



The Shifting Reality of Areas of Control between Syrian Regime and the Free Army in the Syrian Revolution

A report by the Syrian Network for Human Rights on the nature of the geographic and demographic situation in the Syrian regime's and the Free Army's areas of control on the ground in light of the peaceful and armed revolutionary movements

It can be difficult to comprehend the map of areas of control in light of the rapid developments. Nonetheless, it is conceivable to say that after 18 months into the revolution, Syrian regime forces and Free Syrian Army fighters have split the Syrian lands. With time, the scope of heated clashes and heavy bombardment has expanded around major cities, with the Syrian regime being very far from making good with its promises on a military victory, and the ever-changing realities of various areas in Syria that are called "cleansed" areas, sometimes, or "liberated" areas at other times.

Occasionally, the Syrian regime would declare that they have cleansed an area more than once especially in Damascus suburbs governorate that surrounds the capital Damascus, which is the case in Douma city, the towns of Eastern and Western Ghouta, and Damascus's southern and eastern neighborhoods. The "cleansing", in the Syrian regime's case, means that these areas have been raided and subjected to wide military operations during which savage massacres were committed, which results in destroying more than 60% of these cities for the sake of killing the opposition's activities, whether it was peaceful or armed. However, this is not enough to stop the Free Syrian Army from returning more intensified and resolved. More importantly, the idea of returning gets firmer for the residents and rebels, as it is motivated by the desire to retaliate in the wake of the barbaric massacres the Syrian regime perpetrated during the raids, where more civilian find themselves joining the Free Syrian Army, and more regime soldiers defect from the regime, which can be drawn out from a sign that was held in a demonstration in Aleppo, saying to the head of the regime Bashar Al Assad: "When a person's family is killed, his home is wrecked, and his work is no more, what else he has but to volunteer in the Free Army's ranks."





This report tries to shed light on the nature of the areas that are controlled by the Syrian regime and the areas that are controlled by the Free Army. But first, we should talk about the demographic components of the Syrian people, and the structure within the Syrian regime army and the Free Army, which will be followed by a detailed look at the military authorities that are controlling the Syrian lands, and what these area's residents think of the revolution and the Syrian regime.

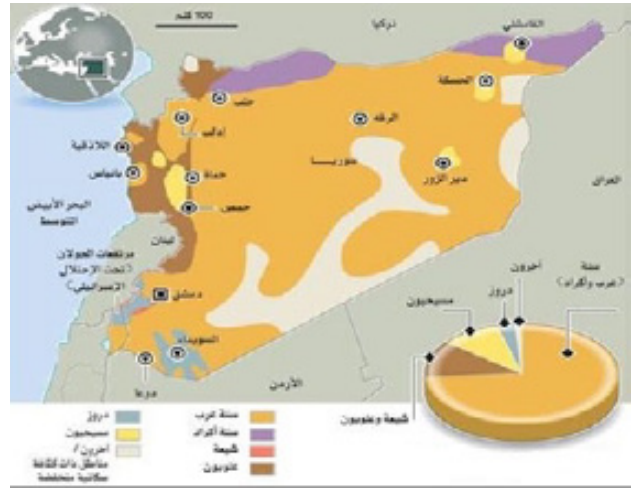
The Demographic components in Syria

Syrian population is estimated at approximately 22,000,000 that the Sunni Muslims represent 74% while Alawites, Shiites and Ismailis represent 13%. The Druze represent 3% and the Christians are estimated to be 10%. And between the religious minorities, the Yazidi community which can be found in al Jazeera area northeast of Syria.

Moreover, the main sectarian minorities in Syria are Kurds Arman and Turkman which represent 8.5%, 4% and 3% respectively, in addition to a number of Circassians in which most of Kurds, Turkman and Circassians are Sunni Muslims while Arman are Christians that makes them ethic and religious minority at the same time.

The other ethnic minorities are Syriac, including Assyrians and Chaldeans and they are estimated in Syria at 200,000 most of whom live in al Jazeera area northeast of Syria and the Circassians are estimated by 100,000 while Syrian Druse is concentrated in Sowaida governorate and in some of Golan villages and Damascus suburbs such as Jaramana and Ashrafiyat Sahnaya. The Armenians live in Aleppo city and al Qamishli city northeast of Syria.

Great unevenness among Sunni Alawite and Christian is a remarkable trait in Syrian suburbs, in particular in Homs, Hama and Tartus. In Homs suburbs, which is a Sun-





ni- majority, there are mixed villages or Christian- majority villages, Alawite villages, Sunni Turkman and other related to “al Murshidya” sect. in Hama, also, we could find Ismailis, Alawites, People believing in al Murshidiya convictions, Shiites and Christians villages although the center of Hama is considered as Sunni-majority center.

Tartus suburbs with Sunni- majority center include villages of Ismailis, Alawites, and Christians in addition to other sects in Misyaf, al Qadmous and al Khawabi while Sunni Turkman are concentrated in other villages.

Also, the Aleppo suburbs contain Shiite, Christian, Alawite and mixed villages in the northeastern areas like Hasaka and al Qamishli where the Kurds are the majority with Christian minorities like Syriac, Assyrians and Armenians.

In Latakia, the Alawite and Christian constitute the majority of the population in addition to some Sunni villages. Although Jabla city is a Sunni majority but it is considered as Alawite village. Contrary to the suburbs, every city contains neighborhoods of one different ethic or minority or neighborhoods with mixed religious and ethics minorities which mingle uniquely.

For instance, the western suburbs of Homs are well-known for having Christian majority while some other villages have an Alawite majority e.g. Um Jamme’, Qerab Ali, Jin Kamra, Kherbet al Teen and Kherbet Ghazi. The Sunni presence is generally found in Tal Kalakh and al Husen village by Turkman-Sunni majority. The families of the village have relation with Tal Kalakh families, while the village surrounding Tal Kalakh are distributed between Alawite sect in Ein al Khadra village and al Qrayat village, al Murshideya sect in al Bahloliya village, Azair village is Maronite with some Sunni Turkman families, on the road to al Qabo- northwest Homs- there is Tal Dou village with mixed Alawite and Sunni sect, and Maraymin village with Marashida and Alawite sects. However, the western suburbs are well- known for its Christian majority.

Meanwhile, in Tartus suburbs- Safita as an example- there are many sects of Alawite, Shiite, Turkman, Christian, and Sunni while in Hama suburbs in Misyaf which is affiliated to the Sunni center there are other different sects of Shiite, Severner, Alawite, Ismailia, Christian and even Sunni and at the same suburbs the population of Salamiya area are Ismailia surrounded with Alawite villages like Taldora, al Saboura. Idlib suburbs are considered as Sunni-majority area in which there are some villages with Christian majority and Shiite minority like al Ghasaniya and al Yaqoupiya villages.





The components of Syrian regime army and Free Syrian army:

Syrian regime army:

The Syrian regime army is one of the biggest armies in the Arab world with about 325,000 individuals in the actual service including reserve soldiers, in addition to 314,000 individuals who are out of service but they can be requested in time of emergencies.

But the most striking thing about armed forces is the centralized-organization and the sectarian majority of the leadership and they contain a number of militias and irregular forces which is related to al Ba'ath, the ruling party that are estimated at 100,00 members and is well-known as “al Shabiha” by the demonstrators. These militias supported by army are responsible for the operations of repression. The Alawite percentage is estimated by 7% of regular army (soldiers and officers) while Sunni are majority of reserve army, Air force and the navy.

Land forces constitute the biggest and the most important component of armed forces by 80% of the total of soldiers and officers. The leader of these forces is the Chief of Staff, who is usually from Alawite sect. the Syrian armed forces consist of four sectors: Land forces, Air forces, Air Defense forces, and the navy. The Defense minister has board power which prevents the Chief of Staff to act alone while the President al Assad is the commander in chief of the armed forces.

Moreover, Syria has more than fifteen security and intelligence bodies, the most important bodies are military intelligence, general intelligence, Air security intelligence, military security and political security. Most of the leaders of security and intelligence bodies are from Alawite sect who have board power in compare with the officers and the leaders of the army in which they are related directly to the president's authority.

The Syrian regime army is divided into three army's leaderships where the first and the second armies are well-armed and more effective than the third one and they are distributed in the capital Damascus and its outskirts, along the borders with Lebanon, Jordan, and al Golan front.

The structure of the Syrian regime army shows that its primary goal is to prevent coups and popular rebellion movements that aim to overthrow the regime, through

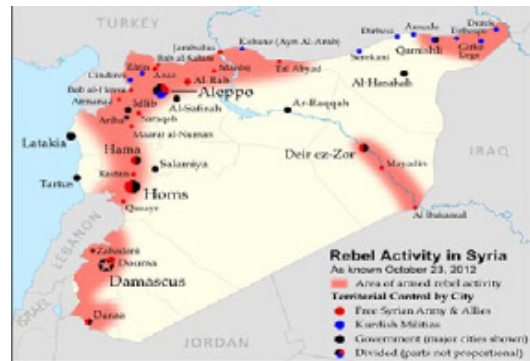




a centralized system and limits the capability of one military leader or even two leaders to act effectively against the state. Also, authorizing Alawi people in sensitive leadership positions and the Alawite-majority army ban the majority of population, the Sunni, to rebel against the state and keep a great deal of loyalty within the army to Alawite leadership as there is fear among Alawite sect in Syria that any coup could overthrow the Alawite rule which means throwing the sect out of rule and shifting them to second- degree citizens. As a result, the regime invests the sectarian structure in the state to protect its position with support of military and security leaderships. Additionally, the structure of the reserve army, which is Sunni majority and consists of brigades, regiments and some battalions, is distributed by limited numbers which restrict them to lead a coup if they return back from a war. At the same time, the large number of security bodies strengthen the regime as they monitor each other and watch armed forces and the political officers to observe any rebellion movement and oppress it in early stages.

Free Syrian Army

It consists of groups of civilians who are capable of wielding weapons and comprehending the ethics pertaining to that, in addition to the officers and soldiers who defect from the regular army where they appear to protect the peaceful protesters and now they aim to liberate the lands from al Assad rule. And although the Free Army consists of the various members who have the same goal but the lack of coherence and coordination is still main trait of this army as it depends on civilian rebels, with a few members of military officers, which makes the mission of elimination of free army a hard one for the Syrian regime. Consequently, the Free Army will be the main party at any solution of Syrian crisis and whether it will pass or fail.



When the Syrian regime decided to use security solution against its people and tried to suppress the revolution and gave people hard lesson for being brave and protest against the regime, many officers and soldiers defected from the Syrian army and





preferred to be killed at the hand of Syrian regime over killing their families, as defection from Syrian regime means that they choose to be tortured and killed or may expose their families and children or even relatives to killing and that what was happened to the most of the first defected members. Although the defection cases didn't start among high officers or leaders but it affected the Syrian regime army and was a turning point at the revolution in which it raised the morale of Syrian people after they had been frustrated by the attitude of regime army which appears as an army of al Assad family not Syrians.

The defection among officers started when the lieutenant Hussein al Harmoush defected in June 2011 and formed "free officers brigade" which was followed after less than a month by the colonel Reyad al As'ad who formed "Free Army". This army became the popular base for the armed resistance in Syria. The military defection has spread in different regions from all ranks including brigadiers and generals. The most popular defected dean was Manaf Tlas the officer in the Republican Guard who is also a son of former defense minister. Moreover, the Syrian astronaut and the general Mohammad Fares who is the only Syrian astronaut to travel by Russian space ship in 1986 has defected.

In August 2013, the colonel Ya'rub al Shar', the chief of information branch affiliated to political security defected from the army while his assistant Affaqa Ahmad defected in October 2011.

Characteristics of defection cases

- It affects the state rather than the regime, which means that the public institutions are harmed not the regime private bodies "the hidden state".
- It considered as a non-collective defection that although the number of the defections is large but there is no case of a collective defection like defection of complete military brigade or battalion. The reason behind this is the sectarian security structure of Syrian Army, if the leader of a brigade is from sect so his assistant will be from other sect and the security officer of third sect which resulted in low confidence among the all levels to defect and it is impossible to agree with each other.
- There is no case where an officer or a civilian from high ranks declare his defection as he needs to protect his families out of fear of retaliation from their families, including fathers, sons and brothers.

The mission of Free Army began as a defensive mission by protecting the protesters with simple guns and Kalashnikovs, and they keep to do so but with an offensive





force. Nowadays, most of fighters are divided into brigades, for example al Tawhid brigade which consists of a number of battalions from Aleppo and its outskirts. The number of Free Syrian's members is hard to be specified as there no list for the soldiers affiliated to it.

For the Free Syrian Army, coordinating operations is one through cooperating with cooperation with military local councils in different regions, the councils consist of leaders at all regions and the civilians who have military experience like retired officers.

The weapons of Free Army come from many sources, some soldiers defected and kept their light weapons with them while other weapons became a spoil of war after raids against Syrian regime army. And the military equipment is passed through Turkey and Lebanon but the observation of borders ban any large number of weapons to enter.

Military dependency of Syrian regions and the attitudes of their residents towards Syrian regime and Revolution:

As a result of lack of balance of power between Free Army which has Light and medium weapons and the Syrian regime army with all artillery and aerial weapons, the popular base becomes the point of Strength and dependence for Free Army. Consequently, the conflict will last more and more where no army can achieve the victory. When the Free Army is fighting among its families and social vicinity and that turns these places to a target of bombardment and destruction while the Syrian regime will not launch a war of genocide against thousands of people at once so it commits massacres to enforce the residents to leave their lands then to drop barrel bombs to destroy the infrastructure in sake for ban returning back to areas which is applied to many neighborhoods of Jourat al Shayyah, Baba Amr and al Rastan. Recently, the Syrian regime began to explode the buildings and destroy it completely in Damascus neighborhoods under the pretext of removing slums and opening roads or fixing other in an alleged organization plan. The alleged plan was included the revolutionary areas in Mazzet Basateen, Kafrsousa, al Qadam, al Hajar al Aswad, al Assali, al Tadamon, al Mukhayam, al Maydan and Barza neighborhoods. The activists broadcasted videos showing the destruction operations for buildings after exploded it, the activists said: "the regime does this to change the demography of the revolutionary areas and to eliminate the popular base of Free Army:

The distribution of areas by the military party that control it and the attitude of their inhabitants toward Syrian regime and the revolution:





- 1- Areas controlled by Syrian regime
- 2- Area controlled by Free Army
- 3- Areas of changing dependency

Details:

- 1- Areas controlled by Syrian regime, which are divided into two categories:
 - areas controlled by Syrian regime but their residents are not loyal to regime.
 - areas controlled by Syrian regime with a majority of loyal residents

Areas controlled by Syrian regime but their residents are not loyal to regime

While the regime controls the capital Damascus firmly by dividing areas into security blanks and closing its entrance using large number of security checkpoints which enable regime to cut off its suburbs and areas of heated clashes rapidly and repeatedly on one day as the regime treats with the Sunni majority which oppose al Assad rule. It controls the security body and the main transportation axes in the most areas in the capital except the southern neighborhoods like al Hajar al Aswad, al Qadam and al Asali, which didn't prevent attack and explosion to occur in the centers of the regime forces as the last one attack was on military Judgement building in al Maza that followed the three attacks on the headquarter of the General Staff and the attack on the National Security headquarters. Also, the securities headquarters are subjected to quick attacks by Free Army's members in which there are shooting fire at night. Even though the military operations that were carried out by Syrian regime forces to eliminate the Free Army out of the capital and its suburbs, these operations intensively renewed and followed by artillery bombing on the areas of al Qadam, al Hajar al Aswad, al Asali, al Tadamun, al Yarmouk Camp and the areas and the towns of Eastern Ghouta and Douma where Free Army declares his control over Air Defense brigade, at the same time the activists broadcasted the Free Army's members seize the control over the brigade and Air Force System and gained huge number of weapons. Additionally, the Free army control a number of counties and towns that is located in Eastern Ghouta and Marj al Sultan Airport.

Areas controlled by Syrian regime with majority loyal residents

These areas are represented by coastal region and is located between Latakia and Tartus, in addition to mountain villages on the coast. These areas are relatively Quiet areas as their inhabitants support the regime for sectarian reasons- most of the





residents are Alawites- and most of families are employees in state institutions, in particular, security bodies of the regime. Another reason is that the region is under an iron fist of al Shabiha and the regime forces. Moreover, the harmony in these areas are subjected to the expansion risk by forces in Kurd mountain and al Turkman mountain (located in the northeast of Latakia) seeking more areas toward the coast.

Meanwhile, the towns and the villages with Alawite majority in the center of Homs, Hama and some neighborhoods as al Nuzha, Ikrima and other areas which witnessed the chaos and bloody operations, in particular, the areas adjacent to the Sunni majority like al Houla massacre in Homs suburbs where al Shabiha forces committed a genocide by the killing of 107 individuals, including 49 children and 32 women, and the injuries of no less than 400 individuals most of whom are serious cases according to SNHR documentation at the time of the incident. SNHR has documented slaughtering cases and cases of indiscriminate bombardment on the city. The massacres are repeatedly occurred against children and civilians in several towns like Kafr Awaied.

Suwayda governorate of Durzi majority is still under the Syrian regime' control and is considered as relatively peaceful region and a refuge for IDPs from heated clashes regions although it witnessed some of anti- regime protests that supports the national unity.

1- Area controlled by Free Army

The Free Army calls these areas “the liberated areas” but actually they become “besieged areas” by the Syrian regime and a target for artillery and aerial bombardment as the Syrian regime considers these them as areas of terrorists and armed gangs while the Syrian rebels consider them liberated areas from al Assad occupation.

The Free Army controls wide areas of adjacent lands of Turkey that are located north of Syria and are included the northern suburbs of Aleppo, Hama, Idlib and Latakia, whereas the fighting operations are ongoing in the economic capital of Aleppo. The free army seized control over more than 60% of the city in the following neighborhoods: al Sukari, Bostan al Qasr, al Kalasa, al Sha'ar, Salah al Din , Saif al Dawla, al Athamiya, Bab al Nayrab, Qadi Askar, al Sakhour, Masakin Hanano, al Haidariya, Al Hollok, al Myasir, Bostan al Basha, and Karm al Jazamati, in addition to control wide towns in the suburbs of Aleppo.





In the northwestern, the Free army controls Idlib city and its suburbs and the whole border crossings with Turkey, Tal Abyad crossing, Bab al Salam crossing, Bab al Hawa crossing in addition to Kherbit al Jouz village except Kasab crossing in Latakia where the regime forces have the control over it. However, the Free army makes progress in new areas and towns in the northern suburbs of Idlib, Hama, Latakia and Aleppo with the complete control over Idlib city which give it the quality to establish isolating area. Khan Shiekhoun, Ma'ert al Numan which are located in the International Road between Damascus and Aleppo and deemed as main supplying line for the Syrian regime in north and northwestern of Syria, while Saraqeb is controlled by Free Army.

The Free Army controls more than one-third of Deir Ez-Zour governorate that is located along the borders with Iraq which the same case in Deir Ez-Zour city. The Free Army controls most of International Road that passing through al Badia toward oil fields where the work has been stopped completely.

In the center of the state, Homs is deemed as the capital of the revolution and its center. It was divided into three divisions: the first includes 13 neighborhoods under Free Army's control -the most well-known ones are: Old Homs, Jouret al Shayyah, al Hamidiya, al Khalediya, al Bayyada, Deir B'alba-. The second includes relatively quiet neighborhoods such as al Wa'er. The third includes pro-regime neighborhoods: al Zahra, al Nuzha and Karm Shemshem where many clashes take place there.

In the suburbs of Homs, the Free Army controls cities and town of al Rastan, Talbisa, al Qusair in which they are subjected to ongoing bombardment for the sake of seizing control over al Qusair- Rabla International Road leading to Lebanon lands and siege al Qusair area and Homs firmly to ban delivering supplies from Lebanon.

While the suburbs and the city subjected to severe bombardment from the first time of siege on the city before eight months. Many activist mentioned that the bombardment was to compensate the loss of control over lands at the north of state and to stop the expansion of the Free Army toward the capital. The Syrian forces still have the control over Homs -al Qusair Road and Homs-Damascus Road. While the Free army uses agricultural roads to deliver aid and food and medical supplies to makeshift hospitals to these areas.





In al Qalamoon, the Free army controls the areas in the vicinity of al Nabak Jeroud and Yabroud which witness attacks on the military convoys in Homs- Damascus International Road. This area includes the suppling roads to the middle region where kidnapping operations take place followed by seeking ransom. At the same time, al Nabak and Yabroud cities Attract the displaced people from Homs governorate and the regime continues to treat them with caution.

That doesn't mean that these areas are free of Syrian regime forces which is important to break the complete control over liberated areas like Wadi al Dayef Camp in Idlib governorate near Ma'aret al Numan city where the regime try to protect suppling lines to Aleppo city.

At the east, more than two-third of Deir Ez-Zour governorate that is located on the borders with Iraq are out of Syrian regime control which is the case in Deir Ez-Zour city where the Free Army controls the International Road in al Badia to oil fields. In light of loss the

control by the Syrian regime over its lands by rebels, the regime lost the control over his institutions including oil field that is governed by governmental companies in the eastern areas. Which resulted in material losses as the regime forces enforces to retreat from al Omar field which is located at the north of al Mayadeen city and considered as his last regime center in the east of Deir Ez-Zour city and the largest oil field.

Although the Syrian forces are trying to seize the control over the fields of al Teem, al Mazra'a, al Kharata and al Mahash and al Bishri, which are located at the western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour city, the oil pipes and pumping station were exploded in various areas of Syria, and they lost many oil field where the first was al Ward field in Deir Ez-Zour which contains the most popular oil field to produce oil and natural gas in Syria.

It would be clear that the demographic structure of the areas of the Free Army is deemed as popular base as their inhabitants oppose the regime and support change and revolution





Areas of changing dependency: they are classified into two types as follows:

- Changeable clashes areas:

The disputed areas where many repeated clashes took place and considered as unstable front lines. They include the outskirts of main cities like Douma, Harasta, Darayya in Damascus suburbs and the area in the vicinity of Daraa and a number of Aleppo's neighborhoods. These areas are controlled by Syrian regime and include the disputed areas in addition to interior neighborhoods of civilian centers which are considered as sectarian rift, for example, Homs which divided into Sunni neighborhoods and Shiite neighborhoods leading to economic distribution of wealthy neighborhoods and poor neighborhood, which the case in Aleppo.

In these areas, the regime compensates its relative absence by intensifying the shelling and attacks followed by massacres which offer limited rest to regime but doesn't ban the Free Army to come back in weeks or months.

In light of battles that take place in the capital, the close of international airport, the networks cut off for three days and spread of checkpoints in several areas in Damascus, a general feeling grow up that the regime prepare his pro forces to defeat the capital while it is hard to know if the final battle will come soon or not. Whereas, the defense battle in the city could be the hardest and most destructive one in the Syrian crises. Moreover, al Assad regime brought the families of military member who support him, most of whom are Alawite, in the western suburbs of the capital while the Republican Palace is located on a mountain overlooks the capital. As the regime deems the loss of Damascus a hard loss he prepares all pro- regime forces which is well equipped in addition to the fourth brigade in the capital and the special forces near Damascus International airport.

The regime presses at the west and southwestern of Damascus in the axes of Daraya and al Mazza where the civilian airport and the military airport are located. The military airport is about few kilometers away from Darayya and receives the weapon coming from Russia and Iran. Also, it is used to transfer the president and the officers. Both airports are not safe anymore, particularly the civilian airport because it is surrounded by wide areas where the Free Army can break into. That pushes the regime the intensify his airstrikes on Damascus suburbs and the area around like Babaila, Yalda, Aqraba and Bait Saham, simultaneously with clashes between reb-





els and Syrian regime forces. The bombardment sometimes targets the area of the gardens between Kafrsousa west of Damascus suburbs.

Al Shabiha, well-known for their brutality that frightened the people, play main military role as they scare the residents and forbid them to rebel against the regime. In cases documented by SNHR, many martyrs have been killed at the hands of al Shabiha in savage and brutal way. A SNHR's report pointed out that the highest percentage of martyrs is recorded in Damascus suburbs.

It should be mentioned that the regime army, in recent months, was unable to restore control over areas and neighborhoods that were lost in street battles, so he tries to seize control over the areas and shell the rebels' areas which the case in the besieged neighborhoods in the middle of Homs city, al Rastan and al Qusair cities in the capital of Homs in addition to a number of towns and cities in Damascus suburbs. The systematic policy of al Assad regime in destroying neighborhoods and buildings in whole cities and towns that are classified as a crime against humanity. While the main target of the regime through destroying the cities, and displaced the residents is to punish people oppose him and deprive the revolution --- and to eliminate all areas from opponents. It becomes clear that changing the demographic of these cities and villages is the sake of the regime for instance Kafrsousa incident and al Qaboun where many house were destroyed in a glance without any warning. the air security forces with tracks destroyed what was left from al Qaboun houses which is located at the opposite of the special forces although the residents asked the security officer to have some time to take their furniture but they were threatened to kill or to destroy the house over them if they come in them. The other house that were shelled look like houses after an earthquake. The bombardment targeted hundreds of houses and shops and vital facilities and trees in addition to parks near al Mutahaliq al Janoubi.

The same happened in IDPs Camp in Daraa, that after shelling stopped, the people were banned from returning to their houses and threaten to destroy it over them. The media activists explain the regime act by punishing the residents to protest against regime and support the Free Army.

Sensitive border areas

It includes borders and high tension areas whether they are free or well-locked ar-





eas, and whether they are under regime control or Free army control. The borders constitute a special issue in Syrian crisis. On one hand these areas include points that could be a cause of regional conflict like borders with Turkey which is a very sensitive point where the general stuff of Free Army and crossing areas for refugees flee from the killing and violence as their number reaches to 160,000 refugees in Turkish camps according to recent SNHR estimation.

Turkey has deployed surface to air medium range missiles launchers on the borders with Syrian after the Turkish warplanes was shot down in the Mediterranean Sea by Syrian regime army months ago. These borders witness clashes and launching shells on the Turkish lands resulting in civilian victims in some bordering villages. At the northeast of Syria, the Syrian regime retreated from several cities and towns with Kurdish majority like al Malekiya, al Qamishli, Amouda, al Derbasiya, Ras al Ein, Ein al Arab and Ifreen and they were given to The Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) allied with a formative extension of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), that is led by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

This serious step came when the Syrian regime put pressure on the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and transferred the clashed to Free Army and Kurdish forces and to say that the Syrian people is a only guarantee for the unity of the state while the opposition sake for destroying the national unity and pointed out that these areas are the only areas where regime forces lost his control.

On the other hand, it becomes very clear that the danger of instability in Lebanon between Hezbollah who supports militias fighting with the Syrian regime and the clashes in Tripoli between the Sunni and the Alawite.

Recently, the Free Army seized control over wide areas along the Syrian- Jordanian borders, in particular, in the northeastern areas between the centers of Naseeb and Daraa cities while the regime army controls the bordering centers in both cities. At the same time the clashes between rebels and soldier of al Hajana in several police stations that dropped in the control of Free Army while other clashes take place on private military roads of regime army. Some people explain this by being an important supplies lines in south of Syria addition to destroying all military areas by rebels in liberated areas which will cost Syrian Army a lot. SNHR estimates the refugees in Jordan at 45,000 who live in bad humanitarian conditions. So, the General Secretary in United Nations Ban Ki-moon called on the international community to





deliver more humanitarian aid to hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees considering that the magnitude of the aid doesn't fit with their number, during his visit to Syrian camps in Jordan and Turkey. It should be noted that Syrian- Jordan borders span over 370 kilometers.

On the Lebanon- Syrian borders, the conditions cause tension due to frequent shooting at clashes point and firing shells and heavy and light weapons on the neighboring towns, villages and other in far distance, the shelling from Syria on the north of Lebanon affected the bordering villages where the residents flee at the time of shelling and returning when the violence reduce. The Lebanese villages like al Nou-ra, al Dabaniya and Kherbet Dawwd subjected to intensive shelling, causing the destruction of properties including houses in neighboring villages on the bank of al Kabir river in al Baq'iyah area in Wadi Khaled near al Baq'e- Jesr Qmar crossing borders. The IDPs still flee across al Masna' bordering point to various areas, particularly in Beirut, Tripoli and Sida. It should be noted there are more than 513,000 IDPs according to UNRWA. The Syrian- Lebanon borders are 375 kilometers. The regime forces lost the control over the majority of bordering areas with Turkey and Iraq but from his control over the borders with Jordan and Lebanon.

According to the aforementioned, the borders of Syria with neighboring countries are important to establish safe areas and no-fly zones inside its lands on three axes, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. And despite the calls of several Arab and foreign countries in recent months for establishing safe areas, or no-fly zones inside the Syrian lands are failed in light of using the veto by Russia and China in the Security Council for three times to ban a resolution of using power under article VII of the Charter of the United Nations and the demand of the Syrian National Council for international groups to establish safe areas.

The field situation on October 23, 2012

Orange: area of armed rebel activity

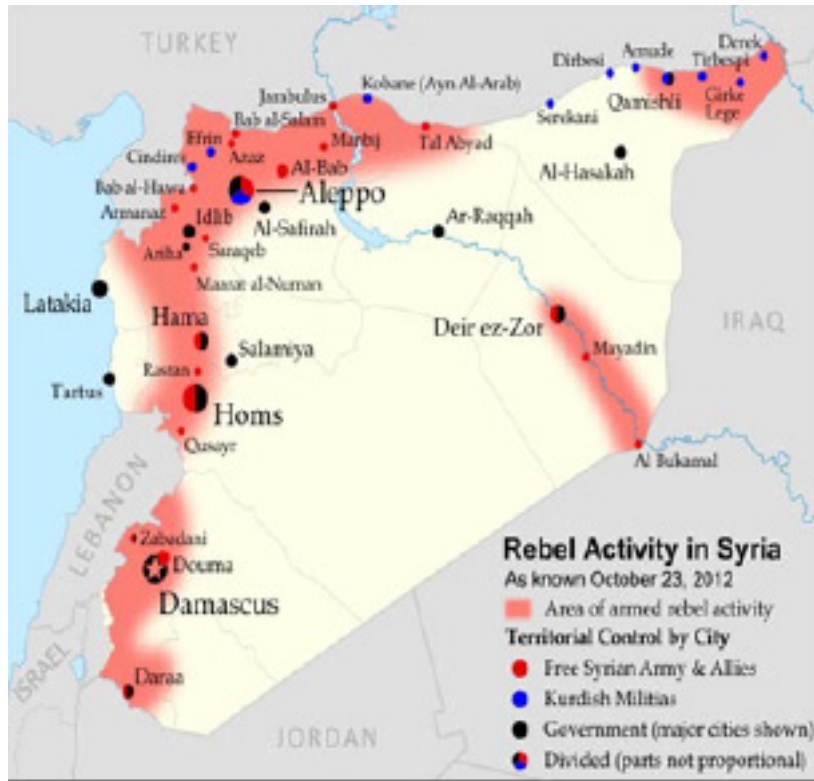
The control in cities:

Red circle: areas under Free Army and its allies control





Blue circle: areas under Kurdish militias
Black circle: areas under regime control
Red and blue circle: partial control of regime
SNHR's team



Syrian Network For Human Rights
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

