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## Weekly Conflict Summary

January 25-31, 2018

During this reporting period, the Turkish-led offensive (Operation Olive Branch) continued to advance on Afrin, which is controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF, a Kurdish-led organization in Syria's north). South of Aleppo city, pro-government forces continued their advance into opposition-held Idleb, securing the town of Abu al-Thuhour as well as about a dozen small towns to the north and west. Around Damascus city, pro-government forces continued their bombardment of opposition-held Eastern Ghouta.

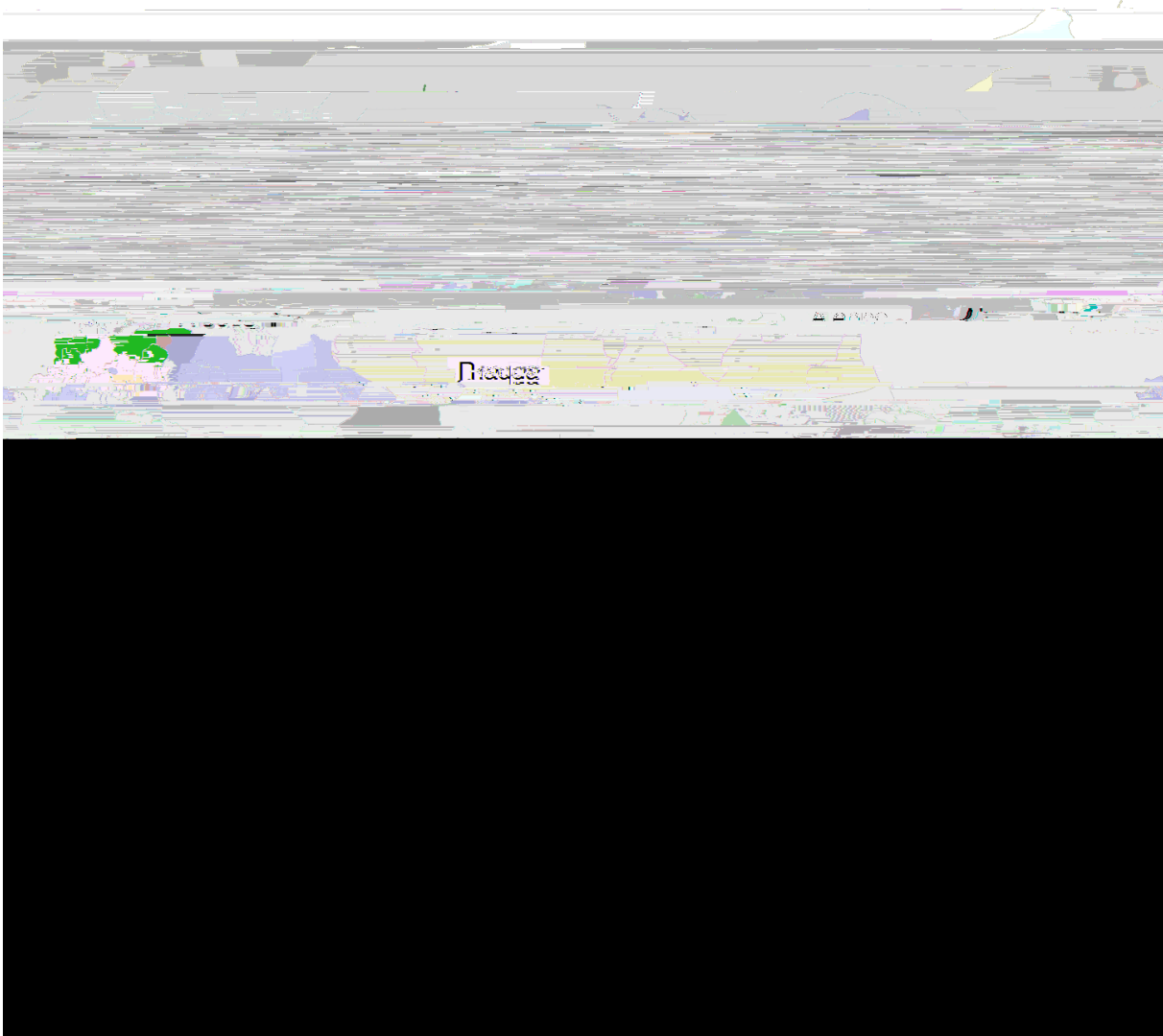


Figure 1 - Areas of control in Syria by January 31, 2018. Arrows indicate advances during the previous week.



Figure 3 - Areas of control at the southeastern frontier of the opposition-held Idleb pocket by January 31. Pro-government forces took territory around Abu Thuhour during this reporting period, and are continuing to advance north along the rail line.

Pro-government forces continued to advance on the eastern edge of the opposition-held Idleb pocket, capturing Abu Thuhour city and locations to its west and north by January 31. Abu Thuhour and its accompanying airbase were the initial targets of the ongoing offensive, though it is expected that government forces will continue to advance until they have taken control of the entire railway leading to Aleppo city, with a significant buffer zone to the west.

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Figure 4 - Areas of control east of Damascus by January 31.