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4.1. Areas under the control of the Transitional Administration

On 27 November 2024, HTS and allied Türkiye-backed factions started a lightning military offensive in northwestern Syria that eventually led to the collapse of Assad's rule. This operation followed a marked intensification of attacks by troops of the Assad government⁵⁷⁴ and Russian forces, with ACLED recording 684 aerial and artillery strikes across in opposition-held territories in northern Syria between 1 October and 26 November. These strikes reportedly caused at least 39 deaths among militants and civilians.⁵⁷⁵

Concurrently with the HTS-led offensive launched on 27 November, assassinations, Israeli strikes, ISIL attacks, and indiscriminate gunfire in the areas formerly controlled by the Assad government led to multiple deaths of civilians.⁵⁷⁶ Aerial strikes by pro-Assad forces, including by Russian aircraft, killed dozens of civilians in Idlib city between 27 November and 2 December 2024,⁵⁷⁷ including 22 civilians in a series of strikes that hit a market and five residential areas on 1 December,⁵⁷⁸ as well as in strikes targeting a hospital in Aleppo city (1 December)⁵⁷⁹ and areas in Aleppo's western countryside (between 27 and 30 November).⁵⁸⁰ Meanwhile, four students were killed when a HTS rocket hit their Aleppo dormitory (29 November 2024).⁵⁸¹ By 12 December 2024, more than 1.1 million people had been newly displaced due to the escalation in hostilities since the beginning of the offensive.⁵⁸²

As of February and early March 2025, the territories controlled by the Military Operations Administration (MOA), the umbrella command centre⁵⁸³ of the new HTS-led transitional administration, encompassed most of western, central and southern Syria as well as the western Euphrates bank in Deir Ez-Zor. These areas included the cities of Damascus, Idlib, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, as well as the coastal cities of Latakia and Tartous.⁵⁸⁴ Sources noted that the control of the new authorities remained fragmented in certain areas.⁵⁸⁵ While their control in the cities of Damascus, Aleppo and Hama was reportedly effective,⁵⁸⁶ in areas of Homs, rural Hama and southern Syria (Dar'a and Sweida governorates)⁵⁸⁷ the MOA forces are overstretched and competing with other autonomous armed factions.⁵⁸⁸ The coastal areas of Latakia and Tartous have been prone to attacks on security forces⁵⁸⁹ and sectarian violence⁵⁹⁰ in the aftermath of Assad's fall (for more information [see section 4.1.2.](#)).

According to ACLED data, the districts most affected by security incidents (battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians) during the reporting period were the districts of Ain Al Arab/Kobane (401 incidents) and Jebel Saman (307 incidents) (both Aleppo

governorate) and Deir Ez-Zor district (258 incidents) of Deir Ez-Zor governorate.[591](#) Meanwhile, among all governorates, the fewest security incidents were recorded in Tartous (40 incidents).[592](#) In the coastal areas, the highest number of security incidents was recorded in the district of Latakia (47 incidents).[593](#) The highest number of security incidents in southern Syria was recorded in the districts of Dar'a (75 incidents), Izra (66) and Quneitra (57 incidents).[594](#)

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