Main events

- **The unilateral ceasefire in the Idlib region** declared by the Syrian army continues. However, exchanges of artillery fire between the Syrian army and the rebel organizations continue, with each side accusing the other of violating the ceasefire. The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham announced the completion of a new snipers course. In the ITIC’s assessment, the announcement was made in order to convey a message that the organization was preparing for the next round of fighting.

- **Intensive guerilla activity by ISIS continues in the Euphrates Valley**, in the area of Al-Raqqah and in the area between Deir ez-Zor and Albukamal. This activity consisted mainly of detonating IEDs against vehicles, firing, and throwing hand grenades at checkpoints and other targets of the SDF forces.

- **In the Kurdish-controlled Al-Hol displaced persons camp, riots were initiated by wives of ISIS operatives** (who arrived at the camp with a civilian population who fled the Euphrates Valley). There was an exchange of fire during the riots. One woman was killed and several were wounded. It is possible that ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s call to act to release ISIS detainees “permeated” through the camp and raised the level of motivation and daring of the wives of ISIS operatives.

- **In the northern Sinai Peninsula**, ISIS continues its high-intensity terrorist and guerrilla activities against the Egyptian security forces and local residents who collaborate with them. One of the most noteworthy attacks was against an Egyptian army checkpoint on the coastal road west of Al-Arish (8-15 killed). The attack was carried out at a sensitive time for the Egyptian regime (demonstrations against President El-Sisi). In the ITIC’s assessment, this is an expression of the increased operational capability of ISIS’s Sinai Province.

- Apart from Egypt, noteworthy activity took place in two provinces:

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1 Due to the High Holidays, there will be changes in the dates of publication of the forthcoming bulletins. The ITIC wishes all our readers a Happy Jewish New Year.
In the states of Borno and Yobe, in northwestern Nigeria, ISIS operatives carried out a series of attacks against the Nigerian army, which were characterized by setting up ambushes on roads and attacking army camps. According to ISIS, the Nigerian army suffered many losses and large quantities of weapons and equipment were seized.

In the Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan, ISIS carried out intensive activity aimed at disrupting the presidential elections. The activity consisted mainly of activating IEDs near polling stations in order to target voters, security officials, and election committee officials.

Idlib region

The ceasefire: overview

The unilateral ceasefire declared by the Syrian army more than a month ago (on August 31, 2019) is generally maintained. Since the declaration of the ceasefire, the Syrian army has refrained from initiating ground attacks to take over additional territories in the Idlib region. However, at the same time, exchanges of artillery fire continue between the Syrian army and the rebel organizations. In addition, Syrian helicopters were reportedly carrying out airstrikes in the Kabanah area, in the northwestern part of the Idlib region (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, September 29, 2019).

Exchanges of artillery fire

The Syrian army continued to fire artillery at rebel organizations’ targets. Following are several prominent activities:

- On September 29, 2019, artillery was fired at targets in the rural areas south of Idlib and south of Aleppo.
- The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham reported that on September 27, 2019, the Syrian army had fired over 50 rockets at Kafr Oweid, about 35 km southwest of Idlib (Ibaa, September 28, 2019).
Buildings at Kafr Oweid southwest of Idlib, hit by Syrian army artillery
(Ibaa, September 28, 2019)

On October 5, 2019, the Syrian army fired about 100 rockets at villages in the rural area south of Idlib (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, October 5, 2019).

The rebel organizations also continued to fire artillery at the Syrian army. Following are several prominent activities:

- On October 1, 2019, the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham fired mortar shells at Syrian army positions in the southern Idlib region. The Syrian army responded by firing at the rebel organizations’ positions (Al-Watan, October 2, 2019).

- The operations room controlled by the (Al-Qaeda-affiliated) Guardians of the Religion Organization reported mortar and sniper fire against the Syrian army east of Idlib and in the northern Al-Ghab Plain (Telegram, October 4-5, 2019).

Completion of a snipers course of the Headquarters for the liberation of Al-Sham

- The Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham announced the completion of the training of new snipers as part of the organization’s sniper battalions (Ibaa, September 30, 2019). In the ITIC’s assessment, the announcement was intended to convey a deterrent message to the Syrian army that the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham was preparing for the continuation of the fighting.
Preventing civilians from leaving through the Abu Duhur crossing

A newspaper affiliated with the Syrian regime reported that on October 1, 2019, the rebel organizations had planted mines in the western part of the Abu Duhur crossing, as part of the measures taken to prevent civilians from leaving the rebels’ control zone (Al-Watan, October 2, 2019). Aleppo Governor Hossein Diab reported that a “humanitarian corridor” had been opened in Abu Duhur, under Syrian and Russian sponsorship. However, he said, the rebel organizations ("unlawful armed groups") continued to prevent the evacuation of civilians, using them as human shields (TASS, September 28, 2019).

Summary of the losses since the beginning of the Syrian army’s round attack

Since the beginning of the Syrian army's ground attack in early May 2019, a total of 4,180 people have been killed in the Idlib region. Fatalities included 1,688 rebel organization operatives, including 1,098 operatives of the jihadi organizations [bearing the brunt of the fighting]. Fatalities also included 1,426 soldiers and operatives of the Syrian army and the forces supporting it, and 1,066 civilians (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, October 5, 2019).

Eastern Syria

The area of Palmyra and Al-Sukhnah

On September 26, 2019, an IED was activated against a Syrian army vehicle near Al-Sukhnah, northeast of Palmyra. The three passengers were killed. ISIS released photos showing the damaged vehicle and bodies of two fighters (Telegram, September 27, 2019).
ISIS operatives attacked Syrian army positions in the desert about 30 km southwest of Deir ez-Zor and in the Al-Sukhnah area. The exchanges of fire with the Syrian army lasted for several hours. Airstrikes against ISIS were also carried out during that time. A total of 11 ISIS operatives and seven Syrian soldiers were killed (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, October 4, 2019).

Syrian army vehicle hit by the detonation of an IED by ISIS north of Al-Sukhnah (Telegram, September 27, 2019)

The Euphrates Valley

Al-Raqqah area

Following are ISIS’s main activities in the Al-Raqqah area:

- **On September 26, 2019**, two hand grenades were thrown at SDF fighters east of Al-Raqqah. Three fighters were killed and wounded (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

- **On September 27, 2019**, four hand grenades were thrown at the center of the Kurdish Internal Security forces in Jadidat Khabour, 36 km east of Al-Raqqah. One security guard was killed and another was wounded (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

- **On September 29, 2019**, an SDF vehicle was set on fire about 10 km west of Al-Raqqah (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

- **On September 30, 2019**, a vehicle of one of the officials of the SDF local council in Mazraat al-Rashid, about 20 km northwest of Al-Raqqah, was set on fire (Telegram, October 1, 2019).

- **On September 30, 2019**, a vehicle of one of the officials of the SDF local council in Al-Hous, about 20 km east of Al-Raqqah, was set on fire (Telegram, October 1, 2019).

- **On October 1, 2019**, an IED was detonated against an SDF vehicle about 20 km east of Al-Raqqah. Five fighters were killed or wounded (Telegram, October 1, 2019).
On October 1, 2019, an SDF fighter was shot at his home in Al-Raqqah. He was severely wounded (Telegram, October 2, 2019).

On October 2, 2019, an SDF fighter was shot and killed in Al-Tina, about 50 km north of Al-Raqqah (Telegram, October 2, 2019).

The area of Deir ez-Zor, Al-Mayadeen, and Albukamal

Following are highlights of ISIS’s activity in the area between Deir ez-Zor and Albukamal:

On September 26, 2019, SDF forces at a checkpoint near Suweidan, about 15 km southeast of Al-Mayadeen, were targeted by machine gun fire. An SDF fighter was killed and others were wounded (Telegram, September 26, 2019).

On September 26, 2019, an IED was detonated against a vehicle of a militia supporting the Syrian army in the Al-Mayadeen rural area. The five passengers were killed (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

On September 26, 2019, an SDF fighter was targeted by machine gun fire in the village of Diban, 5 km east of Al-Mayadeen. He was killed (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

On September 27, 2019, an SDF checkpoint in the village of Diban was targeted by machine gun fire. An SDF fighter was killed and another was wounded (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

On September 28, 2019, an IED was detonated against an SDF vehicle 14 km north of Al-Mayadeen. The three passengers were killed (Telegram, September 28, 2019).

On September 30, 2019, an IED was detonated against a Syrian army convoy in the Al-Mayadeen area. Several soldiers were killed (Furat Post, September 30, 2019). So far, no organization claimed responsibility. In the ITIC’s assessment, ISIS is responsible for the attack.

Syrian army vehicle carrying a two-barreled anti-aircraft gun, which was hit by the IED in the Al-Mayadeen area (Furat Post, September 30, 2019)
On October 1, 2019, an IED was detonated against a truck carrying SDF fighters in the area of Diban, 5 km east of Al-Mayadeen. About 20 fighters were killed and wounded (Telegram, October 1, 2019).

On October 1, 2019, an IED was detonated against an SDF vehicle on the road leading to the Omar oilfield, about 50 km southeast of Deir ez-Zor. Three SDF commanders were killed (Telegram, October 1, 2019).

On October 1, 2019, an SDF vehicle was targeted by machine gun fire in the Al-Basira area, 14 km north of Al-Mayadeen. The passengers were killed and wounded (Telegram, October 1, 2019).

On October 4, 2019, an IED was detonated against a Syrian army vehicle in the Al-Mayadeen Desert. The passengers were killed or wounded (Telegram, October 5, 2019).

**SDF counterterrorist activity**

An SDF sapper unit exposed an ISIS workshop operating at one of the schools in Hajin, 25 km north of Albukamal. The unit deactivated the IEDs and mines found there (SDF Press, October 1, 2019).

**Main developments in Iraq**

ISIS’s terrorist and guerrilla activities in the various provinces in Iraq continued. Most of the activities took the form of detonating IEDs and firing light weapons. **The main activities for which ISIS claimed responsibility were as follows:**

- **Kirkuk Province:** An IED was detonated against an Iraqi federal police vehicle about 50 km southwest of Kirkuk. The passengers were wounded (Telegram, September 28, 2019).
Irbil Province: An IED was detonated against an intelligence operative of the Kurdish forces about 70 km southeast of Mosul. He was wounded (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

Diyala Province: Civilians of the Kakaiya sect were targeted by machine gun fire 4 km north of Khanaqin. Three people were killed (Telegram, September 28, 2019).

Diyala Province: An IED was detonated against Tribal Mobilization operatives in the village of Al-Islah, about 90 km northeast of Baqubah. Two operatives were wounded (Telegram, September 28, 2019).

Salah al-Din Province: A vehicle and a bulldozer belonging to the Popular Mobilization were targeted by machine gun fire about 10 km northwest of Samarra. Several operatives were killed and wounded (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

Machine gun fire at a vehicle and a bulldozer of the Popular Mobilization northwest of Samarra (Telegram, September 30, 2019)

Diyala Province: A Border Police headquarters was targeted by sniper fire 4 km north of Khanaqin. Two border policemen were killed (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

Baghdad Province: An IED was detonated against the vehicle of a Tribal Mobilization local commander about 25 km southeast of Fallujah. He was wounded (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

Nineveh Province: An IED was detonated against a Tribal Mobilization vehicle about 60 km south of Mosul. The driver was wounded (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

Diyala Province: Quarters of the oil facilities security guards were targeted by sniper fire about 40 km east of Baqubah. One security guard was killed and another was wounded (Telegram, October 2, 2019).

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2 An ancient monotheistic sect which is mostly Kurdish, ethnically speaking. ISIS considers its members infidels and persecutes them (as it persecutes the Yazidis).
Diyala Province: An Iraqi Border Police base north of Khanaqin was targeted by sniper fire. A border policeman was killed (Telegram, October 4, 2019).

Diyala Province: An oil police base in the Mandali area, about 40 km east of Baqubah, was targeted by sniper fire. Two policemen were killed and another was wounded (Telegram, October 4, 2019).

**Riots at the Al-Hol displaced persons camp**

**On September 30, 2019, riots took place at the Kurdish-controlled Al-Hol displaced persons camp east of Al-Hasakah.** About 70,000 people are living there, most of whom fled during the takeover of the ISIS outpost in the Euphrates Valley in March (CNN report). The riots took place at the camp area where wives of ISIS operatives were living. Those who initiated the riots were reportedly wives of ISIS operatives, who opened fire at the camp guards. The guards returned fire.

One of the women was killed in the exchange of fire, and seven others were wounded. Over 50 women were detained. The detainees were accused of organizing the riots and holding kangaroo courts which led to the execution of women opposed to ISIS (Furat Post, October 5, 2019; Rohani TV, September 30, 2019).
The Sinai Peninsula

Attack against an Egyptian army checkpoint

In the afternoon of September 27, 2019, operatives of ISIS’s Sinai Province attacked an Egyptian army checkpoint on the coastal highway south of Bir al-Abed (about 75 km west of Al-Arish). The attack was unusual in its scope, complexity and consequences. According to ISIS, 15 officers and soldiers were killed in the attack (Telegram, September 27, 2019). The attack was carried out at a sensitive time for the Egyptian regime, with demonstrations against President El-Sisi). In the ITIC’s assessment, this is an indication of the increased capability and daring of ISIS operatives, who continue to successfully wage a terrorism and guerrilla campaign in the northern Sinai Peninsula, despite the ongoing counterterrorism activity by the Egyptian security forces.
Egyptian media published several versions of how the attack was carried out and the number of casualties. According to some sources, a number of armed ISIS operatives got out of a vehicle that stopped near the checkpoint and began firing at the soldiers. Later, they were apparently joined by additional operatives. As for the number of fatalities, in the absence of an official version, several versions were published in the Egyptian media. According to some of them, eight people were killed. They were an officer, six soldiers, and a civilian (up to now, the names and photos of eight fatalities have appeared in the Egyptian media, along with documentation of their funerals).

Right: An ambulance evacuating the wounded from the scene of the attack (YouTube video, September 27, 2019) Left: The site of the attack in Bir al-Abed (Google Maps)

**Execution of two civilians alleged to be agents of the Egyptian army**

On September 26, 2019, ISIS reported the execution of two Egyptian army “agents” who had been taken prisoner south of Sheikh Zuweid (Telegram, September 26, 2019). They were two civilians abducted by ISIS from their home on September 23, 2019, in the village of Al-Jura, some 10 km south of Sheikh Zuweid (Shahed Sinaa Facebook page, September 23, 2019).
Execution of the two Egyptian army “agents” by ISIS operatives  
(Telegram, September 26, 2019)

Further “routine” activity by ISIS in northern Sinai

Concurrently with these events, ISIS’s “routine” guerrilla activity in northern Sinai continued, consisting mainly of attacks on Egyptian army checkpoints. The main activity was as follows:

- **September 27, 2019:** An Egyptian soldier was targeted by sniper fire at the Al-Kharafin checkpoint east of Sheikh Zuweid. The soldier was killed (Telegram, September 27, 2019).
- **September 28, 2019:** An antitank rocket was fired at an Egyptian army tank west of Sheikh Zuweid. The tank was damaged (Telegram, September 28, 2019).
- **September 28, 2019:** Machine guns were fired and an antitank rocket was launched at Egyptian army vehicles on a land stripping mission west of Sheikh Zuweid (Telegram, October 2, 2019).

Right: Machine gun fire at an Egyptian army bulldozer. Left: ISIS antitank rocket hitting an Egyptian armored vehicle, which was part of a force carrying out the land stripping mission (Telegram, October 2, 2019).
Counterterrorist activities by the Egyptian security forces

On September 27, 2019, one day after ISIS’s deadly attack west of Al-Arish, the Egyptian army issued a statement (accompanied by a video) of its achievements in the counterterrorism campaign in the northern and central Sinai Peninsula. The statement said that the Egyptian army had recently (no precise date was stated) eliminated 118 jihadists; blown up 273 IEDs; destroyed 33 hiding places of jihadists; demolished 11 tunnel openings used by terrorists, and destroyed dozens of vehicles and motorcycles (Facebook page of the Egyptian Armed Forces Spokesman, September 27, 2019).

On September 29, 2019, the Egyptian Interior Ministry announced that the counterterrorism unit had killed 15 “terrorist operatives” on a farm on the outskirts of Al-Arish. During their arrest, the terrorist operatives reportedly opened fire at the combatants of the counterterrorism unit and were shot dead (Masrawy, September 29, 2019).
ISIS’s activity around the globe

Nigeria

ISIS’s West Africa Province announced a series of attacks carried out by its operatives against the Nigerian army and a militia that supports it in the states of Borno and Yobe, in northwestern Nigeria. Main activity:

- **Ambushing** a Nigerian army vehicle on the road between the town of Gubio and the city of Maiduguri, in Borno State. A total of 14 soldiers were killed, several others were wounded, and two were taken prisoner. Weapons were also seized (Telegram, September 25, 2019).

- **Ambushing** a vehicle of a militia that supports the Nigerian army in Yobe State. Four militia fighters were killed and weapons were seized (Telegram, September 27, 2019).

- **Attack on a Nigerian army camp** in the town of Gubio, in Borno State. ISIS reported that 18 soldiers had been killed or wounded. In addition, large quantities of weapons and equipment were seized (Telegram, September 30, 2019). A Nigerian “security source” said that at least nine Nigerian soldiers had been killed in an attack carried out by “militants” on September 29, 2019 (www.sabcnews, September 30, 2019).

- **Nigerian army weapons and vehicles seized by ISIS operatives** (Telegram, October 1, 2019)

- **An attack on Nigerian soldiers’ quarters** in the town of Gajiram, some 80 km north of Maiduguri, in Borno State. There was an exchange of fire between ISIS operatives and Nigerian soldiers. Several soldiers were killed and others were wounded (Telegram, September 28, 2019).

- **Ambushing vehicles** carrying Nigerian soldiers in the town of Gajiram, in Borno State. The forces exchanged fire. Four Nigerian soldiers were killed and several others
were wounded. In addition, weapons and vehicles were seized (Telegram, October 3, 2019).

**Mozambique**

- ISIS’s Central Africa Province announced that its operatives had attacked a Mozambican army camp in the city of Mbamba, in northeastern Mozambique. The forces exchanged fire. A number of soldiers were killed or wounded. ISIS operatives seized weapons and set fire to a number of homes in the vicinity of the camp (Telegram, September 26, 2019).

![Weapons seized by ISIS operatives in the attack against a Mozambican army camp in the city of Mbamba (Telegram, September 26, 2019)](image)

**The Democratic Republic of the Congo**

- ISIS’s Central Africa Province announced that its operatives had attacked the living quarters of Congolese soldiers in the Beni region, in northeastern Congo. Several soldiers were killed or wounded and the rest fled. In addition, weapons and equipment were seized (Telegram, September 26, 2019).

**Afghanistan**

- ISIS’s intensive activity continued in the Nangarhar Province, in eastern Afghanistan, *which was directed mainly against the Afghan government*. The activity consisted mainly of attempts to disrupt the presidential elections, which were held on September 28, 2019, by activating IEDs at polling stations against voters and government officials.
- ISIS claims to have activated *36 IEDs against polling stations in various areas of the Nangarhar Province*. According to ISIS, around 170 members of the Afghan security forces, election committee officials, and voters were wounded (Telegram, September 29, 2019). “Local sources” reported that at least five IEDs were activated in the city of Jalalabad at the
At the same time, ISIS’s “routine” activity in the Nangarhar Province continued. Following are the main attacks:

- An IED was activated against the Afghan police in Jalalabad. One policeman was killed and another was wounded (Telegram, September 27, 2019).
- Two IEDs were activated against the Afghan police in Jalalabad. Several policemen were killed (Telegram, September 30, 2019).
- Taliban positions were attacked in the area of Tora Bora, near the border with Pakistan. Around 20 Taliban operatives were killed and wounded, and weapons and equipment were seized (Telegram, October 1, 2019).
- An IED was detonated against a vehicle of the Afghan security apparatus in the area of Jalalabad. The vehicle was damaged (Telegram, August 4, 2019).

![Taliban weapons seized by ISIS operatives in the attack in Tora Bora](Telegram, October 1, 2019)

- An IED was activated against a crowd of Afghan police in Jalalabad. Two policemen were wounded (Telegram, October 2, 2019).
- An IED was activated against an Afghan police checkpoint. Six policemen were killed and wounded (Telegram, October 2, 2019).

**Counterterrorist activities by the Afghan security forces**

- Afghan security forces have mounted an operation to eradicate ISIS activity in the Achin region of the Nangarhar Province. A total of 44 ISIS operatives were reportedly killed and 12 others wounded in the attack. In addition, weapons, ammunition, and explosives were destroyed. It is claimed that 90% of the Achin region has been mopped up from the presence of ISIS operatives (Khaama Press, Afghan News Agency, October 1, 2019).
Bangladesh

ISIS’s Bangladesh Province announced that its operatives had detonated an IED inside the headquarters of the ruling party in the city of Khulna, in southwestern Bangladesh. The building was damaged (Telegram, September 30, 2019).

Yemen

ISIS’s Yemen Province announced that its operatives had ambushed a vehicle and motorcycle of Al-Qaeda operatives in the area of Qifah, in the northwestern Al-Bayda Province (about 100 km southeast of Sana’a). ISIS operatives fired machine guns. Al-Qaeda operatives were wounded (Telegram, September 28, 2019).

ISIS’s Yemen Province announced that the organization’s operatives had repelled an attack by Al-Qaeda in the area of Qifah. The two sides exchanged fire, during which ISIS operatives activated IEDs. Many Al-Qaeda operatives were killed or wounded and the rest withdrew (Telegram, October 3, 2019).

The Philippines

ISIS’s East Asia Province announced that its operatives had attacked operatives of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. The forces exchanged fire. Eight Moro Islamic Liberation Front operatives were killed. In addition, weapons and ammunition were seized (Telegram, October 3, 2019). The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is a Muslim organization operating in Mindanao, in the southern Philippines, with the goal of obtaining an autonomous region for the Moro people from the Philippine government (Wikipedia).

Weapons and ID documents of Moro Islamic Liberation Front fighters seized by ISIS operatives (Telegram, October 5, 2019)