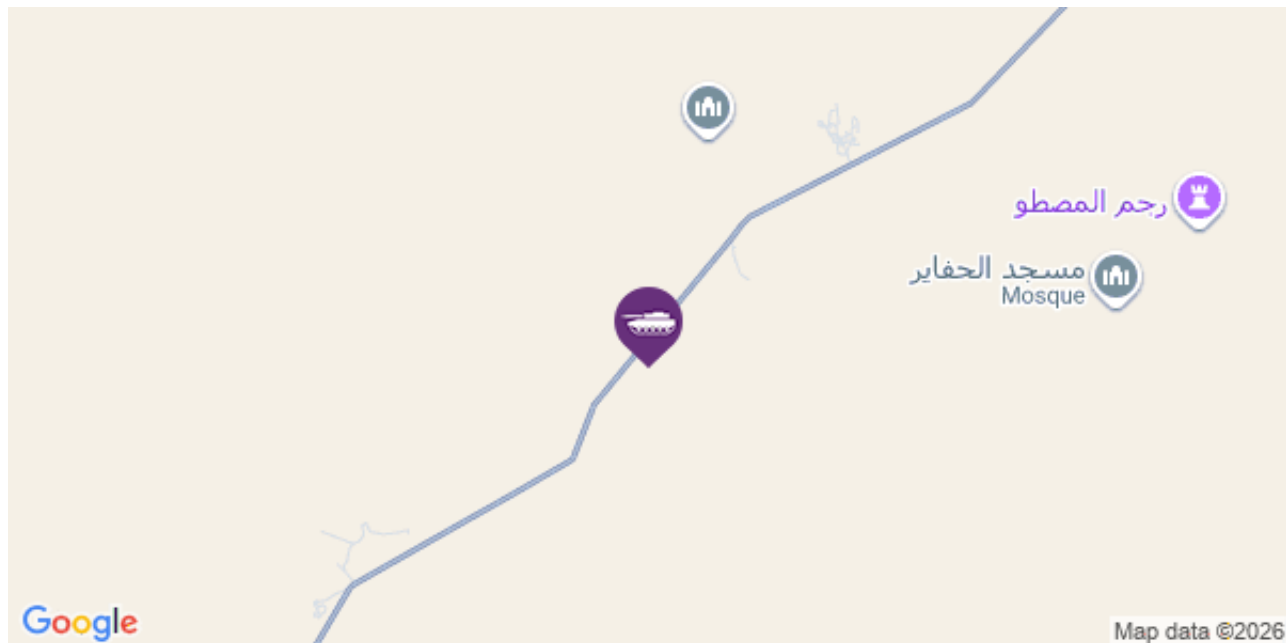


Armed Conflict



25

JAN
8:53 UTC

Syria Alert (UPDATE): Ceasefire between government, SDF extended on January 24 for 15 days; ceasefire to remain volatile

Current Situation:

- On January 24, the Syrian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced the extension of the ceasefire with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) for 15 days.
- The SDF confirmed the extension.
- The ceasefire extension came into effect at 23:00 (local time) on January 24, following the expiration of the previous four-day truce at [20:00](#).
- The Syrian MoD stated that the ceasefire was extended to “support [US operations](#) to transfer Islamic State (IS) detainees from SDF prisons to Iraq.”

Source: [Syrian MoD](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The extension of the ceasefire is likely driven by several factors, including the need to preserve stability while sensitive security and political arrangements are finalized. Beyond reducing the immediate risk of large-scale clashes, the extension is likely intended to create space for continued negotiations over the SDF’s potential integration into government structures.

2. The MoD's statement suggests that a primary consideration of the truce is to facilitate the US Central Command (CENTCOM)-led plan to transfer IS detainees from Syria to Iraq, a process that requires sustained coordination, secure transit routes, and a lack of hostilities that could disrupt implementation.
3. **FORECAST:** During this period, both sides are likely to use the relative calm to pursue confidence-building measures, including deconfliction mechanisms and ongoing dialogue on administrative and military integration frameworks. The government may seek to leverage the ceasefire to expand its presence and influence across other contested areas and advance the integration process, while the SDF is likely to press for concrete political and security guarantees.
4. **FORECAST:** Nevertheless, the ceasefire is expected to remain fragile and contingent on continued mutual restraint. While neither side appears inclined toward a full-scale resumption of hostilities, localized clashes may occur near al-Hasakah, Kobani, and Qamishli during the ceasefire period. Sporadic spoiler attacks by extremist factions on either side may also materialize and could undermine the viability of the temporary truce, posing risks to the agreement's durability.

Recommendations:

1. Avoid all travel to Syria at the current juncture due to the volatile security environment, including the elevated risks of militancy and armed conflict.
2. Those operating in northeastern Syria over the coming days are advised to shelter in place given the volatile security situation and the significant risk of armed conflict between government troops and SDF fighters. Keep abreast of updates and comply with measures announced by local authorities.
3. Travel to Damascus should be for essential purposes only, while adhering to all security precautions regarding the threat of militant attacks and potential for airstrikes.
4. Those conducting essential operations should seek security escorts and a local fixer to facilitate coordination with Syrian government authorities.
5. Avoid the vicinity of government and military installations throughout Syria, including in Damascus, as well as the border areas with Israel and Lebanon due to the persistent risk of Israeli strikes.
6. Use only vetted and secure private transportation from a hotel, company, or organization.
7. Remain cognizant of the elevated risk of sectarian violence in the country, particularly in and around as-Suweida, Latakia, and Tartus provinces, and Kurdish-dominated northeastern parts of the country. Avoid discussing sectarian issues in public due to heightened sensitivities.
8. Remain cognizant of the extreme risk posed by jihadist militant groups in the country, including the Islamic State (IS)