Country/entity	Syria
Region	Middle East and North Africa
Agreement name	Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement Agreement on Jabal Zawiyya
Date	26 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 Ceasefire/related

Conflict nature Inter-group

Peace process Syrian Local Agreements

Parties	Ahrar Al Sham Abu Al Saad [Signed] Hayat Tahrir Al Sham Abu Obaidah Al Shami [Signed]
Third parties	-
Description	3-point agreement providing for a release of detainees; withdrawal of military forces, checkpoints and ending the state of alert; ending all media escalations.

Agreement document	SY_170726_HTS and Ahrar al-Sham Agreement on Jabal Zaawiyya_EN.pdf (opens in new tab) | Download PDF
Agreement document (original language)	SY_170726_HTS and Ahrar al-Sham Agreement on Jabal Zaawiyya_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 armed groups. Moreover, this agreement cannot be linked to the national peace process. Indeed, both groups have a Salafist ideology; they 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 singing peace agreements, the parties are involved (in a non-proactive and non-conscious way) in a persistent practice of signing local agreements. The agreement is related to multiple local level processes in Idlib governorate in July 2017.
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. Yet, the agreement is related to multiple local level processes in and around Idlib in July 2017.
Name of Locale	Jabal Zawiyya

Nature of Locale	Region
GPS Lat/Long (DD)	35.733345, 36.699925
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, Most Gracious, Most Merciful All praises be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon his Prophet, his family, and all of his companions. Page 1, We ask Allah to preserve the blood of the mujahideen and unite them.
Grievance List	Although the agreement does not refer to specific causes of the conflict, it lists three provisions to address grievances of the two fighting groups. Page 1, 1. Releasing the detainees being held by both sides 2. Withdrawing all of the military forces, ending the state of alert, removing the barriers that were put up recently, and returning to the old barriers (Rawhi ah Fork, Radar, and Al Saleeb) 3. Stopping all of the escalation and incitement in the media
Cattle rustling/ banditry	No specific mention.
Social cover	No specific mention.
