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4.1.3. ISIL insurgency

In Homs and Hama governorates, ISIL expanded its presence as the lines of Assad's forces collapsed and security forces retreated to the main cities.652 Exploiting this power vacuum,653 the group has seized large weapons stockpiles from Assad's bases in the Syrian desert654 and its cells entered or attempted to enter several towns in eastern Homs towns. In Hama, returning formerly displaced 'Bedouins', some of whose community formed the core of local ISIL supporters in east Hama in the past, reportedly robbed and looted Ismaili and Alawite villages in the Salamiyah countryside. At the same time, the departure of Assad's army and Russian forces from central Syria has enabled the US-led Global Coalition to strike ISIL camps without hindrance. Amongst others, US forces on 8 December 2025 hit more than 75 ISIL camps that were reported to have played a key role in the group's recruitment and training.655

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