

Video: U.S. Backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) Political Wing Seeks to Normalize Relations with Damascus

By [South Front](#)

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*On July 18, **the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)** said that their members, backed up by the US-led coalition, had captured 1,100km², which included sixteen villages, from ISIS in the provinces of al-Hasakah and Deir Ezzor.*

According to the SDF, four ISIS members were killed and four others were captured during the advance. One SDF member reportedly died. Additionally, the SDF captured a pickup truck, two heavy machine guns, a RPG-7 launcher, mines and ammunition. The provided numbers show that ISIS had shown almost no resistance to the advancing US-backed force.

A day earlier, on July 17, Ilham Ehmed, co-chairperson of the Syrian Democratic Council (SDC), a political wing of the SDF, announced that the SDC will open offices in the provinces of Hama, Homs, Latakia and in the capital of Damascus in the near future in a move allegedly aimed to propel negotiations between the SDF/SDC and the Damascus government.

The announcement came a day after a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Putin in Helsinki on July 16, during which the discussed the situation in Syria and other important topics.

Meanwhile, militants in the southern Syrian city of Daraa handed over another batch of weapons to the Syrian Arab Army. This batch included three T-55 battle tanks, two BMP-1 infantry fighting vehicles, four so-called "Hell canons", several heavy machine guns and ammunition.

A reconciliation agreement in the area was reached on July 14 and the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) restored control of the city. Since then, militants have been surrendering their weapons there.

A local reconciliation deal was also reached in the town of Nawa, northeast of Daraa city. According to pro-government sources, units of the SAA have established control of key hills around the town by July 19 and militants have started preparing to hand over their weapons.

Earlier a series of firefights between the SAA and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham took place in Nawa.

However, a more moderate part of militants was able to expel Hayat Tahrir al-Sham from the area.

Russia has established a center for receiving, relocating and accommodating refugees in Syria, the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement on July 18. The center will monitor the return of displaced persons and Syrian refugees from foreign countries to their homes. It will also be involved in humanitarian aid deliveries and will assist the Syrian government in restoring healthcare and human services.

As the conflict in most of Syria comes to an end of its hot phase, humanitarian operations and the ability of the Damascus government to restore a peaceful life across the country will become important factors impacting the prospects of a possible political solution of the entire conflict.

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