

WEEKLY CONFLICT SUMMARY | 13 - 19 April 2020

SYRIA SUMMARY

NORTHWEST | There were reduced levels of shelling exchanges among the warring parties. Tensions increased between Hayyat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Turkish-backed opposition armed groups after a series of raids and arrests. Later, the groups released prisoners to defuse tensions. Protests were held against the Turkish-Russian joint patrols on the M4 highway, and against HTS's decision to open up a crossing with territories under the Government of Syria (GoS) control.

SOUTH & CENTRAL | Attacks against GoS-aligned personnel increased this week in Dara'a Governorate, with multiple assassinations and attacks on

NORTHWEST SYRIA

The current reporting week saw reduced levels of shelling exchanges in northwest Syria. GoS-aligned forces engaged in 27 artillery exchanges in 21 locations.² Most of the artillery exchanges took place against HTS-dominated territory within the Idlib Governorate, with one striking Haddada within Latakia Governorate and one striking Ankawi in Hama Governorate. GoS-aligned forces clashed with armed opposition groups on the Kafr Nobol frontlines in the countryside of Idlib Governorate on 13 April.

Tensions emerged on 13 April between HTS and Turkish-backed opposition

Protests erupted after HTS announced plans to open a crossing with GoS-controlled territory. On 17 April, HTS announced the opening of a new crossing which would have connected Sarmin and Saraqab, the latter of which is controlled by GoS.³ Civilians protested against the crossing over fears of aiding the GoS, of spreading COVID-19 and normalizing relations with GoS.⁴ HTS attempted to disperse protesters on 18 April. After public pressure, HTS delayed the opening of the crossing.⁵

During the reporting week, Turkish-backed factions clashed with the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) as well local militias. On 14 April, Turkish-backed opposition groups fought with the YPG in Kafr Khasher in Aleppo Governorate, near YPG-dominated areas. On 15 April, Turkish-backed opposition factions clashed with members of the Jarablus Communal militia. Fighting erupted after a dispute between a Turkish-backed faction and a local family escalated.⁶

SOUTH & CENTRAL SYRIA

There were increased attacks against GoS-aligned personnel this week in Dara'a Governorate. Some government officials and civilians accused of aiding government security services

