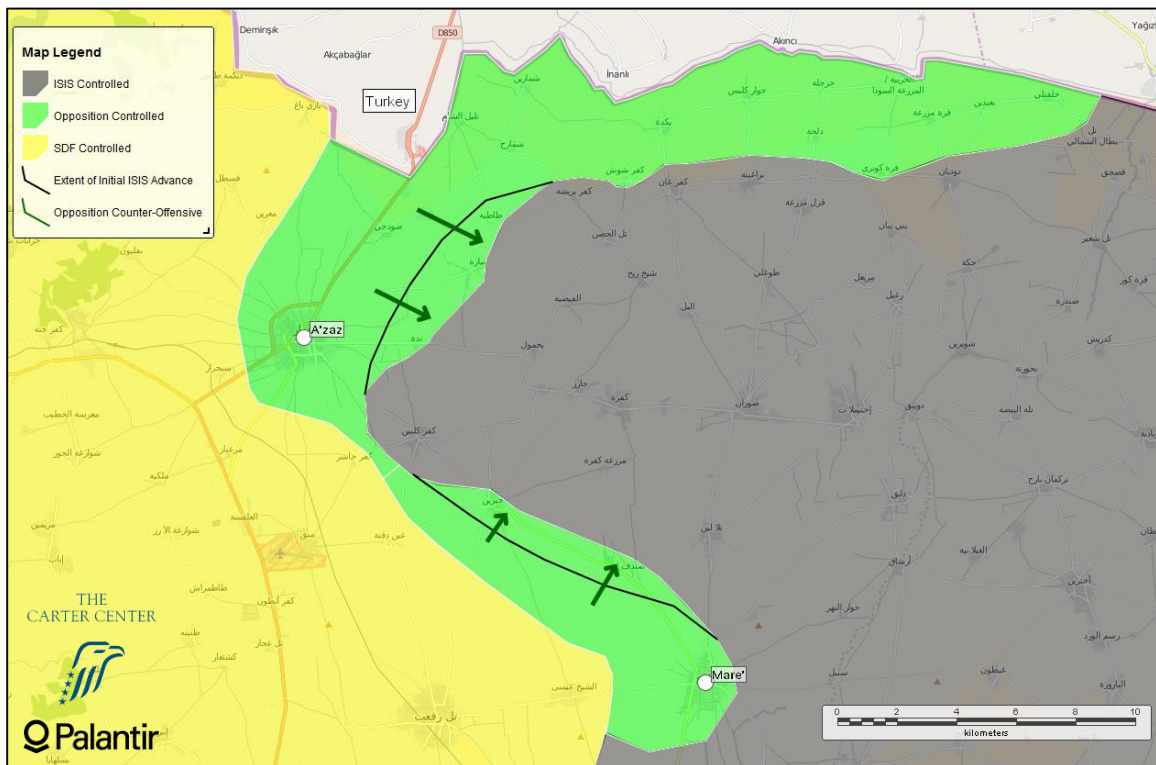




**Weekly Conflict Summary**  
May 26 – June 1, 2016

Beginning May 27<sup>th</sup>, ISIS conducted a major offensive against opposition positions north of Aleppo city. As a result, the two opposition strongholds of Mare' and Azaz have been almost entirely cut off from one another, leaving only a small (approximately 1km) strip of land connecting the two, and a thin (3-4km) strip of opposition-controlled towns remaining along the Turkish border. Opposition forces have pushed back, but with limited success so far. This area has seen near constant back-and-forth territorial changes between opposition and ISIS forces since January 2016.



**Figure 1: Situation in northern Aleppo governorate as of June 1, 2016.**

This offensive coincided with two major offensives against ISIS by the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which took control of a large swath of territory along the western banks of the Euphrates River near Manbij city. The SDF, which has been within artillery striking distance of Manbij since January of this year, now flanks the city to the south and east, though heavy fighting continues to the east of the city. The second, and more heavily publicized, offensive accomplished modest advances toward Raqqa from positions to the north around the city of Ayn Issa.

Relatively low levels of fighting continued in Aleppo city, with back-and-forth shelling and aerial bombardments occurring consistently throughout the week.

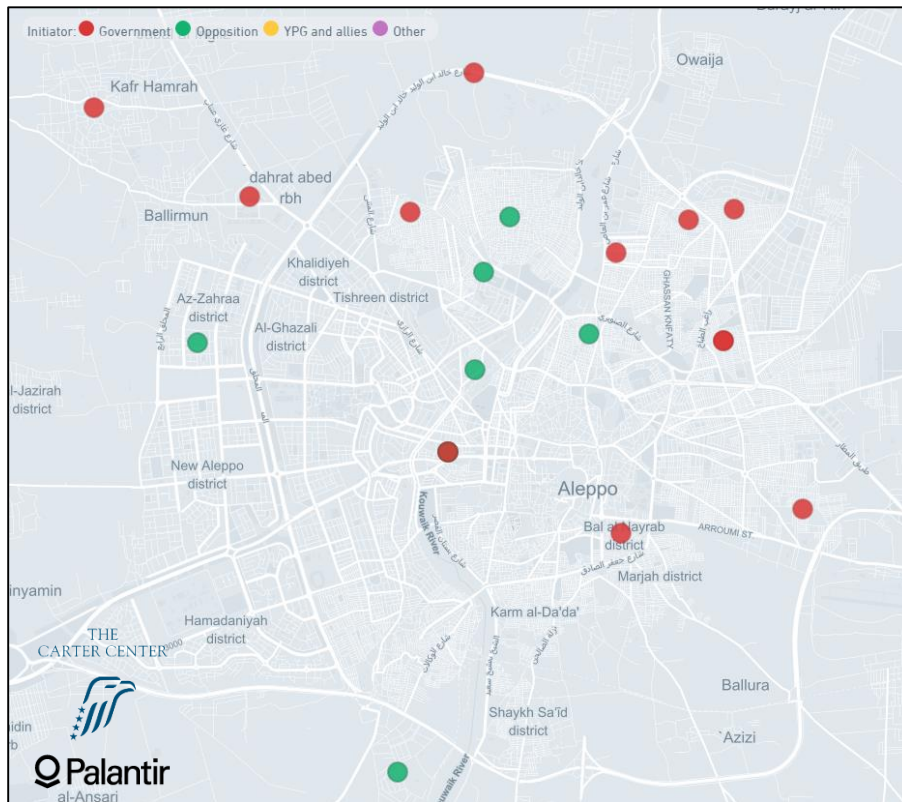


Figure 2: Recorded locations of potential violations of the cessation of hostilities.

Elsewhere in Syria, fighting has continued along front lines in Eastern Ghouta, with aerial bombardments and clashes reported in and around Harasta el-Qantara, and along front lines on the outskirts of Damascus city. In western Damascus, despite the delivery of some humanitarian aid, clashes and shelling was reported in and around Darayya. Further to the west, the opposition-controlled town of Deir Khabiyyeh (approximately 10km southwest of Darayya) witnessed a significant spike in violence, with multiple reports of aerial bombardments and clashes throughout the week.

Southern Syria remained relatively quiet during the past week, with only a handful of clashes reported between Jabhat al-Nusra and Shuhada al-Yarmouk in southwestern Daraa, and one reported air raid on opposition positions in Tal Harra.

Conclusion

Following last week’s pro-government offensive in rural Damascus, there have been no recorded front line changes between participants of the cessation of hostilities. Unless there have been unreported advances, this marks the first week in nearly a month without any territorial gains by one party or another, offering a glimmer of hope for the continuation of the cessation of hostilities.