

Video: Syrian Army Takes Control of Abandoned US Bases

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The northeastern Syria ceasefire, agreed by Washington and Ankara, immediately collapsed. Under the terms of the reached agreement, Turkey had to halt its Operation Peace Spring for 120 hours to allow units of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to withdraw from a 32km-deep safe zone. It was supposed that after this Turkey will not resume its offensive. This plan was doomed to failure.

The SDF leadership said that it accepts the ceasefire, but rejected the forces withdrawal. In own turn, the Syrian National Army (SNA), a coalition of Turkish proxies, did not halt attacks on Kurdish fighters. The battle for Ras al-Ayn between the SNA and the SDF continued.

By October 20, the SNA backed up by Turkish Army battle tanks had resumed offensive actions near Ras al-Ayn capturing the villages of Umm al-Asafir, al-Shakariyah, Haji Hisso and Jan Tamir, where an intense fighting erupted. Pro-SDF sources claim that these villages were recaptured by Kurdish forces. Pro-Turkish sources claim that the SDF counter-attack was repelled. In reality, the area remains contested.



[Watch the video here.](#)

Additionally, the SDF-affiliated Afrin Liberation Forces attacked SNA positions near Tuways in northern Aleppo. At least 6 SNA members were killed and 9 others were injured in the

attack. The SNA confirmed the fact of the attack and revealed that the killed militants were from its Al-Waqas Brigades.

On October 19, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared that his country will officially resume its military operation “a minute after 120 hours” if promises given to Turkey “are not kept as in the past”. Turkish media are counting minutes until the end of the formal ceasefire.

According to an adviser to the Turkish president, Yasin Aktay, the US-Turkish-agreed safe zone should be 444-km long and 32km-deep. With the Syrian Army deployed in the supposed safe zone, and the SDF is not planning to withdraw anywhere, it is hard to imagine how this promise can be kept. Therefore, Operation Peace Spring will soon be resumed.

Aktay also claimed that any efforts by the Damascus government to protect Kurdish militias in northeastern Syria will be seen by Turkey as a declaration of war. However, he added that if Damascus provides Turkey with guarantees that Kurdish forces will not operate in the border area, Turkey may change its attitude towards the deployment of the Syrian Army in northeastern Syria. These remarks are another indication of the unpublicized coordination between Turkey and the Damascus-Moscow alliance. Pro-SDF sources itself admitted that Russia appeared the only power capable to limit the scale of the Turkish offensive and already did it in such areas as Manbij and Ayn al-Arab.

Meanwhile, the US military continued its withdrawal from northern Syria. After bombing own military facility at the Lafarge Cement Factory, the US-led coalition destroyed a radar station at Abdulaziz Mount. US troops abandoned the Robariye facility, one of its largest bases in the region.

On October 19, the Syrian Army got control of the former US military garrison in Qasir Yalda. Government troops were deployed in the nearby villages of Tell Tamir and al-Ahras as a part of the SDF-Damascus security deal. According to Syrian state media, the army even repelled an attack by Turkish-backed militants near al-Ahras and entered the villages of al-Salamas and Umm al-Khair.

On October 22, President Erdogan will visit Russia for talks with his counterpart Vladimir Putin. Besides economic and military cooperation, the sides will discuss the situation in northeastern Syria. These talks may become a turning point in settling the developing crisis.

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