



A Deal Between Kurds, Russians, and the Syrian Regime in Ain Issa

OE Watch Commentary: Months of sporadic shelling of Ain Issa by Turkish-backed Syrian armed rebel groups led to an agreement between Russia, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), and the Syrian regime. SDF currently controls Ain Issa, located on the M4 highway that connects northeastern Syria to the western part of the country. Ain Issa is a town in the Tel Abyad District of the Raqqa Governorate in Syria.

According to the first article from *Rudaw*, a Kurdish news outlet broadcasting from Iraq's Kurdish region, the agreement between SDF, Russia, and the Syrian regime establishes three observation posts near Ain Issa to prevent further Turkish attacks on this area. Riyadh El-Xelef, the military council leader for Tal Abyad, states that these posts will be established in the eastern part of Ain Issa, in the western part of Ain Issa, and on the M4 international highway. The article notes that Russian officials asked SDF to allow Syrian regime forces to resume control of Ain Issa to thwart the possible offensive by Turkish forces and Turkish-backed rebel groups from attacking. However, SDF refused the Russian offer.



Map showing Ayn Issa in Syria.

Source: Karte: NordNordWest via Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayn_Issa, Attribution: CC BY-SA 3.0 DE

The second article from *Hawar News Agency*, a news site closely monitoring developments in Syria, is an interview with Ziyad Heleb, the commander of SDF in Ain Issa. In the interview, the commander states that his “forces are ready to repel any possible” offensive against the region. The article notes that after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin agreed on a deal in Sochi in October 2019 to end Turkey’s offensive against Kurdish forces in Syria, Russian and Syrian regime forces were stationed in Ain Issa alongside SDF to prevent Turkish attacks. However, the commander states that “unfortunately, the Russian and government forces have not fulfilled their duties against the recent attacks by Turkish [and Turkish-backed Syrian rebels] and did not fire any shot” to protect the region. Kurdish forces hope that the recent agreement and the three new posts will be able to prevent the attacks on this region. **End OE Watch Commentary (Gündüz)**

“The Commander of the Tal Abyad Military Council, Riyadh al-Khalaf, said that they agreed with the Russians and the Syrian army to establish 3 joint military points in Ain Issa district and on the M4 highway.”



Continued: A Deal Between Kurds, Russians, and the Syrian Regime in Ain Issa

Source: “DSG, stratejik ilçe için Ruslar ve Suriye ordusu ile anlaştı (SDF agrees on a deal with Russians and Syrian army for strategic district),” Rudaw, 10 December 2020. <https://www.rudaw.net/turkish/kurdistan/101220201>

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Last week, officers from the Russian and Syrian army had met with the SDF commanders at the Russian base in Ain Issa.

A source from Ain Issa Military Council providing information to the press regarding the content of the meeting, to prevent Turkish threats, Russian officers asked the SDF to hand over control of Ain Issa to Syrian regime forces...

According to the source, the Russian side suggested that the Syrian flag should be raised in Ain Issa, as in Qamishli and Hasakah, and that state institutions should be opened.

Source: “Femandarekî QSD’ê: Hêza me ji her êrişekê re amade ye (SDF commander: Our forces are ready to repel any attack),” Hawar News Agency, 13 December 2020. <http://www.hawarnews.com/kr/haber/fermandarek-qsd-hza-me-ji-her-risek-re-amade-ye-h40028.html>

The commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces in Ain Issa, Ziyad Heleb, said that their forces are ready to repel any possible attack on the area, commenting on the latest developments in Ain Issa...

In an interview with Hawar News Agency (ANHA) the commander Heleb, explained that the Turkish occupation and its paid mercenaries wanted to occupy Ain Issa.

He pointed out that Turkey sought to exploit the vacuum... by targeting the area.

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According to the Russian and Turkish understanding in the Russian city of Sochi on October 22, 2019, Russian and government forces were stationed in Ain Issa alongside the SDF forces to prevent Turkish attacks... Heleb said, “unfortunately, the Russian and government forces have not fulfilled their duties towards the recent attacks by Turkey, and did not fire any shot, so the Syrian Democratic Forces were the only ones that carried out their duties in the face of the attacks.”

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The commander in the SDF stated that they have established 3 joint points with the Russian and government forces in Ain Issa, and said that this is not a new agreement, but rather an application of the previous agreement.

Fangs of the Lone Wolf

Chechen Tactics in the Russian-Chechen Wars
1994-2009

Dodge Billingsley
with Lester Grau

Fangs of the Lone Wolf is about combat experience in urban, mountain and fairly open terrain. It is not a comprehensive history of conflict. This book is a series of snapshots — of vignettes — describing the difficulty, the hardship, the victories and the defeats of the participants. It is an examination of the raw data of combat in a foreign land, and is aimed to advance the professional military study of conflict.

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