

Russia again voiced growing frustration with the situation in the Idleb area, while conflict was further reduced between Hayyat Tahrir al Sham (HTS) and the National Liberation Front (NLF).

Following an improvised explosive device (IED) detonation in Damascus in the previous reporting week, a second explosion took place in the central Adawi neighborhood of the capital this week.

US backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) began a two-pronged offensive against the remaining

that this activity heavily contrasts to Syrian army activity against the Idleb pocket. At least 145 incidents involving rockets or artillery were recorded this week, and resulted in three notable civilian population movements from Al Latamna, Kafr Zeita and Morek towns on 25 January (Figure 2).

The

Despite this activity, notable ISIS activity continued and even resulted in SDF forces [withdrawing](#) temporarily from Baghuz Fawqami village after heavy clashes with the group. Elsewhere, further signs of ISIS resilience and capability were also seen after the 16 January [explosion](#) against US personnel in Menbej city. On 21 January, an ISIS suicide vehicle borne IED detonated in the vicinity of a joint Kurdish Security Force / US patrol near the 47th Bridge west of Shadadah town in southern Hassakeh governorate. At least five local casualties were recorded.

Explosive events are not uncommon in the Shadadah District, with at least 32 ISIS-linked IED incidents recorded in the past 12 months. However, these have exclusively involved IEDs targeting local military actors, with this week's event the first reported case against US forces in the area. The ongoing ISIS activity in the northeast continues to highlight the enduring threat posed by ISIS, as well as their considerable capacity to launch attacks in seemingly pacified areas of the country.

The watch list outlines various dynamics that The Carter Center is monitoring in the coming weeks:

- Ongoing internal dynamics within the Idleb pocket, especially the worsening of relations between HTS and the NLF,