

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Agreement between Syrian Defence Forces (SDF) and the Islamic State (IS)
Date	27 Nov 2017
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	Ceasefire/related
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	Islamic State (IS, ISIS); Syrian Defence Forces (SDF)
Third parties	-
Description	Three part agreement with sections providing for military, political and economic issues.

Agreement document [SY_171127_ISIS Ceasefire_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language) [SY_171127_ISIS Ceasefire_AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties

Process type Isolated example

Rationale -> Local issues only; no external support mechanism; no culture of signing The tensions between IS and other parts to the Syrian conflict are rarely solved with agreements, as the group does not recognise the legitimacy of any other actor, especially non-religious ones as it is the case of the Syrian Defence Forces. The truce (hudna) was probably seen as a necessity for IS' soldiers who have been losing ground in Iraq and Syria since 2015. Moreover, only one previous local agreement (ceasefire) was reportedly signed in this locale between the YPG and the Syrian Army on 23 August 2016. Finally, no established mechanisms supported the negotiation. Hence, the agreement cannot be placed within the context of a systematic process of 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. It is not clear how the Syrian Defence Forces are affiliated to the Syrian army. As a humanitarian and civil organisation, they have been part of the International Civil Fence Organisation since 1972 onward. Moreover, they have been assisting the Syrian Arab Army – the land force branch of the Syrian Armed Forces – in several governorates such as Damascus, Deir Ezzor Raqqa and in Eastern Ghouta. Yet, the agreement has not been formally endorsed or recognised by any state representative. Hence, it cannot be safely asserted that the Syrian Defence Forces represent the state authority. Second, IS fully rejects the national peace process, as it would maintain Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian government in power.

Name of Locale al-Hasakah

Nature of Locale Region

GPS Lat/Long (DD) 36.511684, 40.742253

Participant type International or transnational actor

Mediator, facilitator or similar No mention of mediator or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture) Page 1, In the name of God, most Gracious, most Compassionate
Page 2, Only Allah leads to prosperity and guides to the straight path.

Grievance List Although the agreement does not refer to specific causes of the conflict, it seems that the confrontation between the Islamic State and the Syrian Defence Forces in the province of Barka lies at the centre of the dispute. The issue of captured soldiers and control over oil wells seem particularly important to the parties.

Cattle rustling/ banditry No specific mention.

Social cover No specific mention.
