

Syrian Branch of Al Qaeda Sends Delegation to Turkey. Report

Delegation of Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham

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According to the Al Mayadeen satellite television channel, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (formerly Jabhat al-Nusra, the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda) has sent a delegation to Turkey to discuss the possible Turkish intervention to the Syrian province of Idlib.

Furthermore, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) has strengthened its forces in many areas in the western and northern countryside of Idlib and doubled the number of checkpoints on the road between Idlib and Salkeen, as well as deployed many heavy weapons. HTS has also built fortifications and planted mines on the road.

According to unconfirmed reports, HTS demanded from Ahrar al-Sham to withdraw completely from the western countryside of Idlib during the next 48 hours. It appears that HTS fears that the Turkish military may use the Ahar al-Sham-controlled area as a foothold for an attack against HTS in the western countryside of Idlib.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), sheikhs in Idlib during the Friday prayers speech warned against the alleged Turkish intervention. They also described Turkish **President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** as a “punk”. They also said that the Turkish strategy is an occupation project aimed at reviving the Ottoman Caliphate and that the Syrians should confront this Turkish effort.

Meanwhile, another group of Sheikhs in Turkey and Syria began work on a statement that included a “fatwa” that allows and welcomes the Turkish military operation in Idlib.

It's worth to remember that HTS issued a statement declaring its intention to fight any Turkish forces entering Syria and any party that cooperates with it.

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