

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Agreement between Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Free Idlib Army on the issue of Col. Ali Al Samahi
Date	6 Apr 2017
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes

Agreement/conflict level Intrastate/local conflict

Syrian Conflicts (1948 -) (1976 - 2005) (2011 -)

The agreements relate to three different conflict contexts. Israel-Syria and Syria-Lebanon. The Syrian-Israeli conflict was a key factor for the Syrian intervention during the Lebanese Civil War, with Syrian-backed Palestinian Liberation Army units intervened in 1976 against the Palestinian/Leftist militias. Following a massacre at Tel al-Zaatar that year, Syria was forced to accept a ceasefire at a meeting of the Arab League. However, the Arab League also mandated an Arab Deterrence Force, consisting of mostly Syrian soldiers with token contributions from other Arab League states, thus further legitimizing the Syrian presence in Lebanon. During a second bout of fighting that began in 1989, caused by the formation of rival Lebanese regimes in East and West Beirut, the Syrian-backed regime won and in 1991 the 'Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination' was signed to legalize the Syrian occupation as a means to ensure the security of Syria. Syrian forces were forced to withdraw in 2005 following possible involvement in the assassination of Lebanon's President Hariri.

Syria-internal. In 2011, domestic upheaval following a wave of protests across the Arab World soon led to violent repression of protestors by Syrian government troops. The violence progressed steadily and by July 2011 the Free Syrian Army (FSA) was formed consisting of defected military units and new recruits. The FSA and rebel umbrella group known as the Syrian National Council represented the first attempt at coordinating rebel factions in late 2011. However, a steady influx of foreign fighters and increased sectarianism radicalised opposition groups, which relied on foreign funding. The nature of the conflict changed drastically in late 2013 as infighting among the opposition groups increased. One of the more significant developments was the split between the al-Qaeda outfits the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, ISIS), and Jabhat al-Nusra in early 2014 in addition to the intensified targeting of other rebel factions by ISIS fighters in particular, including the Kurdish Peshmerga, the FSA and other jihadist outfits. Since the summer of 2014, the conflict was further internationalized when ISIS announced the formation of an Islamic state eroding the state line between Iraq and Syria and also in mid-2015 when Russian forces intervened on behalf of the Bashar al-Assad government in Damascus.

Close

Syrian Conflicts (1948 -) (1976 - 2005) (2011 -)

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Stage	Framework/substantive - partial
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	Col. Tayseer al-Samahi for the Free Idlib Army [Signed] Abu al-Saad al-Suri for Hayat Tahrir al-Sham [Signed]

Third parties

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Description

Agreement to form a sharia court and adjudicate on the killing of Col. Ali al-Samahi at the Khan al-Subul checkpoint. Also agrees to release detainees; handover of seized belongings, vehicles, etc. by both sides. Parties further agree to remove checkpoints and other 'manifestations' of tension and hand over wanted members from their groups.

Agreement document

[SY_170405_HTS and FSA agreement on al-Samahi, Idlib _EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\) | Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language)

[SY_170406_HTS and FSA agreement on al-Samahi, Idlib _AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties**Process type**

Informal but persistent process

Rationale

-> Local issues only; no external support mechanism; no culture of signing This is the only written agreement referenced in the database between a Salafi-jihadi group and the nationalist Syrian group. Moreover, the agreement relates to specific issues that arose in a highly localised context. If one takes Idlib governorate as the unit of reference though, a series of agreements have been signed in the context of infighting between armed groups for control over territories, resources and populations.

Is there a documented link to a national peace process?

No

Link to national process: articulated rationale

No link to the national peace process in Syria is mentioned in the agreement, neither it can be inferred from further research. The agreement does not involve local governance actors, and the signing parties themselves are not official state representative.

Name of Locale

Khan Al Subul checkpoint

Nature of Locale

Smaller

GPS Lat/Long (DD)

35.748312, 36.753173

Participant type

Local armed group

Mediator, facilitator or similar

No mention of mediator or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture) Page 1, In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Grievance List The agreement addresses the grievances that arose from the killing of Colonel Ali al Samahi - the chief of the Free Idlib Army - by the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham.

Cattle rustling/ banditry No specific mention.

Social cover No specific mention.
