



WEEKLY CONFLICT SUMMARY | 7 - 13 June 2021

SYRIA SUMMARY

- Turkey accuses Kurdish armed groups of attacking a hospital in Afrin, Aleppo Governorate.
- Israel attacks Government of Syria (GoS) armed forces positions in Rural Damascus and Homs Governorates.
- The opposition's Sharqiya Brigade clash with Iranian-backed militia fighters in Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.

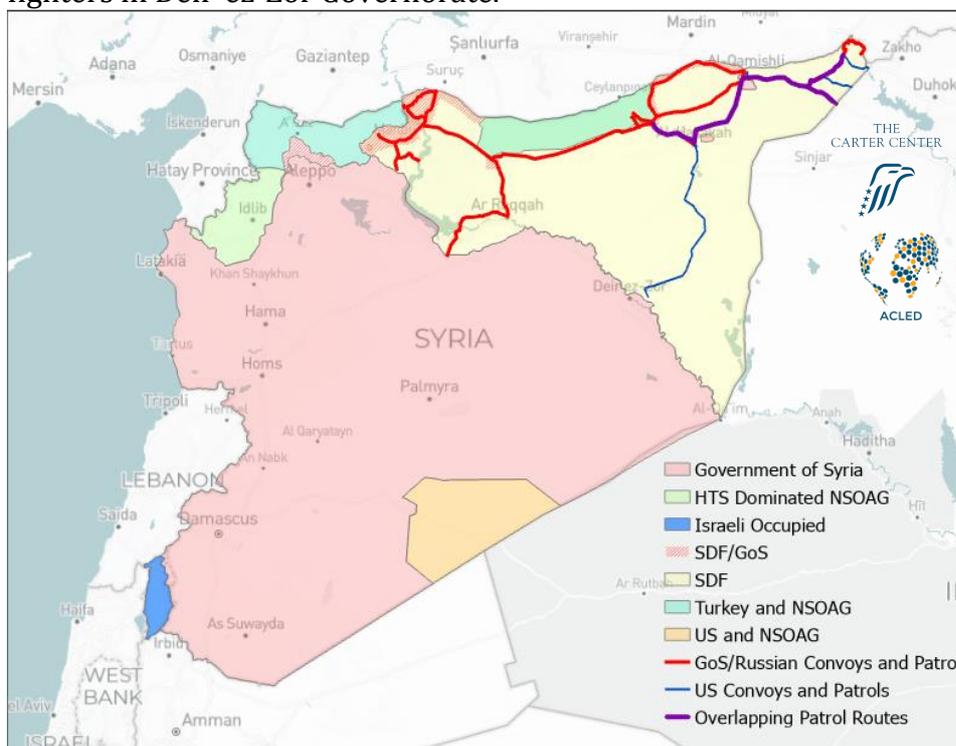


Figure 1: Dominant actors' area of control and influence in Syria as of 13 June 2021.-NSOAG stands for Non-state Organized Armed Groups. Also, please see footnote 1.

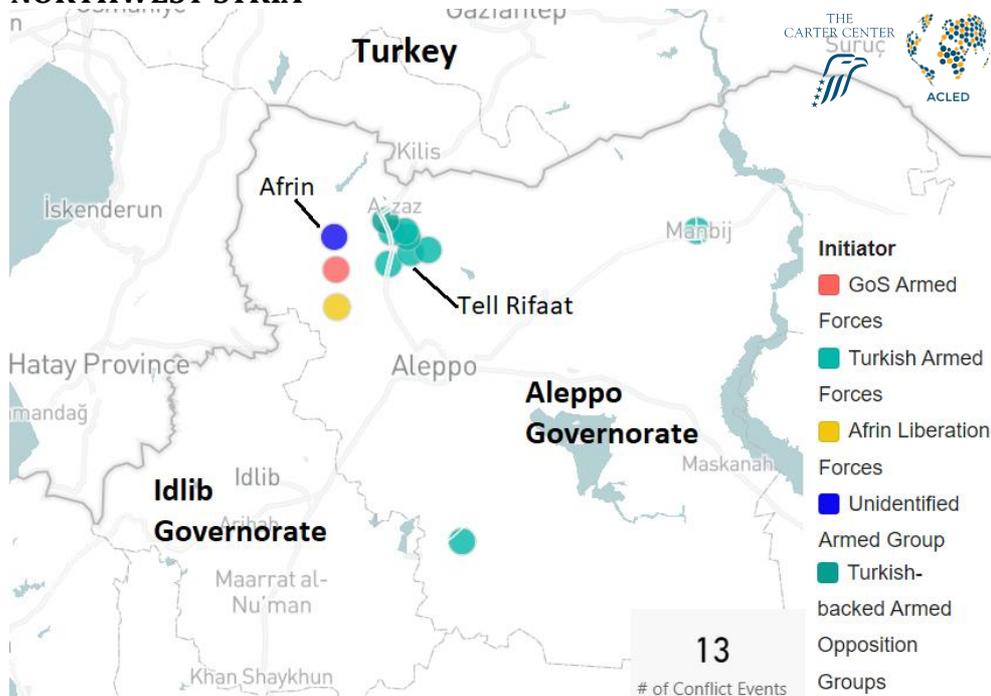
NORTHWEST SYRIA¹

Figure 2: Conflict between Turkish armed forces and Turkish-backed armed opposition groups on the one side and GoS armed forces and Kurdish militias on the other between 7-13 June 2021. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

Conflict in Aleppo Governorate

Turkey justifies its control of territory in northern Syria as a secure zone along the border to prevent alleged threats from armed Kurdish groups.² Shelling and clashes along the frontlines between Turkish armed forces and Turkish-backed armed opposition groups on the one side and Government of Syria (GoS) armed forces and the predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on the other side are frequent.

12 June

Unidentified missile strikes destroyed the Al-Shifa hospital in Afrin, Aleppo Governorate, killing 15 people.³⁴ Turkish armed forces accused the SDF of

¹ Figure 1 depicts areas of the dominant actors' control and influence. While "control" is a relative term in a complex, dynamic conflict, territorial control is defined as an entity having power over use of force as well as civil/administrative functions in an area. Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah maintain a presence in Syrian government-controlled territory. Non-state organized armed groups (NSOAG), including the Kurdish-dominated SDF and Turkish-backed opposition groups operate in areas not under GoS control. The area along the junction of the Syrian border with Iraq and Jordan is a 55km de-confliction zone, established by the US-led coalition that also includes a number of aligned local armed groups. Patrols are also depicted in the map to show the presence of actors that may have influence in an area. This is particularly relevant as US and Russian forces regularly patrol towns and routes in the northeast. While they do not control local administration or local forces, there is an assumption of a high degree of coordination with local de facto authorities. Data collected is by the publicly available project [ACLED](#).

² <https://www.voanews.com/world-news/middle-east-dont-use/ap-explains-turkeys-operation-olive-branch-afirin-syria>

³ <https://syriadirect.org/who-is-behind-the-massacre-at-afirns-al-shifa-hospital/>

⁴ <https://halabtodaytv.net/archives/191161>

attacking the hospital.⁵ However the SDF denied the accusations.⁶ The SDF-affiliated People's Protection Units (YPG) issued a statement condemning the attack on the Al-Shifa hospital.⁷

13 June

In response to the hospital bombing, Turkish armed forces targeted alleged SDF-owned buildings in Tell Rifaat, Aleppo Governorate.⁸

SOUTH & CENTRAL SYRIA

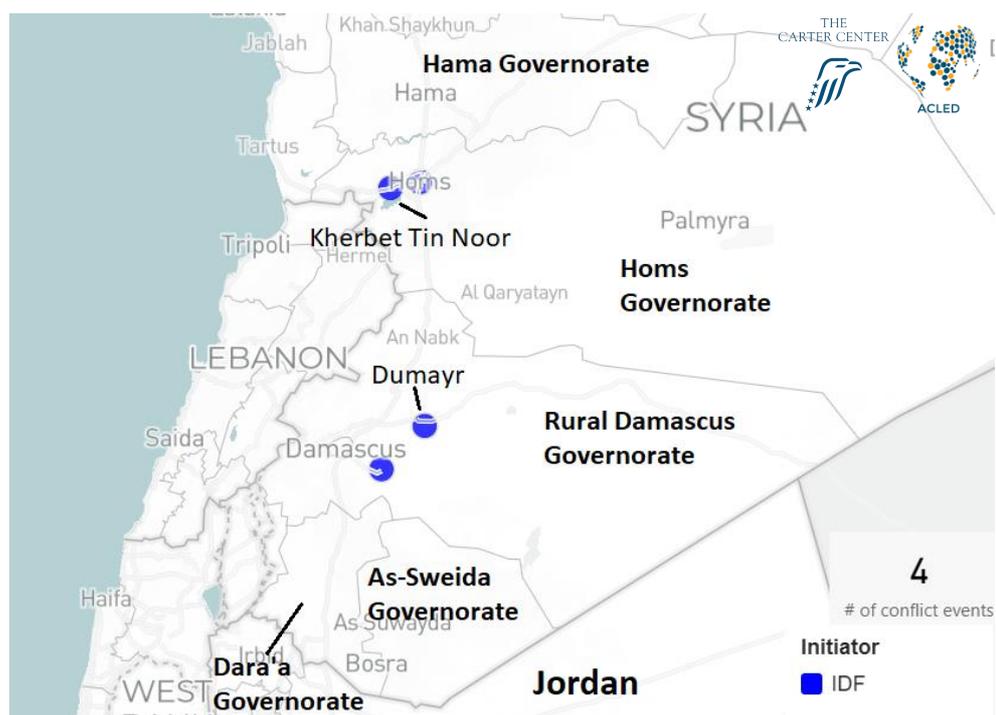


Figure 3: Israeli airstrikes in south and central Syria between 7-13 June 2021. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

Israeli Airstrikes

Israel conducts airstrikes frequently across Syria against Iranian and GoS targets, but rarely comments on its attacks.^{9,10} In 2021, the pace of Israeli airstrikes has increased.

8 June

The Israeli air force struck GoS armed sites in Damascus city and Homs Governorate.¹¹ Israel's targets reportedly included the Damascus International airport, and a GoS army position in Dumayr, Rural Damascus Governorate.¹² At

⁵ <https://halabtodaytv.net/archives/191252>

⁶ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/487799>

⁷ <https://sdf-press.com/?p=33229>

⁸ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/487874>

⁹ Iranian-backed militias refers to armed groups that are supported by Iran, like Hezbollah, and include militias from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, or Pakistan.

¹⁰ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/432892>

¹¹ <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/487166>

¹² <https://npasyria.com/en/60631/>

least 7 GoS army personnel were reportedly killed in the airstrikes, including a Brigadier General.¹³¹⁴

NORTHEAST SYRIA



Figure 4: Attacks against pro-government forces in northeast Syria between 7-13 June 2021. Data from The Carter Center and ACLED.

Attacks Against Pro-Government Forces

The GoS armed forces, within territory in northeast Syria they control, face threats primarily from ISIS but also confront tensions with the SDF. In 2021, there has been an increase in reported attacks against GoS armed forces by unidentified armed actors and armed groups not affiliated with ISIS. Since 1 January 2021, there have been 81 reported attacks against GoS armed forces and their allies. In February 2021, a new opposition armed group called the Sharqiya Brigades (Eastern Brigades) was formed with the announced objective of attacking GoS soldiers and infrastructure.

7 June

Fighters with the Sharqiya Brigades killed three Iranian-backed Fatemiyoun fighters in Ayyash, Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.¹⁵¹⁶

9 June

¹³ <https://halabtodaytv.net/archives/190895>

¹⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/yvp98rzc>

¹⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/wfhrsms4>

¹⁶ <https://deirezzor24.net/en/new-group-claims-responsibility-for-two-military-operations-in-week-in-deir-ezzor/>

A landmine¹⁷ planted by an unidentified armed group struck a Russian armed forces vehicle in Assadiya near Ras al-Ayn, Al-Hasakah Governorate, killing one Russian soldier and three others.¹⁸

12 June

Sharqiya Brigade fighters attempted to assassinate a GoS Military Security Brigadier General in Deir-ez-Zor city.¹⁹

For earlier weekly conflict summaries, please click [here](#). For an interactive map of historical areas of control in Syria, please click [here](#).

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¹⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/f3wc5mjx>

¹⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/vzx7mayj>

¹⁹ <https://deirezzor24.net/en/new-group-claims-responsibility-for-two-military-operations-in-week-in-deir-ezzor/>