

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Field Agreement between the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and People's Defence Units (YPG) in the city of Ras al-Ain (Serê Kaniyê)
Date	18 Feb 2013
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes

Agreement/conflict level Intrastate/local conflict

Syrian Conflicts (1948 -) (1976 - 2005) (2011 -)

The agreements relate to three different conflict contexts. Israel-Syria and Syria-Lebanon. The Syrian-Israeli conflict was a key factor for the Syrian intervention during the Lebanese Civil War, with Syrian-backed Palestinian Liberation Army units intervened in 1976 against the Palestinian/Leftist militias. Following a massacre at Tel al-Zaatar that year, Syria was forced to accept a ceasefire at a meeting of the Arab League. However, the Arab League also mandated an Arab Deterrence Force, consisting of mostly Syrian soldiers with token contributions from other Arab League states, thus further legitimizing the Syrian presence in Lebanon. During a second bout of fighting that began in 1989, caused by the formation of rival Lebanese regimes in East and West Beirut, the Syrian-backed regime won and in 1991 the 'Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination' was signed to legalize the Syrian occupation as a means to ensure the security of Syria. Syrian forces were forced to withdraw in 2005 following possible involvement in the assassination of Lebanon's President Hariri.

Syria-internal. In 2011, domestic upheaval following a wave of protests across the Arab World soon led to violent repression of protestors by Syrian government troops. The violence progressed steadily and by July 2011 the Free Syrian Army (FSA) was formed consisting of defected military units and new recruits. The FSA and rebel umbrella group known as the Syrian National Council represented the first attempt at coordinating rebel factions in late 2011. However, a steady influx of foreign fighters and increased sectarianism radicalised opposition groups, which relied on foreign funding. The nature of the conflict changed drastically in late 2013 as infighting among the opposition groups increased. One of the more significant developments was the split between the al-Qaeda outfits the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, ISIS), and Jabhat al-Nusra in early 2014 in addition to the intensified targeting of other rebel factions by ISIS fighters in particular, including the Kurdish Peshmerga, the FSA and other jihadist outfits. Since the summer of 2014, the conflict was further internationalized when ISIS announced the formation of an Islamic state eroding the state line between Iraq and Syria and also in mid-2015 when Russian forces intervened on behalf of the Bashar al-Assad government in Damascus.

Close
Syrian Conflicts (1948 -) (1976 - 2005) (2011 -)

Stage	Framework/substantive - comprehensive
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	The Free Syrian Army (FSA); People's Defence Units (YPG)

Third parties

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Description

Coordination agreement between the Free Syrian Army and the People's Defence Units in Ras al-Ain. Agreement provides for a military withdrawal, the non-interference in the city council by armed units, joint-checkpoints between FSA/YPG forces until the city can take over, to secure access and mobility in the city, further cooperation between the YPG and FSA to liberate regime-held cities, end hostile media between the two groups.

Agreement document

[SY_130200_Field Agreement between YPG and FSA.PDF \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language)

[SY_130200_Field Agreement between YPG and FSA_AR.PDF \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties**Process type**

Informal but persistent process

Rationale

-> Local issues only; no external support mechanism; culture of signing There is no formally established mechanism to support the negotiation between the signing parties. Moreover, this agreement cannot be linked to the national peace process. Indeed, both groups oppose the rule of Bashar al-Assad in Syria and reject the idea of a national negotiation to solve the conflict. Yet, it seems that both signing parties choose to solve daily pragmatic issues related to their armed struggle through agreements. Although one cannot speak of a "culture" of signing peace agreements, the parties are involved (in a non-proactive and non-conscious way) in a persistent practice of signing local agreements.

Is there a documented link to a national peace process?

No

Link to national process: articulated rationale

No link to the national peace process in Syria is mentioned in the agreement, neither it can be inferred from further research. First, the agreement does not involve local governance actors; and the signing parties themselves are not official state representative. Second, all parties to the agreement reject the national peace process, as it would maintain Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian government in power. The agreement is signed "in order to unite all people in the battle of dignity against the bloody authoritarian regime in order to build a free Syria".

Name of Locale

Ras al - Ain

Nature of Locale

City

GPS Lat/Long (DD)

36.850124, 40.070573

Participant type Local armed group

Mediator, facilitator or similar No mention of mediator or similar or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture) No specific mention.

Grievance List Page 1,
Based on our belief in the unity of a free Syrian land and people, and motivated by the commitment to the principles of peaceful coexistence between all components of the Syrian people and rejection of all sectarian, ethnic, chauvinistic and exclusionary approaches. And in order to unite all people in the battle of dignity against the bloody authoritarian regime in order to build a free Syria where all components enjoy their legitimate rights under the banner of ‘Syria for All Syrians’ to be a country that can genuinely express the authenticity and the civilization of the coexistence. For all of this, the parties meeting in Ras Al Ain agreed to resolve all the arising conflicts and disagreements according to the following principles:

Cattle rustling/ banditry No specific mention.

Social cover No specific mention.
