

REGIONAL ANALYSIS SYRIA

28 March 2013

Overview

 Red flags indicate new information

This Regional Analysis of the Syria Conflict (RAS) is an update of the [February RAS](#). The RAS seeks to bring together information from all sources in the region and provide a coherent analysis of the overall situation in the region as well as in each of the affected countries. While Part I focuses on the situation within Syria, Part II covers the impact of the crisis on the neighbouring countries. The Syria Needs Analysis Project welcomes all information that could complement this report. For additional information, comments or questions, please email SNAP@ACAPS.org.

-  The UN have revised their estimate of people within Syria affected by the crisis from 4 million to 5.5 million although this figure is still considered to be a low estimate.
-  **Conflict:** While the conflict entered its third year on 15 March, the prospect of a resolution to the conflict remains remote with the fighting intensifying around strategic locations and the opposition becoming more fractured, especially in the north. The Free Syrian Army publicly refused to acknowledge the authority of Ghassan Hitto, the coalition-appointed Prime Minister for rebel-held areas in Syria. With the resignation of the head of the Syrian National Council, who pursued peace talks with the Government; the election of a new Prime Minister who has ruled out negotiations with President Bashar al-Assad's regime; disagreement between the military and political sections of the opposition; and neither Government nor anti-Government forces with sufficient military power to win decisive victory, the conflict is set to continue.
-  Violence intensified in the hotly contested areas of Aleppo, Homs, Dar'a and Damascus cities. Anti-Government forces secured control of Ar-Raqqa on 4 March (the first time the Government has ceded control of a major city). Since then the city and its environs have been subject to heavy aerial bombardment. In the city of Homs fierce conflict continues, with Government forces launching a large-scale assault to retake opposition-held areas of the city. Central areas of Damascus city are now subject to mortar and artillery shelling and the UN is evacuating half its staff. Fierce fighting continues in the border governorate of Dar'a as both sides seek control over the supply lines to Jordan.
-  Reports indicated that the fighting in Syria spilled over into Iraq, Turkey and particularly Lebanon and the occupied Golan Heights.
-  **Displacement:** The official estimate for the number of internally displaced is now 3.6 million, although this is considered a low estimate as it does not include IDPs in Deir-ez-Zor. Other sources indicate greater numbers of displaced in some governorates such as Aleppo and Dar'a. Following the intense battle for Ar-Raqqa over 200,000 people have fled the city – most to Deir-ez-Zor.

-  Refugees continue to flee Syria with the UNHCR reporting over 1.17 million registered/awaiting registration and neighbouring governments estimates, including unregistered Syrians, totalling 1.7 million
-  **Humanitarian concerns:** **Within Syria** the humanitarian situation deteriorates on a daily basis as millions of Syrians are driven deeper into poverty and the ability of the Government to provide basic services is eroded. **Protection** remains a priority within the country with a lack of law and order and widespread fighting affecting Syrians countrywide on a daily basis. Reports indicate an increase in use of cluster munitions and ballistic missiles on populated areas, and accusations have been made that chemical weapons have been used.
-  Child protection is of increasing concern with reports of killing and maiming; sexual violence including rape; torture; arbitrary detention; recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups.
-  With the end of winter, rising temperatures bring new risks: with the health structure severely damaged, limited availability of potable water, damaged sanitation systems and no solid waste collection, diseases such as Typhoid and Hepatitis A are on the increase. Although the food security situation is volatile with some critical needs, cross-border trade, stocks of food held by the Government as well as by communities and food assistance to 1.7 million people have so far prevented a nationwide life threatening food security crisis.
-  The large-scale exodus of **refugees** continues at apace outwitting humanitarian response planning in neighbouring countries. While increasing knowledge exists on humanitarian needs, funding limitations are creating gaps in response mechanisms. Meanwhile the plight of Syrian refugees continues to grow, with notably an increasing trend of protection issues such as the use of child labour to counter reduced livelihood opportunities. The lack of knowledge on the number and needs of unregistered refugees continues as a cause of concern while the delivery of basic services both to refugees in camps, in host communities and in ad hoc settlements remains challenging. Refugees living outside camps in all countries stay in rented apartments; with host families; in vacant buildings or in temporary shelters. Across the region their main challenges include inability to pay rent; difficulties in accessing health care and a lack of employment. The host populations are also affected as refugees strain local resources.
-  **Funding status:** Regional Response Plan 4 was launched in December 2012, requesting more than \$1.5 billion in support of operations in and outside of Syria. Although the humanitarian community pledged over \$1.5 billion at the Kuwait conference in January, less than a third has been given to date.
-  **Information gaps:** Information on refugee status is improving little exists on the needs of host communities. Information on the humanitarian situation in Syria remains woefully incomplete.

Situation overview, 28th March 2013

Key developments

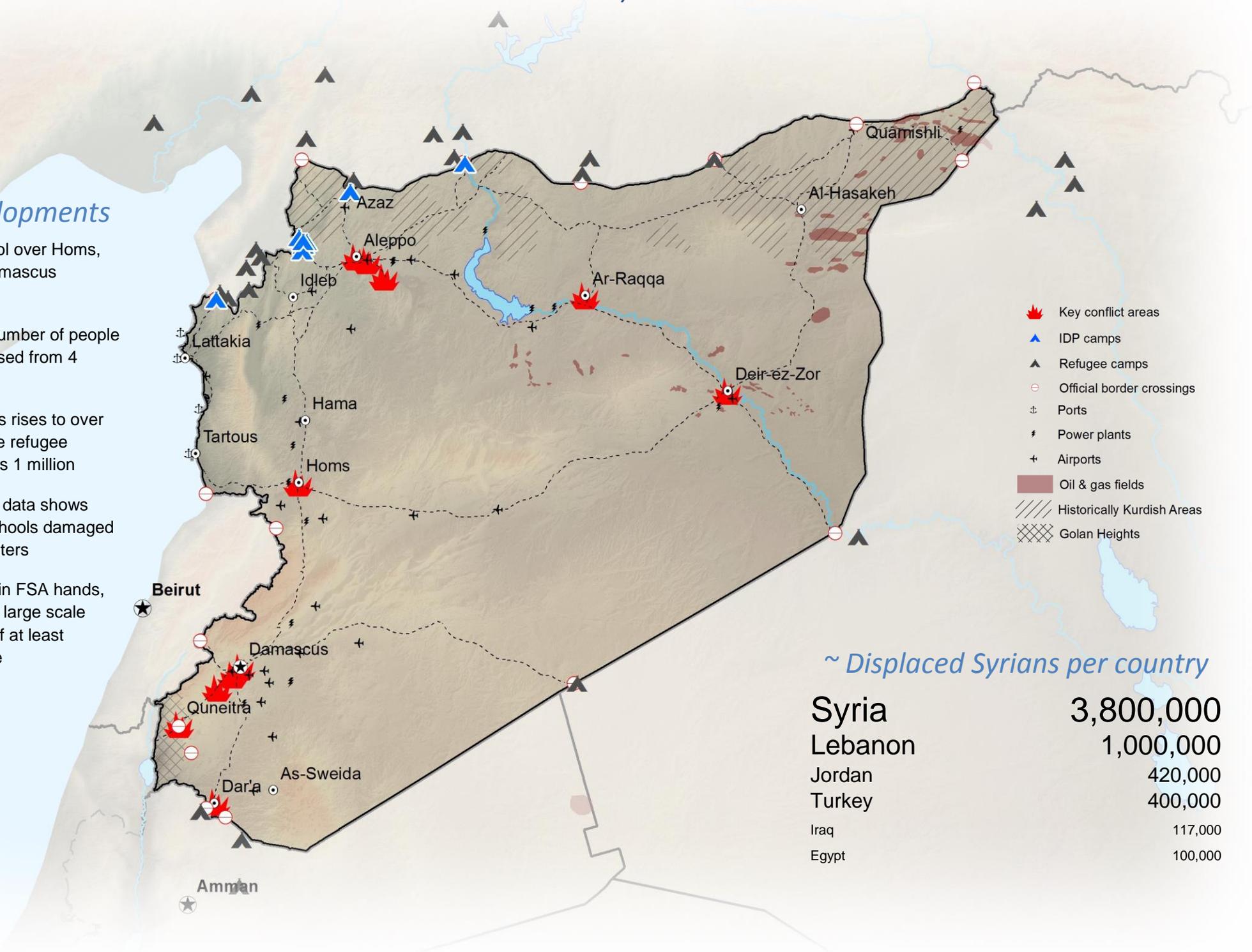
Battle for control over Homs, Aleppo and Damascus intensifies

The reported number of people affected increased from 4 million to 5.5

Number of IDPs rises to over 3.8 million while refugee exodus exceeds 1 million

New education data shows over 20% of schools damaged or used as shelters

Ar-Raqqa falls in FSA hands, fighting causes large scale displacement of at least 200,000 people



~ Displaced Syrians per country

Syria	3,800,000
Lebanon	1,000,000
Jordan	420,000
Turkey	400,000
Iraq	117,000
Egypt	100,000