

Video: The Liberation of Palmyra. Towards the Defeat of ISIS

By [South Front](#)

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

Theme: [Terrorism](#)

On Mar.27 the pro-government forces liberated the ancient city of Palmyra and the adjacent Palmyra Airbase in Eastern Homs completing an anti-ISIS operation that began on Mar.7 with aim to seize the strategic crossroads. The operation was synchronized with the Iraqi forces' advance on Mosul depriving ISIS' opportunity to deploy reinforcements to Palmyra. The Russia-Iraq-Syria-Iran coordination center in Baghdad played a key role in this.

More than 5000-strong land grouping, which consisted of mainly the Syrian Arab Army's Tiger Forces, Syrian Navy Marines, Desert Hawks Brigade, the National Defense Forces, Hezbollah and Liwa al-Fatimiyoun, was involved in the operation. The Syrian government was able to concentrate such group on the Palmyra front due to the US-Russia promoted ceasefire that took effect on Feb.27.

The Palmyra offensive proceeded as a three-pronged assault displaying an operational design that characterized the most part of the recent major operations and marks a high involvement of Russians into the operation planning.

The Russian Special Forces troops took part in the operation performing target designation and other special missions. It's complicated to estimate their numbers at the frontline; however, it's clear that their participation on the ground was one of the main reasons of such military success. Moreover, Russian military specialists will reportedly dismantle IEDs set by militants in Palmyra.

A significant air support played an important role in the success. Russian warplanes have been conducting some 40 sorties to Palmyra's area per day since Mar.22. These numbers don't include the participation of Russian fighter helicopters such as Mi-28 which were observed in the area.

Now, when Palmyra is liberated, the SAA and its allies will likely advance through the Palmyra-Sukhna-Deir Ezzor road in order to break ISIS siege from the Deir Ezzor. According to reports, ISIS has already started to set new a defense line at Al Sukhna.

However, before the advance on Deir Ezzor, the Syrian forces need to consolidate their positions in the ancient city and nearby areas. The loyalist forces have redeployed a force to conduct an operation to push ISIS from the town of Qaryatayn and Al-Busairi crossroads. The advance on Qaryatayn is expected to be launched on Feb.28.

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