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There was a decrease in armed clashes between Government of Syria (GoS) armed

Jabal al-Zawiya area, Idlib Governorate.<sup>12</sup> On 8 August, armed opposition groups deployed additional forces to the Jabal al-Zawiya area, Idlib Governorate.<sup>13</sup> On 9 August, Turkish armed forces established a new military outpost near Al-Haddadah Hill, northern Latakia Governorate.<sup>14</sup> The new outpost came after clashes between GoS armed forces and armed opposition groups in the area.<sup>15</sup> Observers are concerned that the military buildup signals the collapse of the 5 March ceasefire.<sup>16</sup>

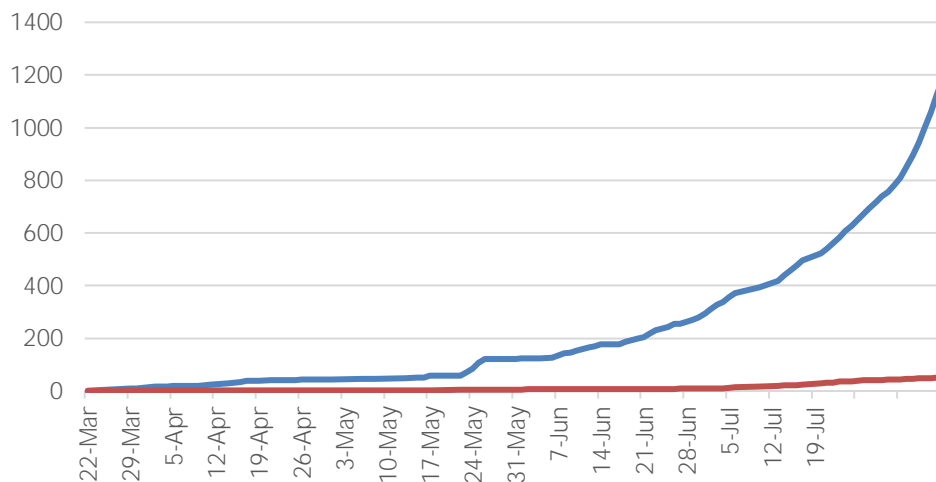
On 9 August, Turkey established a unified command center to coordinate its military operations in Syria.<sup>17</sup> This followed a 23 July decision by Turkish President Recep Erdogan to set up a new military center to oversee the country's operations in Syria. The center is reportedly based in Hatay province in Turkey, which borders Syria.<sup>18</sup>

COVID-19 cases increased in northwest Syria. On 5 August, the HTS-dominated Salvation Government removed the quarantine on Sarmin town, Idlib Governorate, after the recovery of its COVID-19 infected patients. The town had been under quarantine since 25 July.<sup>19</sup> On 9 August, doctors reported two new cases in Bab al-Salama in Turkish-held territory. As of 9 August, there were 45 COVID-19 cases in northwest Syria.<sup>20</sup>

On 4 August, authorities in Dara'a Governorate implemented new measures to stop the spread of COVID-19.<sup>21</sup> The new measures came after the director of a hospital in Izraa contracted the virus. On 7 August, it was reported that a GoS's Palestinian Liberation Army general died from COVID-19.<sup>22</sup> To date, there are 1,188 reported COVID-19 cases in GoS-controlled territory (see figure 2).<sup>23</sup> However, observers believe that COVID-19 infection numbers throughout Syria are significantly higher than what is officially reported.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.hawarnews.com/en/haber/turkish-reinforcements-enter-jabal-al->



Attacks against GoS soldiers and former opposition fighters decreased during the reporting period in Dara'a Governorate. On 4 August, unidentified gunmen killed an alleged GoS informant in Tafas, Dara'a Governorate.<sup>25</sup> The same day, GoS armed forces deployed military reinforcements to Harra city, Dara'a Governorate, due to the security situation.<sup>26</sup> On 7 August, unidentified gunmen killed a GoS air force intelligence officer near Jilin, western Dara'a Governorate.<sup>27</sup> On 8 August, unidentified gunmen injured a former opposition fighter in Ankhel city, Dara'a Governorate.<sup>28</sup>

On 5 August, ISIS launched an attack on GoS armed forces in the Badia desert region of Homs Governorate.<sup>29</sup> The attack coincided with attacks in Hama Governorate (see above). ISIS attacks have been concentrated in the Badia desert region in Homs Governorate, with 42 conflict events involving ISIS since 1 June 2019.

On 3 August, the Israeli air force struck GoS armed forces targets in Quneitra city, Quneitra Governorate. The airstrikes followed an attempted IED attack on Israeli targets in Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.<sup>30</sup> GoS armed forces said that the attack

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.syriahr.com/en/178130/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.syriahr.com/en/178123/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.syriahr.com/en/178499/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.syriahr.com/en/178768/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/isis-launches-big-attack-against-syrian-army-in-central-syria/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/israel-launches-airstrikes-on-syrian-posts-hours-after-border-attack/a-54426134>



