

# Video: Syria and Turkey Ramp Up Preparations for New Military Confrontation

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*The Syrian Army and Iranian-backed militias deployed a new batch of reinforcements to the frontline in southern Idlib and western Aleppo. According to local sources, fresh troops reinforced by armoured vehicles and battle tanks were placed near Saraqib, Kafranbel, and Urma as-Sughra. These areas were the hottest points of the conflict between Syrian troops and Turkish-led forces during the previous round of escalations in Greater Idlib. Turkey and its proxies are also preparing for a new round of confrontations.*

During the past week, at least four Turkish military convoys, with battle tanks and even MIM-23 Hawk medium-range air-defense systems, entered Idlib, allegedly to secure the ceasefire regime and contain the terrorist threat. How Turkish troops are planning to use air defense systems against al-Qaeda terrorists that do not have aircraft remains a mystery.

[https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR\\_30\\_03\\_2020\\_ENG\\_AE\\_1.mp4](https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_30_03_2020_ENG_AE_1.mp4)

At the same time, sources close to Idlib militants announced that Ankara is forming five new units consisting of its own troops, members of the National Front for Liberation and the Syrian National Army. Both these militant groups are funded and trained by Turkey. The newly formed units will be led by Turkish officers and allegedly include 9,000 Syrian militants and a similar number of Turkish troops. Pro-Turkish sources speculate that this force will be tasked with securing the M4 highway in southern Idlib and clearing the area of radical groups like Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. After this, a security zone will be established and joint Turkish-Russian patrols will be launched in the area as it was agreed to by Presidents Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Vladimir Putin in Moscow. The problem with this theory is that the Turkish-backed groups, which should supposedly be involved in this operation are allied with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and other al-Qaeda-linked organizations. So, they will have little motivation to confront them shifting the burden of fighting to Turkish troops.

According to pro-government sources, the Turkish motivation is different. They note that Ankara is very unsatisfied with the performance of their proxies during the recent battle against the Syrian Army. So, it opted to make a new attempt to create elite units that should deliver a devastating blow to the brutal Assad regime that is cowardly resisting the occupation of Syrian territory by Turkey.

Turkish-backed forces also increased their activity in Syria's northeast. On March 29, the 20th Division of the so-called Syrian National Army attacked positions of Kurdish militias near the village of Sayda. Pro-Turkish sources claimed that a truck equipped with a 23mm machine gun belonging to Kurdish forces was destroyed and that many fighters were killed. Turkish proxies still cherish radiant hopes to capture the nearby town of Ayn Issa thus

seizing control of the crossroad of the M4 highway and the Tall Abyad-Raqqah road.

The US-led coalition continues evacuation of smaller bases and regrouping of its forces in Iraq. After the withdrawal of coalition troops from al-Qaim and al-Qayyarah, they left from the Kirkuk K1 base. Means and forces from these facilities will be redeployed to other US bases in the country, mainly Camp Taji. There are no signs of any kind of US troop withdrawal from the country despite the demands from the Baghdad government. To the contrary, the Pentagon recently announced that it was working to deploy Patriot air defense systems to protect US troops in Iraq from missile attacks.

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