

Syria Update

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

Eleven Years On: The State of the State(s) in Syria

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Russia Recruiting Syrians for Urban Combat in Ukraine

'Volunteers' likely drawn by salaries amid limited opportunities in Syria. [Pg 6](#)

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Russia's divided attention with its invasion of Ukraine may present more opportunities for the Islamic State. [Pg 6](#)

Congressional Letter on Rukban Camp: Residents' Voices Finally Heard?

The camp, effectively placed outside the purview of any single actor, faces a humanitarian crisis. [Pg 7](#)

Israeli Airstrike Kills Two Iranian Officers

Israel strikes Syria as Russia is busy invading Ukraine. [Pg 7](#)

US Categorises HTS-affiliated Jihadi Group as 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist'

The designation will test whether HTS is truly prepared to cooperate with the international community's counterterrorism efforts. [Pg 8](#)

Caesar Act Waivers for Kurdish and Opposition-held Areas

Move will permit outside investment in the northeast, though it will take time for any significant investments to bear fruit. [Pg 8](#)

Eleven years since the beginning of the Syrian uprising, the humanitarian crisis shows little sign of abatement as the world's attention and resources drift to Ukraine. Image courtesy of SOHR.



WEEKLY SYRIA UPDATE DIGEST



Syria in 2022

Although conflict in Syria has slowed considerably, humanitarian needs continue to rise. Aid actors have struggled to adapt. To do so, they must recognise that the crisis in Syria is arguably undergoing a paradigm shift. This report, a forecast for the year 2022, offers guidance to aid actors seeking to move beyond outmoded emergency response approaches to achieve more substantive, lasting change.

[READ MORE](#)



The Future of LGBTQ+ Syria and the Aid Response

LGBTQ+ Syrians face specific challenges, including healthcare disparities, legal discrimination, social prejudice, and the aid sector's unpreparedness to meet resulting needs. This report explores regional case studies to identify programming opportunities and entry points to meet these needs and empower and support LGBTQ+ Syrians.

[READ MORE](#)

The following is a brief synopsis of the *In-Depth Analysis* section:

15 March will mark the eleventh anniversary of the protests that sparked the Syrian uprising, which opened a Pandora's box to civil war and an enduring humanitarian crisis that shows little sign of abatement. The world appears more polarised than at any point in the past decade, with aid actors less able to navigate such tense politics. Outside powers continue to have opposing interests and stakes inside Syria, where frozen lines of control have resulted in four different de facto authorities, with each nevertheless facing broadly similar challenges and rising social discontent. As the international community's attention drifts to the largest ground war in Europe since 1945, it is imperative for donors to put into motion broader plans to improve conditions in Syria for the future, with context-driven and sustainable assistance strategies that do more with less.

The following is a brief synopsis of the *Whole-of-Syria Review*:

- 01 On 6 March, a Government of Syria military bus was attacked on a desert road near Tadmor by Islamic State (IS) militants, killing at least 13 soldiers and injuring 18. IS may be emboldened to carry out more attacks and raids should the war in Ukraine divert Russian attention and airpower away from Syria.
- 02 On 11 March, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave the green light for "16,000 volunteers" from the Middle East to be deployed to fight in Ukraine. Syrian fighters being deployed abroad is nothing new, reflecting their vulnerability to predation by foreign mercenary companies amid a lack of opportunities, protection, and a stable future in Syria.
- 03 On 7 March, a bipartisan group of US lawmakers reportedly sent a letter urging the Biden administration to address "a humanitarian crisis" in Rukban camp. Rukban residents face increasing desperation and fewer options, and aid actors likely find themselves with a limited tool kit to act amid the political indifference of major actors in the area.
- 04 On 7 March, an Israeli airstrike targeted southern areas of Damascus, killing two IRGC officers. While Moscow has occasionally signalled its dissatisfaction with Israel's frequent airstrikes on Syria, it has generally turned a blind eye. Nevertheless, the geopolitical fallout from the invasion of Ukraine introduces a new element of uncertainty to the multiple conflicting military interests in Syria.
- 05 On 7 March, the US State Department designated "al Qaeda-affiliated" group, Katibat-al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (KTJ), which operates primarily under the HTS banner in Idleb, as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist". The designation may reflect US intentions to test HTS's seriousness in cooperating with the international community's counterterrorism efforts.
- 06 Since 25 February, reports have suggested that the Biden administration will soon exempt Kurdish and opposition-held areas of northeast Syria from the Caesar Act. However, issues of security and monopoly may continue to deter the investment needed for sustainable economic growth and improvement in living standards.

01 📍

SYRIA, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Russia Recruiting Syrians for Urban Combat in Ukraine

06 🌐 🗳️

WASHINGTON, DC

Caesar Act Waivers for Kurdish and Opposition-held Areas

05 📍

US Categorises HTS-affiliated Jihadi Group as 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist'

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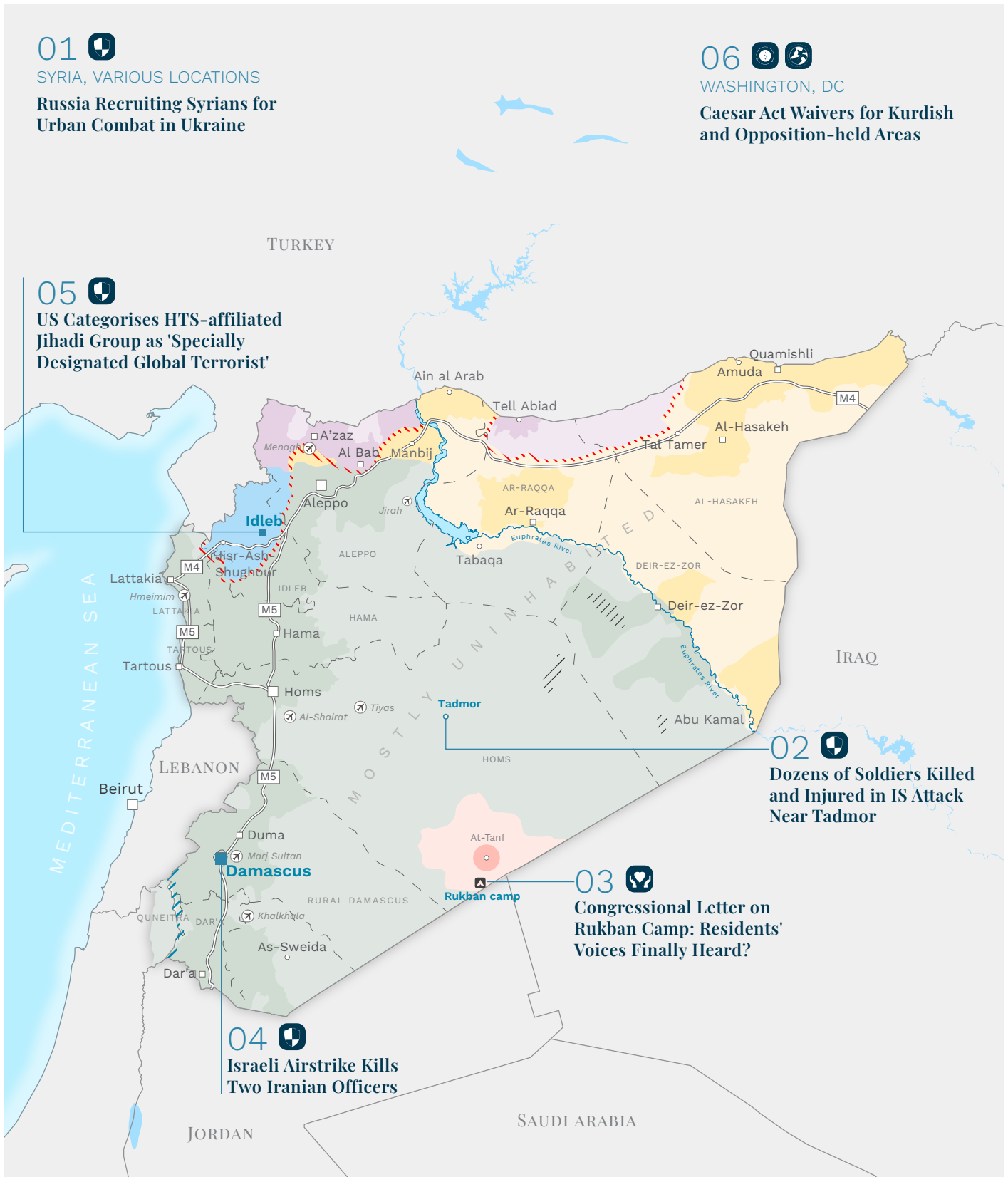
Dozens of Soldiers Killed and Injured in IS Attack Near Tadmor

03 🗳️

Congressional Letter on Rukban Camp: Residents' Voices Finally Heard?

04 📍

Israeli Airstrike Kills Two Iranian Officers



Population Density

- Major city (750,000+)
 - City (100,000+)
 - Town (25,000+)
 - ▲ IDP Camp
 - — Governorate
 - ⊙ Military airbase
- 100 km

Territorial Control

- LOW POPULATION DENSITY
- Government of Syria
 - Syrian Democratic Forces
 - Syrian National Army
 - US-Backed Opposition Groups
 - Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
 - ▨ Islamic State presence
 - ▨ Contested area
 - ▨ UN Disengagement Observer Force

Type Of Incident

- 👉 Humanitarian Issues
- 👥 Social
- 🌐 Regional Intervention
- 🛡️ Security
- 💰 Economy
- ⚖️ Governance

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

The 15th of March will mark the eleventh anniversary of the protests that sparked the Syrian uprising, which opened a Pandora's box to civil war and an enduring humanitarian crisis that shows little sign of abatement (see: [Syria in 2022: New Aid Approaches For an Evolving Crisis](#)). To the contrary, the Syrian population is growing increasingly vulnerable as a result of myriad internal developments and exogenous shocks (see: [Crisis in Ukraine: Impacts for Syria](#)). The world appears more polarised than at any point in the past decade, with aid actors less able to navigate such tense politics. As the international community's attention drifts to the largest ground war in Europe since 1945, it is imperative for donors to put into motion broader plans to improve conditions and resilience in Syria for the future, with sustainable assistance strategies that do more with less.

Between policy and politics, where does Syria stand on the world's agenda?

Despite early signs of regional normalisation (see: [Syria Update 15 November 2021](#)), the Government of Syria remains a pariah on the international stage. The West remains steadfast in its aims for a political transition, following UN Security Council Resolution 2254, as a precondition for lifting sanctions and more open engagement with the Syrian state. Tangible progress, however, is hard to spot. The Constitutional Committee in Geneva has made little progress (see: [Syria Update 1 November 2021](#)), while the Government of Syria's stonewalling and intransigence over key international demands constitutes a roadblock to proposed "step-by-step" approaches to engagement with Damascus (see: [Syria Update 7 March 2022](#)). With meaningful political change in Damascus seeming more elusive than ever, the one source of solace for Syrians opposed to the regime is progress in the trials of war criminals in Western courts, though attempts at justice and accountability remain piecemeal (see: [Syria Update 24 January 2022](#)).

Outside powers continue to have opposing interests and stakes inside Syria. Major milestones have nevertheless been achieved, such as establishing deconfliction zones and the UN's cross-border modality, possible only following agreements between major regional and global powers. The cross-border modality was only extended by a last-minute vote in June 2021, and following months of intense diplomatic bargaining. The likelihood of that happening again now appears lower

than ever, however. The exact contours of early recovery programming will be shaped by political decisions over sanctions and red lines, themselves the result of negotiations between outside powers (see: [Syria Update 20 December 2021](#)). Deals concerning the Arab Gas Pipeline show that regional interests have the ability to shift geostrategic priorities over Syria (see: [Syria Update 24 January 2022](#)).

A divided country with similar challenges

Outside interests are most clearly represented by the support for and alliances with factions on the ground. With lines of control largely frozen, Syrians find themselves living under four different de facto authorities, each supported to some extent by foreign powers — the Government of Syria, the Kurdish-led Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, the Salvation Government of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), and the Turkish-backed Syrian Interim Government. The challenges they face, however, are broadly similar: the ongoing deterioration of living conditions amid high and increasing inflation (see: [Syria Update 7 March 2022](#)); limited, poor quality public services; food insecurity (see: [Syria Update 10 January 2022](#)); poorly maintained or destroyed infrastructure; continued displacement; and a fragile state of security with routine clashes between opposing forces and the continued threat of Islamic State (IS) attacks. Local authorities, which lack accountability or transparency, have rarely been competent in dealing with these challenges.

As a result, social discontent remains widespread across Syria, to which authorities have largely taken a securitised approach. The Government of Syria's tight security grip is its only shield against mass protests in its territories over deteriorating living conditions, which have nevertheless continued to take place in the restive south (see: [Syria Update 14 February 2022](#)). In the northeast, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have taken a heavy-handed approach to local opposition, particularly in Arab-majority areas, exacerbating ethnic tensions and feeding grievances over a lack of inclu-

The fragmented nature of territorial control in Syria highlights the need for context-driven, localised approaches to the aid response that recognise the specific needs of the population and understand their relationship with local governmental institutions and authorities.

sion in decision-making structures (see: [Northeast Syria Social Tensions and Stability Monitoring Pilot Project May 2021](#)). HTS has sought to strengthen its nascent statelet in Idleb Governorate, but remains politically isolated and heavily dependent on aid for subsistence, with widespread poverty leading to protests (see: [Syria Update 6 December 2021](#)). Questions remain over Turkey's intentions in northern Syria; while it has seemingly backed down on threats of a broader incursion (see [Syria Update 19 October 2021](#)), tensions between it and the SDF remain high. The economic fortunes of areas controlled by the Syrian Interim Government are closely tied to those of Turkey, whose currency crisis has led purchasing power to plummet.

Responding to the Syrian aid crises

The fragmented nature of territorial control in Syria highlights the need for context-driven, localised approaches to the aid response that recognise the specific needs of the population and understand their relationship with local governmental institutions and authorities. Donors must have a clear vision for what they want to achieve and consider the risks that, without pushing for inclusivity, programming may contribute to upholding dubious governance systems that lack the capacity, or indeed the will, to tackle the myriad crises affecting the people of Syria.

The gap between available funding and that required to meet local needs has continued to widen relentlessly. With the world's attention and resources now being directed to the Ukraine crisis, funding shortages might reach unprecedented levels. As we have previously stated, the future of the donor-funded aid response depends on the adoption of approaches that acknowledge how the crisis in Syria has evolved and manage to do more with less (see: [Syria in 2022: New Aid Approaches For an Evolving Crisis](#)). Events in Ukraine should push aid actors to even more urgently adopt localised, bottom-up, and market-based resilience initiatives (see: [Syria Update 7 March 2022](#)) to set the stage for a sustainable recovery in Syria.

WHOLE OF SYRIA REVIEW



01 SYRIA, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Russia Recruiting Syrians for Urban Combat in Ukraine

On 11 March, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave the [green light](#) for “16,000 volunteers” from the Middle East to be deployed to fight in Ukraine. Even before the invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, there were indications of names of Syrians being registered for deployment (see: [Syria Update 7 February 2022](#)), and multiple recent [reports](#) have suggested ongoing [recruitment](#) processes. Russia and its allies have similarly [claimed](#) that Syrian mercenaries from armed opposition territories are being transferred in support of Ukraine.

"Give back to Russia," a trade in violence

Syrian fighters being deployed abroad is nothing new, and a reflection of their vulnerability to predation by foreign mercenary companies amid a lack of opportunities, protection, and a stable future in Syria (see: [The Syrian Economy at War: Armed Group Mobilisation as Livelihoods and Protection Strategy](#)). In the past few years, Syrians from both pro-regime and opposition groups have been recruited and sent to fight in Libya (see: [The Syria-Libya Conflict Nexus: From Brothers in Revolution to Partners in Crime](#)), in [Azerbaijan](#), and even reportedly as mercenaries to Venezuela (see: [Syria Update 12 October 2020](#)). A decade of brutal conflict in Syria has resulted in a shattered economy and chronic insecurity, leaving combat experience as one of the few marketable skills in significant demand. Although Putin claimed that volunteers are motivated by a desire to help those living in Donbas, Syrians are, in reality, being exploited to feed into a transnational mercenary system created by Russia. A key question looking ahead is the extent to which Syrian authorities, following their vocal [support](#) for the Russian invasion of Ukraine, will facilitate the deployment of fighters to Ukraine. Regardless, Syrians will continue to be pressed into the export of violence so long as job prospects, livelihoods, and stability remain out of reach at home.

“A decade of brutal conflict in Syria has resulted in a shattered economy and chronic insecurity, leaving combat experience as one of the few marketable skills in significant demand.”



02 TADMOR

Dozens of Soldiers Killed and Injured in IS Attack Near Tadmor

On 6 March, a Government of Syria military bus was [attacked](#) on a desert road near Tadmor (Palmyra) by Islamic State (IS) militants, killing at least 13 soldiers and injuring 18. This followed another [reported](#) large-scale attack during the night on Government of Syria bases near al-Sawab, east of Homs. In response, the Government of Syria [reportedly](#) stopped granting leave to its forces and ordered a mobilisation of all of its units in the Badia (Syrian desert) region. Speculations over an IS ‘resurgence’ have grown since its attack on al-Sina’a prison in Al-Hasakeh in late January (see: [Syria Update 31 January 2022](#)), and the killing of its leader by US forces in February seems to have done little to blunt its ability to carry out operations (see: [Syria Update 7 February 2022](#)).

Bombing the needle in the haystack

With the Government of Syria heavily reliant on Russian airpower to combat IS in the Badia, IS may be emboldened to carry out more attacks and raids should the war in Ukraine divert Russia attention and resources away from Syria. Russian airstrikes have so far [continued](#), with 140 recorded in March, although their counter-insurgency effectiveness is questionable — 38 militants were killed and 59 wounded by over 900 airstrikes in February. IS clearly retains significant operational capacity, though it is too early to tell whether recent attacks signal a ‘resurgence’. Notwithstanding the large-scale prison raid in al-Sina’a, its [modus operandi](#) appears to have remained the same — opportunistic hit-and-run attacks on vulnerable targets, taking advantage of favourable terrain and conditions in the Syrian desert and aiming to inflict maximum damage on its enemies. Aid actors and implementers in areas with IS presence should continue to maintain strong security and contingency plans, and be aware that IS surprise attacks remain a significant risk.



03 RUKBAN CAMP

Congressional Letter on Rukban Camp: Residents' Voices Finally Heard?

On 7 March, a bipartisan group of US lawmakers reportedly [sent a letter](#) urging the Biden administration to address “a humanitarian crisis” in Rukban camp. The camp, situated in a US-controlled ‘[deconfliction zone](#)’ along the Syrian-Iraqi-Jordanian border triangle, is effectively placed outside the purview of any single actor. Cross-line aid delivery, the only modality available to UN agencies, has been prevented by authorities in Damascus since the last delivery in [February 2019](#). [Isolated](#) in their desert surroundings, camp residents either endure harsh conditions or move towards Government-held territories, risking forced disappearance or even death. The US-backed Maghawir al-Thawra, the armed group in control of the area, has [established](#) and renovated schools in the camp, and opened a [medical point](#) with the participation of US medical staff, though this operated only for one day. Such bottom-up initiatives have been rare, however.

No easy way out

It is doubtful that the congressional letter will provide enough leverage to enforce effective humanitarian action in the camp. Opinion among US Syria experts is fragmented, with some citing the “[legal and moral responsibility](#)” to help civilians residing in an area under US control, and [others arguing](#) that it should not be the military’s job to do “civilian things”. The camp’s unique disposition is largely a factor of its geographic location and the fact that many of its residents are the families of the US-backed Maghawir al-Thawra fighters operating in the area, and therefore have limited will to leave. With Jordan sealing most of its borders with Syria, delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid is nearly impossible, even by non-UN actors. Relocating camp residents to other non-Government-controlled areas would be a formidable logistical challenge, and would require unlikely coordination among opposing actors (see: [Syria Update 13 December 2021](#)). Rukban residents are facing [increasing](#) desperation and fewer options, and aid actors likely find themselves with a limited tool kit to act amid the political indifference of major actors in the area.



04 DAMASCUS

Israeli Airstrike Kills Two Iranian Officers

On 7 March, an Israeli airstrike targeted southern areas of Damascus, killing two. The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) initially [reported](#) that two civilians were killed, but Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) subsequently [announced](#) that the casualties were two of its officers, and vowed revenge. SANA claimed that the attacks were launched from south of Beirut and the Syrian air defence had intercepted most of the missiles, which also left material damage in southern Damascus.

Russia is busy elsewhere, Israel is not

Israeli attacks on Iran-linked targets are common across Syria, as Israel considers the presence of Iranian forces and Iran-backed militias a direct threat to its security. Despite [partnering](#) with Iran militarily in propping up the Government of Syria since 2015, Russia has generally turned a blind eye to these attacks (see: [Syria Update 13 December 2021](#)). However, recent [joint Russia-Syria](#) air exercises as well as a [joint military](#) patrol in Latakia, following an Israeli airstrike on the port, have prompted [speculation](#) that Russia is signalling its dissatisfaction to Israel. Indeed, Israel has voiced [concerns](#) that the Russian-led patrol could limit its ability to carry out strikes in the country. The recent airstrike on southern Damascus was the first since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, to which Israel has provided a [tepid response](#), likely seeking to prevent disagreements over Ukraine from [undermining](#) coordination on a host of issues, including Syria. Nevertheless, the geopolitical fallout from the invasion of Ukraine and the shifting or solidifying of global alliances may lead Russia to be more inclined to support the Government of Syria, or in effect [Iran](#), in its condemnation of Israeli attacks. The Israeli strikes are a stark reminder of the multiple conflicting military interests in Syria, which remains a regional and global battleground.

“The geopolitical fallout from the invasion of Ukraine and the shifting or solidifying of global alliances may lead Russia to be more inclined to support the Government of Syria, or in effect Iran, in its condemnation of Israeli attacks.”



05 IDLEB

US Categorises HTS-affiliated Jihadi Group as 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist'

On 7 March, the US State Department [announced](#) that it was designating Katibat-al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (KTJ), an “al-Qaeda-affiliated” group that operates primarily in Idleb, as a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist”. The group was also added to the UN Security Council’s [“ISIL and Al-Qaida Sanctions List”](#), mandating UN member states to impose asset freezes, travel bans, and arms embargoes. The Uzbek-dominated KTJ was established in 2013 and [joined](#) the ranks of Jabhat al-Nusra, the precursor to HTS, in 2015. KTJ was involved in attacks on the Saint Petersburg metro in April 2017 which killed 14 passengers and injured 50 others, as well as the August 2016 suicide car bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, which wounded three people. Accordingly, the [State Department](#) has characterised KTJ as an international threat.

Testing the waters

The designation of KTJ as a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist” may reflect US intentions to test HTS’s seriousness in cooperating with the international community’s counterterrorism efforts. Although the US [listed](#) HTS as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2018 and [allocated](#) a 10 million USD reward for information about its leader Abu Muhammad al-Jolani, Washington has shown little interest in targeting the group and its leader, who is known for his frequent [public appearances](#) in Idleb. The US appears to view HTS as necessary for stability in the region and the lesser of multiple evils, particularly as the group has sought to distance itself from its previous associations with international terrorism (see: [Syria Update 14 June 2021](#)), frequently cracking down on IS and al-Qaeda in its territories. The designation of KTJ as a terrorist organisation may indicate that Washington is raising the bar for HTS’s long-standing quest for political legitimacy and delisting by demanding the elimination of a group that constitutes an integral part of its military. How HTS will deal with such pressure remains unclear. Nevertheless, given that its trajectory has been shaped by pragmatism and a desire to maintain control in Idleb at all costs, it is likely to rethink its relationship with KTJ.



06 WASHINGTON, DC

Caesar Act Waivers for Kurdish and Opposition-held Areas

Since 25 February, [reports](#) have [suggested](#) that the Biden administration will soon exempt Kurdish and opposition-held areas of northeast Syria from the Caesar Act, thus paving the way for sustained investment of the type prevented by the sanctions. The waiver will not apply to the oil and gas sectors, and will reportedly exclude Idleb Governorate, controlled by HTS, and possibly Afrin, controlled by Turkish-backed factions. The Kurdish-led [Autonomous Administration](#) and the SDF, a US ally in the war against Islamic State, have [long pushed](#) for territories under their control to be excluded from the sanctions. The waiver will mean that financial transactions taking place with entities outside of Government of Syria-controlled territories will no longer be threatened by sanctions, facilitating outside investment.

Necessary, but not sufficient, for investment

Exempting opposition-held areas of Syria from the Caesar Act would provide a more favourable business and investment environment in the region, leading to better opportunities and livelihoods for its inhabitants. Nevertheless, security will remain an issue for outside investors, given the threat of IS attacks and the risk of escalation between Government of Syria forces and the SDF (see: [Syria Update 7 March 2022](#)). In addition, certain characteristics of northeast Syria’s politico-economic landscape, namely monopolies over key commodities and the Democratic Union Party’s (PYD’s) dominance over business (see: [Syria Update 24 January 2022](#)), render the investment environment less favourable. Overall, the move may help to facilitate international trade and reduce Autonomous Administration territories’ dependence on the Syrian Government for essential goods (see: [Syria Update 6 December 2021](#)). For aid actors, the waiver should provide greater certainty and reduced operational costs in the region, without needing to rely on humanitarian exemptions, and may also open up opportunities for creative partnerships with the private sector. Any increased investment that does take place in the region, however, will take time to bear fruit — dire living conditions and economic insecurity will likely remain a pressing issue in the medium term.

OPEN SOURCE ANNEX

Open Source Annex

The Open Source Annex highlights key media reports, research, and primary documents that are not examined in the Syria Update. For a continuously updated collection of such records, searchable by geography, theme, and conflict actor – and curated to meet the needs of decision-makers – please see COAR’s comprehensive online search platform [Alexandrina](#).

Note: These records are solely the responsibility of their creators. COAR does not necessarily endorse – or confirm – the viewpoints expressed by these sources.

"SDF" Demands the Regime Withdraw its Forces from the Village of Al-Kuziliya, North of Al-Hasakeh

What does it say? Following discussions with Russian forces regarding recent clashes, the SDF demanded that the Syrian Government surrender all its checkpoints in Kozliyah, west of Tal Tamer in Al-Hasakeh Governorate, to the Tal Tamer Military Council.

Reading between the lines: Russia seeks to portray itself as a reliable source of stability for the US-backed authorities in northeast Syria, but its ability to enforce deals has always been questionable, and its credibility has not been helped by its invasion of Ukraine.

Source: Syria TV
Language: Arabic
Date: 6 March 2022

Syrians ready to face bombs to enter EU

What does it say? WhatsApp chats among dozens of Syrians hint that some of them are willing to leave for Ukraine regardless of the risks of war, with the aim of travelling to Europe from there as refugees.

Reading between the lines:

Desperate times call for desperate measures, as worsening humanitarian conditions in Syria push some to risk death for the chance of entering Europe. Nevertheless, survival does not guarantee success – hundreds of asylum seekers have been sent back to their home countries as they sought to cross the same borders.

Source: InfoMigrants
Language: English
Date: 9 March 2022

Syrian Ambassador to Tehran: June Reconstruction Conference Is Important Opportunity for Iranian Companies

What does it say? Syria’s ambassador to Iran highlighted the importance of the participation of Iranian companies at a Syria reconstruction conference to be held in June.

Reading between the lines: Despite some regional efforts toward restoring relations with Damascus, Iran is one of the few actors willing to participate in Syria’s reconstruction before

there is tangible progress toward a political solution to the conflict. Its ability to access the required funds will be determined by the outcomes of ongoing JCPOA talks.

Source: SANA
Language: Arabic
Date: 9 March 2022

Opposition seeks to take Syria's Arab League seat

What does it say? The National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces has met with Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, to discuss occupying Syria’s vacant seat in the League.

Reading between the lines: The opposition is likely trying to preempt regional normalisation with Damascus, whose return to the Arab League is still subject to discussion. The bid is unlikely to be successful, but geopolitical shifts following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine may also delay Syria’s return.

Source: Middle East Monitor
Language: English
Date: 7 March 2022

The Wartime and Post-Conflict Syria project (WPCS) is funded by the European Union and implemented through a partnership between the European University Institute (Middle East Directions Programme) and the Center for Operational Analysis and Research (COAR). WPCS will provide operational and strategic analysis to policymakers and programmers concerning prospects, challenges, trends, and policy options with respect to a mid-conflict and post-conflict Syria. WPCS also aims to stimulate new approaches and policy responses to the Syrian conflict through a regular dialogue between researchers, policymakers and donors, and implementers, as well as to build a new network of Syrian researchers who will contribute to research informing international policy and practice related to their country.

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