

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	East Ghouta Agreement between Jaysh al-Islam and Faylaq al-Rahman Brigade
Date	24 May 2016
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 -)

Stage	Ceasefire/related
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	1-The Leader of Jaysh al-Islam [The Army of Islam]: ‘Asam Buydani ²⁹ , Signed; 2-The Leader of Faylaq al-Rahman [The al-Rahman Legion]: ‘Abdi al-Naser Shamir, Signed.
Third parties	-
Description	Agreement providing for a ceasefire between Jaysh al-Islam and Faylaq al-Rahman, opening roads, ending hostilities, and freeing prisoners, as well as returning institutions to their owners and ending media incitement. The Agreement further agrees that East Ghouta is an indivisible unit, a court will agree on the verdicts for assassination, shared guard of the fronts, and the creation of a committee to for communicating between the two parties.

Agreement document [SY_160524_East Ghouta Agreement between Jaysh al-Islam and Failaq al-Rhaman_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language) [SY_160524_East Ghouta Agreement between Jaysh al-Islam and Failaq al-Rhaman_AR.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#)

Local agreement properties

Process type Informal but persistent process

Rationale -> Local issues only; no external support mechanism; culture of signing There is no formally established mechanism to support the negotiation between Salafi and nationalist armed groups. Moreover, this agreement cannot be linked to the national peace process. Indeed, all signing group oppose the rule of Bashar al-Assad in Syria and reject the idea of a national negotiation to solve the conflict. Yet, it seems that both signing parties choose to solve daily pragmatic issues related to their armed struggle through agreements. Although one cannot speak of a “culture” of signing peace agreements, the parties are involved (in a non-proactive and non-conscious way) in a persistent practice of signing local agreements.

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. First, the agreement does not involve local governance actors; and the signing parties themselves are not official state representative. Second, all parties to the agreement reject the national peace process, as it would maintain Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian government in power.

Name of Locale East Ghouta

Nature of Locale Region

GPS Lat/Long (DD) 33.551283, 36.397705

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 the Merciful

Page 2, These principles were signed after the eshaa prayer [The dinner prayer]

Page 2, (May Allah save them and release them) Thank Allah that His grace is righteous

Grievance List

Although the agreement does not refer to specific causes of the conflict, it lists six provisions to address local grievances.

Page 1,

The first principle: There will be a ceasefire and a prohibition of armed provocations between the brothers. The detainees will also be set free and the public roads will be opened to civilians. The institutions will return to their owners and the official media incitement will stop. The implementation of the content of this principle will start upon signing.

The second principle: East Ghouta is one geographic and demographic unit indivisible in ruling areas of influence.

The third principle: The verdicts in cases of assassinations and bloodshed [brought] to court will be agreed upon, and it will be committed to implement its ruling.

The fourth principle: There will be a commitment to a complete coordination and shared cooperation to guard the fronts.

The fifth principle: All the debated points (fronts, weapons, headquarters, money and properties) will be put on a worksheet and the priorities will be agreed on in order to settle a time schedule.

The sixth principle: The approved Events Committee of the city is the committee responsible for communication and coordination between Faylaq al-Rahman and Jaysh al-Islam. It is also authorised to talk to the media on the progress of the negotiations.

Cattle rustling/ banditry

No specific mention.

Social cover

No specific mention.