrian Army (FSA)-affiliated opposition groups based in Northern Aleppo Province announced their merger with Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki - a former U.S.-backed TOW missile recipient group increasingly affiliated with Jabhat Fatah a-Sham and Ahrar a-Sham.

8 November 11 - 16: Operation Euphrates Shield Advances to Outskirts of Al-Bab:

Opposition groups supported by Turkey in Operation Euphrates Shield advanced within three hundred meters of the key town of Al-Bab in Northern Aleppo Province on November 15 after seizing at least fourteen villages from IS. Turkey resumed air support to Operation Euphrates Shield on November 11 after Turkey and Russia reached an unspecified agreement on the issue following high-level talks in Moscow on November 1. Operation Inherent Resolve Spokesperson Lt. Col. John Dorrian noted that coalition forces have not deployed air support or special operations forces to assist opposition forces in the ongoing offensive against Al-Bab. Meanwhile, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) - a coalition that includes the Syrian Kurdish YPG - advanced west from Manbij in Eastern Aleppo Province towards Al-Bab on November 16, seizing at least eight villages.

9 November 14: Syrian Kurds Announce Intent to Establish Local Administration in A-Raqqa City:

Syrian Democratic Council (SDC) Co-Chair Ilham Ehmed stated that the organization will establish a local civilian administration to govern Ar-Raqqa City after its capture by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) participating in Operation Euphrates Wrath. The statement comes despite a reported agreement between the U.S. and Turkey that the Syrian Kurdish YPG be excluded from the forces that seize, hold, and ultimately govern A-Raqqa City.



Areas of Control*

- Pro-Regime Forces
- Opposition Forces
- The Islamic State
- Kurdish Forces
- Jabhat Fatah a-Sham
*Formerly Jabhat a-Nusra
- Mixed Control

Airstrikes

- ✈ Pro-Regime
- ✈ U.S. / Coalition



*Control of Terrain Accurate as of 10 NOV 2016