



Spotlight on Global Jihad (July 20-26, 2017)



Main events of the week

■ Following is an overview of the situation in Syria:

- As part of the implementation of the de-escalation agreement, Russian military police arrived in **southern Syria** to serve as a separation force between the Syrian forces and the rebel organizations. In the meantime, an additional de-escalation agreement was reached in the area **east of Damascus** (eastern Ghouta).
- **In Al-Raqqah**, fighting is proceeding slowly **in view of ISIS's persistent fighting**. SDF forces are advancing slowly in the Old City but are still subject to attacks in neighborhoods that have ostensibly already been taken over.
- **In the Idlib area, the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (formerly the Al-Nusra Front) has won a victory in the fighting against Ahrar al-Sham**, the largest Islamic rebel organization. Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham operatives occupied two border crossings between Syria and Turkey **and took control of the city of Idlib**. Their victories **position the Idlib area as the most significant territory under the control of Al-Qaeda's branch in Syria**. This is liable to **make it easier for Russia and the Syrian regime to exert massive pressure on it when the time comes** (for the time being, other areas are strategic priorities for Syria and Russia).
- **In the Arsal ridges on the Lebanese-Syrian border**, Hezbollah launched a campaign against the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham. **Hezbollah, which brought large-scale forces to the battle** (some 5,000 fighters, according to the Lebanese media) recorded achievements and took over **most of the areas that had been under the control of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham**. Hezbollah intends to continue mopping up the Lebanese-Syrian border towards the ISIS-controlled Ras Baalbek and Al-Qaa ridges (north of Arsal).
- **Syrian forces continued to advance to the city of Sukhnah**. **In the ITIC's assessment, this was done with the aim of proceeding towards Deir al-Zor, in the Euphrates Valley**. Syrian forces under the command of Suheil Hassan are advancing to Sukhnah from Al-Rasafah (north of Sukhnah), while a Syrian force is advancing to the city from Palmyra (southeast of Sukhnah).

- **In Iraq, there is still no evidence of a significant Iraqi or international effort to rehabilitate the city of Mosul**. The humanitarian situation in the city is difficult, especially in the western part. Meanwhile, there are clashes between ISIS and the Iraqi security forces in various parts of Iraq, **at this stage at a low level of intensity**. In the ITIC's assessment, after a period of reorganization **ISIS will intensify its attacks against Iraqi civilians (Shiites) and against the Iraqi security forces**. Continuing difficulties in the rehabilitation of Mosul are also liable to **increase support for ISIS among the Sunni Muslim population**.

Russia and the United States

De-escalation agreement in southwestern Syria

■ The de-escalation agreement in southwestern Syria, which went into effect on July 9, 2017, was maintained, with the exception of isolated violations on a daily basis. As part of the measures to implement the agreement, **around 400 Russian MPs reportedly arrived in southern Syria** and are staying in a base **north of Daraa**. The Russian MPs are supposed to serve as a separation force on the lines of contact between the Syrian forces and the rebel organizations. According to reports, the Russian separation force has already begun to patrol the area (Al-Arabiya al-Hadath, Orient, July 19, 2017).

■ At the same time, the Russian Foreign Ministry announced that in the wake of the de-escalation agreement in southwestern Syria, **a de-escalation agreement had been reached in the area of eastern Ghouta** (east of Damascus) as well. **The agreement entered into effect on the afternoon of Saturday, July 22, 2017**. The need for an agreement arose after recent clashes in the region between Syrian rebel groups and Islamist rebel groups, including the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (formerly the Al-Nusra Front). According to the agreement, the borders of the de-escalation zone will be determined and supervisory forces will be deployed in the area. In addition, routes were established to provide civilians with humanitarian aid and safe passage. According to the Russians, the first humanitarian aid convoy will be sent to the area in the next few days, and casualties will be evacuated (Russian Defense Ministry's Facebook page, July 22, 2017).

■ Following are some Russian statements about the **de-escalation agreements**:

- According to **Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov**, the Russians have managed to bring about an end to the hostilities between the Syrian government and the rebel groups (the so-called Patriotic Opposition) through talks with various parties. Thus, the Russians have enabled the Syrian forces to direct their efforts to fighting the terrorists. According to Lavrov, the Syrian government did not prevent Russia from taking this course of action, out of a general understanding that **“the first priority is fighting against ISIS”** (Russian Foreign Ministry website, July 21, 2017).
- **A senior Russian Foreign Ministry source told Izvestia that Washington had tried to protect Israeli interests** during its consultations with Russia on the

establishment of the de-escalation zone (in southwestern Syria). According to the same source, **the main objective of the talks was to prevent the establishment of a Shiite foothold in the Syrian Golan Heights.** The source added that **Washington was also interested in preventing the transfer of weapons and ammunition along the Tehran-Baghdad-Damascus-Beirut route** (TASS News Agency, July 21, 2017).

- **A Russian military-diplomatic source told Izvestia** that during the consultations between Russia, the United States and the Jordanian army, an agreement was reached regarding a **de-escalation zone on the Syrian-Jordanian border.** According to the agreement, **all non-Syrian units would withdraw to a distance of 30 km from of the Syrian-Jordanian border.** The non-Syrian units include **Iraqi militias, Hezbollah, Iranian military personnel, and foreign fighters from several other countries** (TASS News Agency, July 21, 2017).

Articles in the US media about the strategy towards ISIS

■ Following are the highlights of two articles published in the American media about the **US strategy towards ISIS and towards US involvement in Syria:**

- **The Daily Beast**, an American news website, published an article revealing unclassified portions of a classified “strategy document” **presenting the current strategy of the United States towards ISIS.** According to the article, the current strategy is reminiscent of the policy adopted by the Obama administration, and the difference between them is “purely linguistic.” According to the article, **the strategy preserves the policy of operating in conjunction with local allies.** Some of goals that were set: **to protect the U.S. homeland and Americans from ISIS attacks; defeat ISIS’s core in Iraq and Syria; degrade its branches globally; disrupt its networks; and neutralize its narrative.** The American strategy now focuses on the presence of ISIS in Syria, and only as a secondary goal does it deal with ISIS’s branches in countries such as Libya and Afghanistan (The Daily Beast, July 18, 2017).

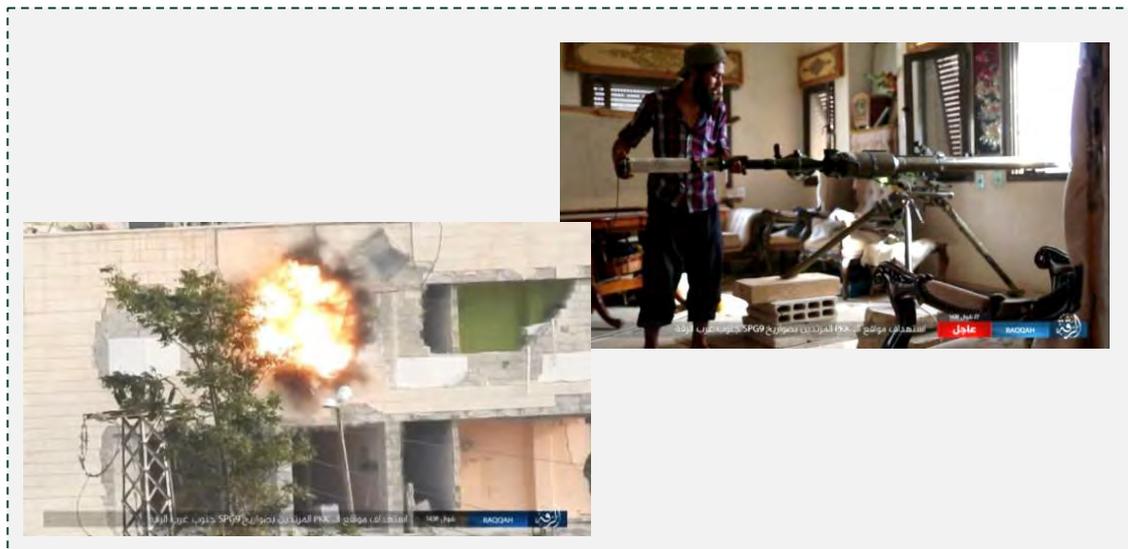
- The Washington Post reported that the Trump administration had announced the **end of the “covert program” led by the CIA to arm and train moderate Syrian rebels fighting the Assad regime.** According to senior government officials, the decision was made about a month ago after President Trump

consulted with the head of the CIA and with his national security advisor. After the termination of the program, **US involvement in Syria will consist of carrying out airstrikes against ISIS and supplying weapons and arms to the Kurdish rebel force, which is advancing towards ISIS's strongholds in Al-Raqqah and along the Euphrates River.** It is estimated that **this decision reflects President Trump's desire to find ways to expand cooperation with Russia in Syria** (The Washington Post, July 19, 2017). The spokesmen for the National Security Council and the CIA declined to comment on the report.

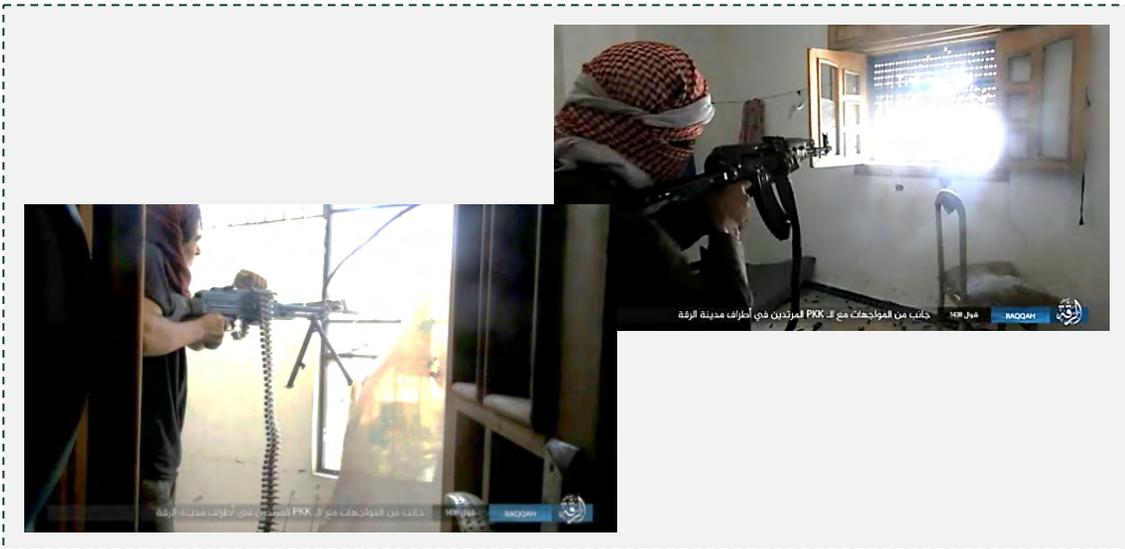
Main developments in Syria

The campaign to take over Al-Raqqah

■ Fighting continues in Al-Raqqah between the SDF forces, with US and Coalition air support, and ISIS operatives. The SDF forces advance slowly in view of the attacks by ISIS, **which continues to fight fiercely.** This week, the fighting focused on the neighborhood of Al-Yarmouk, on the outskirts of southwest Al-Raqqah, and on two neighborhoods in the northwestern part of the city. **The fighting to take over the Old City continued. The SDF forces reportedly took over 50% of its territory** (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 22, 2017).



Right: Launching an anti-tank rocket at an SDF outpost in southwest Al-Raqqah. Left: The rocket hits its target (Haqq, July 21, 2017)



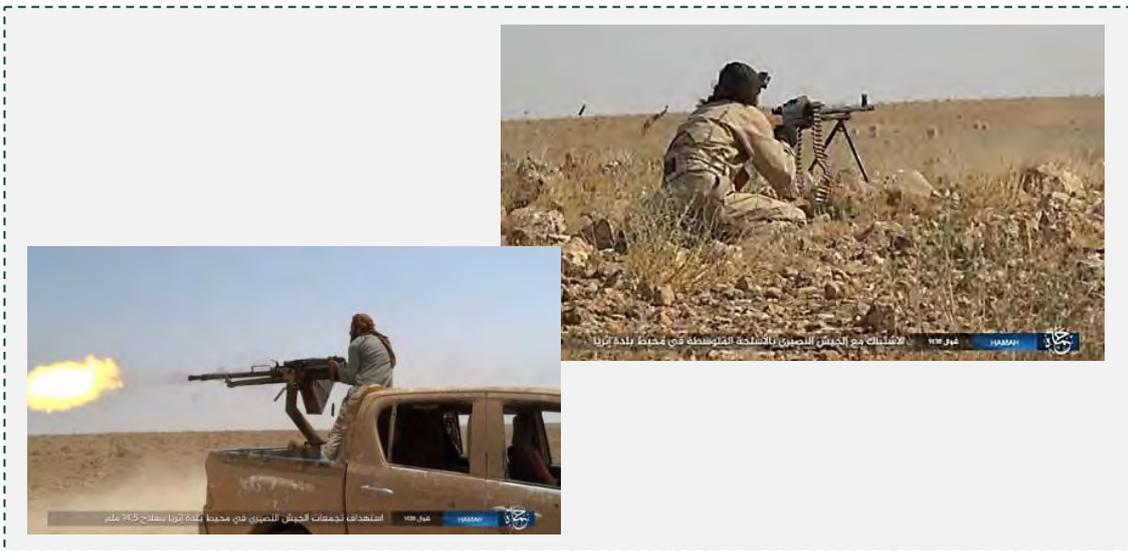
ISIS operatives fire at the SDF forces on the outskirts of Al-Raqqah (Haqq, July 20, 2017)

Mopping up the rural area northeast of Homs

■ Near the town of **Ithriya** and in the rural area northeast of Homs, there were clashes between the forces of the Syrian regime and militias supporting it, and ISIS. In an attack by ISIS against the Syrian forces **east of Ithriya**, **Jawdat Ali Suleiman**, a Syrian Army officer in the rank of *Amid* (Brigadier General), was reportedly killed (Twitter, July 22, 2017). There were also clashes in the area of **Salamiyah**, northeast of Homs.



The town of Salamiyah (1) and the town of Ithriya (2) (Google Maps)



ISIS operatives fighting against the Syrian forces in the area of Ithriya (Haqq, July 20, 2017)

The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham establishes its presence in the Idlib area

■ In the Idlib area, there were battles between operatives of Ahrar Al-Sham (the largest Islamic rebel organization) and the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (formerly the Al-Nusra Front).¹ The battles focused on the area of the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing, north of Idlib, which until recently had been held by Ahrar Al-Sham. The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham drove Ahrar Al-Sham operatives out of the crossing, and the Turkish government closed it. On July 23, 2017, the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham managed to take control of Idlib after the Ahrar Al-Sham operatives had withdrawn. According to a high-ranking source in the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham, the organization intends to reinstate civilian administration in Idlib in the next few days (Dimashq Al-Aan, July 24, 2017).

■ During the fighting, the Ahrar Al-Sham operatives lost control of the compound near the Bab Al-Hawa crossing, and their operatives in the area turned themselves in to the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (Khotwa, July 20, 2017). Following that, it was reported that an agreement had been reached to hand over the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing to the civilian authorities (Khotwa, July 20, 2017). Under the agreement, Ahrar Al-Sham evacuated its operatives from the border crossing. The Syrian media reported that 450 Ahrar Al-Sham

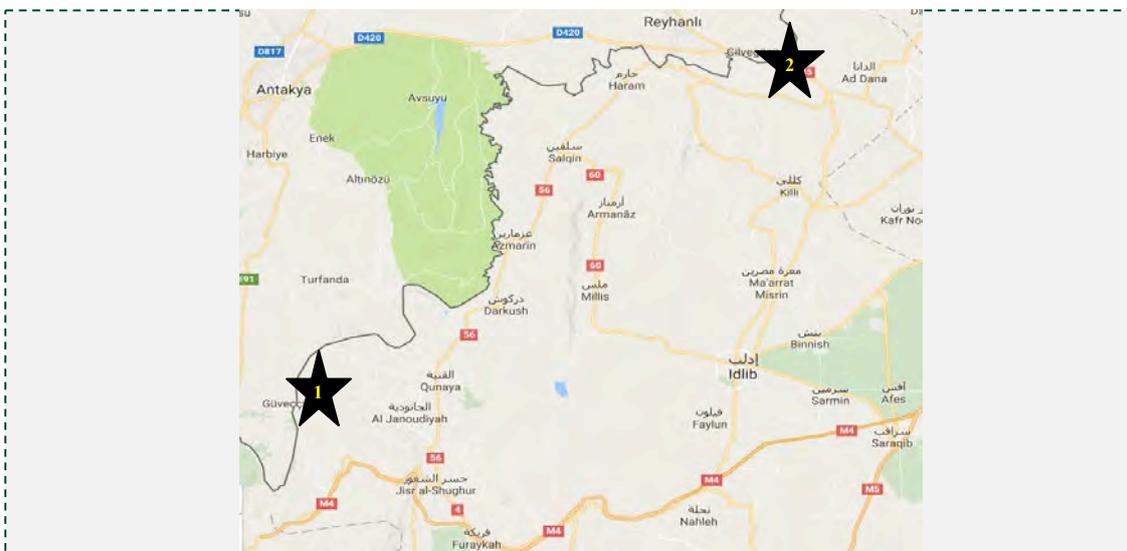
¹The Ahrar Al-Sham movement was established in the beginning of the civil war in Syria, following the unification of several Islamic rebel organizations. The center of power of this organization is in the Idlib area, and therefore it competes there over control with the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham. Until recently, the organization controlled the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing with Turkey, which was a source of revenue and through which weapons were transferred to it.

operatives were transferred, through the Bab Al-Hawa crossing, to the city of Jarabulus (Dimashq Al-Aan, July 24, 2017)².



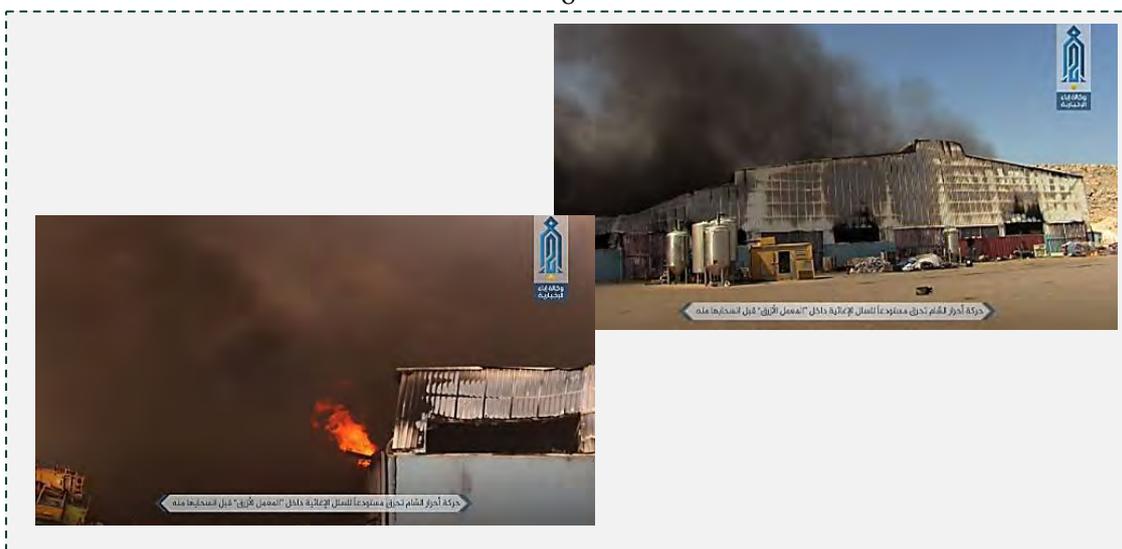
The Bab Al-Hawa crossing (website of the Bab Al-Hawa crossing, July 25, 2017)

■ On July 23, 2017, operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham took control of the unofficial border crossing of Khirbat Al-Joz, about 40 km west of Idlib. This border crossing was previously manned by Ahrar Al-Sham operatives, who retreated from it (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 24, 2017). Following these incidents, **the Turkish government closed the Bab Al-Hawa and Khirbat Al-Joz border crossings** (Al-Jisr Channel, July 24, 2017).

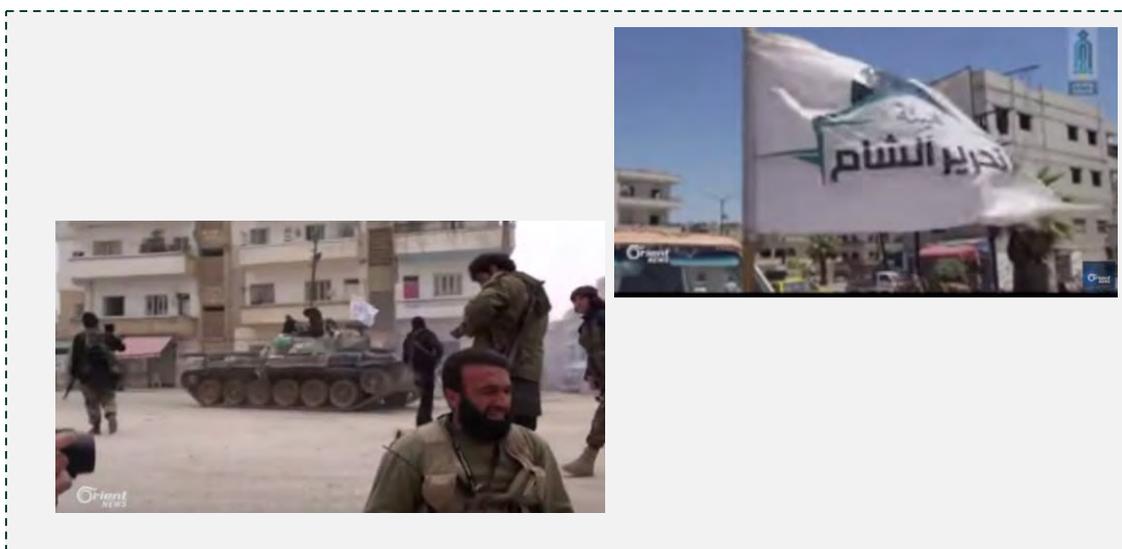


Khirbat Al-Joz crossing (1), Bab Al-Hawa crossing (2) (Google Maps)

²Jarabulus is situated near the Syrian-Turkish border, in the Turkish control zone west of the Euphrates River.



Food warehouse in the Blue Factory compound near the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing, which was set on fire by the Ahrar Al-Sham operatives before they had withdrawn, leaving the area for the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham operatives (Twitter account of Ibaa News Agency, July 21, 2017).



Right: Flag of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham flying in Idlib (Orient News, July 23, 2017). Left: Operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham in Idlib (Orient News, July 23, 2017)

■ On July 23, 2017, a car bomb exploded in Idlib. As a result, over 15 civilians and operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham were killed and wounded. Many vehicles were burned, and buildings at the scene sustained heavy damage. The car bomb exploded at a staging area of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham in the city (Qasiyoun, July 24, 2017). On July 24, 2017, two people accused of being involved in the car bomb attack in Idlib were executed (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 25, 2017).



The scene of the car bomb explosion in Idlib (Qasiyoun, July 24, 2017)

■ In view of the fighting in the area, an audiotape was released in the voice of **Sheikh Mohammad Naji (Abu al-Yakzan al-Masri, i.e., the Egyptian)**, one of the senior clerics in the military wing of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham. Sheikh Mohammad Naji says in the tape that in accordance with the decision of **Hashem al-Sheikh (Abu Jaber), commander of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham**, killing the operatives of Ahrar Al-Sham is permitted. In his words, “If [the operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham] can receive from [the operatives of Ahrar Al-Sham] the control in the checkpoints only by killing them, then they should shoot them in the head” (Haqq, July 22, 2017; Andrew Cox YouTube account, July 21, 2017; GIIMedia YouTube account, July 21, 2017).



Sheikh Abu al-Yakzan the Egyptian in the audiotape (GIIMedia YouTube account, July 21, 2017)

■ **In recent weeks, we have witnessed violent power struggles on the control of the Idlib area, where the main military power of the rebel organizations is concentrated**(including local forces which were transferred there from other fighting zones, based on agreements with the Syrian regime). At this stage, it seems that **the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham**(a coalition led by operatives of the former Al-Nusra Front) **is consolidating its presence in the area and the other rebel organizations, mainly Ahrar Al-Sham, are becoming weaker.** In the first stage, which began in the previous weeks, the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham conducted a large-scale **military operation against ISIS operatives in the Idlib area, which had ended successfully (many ISIS operatives were killed or detained).** The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham now continues its military activity **against the organization of Ahrar Al-Sham, which enjoys Turkish support. At this stage, the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham enjoys successes in the Idlib area (in contrast to its setbacks in the other arenas, including the Arsal area, on the border between Lebanon and Syria, see below).**

■ In the ITIC's assessment, if the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham succeeds in enforcing its rule over the other rebel organizations and consolidating its dominance in the Idlib area, this may eventually be a Pyrrhic victory. For this area will clearly become the most significant area controlled by the Al-Qaeda branch in Syria, and because of this the Syrian regime and Russia are liable to find it easier to concentrate massive military pressure against it when the time comes (today, there are other areas at the top of the strategic priority list of the Syrian regime and Russia, including the Damascus area, Deir ez-Zor and the area of the Syrian-Iraqi border, southern Syria, and the area of the Syrian-Lebanese border).

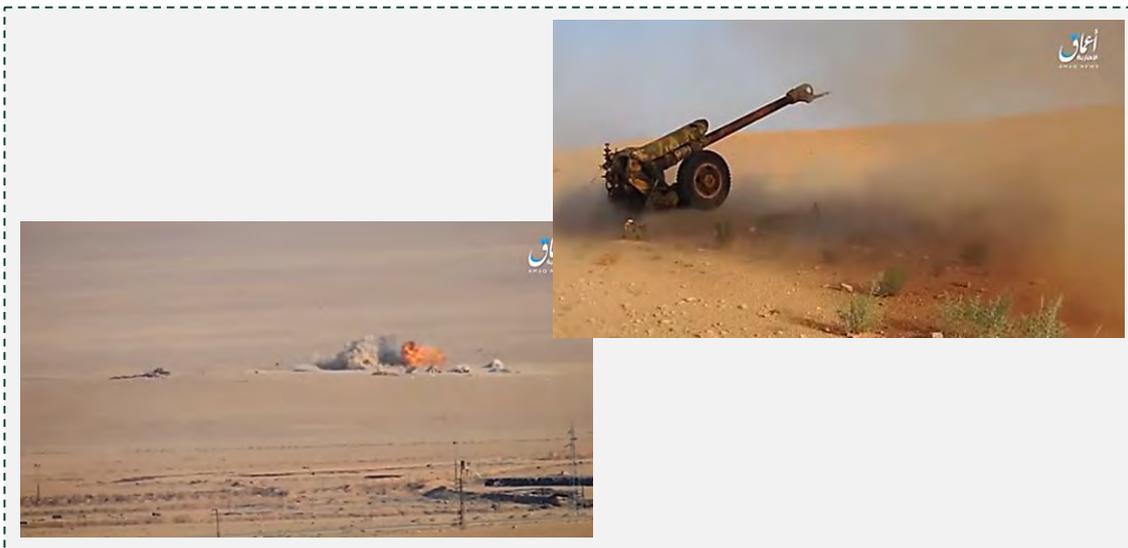
Palmyra area

■ **During the passing week, the Syrian forces under Suheil Hassan's command continued to advance towards the city of Sukhnah from the north.** The Syrian troops are reportedly **at a distance of about 10 km from the city, which is held by ISIS.** The Syrian forces reportedly advance to Sukhnah **from Rasafah and intend to encircle ISIS operatives in the area west of Sukhnah** (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, July 15, 2017). This military effort is carried out at the same time with an effort from Palmyra, **southeast of Sukhnah. The takeover of Sukhnah will prepare the ground for the continued advance of the Syrian forces towards Deir ez-Zor.**



Palmyra (1), the Aarak oil field (2), the Al-Hail oil field (3), Sukhnah (4), Deir ez-Zor (5), the town of Rasafah (6) (Google Maps)

- In the meantime, fighting continues in the area of the Aarak and Al-Hail oil and gas fields (northeast of Palmyra). ISIS released a video showing its operatives firing artillery at a Syrian Army tent camp east of the Aarak oil and gas field. The video shows direct hits (Haqq, July 22, 2017).



ISIS artillery fire at the Syrian Army troops east of the Aarak oil and gas field (Haqq, July 22, 2017)

Hezbollah campaign to mop up the ridges dominating Arsal

■ **On July 21, 2017**, Hezbollah launched a **large-scale campaign against the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham** (formerly the Al-Nusra Front). The attack is carried out in the border area between Lebanon and Syria (the Qalamoun Mountains) and focuses on **the ridges dominating the town of Arsal**, in the northern Bekaa Valley. So far, **Hezbollah has had achievements, and most of the territories held by the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham were taken over by Hezbollah (without significant resistance by the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham).**

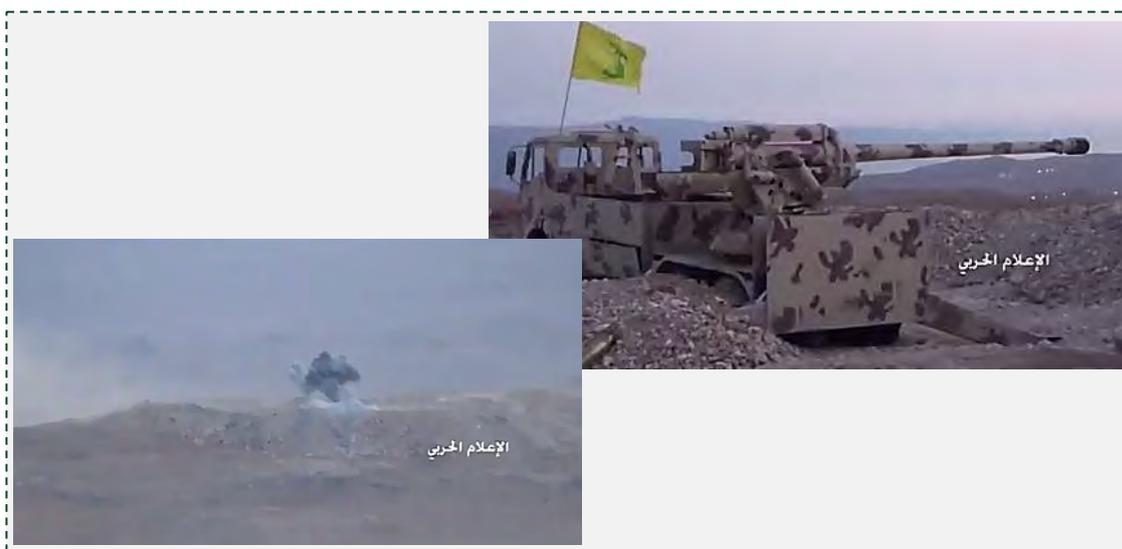
■ **Hezbollah asserts that the campaign is being waged to defend the eastern border of Lebanon.** According to **Sheikh Naim Qassem**, deputy secretary general of Hezbollah, the campaign in the ridges of Arsal represents defense of the eastern border of Lebanon and is part of a sequence of attacks that began in the **liberation of [the southern] Qalamoun [Mountains]** (the border between Syria and Lebanon, northwest of Damascus) and continued in the liberation of Zabadani, northwest of Damascus (Al-Ahed, July 22, 2017). **According to estimates, Hezbollah assigned about 5,000 fighters to the campaign. The Lebanese Army** did not participate in the fighting, but the attack was carried out **in coordination with it.** The Lebanese Army closed all the crossings leading to the town of Arsal to prevent terrorist operatives from fleeing to Lebanon (Al-Nashra, July 21, 2017).



The Qalamoun Mountain ridge along the Syrian-Lebanese border (marked with a dotted line). The town of Zabadani (1), the southern part of the ridge and the town of Al-Qusayr in the north, were taken over by Hezbollah and the Syrian forces during the civil war. The main fighting is conducted now in the ridges dominating the town of Arsal (2), a jihadi Sunni stronghold in Lebanese territory which Hezbollah has yet to mop up (Google Maps)

- After several days of fighting, **Hezbollah seems to record successes in the campaign**. According to the Lebanese newspaper Al-Mayadeen affiliated with Hezbollah, **Hezbollah has managed to liberate about 90% of the territories controlled by the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham** (Al-Mayadeen, July 23, 2017). **Operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham fled towards the contact lines of the area held by ISIS** (Al-Nashra, July 24, 2017). Among the fleeing operatives was **Abu Talha al-Ansari**, a senior commander in the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham who fled together with thirty of his men (Al-Nashra, July 23, 2017).
- **Hezbollah reportedly uses drones in the fighting**:The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham reported that it had downed a Hezbollah drone on the western Qalamoun ridge (Khotwa News Agency, July 25, 2017). The Syrian media reported that **the Hezbollah forces encircled the positions of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham in the Arsal ridges** and took control of key areas along the supply line between Syria and the Arsal ridges (Syrian Army Spokesperson's Office, July 23, 2017).
- The Syrian and Lebanese media reported that Hezbollah decided to end the campaign **by a decisive military victory**, with no negotiations. Hezbollah operations headquarters reported that **the campaign was close to its end** and called on the armed operatives that remained in the Arsal ridges to lay down their arms and turn themselves in. At the same time, Hezbollah began preparations for press tours in the liberated areas. Later, Hezbollah intends to attack **the areas controlled by ISIS in**

the ridges of Ras Baalbek and Al-Qaa (north of Aرسال). Hezbollah expects the fighting in these areas to be easier since ISIS's power is inferior to that of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (Al-Jumhuriya, July 25, 2017).



Right: Gun mounted on a Hezbollah truck fires artillery at outposts of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham in the area of Aرسال. Left: Hitting an outpost of Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham operatives (Twitter; Syrian Army Spokesperson's Office, July 21, 2017)



Hezbollah operatives fighting in the Aرسال area (Syrian Army Spokesperson's Office; Al-Alam, July 24, 2017)

Main developments in Iraq

The situation in Mosul after its liberation

- More than two weeks after the end of the campaign to liberate Mosul, **no significant effort, either Iraqi or international, to rehabilitate the city and address its humanitarian predicament is evident. The humanitarian situation in Mosul is grave, especially in the western part of the city, which has been**

completely destroyed and there are neither infrastructures nor any basic living conditions for the inhabitants. For the time being, residents of west Mosul, gradually returning there, try to find housing solutions in the eastern part. As the city bridges have been destroyed, moving between the two sides of the city is possible only by pontoon bridges set up by the Iraqi security forces (Nineveh Information Center, July 22, 2017).



Right: Debris of a street in west Mosul. Left: Pontoon bridge on the Tigris, connecting the two parts of the city (Nineveh Information Center, July 22, 2017)



Displaced residents return to their homes (Nineveh Information Center, July 22, 2017).

■ Since the rehabilitation of Mosul has not begun yet, the Iraqi activity is currently focused on **the attempt to raise funds from the international community for its rehabilitation.** According to the announcement of Iranian Industry Minister Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, **Iran** is ready to assist the Iraqi government to repair the water and electricity infrastructures and assist in the construction of public

buildings (Al-Mayadeen, July 16, 2017). **Germany** announced that it would allocate €100 million for the rehabilitation of the city (Al-Aan Channel, July 25, 2017). **Turkey** expressed its willingness to assist in rebuilding the city without mentioning specifics (Al-Alam, July 20, 2017).

■ ISIS's propaganda machine continues to **present ISIS's defeat in Mosul as an achievement**. This week as well, ISIS released an infographic glorifying its achievements in the fighting against the Iraqi security forces. According to the infographic, during the nine months of fighting, over 11,700 fighters of the Iraqi security forces were killed, and more than 50,000 fighters were wounded (Haqq, July 22, 2017).



ISIS operatives captured while attempting to flee Mosul, dressed in women's clothes (Al-Aan Channel, July 23, 2017)

Fighting in other areas in Iraq

■ Even after the liberation of Mosul, fighting continued in various sites in Iraq, albeit at low intensity:

- **The environs of Mosul:** Iraqi police announced that the Iraqi forces had taken over the village of Imam Gharbi, about 70 km south of Mosul, which was under ISIS control (Reuters, July 20, 2017).

- **Tal Afar:** The Iraqi Air Force attacked ISIS's ammunition depots west of Tal Afar (Al-Sumaria, July 22, 2017). An Iraqi Army officer reported that four Popular Mobilization fighters were killed and another was wounded in an attack carried out by dozens of ISIS operatives against a Popular Mobilization outpost near Tal Afar in northern Iraq (Anatolia, July 18, 2017).

- **Fallujah:** A car bomb exploded at the western entrance to the city of Fallujah. At least three members of the Iraqi security forces were killed (Al-Sumaria, July 24, 2017).



The scene of the car bomb explosion (Al-Aan Channel, July 24, 2017)

- **Rutba:** ISIS attacked Iraqi Army outposts east and west of Rutba (Haqq, July 20, 2017; Al-Sawarim, July 21, 2017).



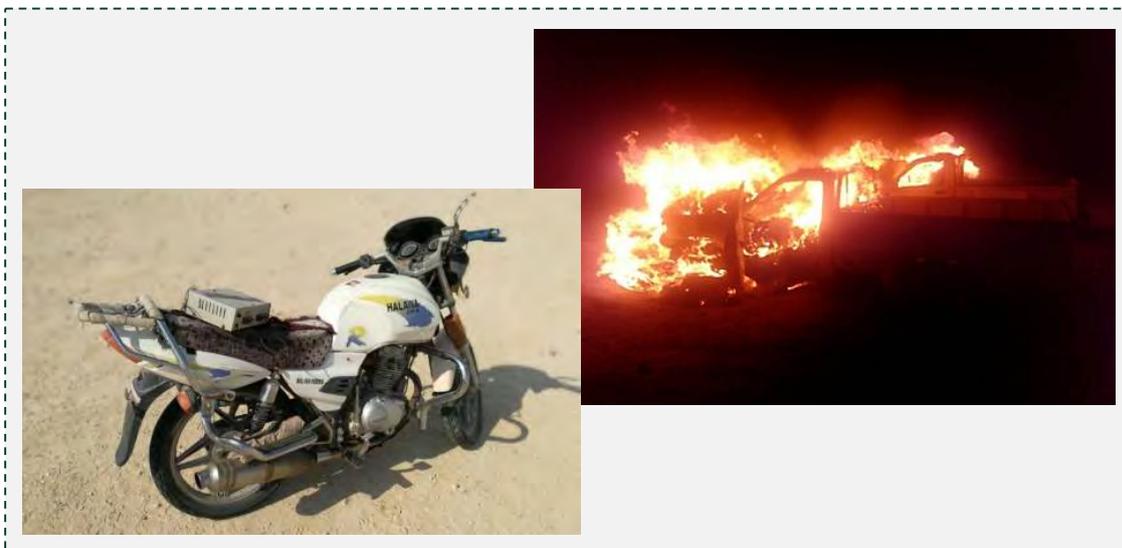
Right: ISIS operatives' attack east of Rutba (Al-Sawarim, July 21, 2017). Left: Attack against an Iraqi Army outpost west of Rutba (Haqq, July 20, 2017).

Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula

The Sinai Peninsula

- **In the Sinai Peninsula, the Egyptian security forces' activity against ISIS operatives continues.** The Egyptian security forces reported that during their activity in North Sinai, thirty ISIS operatives were killed and five others were detained in Al-

Arish, Sheikh Zuweid and Rafah. In addition, twelve off-road vehicles and four car bombs were destroyed, thirty IEDs planted on roads used by the Egyptian security forces were exposed and neutralized, and four depots of powerful explosives were destroyed (official Facebook account of the Spokesman of the Egyptian Armed Forces, July 21, 2017).

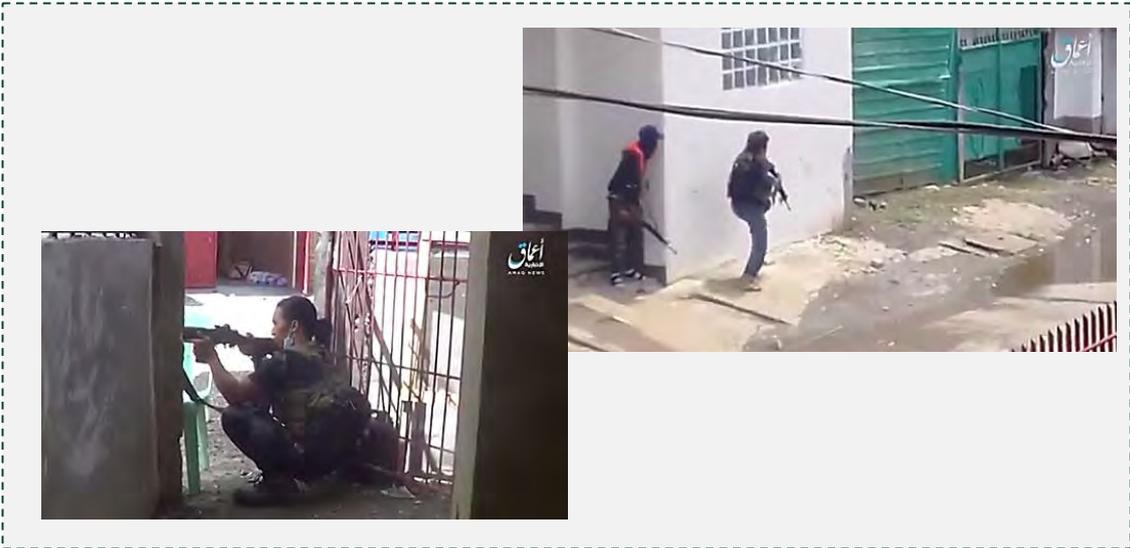


Left: Off-road vehicle of ISIS operatives after being set on fire by the Egyptian Army. Right: Motorcycle of ISIS operatives found by the Egyptian security forces (Facebook account of the Spokesman of the Egyptian Armed Forces, July 23, 2017)

ISIS in other countries

The Philippines

■ **Confrontations between ISIS operatives and Philippine Army forces continue in the city of Marawi, Mindanao Island, southern Philippines.** ISIS announced that its snipers had killed six Philippine Army soldiers. Five additional soldiers were killed and four were wounded in clashes between the parties (Haqq, July 22, 2017). ISIS released a video showing the organization operatives fighting in Marawi (Haqq; Twitter account, July 20, 2017).



ISIS operatives fight against the Philippine Army in the streets of Marawi (Amaq; Twitter, July 20, 2017)