

Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Decree of the civil administration in the villages of Jbala and Ma'aratamatar
Date	28 Feb 2018
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	Head of the Jbala Local Council [Signed]; Head of the Ma'aratamatar Local Council [Signed]; "military officials from all of the groups that have a presence in the village"
Third parties	-
Description	5 point agreement between two local councils and military officials from all groups that have a presence in the village. Agreement provides for (1) sparing the villages from combat; (2) that all fighters are on one side and operate under the command of the councils; (3) the armed groups may not use the roads in the villages; (4) that they will not barrack there; (5) that justice is individual and not collective.

Agreement document [SY_180228_Decree of the civil administration in the villages of Jbala and Ma'aratamatar_EN.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Agreement document (original language) [SY_180228_Decree of the civil administration in the villages of Jbala and Ma'aratamatar_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 (ad hoc) The document is a once-off declaration that relates to a specific and localised series of clashes and its consequences. It does not appear that any national or regional mechanism was established to support the negotiation. Finally, the declaration does not seem to relate to a persistent practice or culture of signing agreements.
Is there a documented link to a national peace process?	No
Link to national process: articulated rationale	[Summary] Agreement appears independent from the national process but involves local governance actors representing civilian constituencies. Considering the fighters under village control, which appear to include factions of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and Harikat Tahrir Suriyya, they are not official 'state' representatives.
Name of Locale	Jbala [Jabal], Ma'aratamatar [Maar Tamater]
Nature of Locale	Region

GPS Lat/Long (DD) 35.573888, 36.556102

Participant type Local state actor
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, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Grievance List Although the agreement does not refer to specific causes of the conflict, it lists five provisions to address local grievances:

Page 1,

- 1- Completely sparing the villages of Jbala and Ma'aratamatar from this fighting
- 2- All of the fighters, from all groups, that are in the two villages are on the same side and operate under the local councils of the two villages
- 3- Armed groups are not allowed to use roads in the two villages
- 4- There are no military bases in the two villages
- 5- Any person that violates any of the provisions of this agreement is treated as an individual and does not represent the villages

Cattle rustling/ banditry No specific mention.

Social cover No specific mention.
