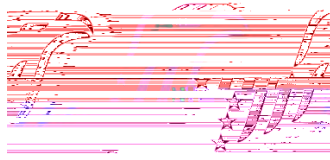


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Weekly Conflict Summary
March 1-7, 2018

bombardment of Eastern Ghouta continues, despite ceasefire attempts and UN Security Council Resolution 2401. Humanitarian aid deliveries have been repeatedly hindered by continuous violence, and have only delivered a fraction of the food and medical supplies agreed upon by all parties. The Turkish-led Operation Olive Branch achieved new gains during this reporting period. Turkish and allied opposition forces have pushed towards the city of Afrin from both the north and south, forcing the US and its Kurdish allies to declare a halt to ground operations against ISIS in eastern Syria.



Figure 1 - Areas of control in Syria by March 7, with arrows indicating fronts of advances during the reporting period

Despite a Russian plan for daily humanitarian pauses for the provision of aid and medical evacuations in opposition-held Eastern Ghouta, violence has continued throughout the reporting period. The bombardment of Damascus also continued from Eastern Ghouta. Russian officials have encouraged the use of humanitarian corridors for civilians to escape from Eastern Ghouta, however, residents do not trust that these corridors are safe, both due to mistrust in Russian and pro-government forces and fears that the Jaysh al-Islam might shell the corridors.

After much debate and careful planning, a UN convoy of 46 trucks crossed the siege lines into Eastern Ghouta, where about 400,000 civilians remain besieged. Before entering Eastern Ghouta, though, pro-government officials removed critical health supplies aboard the convoy, including trauma kits, surgical equipment, dialysis sessions and insulin. The limited delivery that succeeded in reaching Eastern Ghouta was turned back because of clashes with only half of its food delivered. The UN has described the situation

humanitarian law and cease targeting civilian areas in both Eastern Ghouta and Damascus.

Figure 2 - Situation in Eastern Ghouta by March 7

Pro-government militias from Aleppo have arrived at the Eastern Ghouta front, joining

Afrin

Though UN Security Council Resolution 2401 covers the whole of Syria, Turkish officials have largely ignored the ceasefire, saying it does not apply to their operations in Afrin. Despite ongoing fighting, the