



Daraa Situation Analysis

March 4, 2017

This report summarizes recent developments in the province of Daraa and highlights the educational and humanitarian situation caused by the latest escalation of fighting taking place in the province.

1 - Areas of control

The province of Daraa is divided into three districts: the province's center, the eastern and the western countryside.

The city of Daraa is the province's center and it is divided into:

- 1) Daraa al-Balad, which includes al-Mokhayam and al-Saad road (under the control of the opposition factions).
- 2) Daraa Station, which contains the Syrian regime security centers and the districts of al-Manshia and al-Sahari. The opposition controls roughly 40 percent of Daraa Station, while the Syrian regime controls roughly 60 percent of the area.

Most of the eastern countryside is under the control of the opposition factions.

Most of the western countryside is under the control of the opposition factions, except a few areas which are under the control of the Syrian regime.

There is, in addition, Yarmouk Basin which is under the control of ISIS.

2 - Field updates

The regime did not abide by the local cease-fire agreement, and it continues to shell areas beyond its control in a systematic way.

The regime launched an attack on Daraa old customs, which is located near al-Manshia between Syria and Jordan, on February 11, 2017, in order to seize it. That prompted the armed opposition groups to launch a battle named 'Death, not humiliation' against the Syrian regime controlled areas in the province's center (Daraa city). Al-Manshia was a particular focus because it has strategic importance due to its large area, as well as the fact that it overlooks the airport, al-Sahari neighborhood and the security centers.



These battles summoned a violent response from the Syrian regime and its Russian ally. This manifested in the form of heavy shelling on the eastern and western countryside, as well as Daraa city. As a result, civilians fled in large numbers and they put pressure on opposition factions to stop the attack on al-Manshia district.

ISIS benefited from these battles between the Syrian regime and the opposition, seizing a large area of Yarmouk Basin. It advanced to Tseel, Nawa, Heet, Jleen and al-Sheikh Saad. ISIS conducted executions of civilians in these areas, executing the head of the local council of the city of Sahem and others.

These events caused some of the opposition armed groups to withdraw from al-Manshia district, and move to stop ISIS from advancing and regaining areas that were captured by them. Consequently, the opposition armed groups regained Tal Jomou, Tseel and Zleen.

3 - Humanitarian situation

The fighting in Daraa has led to nearly 150 civilian deaths and the displacement of around 2,800 families, according to statistics from the Civil Defense and the local council in the city of Daraa. Displaced families moved to al-Shaiah which is a plain area lies adjacent to the Jordanian border. This is considered a relatively safe area because it is isolated from the Syrian regime's bombardment line. However, it does experience occasional bombing by the Jordanian army's land defense during military exercises, as well as fire aimed at thwarting escape attempts towards the Jordanian border.

The destruction of service facilities caused by air raids has led to the complete destruction of the main water reservoir in the country, which provides drinking water to civilians in Daraa al-Balad

4 - Health situation and Survives

There was a possible pattern of systemic targeting of all medical centers in Daraa- Al-Balad by the Syrian regime and their Russian allies. As a result the only two hospitals in the province of Daraa, which are Daraa al-Balad Field Hospital and Martyr Issa Ajaj Hospital, are out of service. As for medical centers in the countryside they provide only first aid services and they lack medical devices that give first aid to urgent and serious cases. Medical services are non-existent due to the closure of the Jordanian border, which no longer allows sick and injured people to enter Jordan for treatment. Lastly, there is a scarcity of medical supplies because the number of injured people has climbed to more than 1,000.



5 - Educational situation

Schools have stopped functioning as a result of the displacement of thousands, as families moved into the schools as shelters, in addition to the heavy bombardment by the Syrian regime of areas not under its control in Daraa. As for Syrian regime controlled areas, Daraa's governor has issued an order mandating that students and teachers attend schools, even under bombardment. In al-Menshia and al-Sahari districts the education system has stopped completely due to proximity to military operations.

6 – Recommendations

- Reopen safe crossing points to Jordan for injured people to receive treatment in Jordanian hospitals. These hospitals are near the Syrian-Jordanian border, and they are close to areas hit by shells. It should be noted that transferring patients is very dangerous in areas under the control of the radical armed group Khaled bin al-Walid, which executed two injured men from the Free Syrian Army's personnel during transfer to the province of Daraa.
- Humanitarian relief organizations and OCHA must be supported and given access to provide tents, mattresses, blankets and means of heating for civilians who have fled the indiscriminate shelling and are currently in the open air, some of them hiding among the olive trees, which do not protect them from cold weather and shells.
- We demand a cessation of the systematic shelling against civilians and service facilities, in addition to a ceasefire.