



Weekly Conflict Summary May 12-18, 2016

Clashes have continued in the Eastern Ghouta region of rural Damascus, despite a re affirmation of the cessation of hostilitie(CoH)at the ISSG ministerial meeting in Vienna (17 May 2016)Opposition forces, beleaguered by persistent infighting, withdrew from the town of Bzeinel(SE of Damascus, near the airpool)owing an assault by pro government forces. This development leaves opposition forceajm a Assafir nearly surrounded! This region of eastern Damascus has seen near constant fighting since the start of the CoH at the end of February.

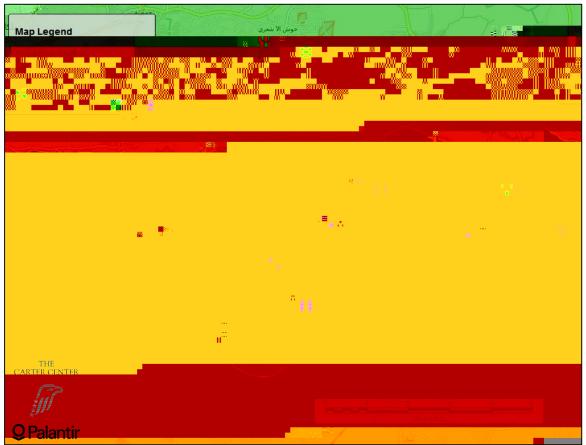


Figure1: Frontlines asof May 18, 2016.

Aleppo also saw a continuation of clashes, and remains the focal point for the majority of conflict activity throughout the country. **Fol**wing an opposition advance, pro government forces have pressured opposition forces in the southwestern suburbs of

¹ Note: Since the drafting of this repo**p**ro-government forces haveaken the town of Deir EAsafir, and continue their advance into the pocket of opposition control in the area.

Rashidin and Khan Touman, but have yet to advance to their former positions. Airstrikes have continued on opposition positions throughout **chuof** Aleppo city as well as the northern A'zaz **pocket**. Additionally, opposition forces have pushed eastward against ISIS positions to the east of A'zaz city.

In central Syria, ISIS has continued to pressgoovernment forces at the Tiyas Air Base nearthe Shaer gas fields, which it captured last week. Additionally, ISIS has engaged forces in the nearby Jazal gas field northwest of Tad(malmyra) Pro-government forces have initiated a counteorffensive against ISIS positions in Shaer.

In the east othe country, an ISIS offensive against government positions in and around Deir EzZorcity has made limited gains, and succeeded in capturing at least one checkpoint. Government forces have responded with aerial bombardments on ISIS positions.

Conclusio

Despite the reassertion of the CoH, opposition and porovernment forces remain locked in battle in key areas throughout the country. Taket that these backand-forth front line changes have remained in relatively isolated areas offers hope thaty the can be interrupted, but the risk of spillover will only increase with time.