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WEEKLY CONFLICT SUMMARY | 29 APRIL – 5 MAY 2019

WHOLE OF SYRIA SUMMARY

x NORTHWEST | The situation in the Idleb pocket deteriorated this week
with government forces advancing just after the reporting period ended.
Elsewhere, a temporary upsurge in conflict was recorded in the Tel Rifaat
pocket.

x SOUTH & CENTRAL | Attacks against Syrian government-aligned
personnel increased in the south, with three attacks recorded in Quneitra
and As Sweida Governorates. Further east, the government announced an
anti-ISIS operation along the Iraqi border as ISIS attacked its forces near
Sokhneh and Deir Ez Zor.

x NORTHEAST | Protest were held in several cities in Deir Ez Zor
Governorate. Unexploded ordnance and left-over landmines were
detonated.

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NORTHWEST SYRIA1
Following the previous week’s spike in conflict, the situation in the Idleb pocket
continued to deteriorate. A significant rise in Syrian and/or Russian airstrikes
were documented this week, with 124 events recorded, contrasting to the 39
recorded in the first three weeks of April. This activity included airstrikes that
struck fortified berms, likely to breach HTS frontline positions in the southwest,
especially near Kurnaz town. Aerial activity this week switched from focusing on
internal areas of the enclave to increasingly affecting frontline positions in the
southwest portions of the pocket.
Syrian government barrel bombings in the northwest also increased this week,
with at least 106 events recorded between 29 April and 5 May. This activity largely
affected the Al Mar’a and Suqaylabiyeh districts of Idleb and Hama, which received
75% (80) of the recorded events in Idleb and Hama governorates this week.
2 It
represented the first barrel bombings on the enclave since September 2018 and is
typically associated with preparations for an assault.
Further arrivals of large numbers of specialist government troops and equipment
were also recorded along frontlines this week. The Tiger Forces’ Tarmeeh group3
arrived in the Madiq Castle area, while Russian forces brought military
engineering and logistical re-enforcements to the Hiyalin village area in northern
Hama. Rumors of Iranian-aligned militias also arriving to the frontlines were
circulated.
Government shelling focusing heavily on the Idleb pocket also continued (154
documented events), despite two more official Turkish patrols this week (Figure
2). Of note, an artillery round impacted a Turkish observation post near the town
of Jebal Shashab, the first such impact since the position was established in early
2018.

1 Figure 1 denotes dominant actors’ control and influence. Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and Iraqi militias
maintain a presence in Syrian government dominated territory. Non-state organized armed groups

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the Idleb pocket north of Kurnaz town, taking Tal Othman hill from HTS. The
situation remains fluid at the time of writing