

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Agreement on Local Councils between Tribes and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)
Date	23 Jul 2017
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	Framework/substantive - partial
Conflict nature	Inter-group
Peace process	Syrian Local Agreements
Parties	Idlib Tribes - six signatories, but all illegible. [Ostensibly with Hayat Tahrir al-Sham organisation as statement is in response to their call]
Third parties	-
Description	Statement issued in response the statement, "The Ongoing Revolution" issued by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham on establishing a civil administration to rule areas under opposition control, the Idlib tribes issue a pre-negotiation document outlining (1) the principle: supporting the formation of civil administration and (2) the process: by establishing a conference between military and civil forces.

Agreement document	SY_170723_Agreement on Local Councils for Idlib between HTS and Idlib tribes_EN.pdf (opens in new tab) Download PDF
Agreement document (original language)	SY_170723_Agreement on Local Councils for Idlib between HTS and Idlib tribes_AR.pdf (opens in new tab)

Local agreement properties

Process type	Isolated example
Rationale	-> Local issues only; no external support mechanism; no culture of signing The agreement cannot be placed within the context of a systematic process of local agreements. There were no established mechanisms to support the negotiation. Moreover, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham has a Salafist ideology; it opposes the rule of Bashar al-Assad in Syria and rejects the idea of a national negotiation to solve the conflict.
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, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham rejects the national peace process, as it would maintain Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian government in power. Yet, the agreement is related to multiple local level processes in Idlib governorate in July 2017.
Name of Locale	NA

Nature of Locale	Region
GPS Lat/Long (DD)	35.931901, 36.635741
Participant type	Domestic religious organisation/leader or other elder
Mediator, facilitator or similar	No mention of mediator or similar

Local issues

Ritual/prayer and process (including use of scripture)	<p>Page 1: In the Name of Allah the Merciful</p> <p>Page 1: Praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon the most honoured of messengers, and upon all his family and companions, and after.</p>
Grievance List	<p>The agreement addresses the call from the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham to establish a local administration in the areas under the control of the opposition factions.</p> <p>Page 1, Due to the urgent need to consolidate the disputes and heal the wounds on the fields of Syria and to continue and preserve the revolution [...] [In the statement], we saw a blessing step regarding the establishment of a civil administration to rule the liberated areas. It will be involved in all legal, revolutionary, political, tribal and civil affairs. They will also possess the military force of the resistance to the regime of Ward Sayaleh and of liberating the rest of Syria.</p>
Cattle rustling/ banditry	No specific mention.
Social cover	No specific mention.
