

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Azaz City Agreement between Ahrar al-Sham (AAS) and Jabhat al-Sham
Date	13 Nov 2016
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	Implementation/renegotiation
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	Harakat Ahrar al-Sham; Jabhat al- Shamiyya
Third parties	President of the Central Court – Azaz, [illegible]
Description	Following a dispute over a checkpoint in the City of Afrin between Harakat Ahrar al-Sham and Jabhat al-Shamiyya, the Central Court in Azaz ruled that Harakat Ahrar al-Sham owes an apology to Jabhat al-Shamiyya and that control over the checkpoint return to the Central Court according to the previous rulling on 25/7/2016.

Agreement document [SY_161114_Azaz City Agreement Between Ahrar Al-Sham and Jabhat al-Sham_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\) | Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language) [SY_161114_Azaz City Agreement Between Ahrar Al-Sham and Jabhat al-Sham_AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties

Process type Formal structured process

Rationale -> Local issues only; external support mechanism; culture of signing The agreement deals with an issue that has previously been solved by a Central Court between the two parties. There is thus a culture of signing and an external judicial mechanism to support the resolution of the conflict. The issue at stake, that concerns a checkpoint in the city of Afrin, is apparently persistent.

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, the parties to the dispute share a Salafi ideology and reject the national peace process, as it would maintain Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian government in power.

Name of Locale Afrin

Nature of Locale Smaller

GPS Lat/Long (DD) 36.509973, 36.860288

Participant type Local state actor
Local armed group

Mediator, facilitator or similar Mediator or similar referred to

Mediator (references) Central Court of Azaz

Type of mediator/facilitator/similar Local state actor

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture) Page 1, In the name of Allah the Merciful
Page 1, (Allah be behind our intention)

Grievance List The agreement addresses grievances that arose over the control of a checkpoint in the city of Afrin.

Page 1,

On Wednesday 9/11/2016, members of Harakat Ahrar al-Sham, under the lead of Abu Hussni Ahrar, came to the mentioned checkpoint, dismissed the members of the court and took over the checkpoint with the force of weapons on the grounds that the court will not ban the passage of cars from the Bab al-Salama crossing towards the city of Afrin.

Despite the request of the Central Court to Abi al-Waleed Ahrar al-Sham, Deputy Commander of Harakat Ahrar al-Sham in Azaz, to implement the agreement according to its wording, he did not do so. He did not take the incident of the checkpoint seriously, stating that 80% of the resources of the checkpoint belong to Harakat Ahrar al-Sham.

Cattle rustling/ banditry No specific mention.

Social cover No specific mention.
