



# Syrian Democratic Times

## Introducing the *Syrian Democratic Times*

*The Voice of Democratic Syria*  
News, analysis, and opinion on democratic Syria, from Washington DC.

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## Burnt Farm Fields Are Economic Terrorism

***Seven Have Died Battling Mysterious Fires***

By Lacy MacAuley

A disturbing new kind of economic terrorism has emerged in North and East Syria, the region of Syria close to the Turkish border. Suspicious fires are destroying hundreds of square kilometers of wheat and barley. So far, seven people have lost their lives battling these fires, internal security and emergency personnel, and local residents who were engaged in fighting the fire. At least one member of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) lost his life battling the fires.

According to the Autonomous Administration of North and East of Syria (AANES), most of these fires were arson, while a few had natural/environmental or accidental causes such as lightning or an errant cigarette. Each harvest season sees a few fires, but the scale of this destruction is far beyond any seen in the recent past.

ISIS claimed responsibility for the earliest of the fires. But since then, many believe there are other culprits. Mohammed Abbas al-Jaghjagh, 75, a farmer with fields near Tal Hamis, lost everything when his fields were burnt. He was [quoted in \*The Washington Post\*](#): “We can’t say who is doing it,” he said. “Is it Arabs? We can’t say. Is it Kurds? We can’t say. Is it the government? We can’t say. Is it Turkey? We can’t say. Is it foreigners? We can’t say. There are many enemies, and we have no proof.”

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## **Ideas Do Not Die By Bullets**

***We defeated the caliphate on the battlefield, but the ideological war has only just begun***

By Sinam Mohamad

The ISIS “caliphate” has fallen. Our brave fighters with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) overran their last encampment, and took down the black ISIS flag. Politicians declared a historic victory, which rang around the world, and then they moved on to the next issue.

The ISIS situation is no longer making headlines. It seems the world wants to move on. But these terrorists have not even been tried in a court of law. They lay idle in camps, sleeper cells, and enclaves, still at work and conspiring to wreak more death and destruction all over the world. ISIS is still here.

Many former ISIS fighters are together every day, still making plans to resurrect the “caliphate.” They are meeting, talking and eating together in the detention camps run by SDF. There are ISIS family members currently in refugee camps, and they too are ticking time bombs. The women are feeding their children on extremist ideology. If we do nothing, we will soon see ISIS erupt again.

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## What's After the Military Defeat of ISIS

***Our brave fighters who just defeated ISIS on the battlefield now shift to a war of ideas***

By Bassam Ishak

The men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to battle ISIS are native Syrians — many Kurdish, but also Arabs, Syriacs, and more — fighting to reclaim their homeland. They fight for a Syria that is secular, multiethnic, and multireligious. These are the principles of the Syrian Democratic Council (SDC), the political wing of the SDF. We are a body of multiethnic political parties, political associations, civil society groups, and activists who call for democracy, the protection of individual freedoms, the empowerment of women, and religious freedom. We have allied with the United States for the purpose of liberating our homeland.

Most of the world knows us, the SDC, as the grisly warriors combating terrorists in Syria. But few are aware that our inspired democratic model is now the governance structure that runs the Syrian region east of the Euphrates river, which is one-third of the country — providing government services to include education, infrastructure repair, local policing, water, electricity, and sanitization services.

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## Weekly Policy Snapshot

### ***Latest US-Syria policy impacting northeast Syria***

By Lacy MacAuley

US and Saudi officials met in territory controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) with local officials from Autonomous Administration of North and East of Syria (AANES) and local Arab tribal leaders. Joel Rayburn, US State Department Special Envoy for Syria, and William Robak, foreign affairs advisor to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and Thamer Sabhan, Minister of the State of Saudi Arabia who is very close to Mohammad Bin Salman were pictured in a meeting in Deir Ez-Zor with Arab tribal leaders and local AANES council members.

Insert Tweet: <https://twitter.com/shinocan2/status/1139236937783549952?s=21>

An interesting exchange occurred at a [recent Middle East Institute event](#) in Washington D.C. on Syria. Ms. Senam Mohamad, co-chief of the US Mission of the Syrian Democratic Council, [asked a question](#) directed toward Ambassador James Jeffrey, who is the top US diplomat on Syria.

She asked about the Turkish occupation of Afrin and why there is no Syrian

Democratic Council (SDC) representation in the negotiations mandated by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (UNSCR 2254).  
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