

The Battle in Southern Syria Is Coming to an End: Has Israel Bowed to Russia's Demands?

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Global Research, July 05, 2018

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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After only two weeks since the beginning of the military operation, jihadists and militants in most of eastern rural Daraa in south Syria have either surrendered or were overwhelmed, the over 70 villages they occupied were liberated by the Syrian Army. Meanwhile, Israel has reduced its requests or conditions pronounced in the last two weeks: from launching threats against the approach of the Syrian Army towards the South, to menaces if Damascus pushes forces beyond the 1974 demarcation line and the disengagement agreement between Syria and Israel. This clearly means all players (the US, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia) have dropped the jihadists and militants they were training and are turning their back on them: they are now on their own.

For over seven years, Israel has invested intelligence, finance, military and medical supplies in these jihadists and their allies. On many occasions, Israel has said it prefers the "Islamic State" to Iranian forces on the borders. Many times, Israel showed images of jihadists - including those fighting under the flag of al-Qaeda - in Israeli hospitals, recovering from wounds inflicted during their clashes with the forces of Damascus. Today, it is clear that Israel's intentions have been defeated when it can announce that for the Syrian army to cross the 1974 disengagement line it means crossing red lines. Israel is crying in the wilderness because the Syrian army has the intention and means to defeat all jihadists and militants who received supplies from foreign countries. It has never crossed Syria's mind to start a new war with Israel before the Syrian territory (in the north) is liberated.

The Syrian allies are participating in the battle of the south of Syria as advisors and with backup (small) units to fill gaps only if the battle becomes critical on this or that front. So far, jihadists and militants are easily defeated and represent little resistance. There is little doubt how ISIS (the "Islamic State", aka Jaish Khaled Bin al-Waleed), deployed on the 1975 disengagement line, will react because neither the Syrian Army nor Russia are offering a relocation to the terrorist group. Therefore, the only choice ISIS have in south Syria is to fight, surrender or be allowed to cross into Israel, since for years the Israeli Army has been cohabiting with ISIS beautifully. The number of terrorists is estimated at between 1500 and 2000, a relatively small number when we consider that the Syrian Army faced tens of thousands in al-Yarmouk, rural Homs, al-Badiya, Deir-ezzour and Albukamal in the north and north east- and they wiped them out completely.

02 / 07 / 2018

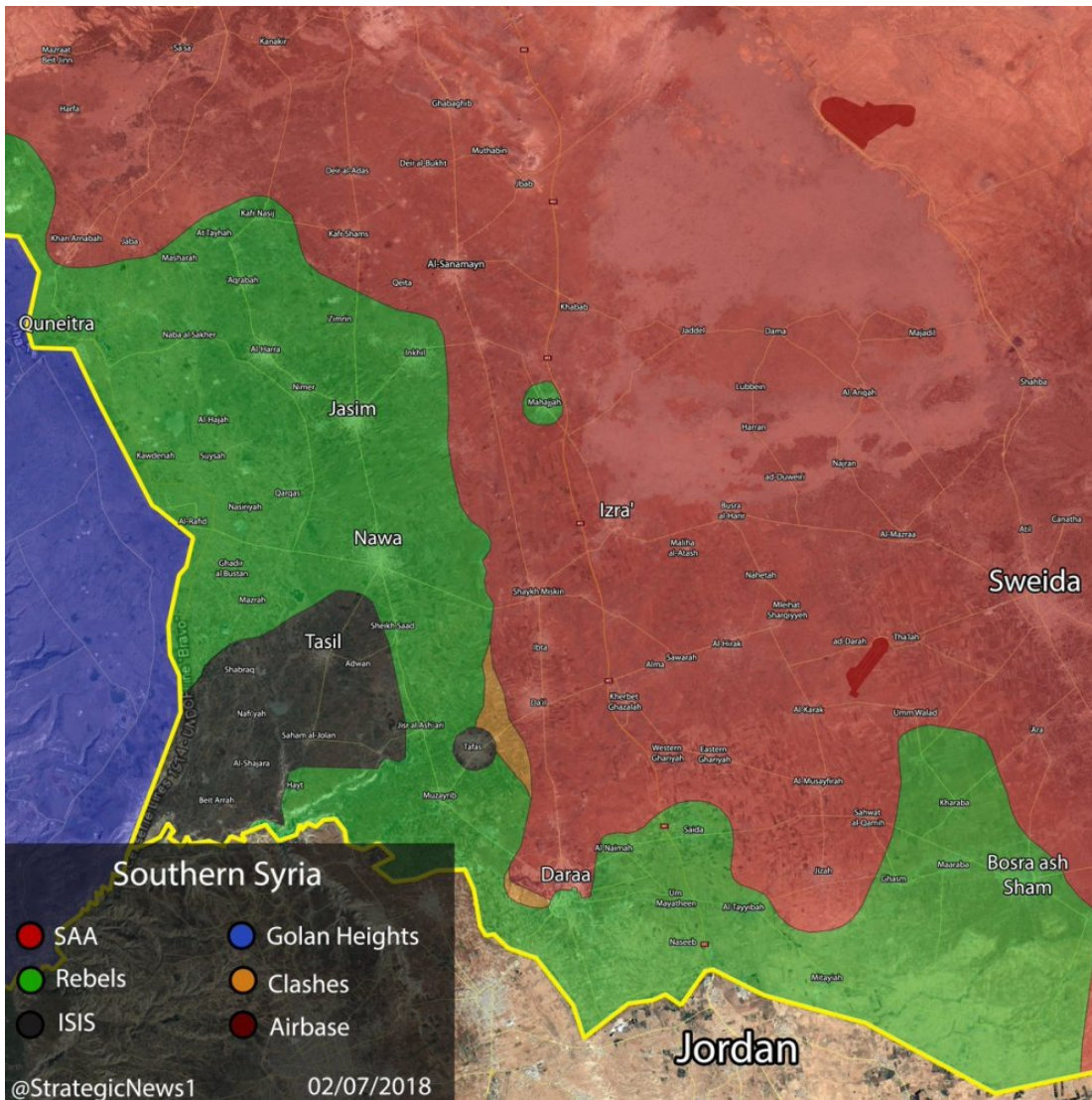


|| غنائم الجيش العربي السوري في محافظة درعا

Weapons found by the Syrian Army in Daraa during the battle of south Syria

The Syrian **President Bashar al-Assad** has disregarded any Israeli threat related to the participation of Iranian advisors and Hezbollah Special forces in the battle of south of Syria. Actually, Russia understands the necessity of the presence of Damascus' allies on the ground, so the operation is fully supported and success is guaranteed. Moreover, Moscow has seen Hezbollah and Iranian advisors pulling out from every single battle when the Syrian army prevails and whenever Damascus considered the area safe enough to take over completely. Therefore, President Putin can guarantee to his US counterpart **Donald Trump** (and he already did guarantee this to his Israeli visitors last month in Moscow) that no Iranian or Hezbollah advisors shall remain behind on Israeli borders (the wish of the Syrian central government). That was sufficient for Trump to inform Israel that the US has no reasons to believe it is facing any danger from the Syrian Army on its borders.

For almost 45 years, Damascus didn't engage in any serious attack against Israel starting from the 1974 disengagement line bordering the occupied Golan heights. There can be no comparison between the presence of the Syrian regular forces and the presence of the terrorist group, ISIS, on the Israeli occupied Golan heights. In fact, it will be impossible for President Trump to defend Israel's case to protect ISIS - regardless how close the terrorist group and Israel are following years of being "good neighbours" - and attack the Syrian army wishing to recover its own territory and totally eliminate the presence of ISIS from the south of Syria.



What is remaining in the south of Syria is only a tactical battle. It will intensify on one front and will be smooth on the other. The battle is reaching its first objective to clear eastern Daraa, in the coming days, and to secure the Naseeb border crossing between Jordan and Syria that helps both countries to recover some hundreds of millions of dollars yearly from their trade and commerce.

In the second phase, the west of Daraa and Quneitra, the Syrian army will push its forces towards south-west Daraa to clear jihadists standing on the way between the Syrian army and where ISIS is located. There is no specific time allocated for the ending of the battle. Nevertheless, the result of the battle is easily predictable: the Syrian army will regain control of Syrian territory, particularly the city of Daraa where all countries involved in “regime change” (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the US, the UK, Qatar) initiated their flow of weapons and finance for the south. They have managed to achieve only the destruction of the Levant (\$300 billions are needed to rebuild Syria), the death of around 400,000 persons, and millions of displaced persons and refugees.

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