

# Syria Situation Report: September 22 - October 7, 2016

**1 September 22: Islamic State Kills Opposition Leader in Southern Syria:** An IS fighter detonated an SVEST in the town of Inkhil in Northern Daraa Province at a ceremony for the opening of a local police station, killing twelve individuals including Daraa Provincial Council President Yacoub al-Ammar - a prominent figure in the opposition Syrian Interim Government.

**2 October 3: Islamic State Detonates Two SVESTs in Hama City:** IS fighters detonated two SVESTs near a Syrian Ba'ath Party headquarters and a police station in Al-Assi Square in Hama City, killing two civilians and wounding at least twelve others. IS claimed that the attack involved three SVESTs, while unconfirmed reports from local activists claimed that regime security forces successfully dismantled the third SVEST.

**3 September 22 - 28: Opposition Groups Continue Advance in Northern Hama Province:** Salafi-Jihadist group Jund al-Aqsa and other opposition factions seized the majority-Alawite villages of Ma'an and Tulaysiyah in addition to at least six other villages in Northern Hama Province following clashes with pro-regime forces. Jund al-Aqsa launched a major offensive against regime positions in Hama Province on August 29.

**4 September 30 - October 3: Russia Deploys Reinforcements to Syrian Coast:** Russia deployed components of the SA-23 'Gladiator' anti-ballistic missile system to its naval facility in Tartous City on October 3, according to U.S. defense officials. The move comes after Russia reportedly deployed additional Su-24 'Fencer' attack aircraft and Su-34 'Fullback' fighter-bombers to the Bassel Al-Assad International Airport in Latakia Province.

**5 October 3: U.S. Strike Kills Jabhat Fatah a-Sham Leader in Idlib Province:** The U.S. Department of Defense stated that a U.S. airstrike targeted Egyptian citizen Abu Faraj al-Masri (aka Ahmad Salamah Mabruk) - a senior member of Jabhat Fatah a-Sham and a legacy member of Al-Qaeda. JFS confirmed that Al-Masri died after a drone targeted his car in Jisr al-Shughur in Western Idlib Province.

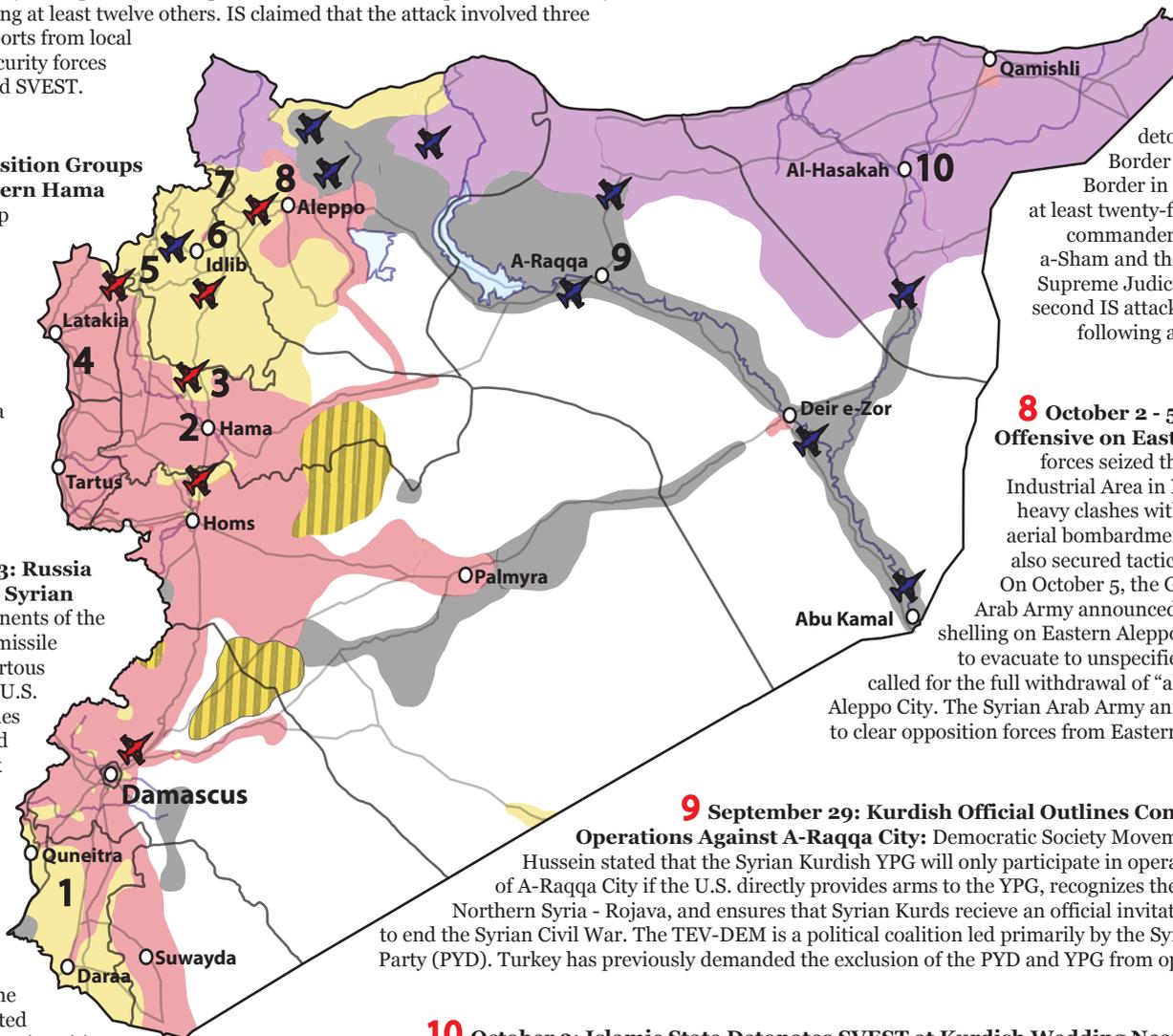
**6 September 22 - 27: Opposition Groups Consolidate in Idlib Province.** Free Syrian Army (FSA)-affiliated groups Division 13, Northern Division, and Suqour al-Jabal - three prominent U.S.-backed TOW anti-tank missile recipients - announced their merger on September 22 under the name of the Free Idlib Army. Meanwhile, former U.S.-backed TOW anti-tank missile recipient Harakat Nour a-Din al-Zenki and former Ahrar a-Sham component Suqour a-Sham joined the Jaysh al-Fatah Operations Room - a coalition led by Jabhat Fatah a-Sham (the successor of Syrian Al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat a-Nusra) and Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar a-Sham.

**7 October 5: Islamic State Detonates SVBIED at Key Border Crossing:** IS detonated an SVBIED at the Atmeh Border Crossing on the Syrian-Turkish Border in Northern Idlib Province, killing at least twenty-five individuals including a local commander for Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar a-Sham and the head of the opposition Aleppo Supreme Judicial Council. The blast marks the second IS attack on the Atmeh Border Crossing following a similar bombing on August 14.

**8 October 2 - 5: Pro-Regime Forces Press Offensive on Eastern Aleppo City:** Pro-regime forces seized the Handarat Camp and Shaqayf Industrial Area in Northern Aleppo City following heavy clashes with opposition forces and intense aerial bombardment by Russia. Pro-regime forces also secured tactical gains in Central Aleppo City. On October 5, the General Command of the Syrian Arab Army announced a "reduction" in airstrikes and shelling on Eastern Aleppo City in order to allow civilians to evacuate to unspecified "safe areas." The regime also called for the full withdrawal of "all armed fighters" from Eastern Aleppo City. The Syrian Arab Army announced the start of operations to clear opposition forces from Eastern Aleppo City on September 23.

**9 September 29: Kurdish Official Outlines Conditions for Participation in Operations Against A-Raqqa City:** Democratic Society Movement (TEV-DEM) official Hanifa Hussein stated that the Syrian Kurdish YPG will only participate in operations to seize the IS stronghold of A-Raqqa City if the U.S. directly provides arms to the YPG, recognizes the autonomy of the Federation of Northern Syria - Rojava, and ensures that Syrian Kurds receive an official invitation to participate in peace talks to end the Syrian Civil War. The TEV-DEM is a political coalition led primarily by the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD). Turkey has previously demanded the exclusion of the PYD and YPG from operations to seize A-Raqqa City.

**10 October 3: Islamic State Detonates SVEST at Kurdish Wedding Near Hasakah City:** An IS fighter detonated an SVEST in the village of Tal Tawil outside of Hasakah City, killing at least thirty-six civilians and injuring at least ninety others at the wedding of a member of the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The groom is a member of a prominent Syrian Kurdish family linked to the autonomous Federation of Northern Syria - Rojava.



## 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 19 SEP 2016