

## Weekly Conflict Summary

October 19-25, 2017

Pro-government forces and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF, a Kurdish-led coalition) continued to advance through ISIS territory. While pro-government forces advanced in Deir Ezzor and around Mayadin, SDF advanced further east to capture oil fields and territory around a tributary to the Euphrates. Turkish

## **Fight against ISIS**

Demining and security operations continue in the city of Raqqa following its capture by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). YPG forces have been photographed painting Raqqa in Kurdish colors amid their controversial dedication of the victory in Raqqa to Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The SDF continued efforts towards ensuring that Raqqa will be controlled by the Raqqa Civilian Council with a local police force providing security. The police force will be set up with help from the US-

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recaptured by HTS. Pro-government forces were able to capture the town of Jeb Abiyad and advanced to the outskirts of Um Miyal before being pushed back by an HTS counter-offensive on the same front.

Pro-government forces have been sighted moving in eastern Hama following the surprise offensive on Jeb Abiyad. Many of these movements have been towards Abu Thohur military airport, for which an offensive could possibly include additional forces from southern Aleppo.

### **Opposition developments**

On Oct. 24, leaders of FSA factions in the Euphrates Shield area signed an agreement with the opposition's Syrian Interim Government in the presence of Turkish stakeholders to begin the process of "ending the factionalism" of groups in northern Aleppo. This involves the reorganization of the first three corps of the Syrian National Army over a series of stages. The agreement additionally stipulated that all border crossings would be transferred to the control of the Syrian Interim Government, which would oversee distribution of all proceeds from the crossings to the Syrian Interim Government, local armed groups, and local councils.

The Turkish military has expanded into opposition-held territory on the northern frontiers of the so-called Idleb pocket. In doing so, Turkish forces

