

Trump Tweets on Withdrawal from Syria & Mass Hysteria Ensues

By Miri Wood

Source: [Syria News](#)

Trump – the Real Donald – tweeted that the US has defeated ISIS in Syria. This was the “only reason for being there” since taking office. The tweet was posted at 0629 EST. Twelve hours later, it has elicited 25,000 comments, 18 million search engine results (mostly yellow journalistic reporting), and mass hysteria.

Twelve hours later, and Sarah Sanders’ White House Press Briefing is still not available online. A few journals and wire services have interviewed a few anonymous “official sources,” and the story line is that “all [illegal] State Department personnel in Syria will be evacuated from the country within 24 hours” and [illegal] US ground troops will leave in 30 or 60 or 100 days – upon the completion of a mysterious “final operation against ISIS.”

This is considered worthy of being called “Immediately” in headlines.

This breaking news comes within days of neocon John Bolton and Pentagon Dr. Strangelove sources stating that the US will [illegally] occupy the Syrian Arab Republic for forever.

The condemnation of this vague possibility is inversely proportional to the wild, war criminal support showered upon Trump, when he bombed Syrian soldiers at the request of al-Qaeda in the S.A.R. Deep state media were so star-stricken that nobody noticed that the US president bombed Syria based on “fake news CNN,” and specifically on CNN’s interview with a

British illegal whose medical license was revoked in his homeland, because of his terrorist activities.

MSM reporting continues to ignore the fact that the US has been illegally in Syria, that the US has breached international law.

US strikes in Syria may be lawful if Syria consents to the use of force in their territory. If Syria does not consent, the strikes would violate international law, unless the US demonstrates that the strikes were taken in self-defense.

Sarah Knuckey, international lawyer and Professor at Columbia Law School

Snickering over Trump taking credit for the 'defeat of ISIS' is similar to the snickering over his sulfuric speech before the UNGA, in September. Ignored were his threats of perpetual war to all countries not amenable to becoming US satellites; instead, media guffawed over his bringing fudged, domestic employment stats to the United Nations. Intentionally omitted is that ISIS was created by the US (as was its parent, al Qaeda) and that the US has been protecting ISIS in Syria since the Obama administration 'accidentally' slaughtered 83 soldiers in September 2016.

Of course, no member of deep state would dare let slip that ISIS is almost gone, eradicated by the Syrian Arab Army & allies, despite the most heinous international conspiracy in history.

The massive pile-on against Trump's open-ended plan to leave Syria exudes the stench that another nefarious atrocity against the SAR might be around the corner. Has-beens of the Hollywood 5th column are tweeting as though they were Joseph McCarthy. Scant moments after the Trump tweet, a neo-colonialist from NBC was on the air, live, chirping about the terrific time he had while illegally in Syria with American invaders...as this were the most normal and legitimate thing in

the world.

Hours later, a fraud liberal from the fraud liberal New Yorker, whined that a US official had just her permission "to meet up with American troops in Syria sometime in the spring."

Ha'aretz, whose antipathy toward Trump dates back to when he was PEOTUS, outdid itself withchutzpah and amnesia. Somehow, Israel's leading news source forgets that Israel has bragged about giving state of the art trauma care to ISIS terrorists on the occupied Golan Heights, and also in Israeli hospitals.

"Ha'aretz also forgets that Israel was al-Qaeda's first air force against Syria:

"Way back in May 2013, when al Qaeda only used 'FSA,' Israel coordinated a massive bombing with the FSA terrorists so they could video the atrocity with their state of the art photographic equipment."

Third generation gusano and US Senator Marco Rubio has also forgotten that Israel tends to the ISIS wounded, crying that a withdrawal of illicit US troops "will have grave consequences for the US and Israel...".

Representative Adam Kinzinger announced, "I'm speechless," and then proceeded to prove himself a liar, giving interviews throughout the day. Kinzinger has spent more of his time as a congressman supporting al Qaeda in Syria, than supporting his constituents in Illinois.

Regarding the floods of crocodile tears by the imperialist politicians and journalists over the faux, potential betrayal of the "Kurds," let it not be forgotten that the SDF was created by Obama as a foreign mercenary militia, with armed, separatist, terrorist, traitorous Ziokurd peons being used for marketing foreign wetworkersto Westerners who love rooting for 'the little guy' in every country not their own.

At 1510, the Real Donald Trump uploaded a video to Twitter. He

offered no timetable, no details, no mention of removing NATO operatives from the al-Tabqa Dam that they have occupied and held hostage since 11 February 2013. He merely repeated that the [illicit and illegal] “troops are coming home.”

ISIS given ‘breathing space’ in parts of Syria under US-backed forces’ control

Source: [RT](#)

Islamic State managed to regain access to Syrian oil fields and make profits from selling oil, a new UN report reveals. While the UN did not point fingers, the IS reemergence seems to occur in areas held by the US-backed forces.

“Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant [IS, formerly ISIL/ISIS], having been defeated militarily in Iraq and most of the Syrian Arab Republic during 2017, rallied in early 2018. This was the result of a loss of momentum by forces fighting it in the east of the Syrian Arab Republic,” the recent report from the UN Security Council’s Sanctions Monitoring Team reads. The document is dated July 27, but was only released to the public this week.

The slow-down gave IS “breathing space to prepare for the next phase of its evolution into a global covert network.” As of June 2018, the terrorist group has been controlling “small pockets of territory in the Syrian Arab Republic on the Iraqi border,” effectively carrying on with its quasi-state ways.

[IS] was able to extract and sell some oil, and to mount

attacks, including across the border into Iraq," the reports stated, adding that the terrorist group regained "access to some oil fields in northeastern" Syria.

While the report did not specify which forces exactly were having troubles with "momentum," northeastern Syria is located on the left bank of the Euphrates river, controlled by the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) militia backed by the US-led coalition.

Regaining control of the oil fields allowed IS to yet again make oil profits a significant source of revenue. The report also vaguely stated that IS continues to impose "taxes" on civilians "in areas it controls, as well as in contested areas," as well as to kidnap local businessmen for ransom.

Apart from strengthening of IS-held "pockets" in northeastern Syria, the report also listed a number of hotspots in Syria, which might be sources of further IS reemergence. Among them, the UN named the Rukban refugee camp, located near the Al-Tanf US military base. Other IS-infested places listed in the report include unspecified locations in the Aleppo province and an area controlled by an IS-affiliated group in the Deraa province. The latter, however, was already eradicated late in July during the Syrian Army offensive in the south-west of the country.

The issue of the Rukban refugee camp has been repeatedly raised by Moscow and Damascus, who repeatedly urged the US to cooperate. Earlier in August, Colonel General Sergey Rudskoy, the head of operations of the Russian General Staff, described Rukban as place where "people are living in harsh conditions and where terrorists find shelter."

"Our American partners should provide humanitarian access to Rukban as soon as possible, provide passage for the refugees to their home areas and withdraw the base from Al-Tanf," Rudskoy stated.

The Road to Idlib and Beyond: Where next for Syria?

By Peter Ford (former British Ambassador to Syria)

Source: [FB](#)

With military operations in the South virtually over, attention inevitably turns to the North and specifically to Idlib province, the last major redoubt of the armed opposition to the Syrian government. A number of other challenges, however, lie ahead besides Idlib before the Syrian government can rest easy.

Islamic State

The first of these is unfinished business with what remains of Islamic State in what Syrians call the Badiya, the vast swathes of steppe which span sections of Suweida, Damascus, Homs and Deir Ez Zor provinces. Largely inhabited by Druze, Sweida was witness recently to a series of raids and suicide attacks by Islamic State which left over 200 dead. This caused some bitterness among the Druze who felt they had been left exposed by the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), but the feelings were mutual: the SAA are not enamoured of a Druze minority which has largely stayed aloof from Syria's conflict and refused to let its sons be conscripted or if conscripted be sent to other battlefields.

Possibly mindful of the need to keep the Druze onside, the SAA, it appears, will now focus on countering IS in the Badiya before any major operations in Idlib. This will not be straightforward as IS has shifted to hit and run tactics and rarely now tries to hold territory. IS also benefits from the existence of the US-controlled Al Tanf enclave near where the

borders of Syria, Jordan and Iraq meet. In June UK RAF aircraft bombed and killed pro-government forces which were chasing IS on the fringes of the 55 km radius enclave. The Al Rukban makeshift refugee camp, home to 50,000 people which is within the area imposed by the US as a no go zone for Syrian government forces, is also a sheltered hiding place for IS.

It was Al Rukban which was the object of a recent Russian offer to the US to cooperate on resettling the refugees, along with a proposal to work together on demining in Raqqa. Elements in the US administration hostile to any cooperation with Russia leaked and spun the offer as 'Russia asks for US funds to rebuild Syria' and the proposal sank.

Despite these obstacles it is fairly safe to predict that the SAA and its allies will over the next several weeks mop up a number of IS and keep the threat from that quarter largely stifled if not entirely extinguished.

Pacification of the South

There is still consolidation to be done in the South. First, arrangements need to be put in place, with the reassuring participation of Russian military police, to cement the incorporation of thousands of 'reconciled' militants, shorn of their heavy weapons, into government military, police and civil defence forces. One of the remarkable features of the government's recovery of territory over the last three years is how smoothly such arrangements have gone. No area has slid back into anarchy. It has to be borne in mind however that the most irreconcilable elements, the most extreme jihadis, together with their families, have taken the option of being bussed to Idlib. Propagandists for the militants decry as 'forced displacement' such an arrangement that others might see as commendably humane and pragmatic.

Secondly it may be some months before the situation in the Golan is fully restored to what it was in 2011 before the conflict began. Russian military police will initially assist UNDOF (UN Disengagement Observer Force) in reestablishing

themselves in the buffer zone and provide Israel with some reassurance that forces allied to Iran do not come too close.

For all its harrumphing , however, Israel has been unable to impose its will: Iranian advisers and allied forces have only pulled back to the outskirts of Damascus and according to some reports are still present near the Golan but wearing Syrian uniforms. Israeli demands for a complete withdrawal of Iran and its allies from Syria have been seen for the bluster they always were. Israel may continue to stage token air raids all over Syria targeting the Iranian or Hizbollah presence but an elaborate de facto protocol has been worked out whereby limits have been established on such activity. Iran and Syria have both demonstrated in recent months a capacity to strike deep into Israeli territory if pushed beyond those limits. In practice the Golan, like Southern Lebanon following the 2006 war, is now quiet and likely to remain so, for the same simple reason – a balance of mutual deterrence.

The dire predictions of think tank 'experts' who foresaw Israeli and US forces going to war to block the Syrian government's recovery of the areas bordering Israel and Jordan should be remembered next time when dire predictions are made (indeed are already being made, about Idlib). The thousands who fled their homes in the South and were the object of much trumpeted UN, NGO and Western government and media anguish are now safely returned to their towns and villages, with former militants often policing them.

Idlib

According to the UN Idlib province is home to about 2 million people including several hundred thousand displaced from elsewhere in Syria. (Alison McGovern MP, Co-Chair of the UK Parliamentary self-styled 'Friends of Syria', stated with hallmark ignorance and hyperbole on 24 July in Parliament that 'several million people are in the city of Idlib', when it is doubtful if Idlib city's population even amounts to one million. The same MP despite having recently been to the

Turkish border and met Syrian doctors appeared not to realise that the shortages of medicines in Idlib have nothing to do with the government of Syria, which has no control over Idlib's border with Turkey, and everything to do with sanctions on Syria.)

Between 40 and 60 thousand Islamist fighters are reckoned to be corralled in Idlib province, including Jaish Al Islam (Army of Islam) and Ahrar Ash Sham, the largest groups, and 10,000 or so Hayat Tahrir Ash Sham (HTS aka Al Nusra aka Al Qaida) with its offshoots like Hurras Ad Deen (Guards of Religion). A large proportion, especially of HTS, are foreigners, including Chinese Uighurs and Russians from North Caucasus. (In the same debate in Parliament on 24 July no speaker mentioned the existence of a single one of these armed groups, while Sir Alan Duncan representing the government spoke apparently without irony of the 'forces of evil driving towards Idlib', forces drawn largely from the Alawite and Christian communities which have suffered more proportionately in the conflict than any other).

The Kremlin has persuaded the Syrian government to hold off from a full frontal attack pending Turkish efforts to dismantle HTS and its satellites. The Russian plan appears to be that if Turkey delivers on this then a peaceful solution could evolve for the rest akin to the reconciliation arrangements in the South, with the irreconcilables transmogrifying into what would be effectively a Turkish militia policing the northern border for a defined period. This is self-evidently the least deleterious outcome possible for the people of Idlib and the one Western governments should be urging on Turkey but aren't. Turkey has reportedly been given until mid-September to deliver.

Turkey's incentive is that it dreads a battle for Idlib which could tip another million refugees into Turkey to add to the three million already there. Given its control of finance and supply routes for all the jihadi groups it is well placed to

twist arms. Whether it has the stomach however to confront HTS must be considered doubtful.

At all events it appears to be already a virtually done deal that Russian military police and SAA units will be permitted quite soon a walkover in the area of Jisr Al Shughur, a strategic location close to predominantly Alawite Lattakia province and the large Russian base at Hummaym.

If Turkey fails to deliver then the prospects for avoiding large scale violence are bleak. Mitigating those prospects is the possibility, which did not exist in the South, that fighters can always flee across the border, in this case into Turkey. It is not correct to say, as some NGOs and media are saying, that these fighters, or the civilians of Idlib, have nowhere to go, with the possible exception of foreign fighters who likely would not be allowed into Turkey.

Enter the White Helmets. In the event of major hostilities it is eminently foreseeable that reports will soon erupt in Western media of 'brave', 'neutral', 'first responders' testifying to alleged horrific use of chemical weapons. As with previous alleged incidents in Idlib such as Khan Sheykhoun in 2017, it will not be possible for OPCW inspectors or Western journalists to make site visits to verify these reports.

It is equally easy to predict that Western governments will seize on these reports to unleash heavy missile attacks on Syrian government targets, including a possible attempt to decapitate the government with attacks on presidential offices such as were reportedly planned in April following Douma until General Mattis persuaded Trump that such a large scale offensive would be too risky for US troops in places like Al Tanf exposed to possible retaliation from a government existentially threatened and with nothing to lose. The next time however there may not be an escape ramp. Having sworn after Douma to punish the 'animal' Asad more heavily next

time, Western governments have painted themselves into a corner. The more Western government attempts to neutralise growing public concern over the credibility of the White Helmets are successful, the more likely it is that the world will see a fresh Syria crisis which will make Douma look paltry.

The Kurds

The Kurds may have a role in the upcoming battle of Idlib. Kurdish leaders, mindful of Trump's stated wish to withdraw US troops from their area, of US reticence over nation-building, of the threat to them from Turkey, and of the long term unviability of Kurds lording it indefinitely over wide territories comprising already restless Arab populations, have entered recently into negotiations with the Syrian government on bringing the North East (Al Hasakeh province, principally) back into the fold. Part of the reported deal would be that concessions to the Kurds would be easier if the Kurds launched a counter-attack to recover Afrin to distract pro-Turkish forces from Idlib. At all events, it appears that the days of indirect US control over 30% of Syrian territory via the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are numbered.

Raqqa is already emerging as a tar baby for the US. Locals, mainly Arabs, have been complaining about the slowness of demining and restoration of basic services. In nearby Al Tabqa, Syrian government workers and officials have been invited back to assist in the operation of the important dam on the Euphrates.

Geneva/Astana/Sochi peace negotiations

Desultory negotiations continue in these formats with some incremental progress towards setting up a group to look at a new constitution. UN envoy De Mistura continues to shuttle about maintaining an illusion of meaningful activity, with the Russians also keen to sustain that illusion.

The reality however is that the time for negotiations passed

some while ago. The only meaningful negotiations now are between the Syrian government and the Kurds, as explained above, and between the governments of Russia, Turkey, Syria and Iran. The US is hoping to exert leverage via spoiling tactics: propping up the SDF, promoting de facto partition, maintaining Al Tanf, continuing sanctions, blocking international reconstruction assistance, and conducting information warfare. Its physical presence however (about 2,000 troops) is a diminishing asset and in some contingencies a liability. The Russians and the Syrians will feel under little pressure to make concessions to the US or the West generally.

That said, the Russians appear keen to involve at least France and Germany in efforts to facilitate the return of Syrian refugees to the homeland. Again, however, as at every stage in this conflict, there is a risk of Western powers overplaying their hand by conditioning resettlement assistance on political concessions: the Syrian security agencies say openly they would rather have 10 million loyal citizens than 30 million of dubious loyalty.

Western policy

For a policy maker genuinely concerned to shorten the agony of Syria rather than indulge in gesture politics and virtue signalling, or prioritise selfish yet ill-conceived great power interests, the conclusions to draw for policy from the above analysis would seem clear:

1. Urge Turkey to dismantle the hardline jihadi groups in Idlib.
2. Start preparing opinion and allies not to expect support for another knee jerk military reaction in the event of another alleged chemical weapons attack.
3. Stop encouraging a de facto partition of Syria and withdraw now redundant Western forces (the 'coalition') in short order.
4. Start to engage with the Syrian government on recovery issues: lifting of sanctions, support for refugee return,

support for reconstruction.

Should it be objected that this course would amount to abetting Russia and Assad, or leaving the future of Syria to be decided among Russia, Turkey and Assad, it must be asked what splendid results have flowed from Western governments' policies to date, and what in practical terms are Western governments proposing now which would bring the end of conflict nearer? Simply calling for negotiations or for freezing the conflict by putting on indefinite hold the removal from the backs of the long suffering people of Idlib of the succubus of vicious Islamist groups is not a responsible or even a moral policy, yet that is what current policy amounts to. And have we so far lost our compass that we consider the removal of Al Qaida from Syria a bad thing if it is delivered by Russia?

US Airstrike Kills 54 Civilians Near Abu Kamal in Push to Control Syrian Border

With the U.S. now unable to prevent Syrian government control of the Syria-Jordan border, Friday's strikes are a sign that the U.S. effort to oust the Syrian government from Abu Kamal is likely to only grow stronger as its occupation of Syrian territory faces an uncertain future.

by Whitney Webb

Source: [Mint Press News](#)

ABU KAMAL, SYRIA – Around midnight on Friday, U.S.-led coalition warplanes in Syria conducted intensive airstrikes

near Abu Kamal in the Deir ez-Zor province, with estimates of civilian casualties ranging from 30 to 54. Syrian state media agency SANA has claimed that at least 30 were killed and that most of the dead were women and children. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), often cited by international and particularly Western media, has asserted that 54 were killed.

According to local reports, the U.S.-led coalition strikes targeted the towns of al-Souseh and al-Baghouz Fowqani, east of the Euphrates river in the countryside around Abu Kamal. The bombings resulted in dozens of houses in the towns collapsing, resulting in numerous civilian deaths, as whole families were crushed by the rubble while they were sleeping.

The U.S. coalition did not confirm or deny its role in the strike, stating only that it "may have" been responsible. However, the bombing comes after the coalition announced in early May it would intensify airstrikes targeting Daesh (ISIS), particularly in Eastern Syria along the Syria-Iraq border. Abu Kamal, where last night's strikes took place, is a strategic border town on the Syria-Iraq border and is the only Syria-Iraq border crossing currently controlled by Syrian government forces.

Western media reports have claimed that Daesh militants were among the dead, but survivors of the attack contest this claim, instead suggesting that they had been targeted for their unwillingness to cooperate with local U.S.-backed militias. Locals told SANA that U.S. claims that the strikes were intended to target Daesh were false and instead suggested that two towns had been targeted for refusing the entry of the U.S.-backed opposition militias, particularly the Qasad militia.

Reports in Arabic media from earlier this year (English translation) have claimed to provide evidence that many former Daesh members have joined the Qasad militia, both in the

province of Deir Ez-Zor and al-Hasakah. Such reports are consistent with U.S. support for other militia groups, such as the Deir Ez-Zor Military Council (DMC), that also include significant numbers of former Daesh fighters who had surrendered to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the proxy force of the coalition, over the course of the past year.

Losing influence elsewhere in Syria, the U.S. sets sights on Abu Kamal

The strike comes at a delicate time for the U.S. coalition in Syria, as its most important alliances, which enable its occupation of more than 30 percent of Syrian territory, threaten to dissolve while local resistance to the presence of foreign troops continues to grow.

MintPress has recently reported on these developments – regarding first the rise of local resistance to the U.S. presence from Arab and Kurdish tribes in U.S.-occupied Syria, and then the agreement between the Syrian government and factions of the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG, the backbone of the U.S. proxy force, the SDF) behind the back of the U.S. coalition. Both developments threaten to make the U.S. occupation of Syrian territory not only ultimately unsustainable but indeed short-lived.

The U.S. has also lost influence elsewhere in Syria, particularly in Syria’s south owing to the Syrian government’s recent, highly successful campaign in the area. The offensive has seen the Syrian government reclaim nearly all of the Syrian-Jordan border and is likely to result in the U.S. abandoning its long-standing presence in al-Tanf, the strategic area where the borders of Syria, Jordan and Iraq meet.

The U.S. has maintained a military base at al-Tanf, where it has trained proxy fighters for the past several years, and has occupied a 34-mile zone surrounding that facility. Losing that location is a blow to U.S. influence in Syria and would mean a consolidation of U.S. occupation forces in the Eastern portion

of Syria nominally controlled by the SDF.

For that reason, the recent strikes on Abu Kamal are notable, as they build on other recent coalition strikes in the area. Indeed, there is no Daesh presence in Abu Kamal aside from the pockets of Daesh that intermittently attack the Syrian government-held city from the area of Syria occupied by the U.S.

In addition, recent coalition bombings in and around Abu Kamal have shown that these strikes have nothing to do with wiping out Daesh. For instance, another recent coalition strike in the Abu Kamal area, which took place last month, did not target Daesh at all but instead Syrian government forces and allied Iraqi militias. Though the U.S. never publicly admitted responsibility for the attack and an anonymous U.S. official had blamed the strike on Israel, forensic evidence analyzed and collected by Iraqi forces showed that the U.S. was indeed responsible.

The U.S. interest in Abu Kamal is aimed at wresting the strategic outpost from the control of the Syrian government, which would result in the Syrian government losing its only road access to both Iraq and Iran. Cutting off this supply line, particularly the connection between Syria and Iran, has long been acknowledged as an important U.S. goal in its occupation of Northeastern Syria.

With the U.S. now unable to prevent Syrian government control of the Syria-Jordan border, Friday's strikes are a sign that the U.S. effort to oust the Syrian government from Abu Kamal is likely to only grow stronger as its occupation of Syrian territory faces an uncertain future. If the high death tolls from the recent strike are any indication, the U.S. seems to have few qualms about killing scores of civilians in pursuit of its geopolitical goals in Syria.

Top Photo | A view of the city of Deir ez-Zor, Syria, Friday,

Sept. 15, 2017. (AP Photo)

Whitney Webb is a staff writer for MintPress News and a contributor to Ben Swann's Truth in Media. Her work has appeared on Global Research, the Ron Paul Institute and 21st Century Wire, among others. She has also made radio and TV appearances on RT and Sputnik. She currently lives with her family in southern Chile.

Kurdish Militias in Conflict-Ridden Northeastern Syria Turn to Kidnapping, Conscription, ISIS-like Tactics

Source: [Mint Press](#)

Independent journalist Sarah Abed speaks with Aramean Christians about the systematic discrimination and human rights violations they often face in the Kurdish enclaves of northern Syria.

AL QAMISHLI, SYRIA (War Report) – Over the past few weeks, multiple independent on-the-ground sources have provided and corroborated information regarding disturbing events taking place in and around the Al Hassakah governorate in northeastern Syria.

One of the most startling allegations made is that the People's Protection Units (YPG) and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have been arresting and kidnapping men aged 18 to

40 in the Al Hassakah governorate, which includes Al Qamishli and other towns under their control. They are taking these men against their will to Kurdish militia training camps, where they will stay for some time and receive training before being forced to fight in the so-called "New Syrian Army" or "North Syrian Army." I was told that some of these men are being taken to the front lines to fight in Afrin as well.

According to RT, in late December:

Russia's Reconciliation Center for Syria issued a statement accusing the U.S.-led coalition of creating the so-called 'New Syrian Army.' The group comprises remnants of Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS), the Al-Nusra Front and others, and is based at a refugee camp in north-east Syria, which is located 20 kilometers from Al-Shaddadah town. Local refugees, returning to areas freed from IS, say the refugee camp has been used by the coalition as a training ground for militants for over six months."

Surge in kidnapping by Kurdish YPG and Asayesh

Eddie Gaboro Hanna – founder of Patriarchal Relief Care Australia, a group that provides aid to Christian families impacted by wars in Syria and Iraq – stated on January 20th, that a few days prior:

The Kurds started a new operation [whereby] they are taking young Christian boys by force to sign them up for the Kurdish military & send them to the front line at Afrin where a new battle has just commenced with Turkey on the border. ... I'm with Sootoro now. That's who I stay with – the good Sootoro of course, not the Kurdish one (Sutoro). Pretty much the Christians are treated as second-class citizens [here] in their own land. ... Just like how ISIS has the Islamic tax they have their own Kurdish one. They've replaced ISIS."

In late January I was able to question Eddie in detail about his role and his view of these events:

Sarah Abed (SA): Can you tell me about yourself, your mission, and why you are in Syria?

Eddie Gaboro Hanna (EGH): I'm the founder of Patriarchal Relief Care Australia. For the past five years I've been organizing fundraising events and sending funds to our Patriarchal diocese in Damascus, to be dispersed to the most needy Christians suffering in war zones in Syria and Iraq.

I'm now on my second aid mission to Syria and am working on projects such as repairing damaged and bombed homes of displaced families, in hopes they can return to their homes. I'm also aiding over 400 orphans and over 160 widows, as well as purchasing and supplying medical equipment, allowances and supplies to ill and disabled children.

I made a documentary called "Tears of Another Genocide" to help raise awareness and show the world the persecution and genocide against Christians in the Syrian war.

SA: How long have you been in Syria during this trip?

EGH: I've been in Syria for exactly five weeks now.

SA: What areas have you visited during your trip thus far?

EGH: I visited Damascus, Saydnaya, Maloula, Homs and villages in the province of Homs, Sadad, Aleppo, Qamishli, Hassakeh, and Khabour.

SA: Did you receive protection from Sootoro or the SAA? If so in what areas? What type of protection?

EGH: Sootoro, as in the Christian Sootoro not the pro-Kurdish fake Sutoro, picked me up and accommodated me for a week in northern Syria. In every other part of Syria I was in, which were all under the control of the SAA (Syrian Arab Army), I didn't need any protection – only in the Kurdish (controlled) areas of Northern Syria I needed protection.

SA: Have you received any threats while in Syria?

EGH: No, I haven't received any threats.

SA: Has your life ever been in danger while in Syria? If so where, why, and by whom?

EGH: Yes, my life was in serious danger New Year's Eve in the Christian town of Bab Toma. I was outside among thousands in a crowd celebrating New Year's Eve and at exactly 12:02, just past midnight, the Free Syrian Army started firing mortar shells and one landed approximately 30 to 50 meters from me killing two Christians that night.

SA: What do Syrians want foreigners to know about the war in Syria?

EGH: Syrians want the foreigners to know that it was never a revolution nor a peaceful protest, because in 2009, two years before the war, the terrorists started digging tunnels and stashing massive arms preparing for this brutal war.

SA: What are some of the complaints you've heard from Syrians?

EGH: Non-Kurds are treated as second-class citizens by the Kurds. They are forced to pay special taxes simply because they are non-Kurds. Christian homes have been confiscated. Kurds write on the homes that this property now belongs to the Kurds, exactly like how ISIS writes on homes they take. Syrians complain more about America and the Kurds than anything else. America funded the opposition who started the war and destroyed over a hundred thousand Christian homes, and they've also funded the Kurds, who are oppressing the non-Kurds and even some Kurds who disagree with their political ambitions.

Eddie told me that he had "recorded a video of the writing they wrote on the wall of an Armenian home, exactly like how ISIS writes on the properties of Christians when they

confiscate them.”

In a more official rendering of the experiences Eddie recounted a World Council of Arameans press release, titled “Kurdish YPG / Asayesh Forces Kidnapped More Aramean Christians in Northeast Syria,” which states:

Local Christian sources, fearing for their lives and speaking on condition of anonymity to the World Council of Arameans (WCA), report that they are facing more and more harassments from the Kurdish YPG and Asayesh (security forces).

On Friday, 19 January, the first grave human rights violations of the new year included the abduction of seven Christians – four Armenians and three Arameans (otherwise known as Syrians). Nevertheless, following intense negotiations, all of them were released except for the 20-year young Aramean, Saliba A., who was snatched in daylight out of his shop in Qamishli by the Asayesh.

After the threat of ISIS, the current wish of the Arameans is for the nationalist Kurds to leave them, their organizations, schools, churches and their self-defense of Sootoro in peace. The Aramean-led Sootoro even includes Arabs, who are also being seized by the Asayesh and enrolled by the YPG.”

Eddie and Qamishli resident Samer, a reliable local source, provided me with further insight into on-the-ground conditions and human rights violations they witnessed in Syria. These included soaring real-estate prices as wealthy Kurds buy up as much property that they can get their hands on, often paying the owners double the property’s value.

Kurds are able to offer more for these properties due to illegal control of Syrian industry – including the oil, transportation, financial sectors – imposing unlawful taxes, and charging fees for everyday things such as renewing licenses or carrying out normal business activities. If one wants to sell a certain good, they are directed to a Kurd who

is in charge of collecting a tax on that particular good. They are doing this for almost everything and the local population is suffering as a result.

Eddie went on to say:

YPG, PYD, SDF, MSF, they are all the same. The SDF have aligned themselves with the Free Syrian Army who openly work side by side with Jabhat Al Nusra [Al Qaeda]. The Kurd[ish militias] have recruited ex-ISIS members.”

I explained that when I had written about the connections between Daesh/ISIS and Kurdish militias, some people were shocked by the association, he responded: “It’s not shocking when you remember the Kurds were the ISIS of 1915, except they slaughtered Christians on a much larger scale then.”

Much of Kurdish culture is borrowed from Assyrians, Armenians, and Aramean culture. In fact, much of the land in Eastern Turkey that the Kurds now claim once belonged to Armenians. It is hardly surprising, then, that the Kurds assisted in the Turkish genocide of Assyrians and the 1915 genocide of Armenians.

Eddie told me that the taxes being charged are similar to what ISIS was forcing civilians to pay in areas it controlled. Samer stated that the prices of food, clothing, etc., are about 25 percent higher than in other governorates in the country, such as in Damascus. Electricity is scarce; people are using generators and have noticed a lot of cars without licence plates. He said it has become a “military society.” Education is also being negatively affected. Samer went on to say “guns are everywhere; people are buying guns like it’s food.”

Eddie Gaboro Hanna told me: “They [the Kurdish militias] are still taking land and property from Christians by force and charging the Christian businesses a tax.” They are also destroying historical sites and claiming Assyrian artifacts to be Kurdish in origin. Historical revisionism is taking place,

and the indigenous people are crying out for the world to stop these violations.

An article by reporter Paul Antonopoulos, originally published by the website Fort Russ and republished by AINA, states:

Reports of ethnic cleansing have been consistent in areas controlled by the SDF/YPG, with Arab villages entirely evacuated and re-inhabited by Kurdish settlers.

In the most recent case, ... Tabqa, a city made up primarily of Arab Sunnis and a small Christian Assyrian minority, has seen SDF tyranny continue since they captured the site from ISIS in May 2017. Houses that were emptied by people escaping the fighting and SDF rule have seen their houses confiscated and taken over by the SDF-controlled Tabqa Council.

The Tabqa Council says that the newly vacant homes are to be given to the families of SDF fighters who have died in battle.”

Kurdish independence has been falsely portrayed as an ethno-religious, democratic, feminist, revolutionary cause by mainstream and even some alternative media outlets. However, these media sources completely ignore facts and realities that contradict the romanticized version being publicly displayed. A point they often disregard is that the Kurds are not the original inhabitants of the lands that they now claim. Assyrians, Aramaeans, Armenians and other Christian minority groups are indigenous to the Levant. Aramaic, the language spoken by Arameans, dates back 3,000 years and is the language that Jesus Christ spoke. Many members of the Syriac Orthodox church still speak Aramaic and it's an important component of their religious liturgy.

Sarah Abed is an independent journalist and political commentator. She covers a broad range of issues relating to the Syrian war, Kurdish issues in Iraq and Syria, as well as U.S policy in the Middle East. The following is an account of

Sarah's conversations with Aramean Christians living under Kurdish rule in occupied northern Syria, as well as her personal take on the issues surrounding those conversations. MintPress News could not independently verify the information given by Sarah's sources.

[Syria: Kurds claim Russia and SAA have bombed SDF positions in Deir ez-Zor](#)

By Adam Garrie

Source: [The Duran](#)

Local Kurdish language media in Syria have reported that both the Russian Aerospace Forces and the Syrian Arab Air-force have bombed positions of the Kurdish led US proxy militia SDF, in Deir ez-Zor, as originally reported in English by Al-Masdar.

While the reports are not yet confirmed by Syria or Russia, the Russian Defense Ministry recently stated that if the Kurdish led US proxy militia SDF continues to attack Syrian and Russian positions, Russia would not hesitate to target the SDF. Syria has also said that they will target the SDF as an enemy force if they continue to prevent the liberation of Syrian territory by the Syrian Arab Army.

Today's unconfirmed reports from Kurdish media also comes less than 24 hours after the Russian Defense Ministry released photos showing battlefield collusion between ISIS, SDF and US special forces in Deir ez-Zor.

Yesterday, Russia confirmed the death of Lieutenant-General Valeriy Asapov, who was martyred in Deir ez-Zor after his position was shelled by ISIS terrorists.

While the story of Russia and Syria targeting the SDF is still unconfirmed, the story is similar to a previous report wherein, Russia shelled ISIS positions in Deir-ez Zor and hit SDF fighters. This was yet another sign of battle field collusion between the SDF and ISIS. The only way that SDF fighters could have been hit in the previous attack, is if they were in the same positions as ISIS fighters. Today's events could be a similar scenario.

Russia shines light on the shady anti-Syrian coalition of the US, Kurds and jihadists

Russia has made a statement with only two logical conclusions: Either the US and its Kurdish proxies are lying about the nature of an alleged strike on SDF positions or otherwise, the Kurdish led SDF is embedded among ISIS.

Russia has rejected claims from the United States and their Kurdish led proxy militants SDF that the Russian Aerospace Forces along with the Syrian Arab Air force targeted an SDF position in Deir ez-Zor East of the Euphrates.

Legally speaking, the entire argument is moot as Syria has declared the SDF an illegal group and therefore a legitimate target as Syria works with its legal partners to liberate Syria. Syria has said openly it will fight the SDF if necessary in the battle to liberate Syria from all illegitimate forces. Hence the notion of some sort of agreement between the SDF and Syria, tenuous as it always was, can now be confirmed as 'fake news' or perhaps better put, wishful speculation by pro-Kurdish elements.

However, in practical terms, it highlights the very real possibility that as ISIS continues to dwindle as a formidable military force, Syria and Kurdish militants may very likely

come into increasingly intense conflicts in a 'rush for territory' in formerly ISIS occupied parts of what is legal Syrian territory, even as Russia seeks to prevent further clashes without directly interfering in Syrian affairs. In this sense Russia's ability to stop such clashes is self-limiting due to Russia's respect for the realities of international law. [More](#)
