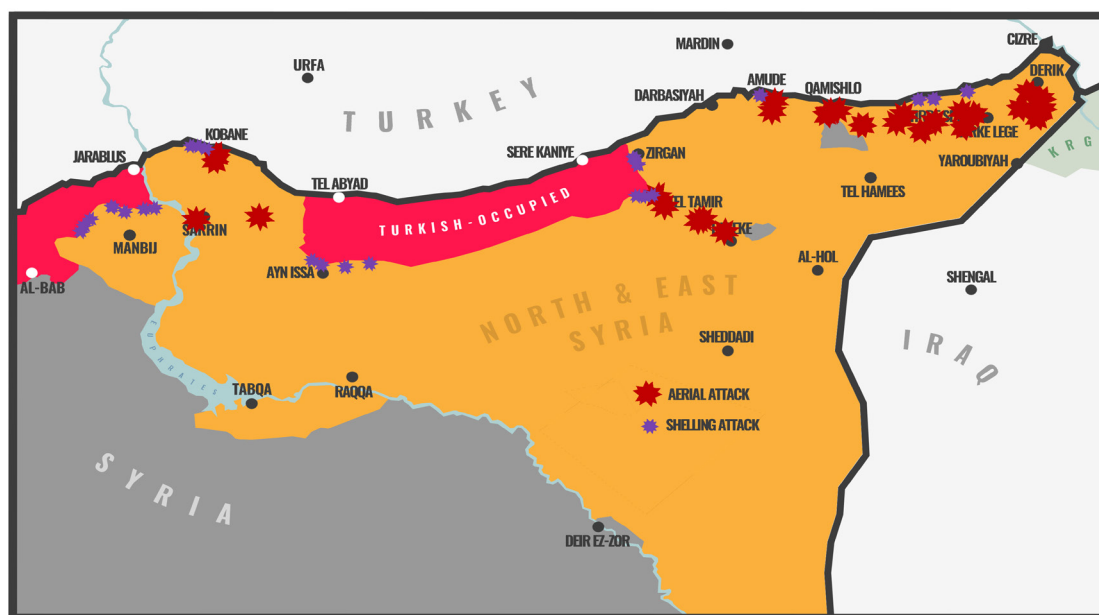


KEY POINTS

- Erdogan declares the end of the “first phase” of the Turkish operation against NES, although attacks are expected to continue
- Attacks have killed 48 (11 civilians, 35 members of the internal security forces, 2 SDF) and wounded many more
- The administration has called for three days of national mourning after 29 members of the Asayish (internal security forces) were killed in 3 airstrikes on an Asayish training academy
- Infrastructure for electricity, water, cooking gas, and oil is completely destroyed across the region
- October 9th marked 4 years since Turkey’s invasion and subsequent occupation of the ‘M4 Strip’ in NES (Sere Kaniye and Tel Abyad); in a press conference, the AANES emphasized that the current Turkish bombardments are part of a long process of ongoing attacks.
- Rojava Information Center available to provide on-the-ground comment, plus photos and videos from airstrike sites and contact to political representatives and humanitarian personnel for comment



Turkish strikes 05-10.10.2023 (Shehba region not visible on map)

BACKGROUND

- Turkey’s campaign of air-strikes against NES has been ongoing since 2019 invasion, killing hundreds of civilians to date
- The current bombing campaign marks the worst escalation since 2019, putting millions of civilians’ lives in jeopardy

- Turkey announced its intention to treat what it called 'YPG infrastructure' as legitimate targets following a recent bomb attack in Ankara, which injured policemen and was claimed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)
- But NES' political and military leaders have emphasised they have no connection whatsoever to the Ankara attack, accusing Turkey of using the incident as a *casus belli*
- The US State Department Department reiterated its position that the Syrian Kurdish YPG, formally allied with the USA in the fight against ISIS, are separate to the PKK, further stressing that Turkish attacks on the region could harm the continued anti-ISIS fight

LATEST STRIKES

- Turkish airstrike on an Asayish (internal security forces of NES) training center in Hamza Bek, Derik kills 29 Asayish and wounds 28, who were members of the anti-narcotic branch of the Asayish. Hospitals put out emergency calls for blood donations after these strikes.
- Further airstrikes on Odeh and Gerdahol oil fields (Tirbespi) injure 1 civilian: Wasel Hassan al-Muhammad
- Turkish strikes in Bashiriyah (Darbasiyah) seriously injure 5 women while they were working in a cotton field [pictured]: Raksa Saleh Fawaz (50), Khadija Edan al-Tamr (40), Farah Adnan (25), Zena Hammoud (20) and Jumana Hammad.
- SNA/Turkish shelling on Mastour, Ayn Issa, kills two children, Nadia al-Ayyash and Ali al-Ayyash
- AANES Foreign Relations Dept's Bedran Kurd says 48 schools are damaged from shelling, thousands of children can't study. When asked about plans to enable students to continue studying: "The attacks impact all parts of life. Under these conditions, all students are impacted. As long as this continues, it is hard for students to continue their studies. Until stability, security is re-established and the attacks stop, there are no plans to ensure education continues."



ECONOMY

Operating in the context of years of war, which destroyed distribution networks and markets, caused price fluctuations, and saw productive machinery looted and infrastructure destroyed, the AANES' overall efforts to meet local needs have been impressive. These efforts rely heavily on oil income. 76% of the AANES' revenue comes from oil, according to the AANES' Ahmad Youssef. Turkey's strikes on oil infrastructure undermine the AANES' economic base. Over 1/3rd of the budget is spent subsidizing fuel, bread, and medicine for the population, according to Muhammad Bakr of AANES Finance Commission. Running schools and hospitals, post-conflict reconstruction, and maintenance of the electricity grid also eat large proportions of the budget. Turkey's strikes set the region backwards socio-economically, while Syria is in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the war began and the worst inflation in its history, with rapidly rising prices making basic goods unaffordable.

ELECTRICITY

Across the past year, the AANES has focused on upgrading and expanding its electricity network. The AANES provides electricity free of charge to citizens, although this supply was only available for four hours per day on average. Turkish airstrikes have systematically targeted electrical infrastructure, erasing the gains the AANES had made, and leaving most of the Jazira region without power.

Qamishlo's electricity station was hit twice. Qamishlo electricity department's Muhemed Zeki told RIC: "We had been working hard this year, replacing 11,000 old electrical lines, establishing two new ports in the city, repairing other ports that were old. As a result, we had been seeing a decrease in electrical failures. Of course, we had not finished our work; there were many other things to do. But these attacks have stopped us. Turkey destroyed both transformers of our northern station. Actually, the first transformer could have been repaired within a week, with difficulty, but after the second targeting, the station is completely destroyed. This has caused huge damage to our essential services: hospitals depended on the station, including the specialty hospitals for kidneys and for hearts and eyes. Two of the big bread bakeries and the two main water stations also depended on our electricity; now they have nothing. This has huge repercussions for all the people here."

COOKING GAS

Most domestic cooking in NES is done with bottled gas. The region's only filling station for the gas cylinders is at Suwaydiyah which hit by a Turkish airstrike on the 6th of October. The filling station was previously hit by Turkish

airstrikes on the 23rd November last year. It was left inoperable, and there were shortages of cooking gas across the region until it could be repaired. The situation is more serious now because the facilities producing oil for heating stoves have also been damaged, and most areas have no power for electrical cooking.

COMMENT

Salman Barodo, who works in the AANES' economy department, told RIC:

"The Suwaydiyah [gas bottling and power] station also supplies the Jazira region with 50% of its regular electricity. Residents of the region are now without electricity, and the continued operation of pumps responsible for procuring water is no longer assured. Given other necessities of living required by residents, and without forgetting that the plant in question was founded by a French company more than 30 years ago without any modernization in the intervening decades, the procurement of replacement parts is extremely difficult under present conditions. The plant's former output approached 130 tons of household gas or 13,000 cylinders per day, that this destruction and deliberate sabotage by the Turkish state has rendered more than two million people without municipal services, without power, and without water, this act can be considered nothing less than tantamount to a war crime. The economy of North and East Syria has fallen into a general recession and into a crisis of suffocation as a result of the targeting of its infrastructure and vital economic sectors. There will be a resultant crisis of gas, diesel, benzine, drinking water and bread, stagnation in economic activity, and a protraction of the trend of rising costs for goods and services. The immediate effect will be to increase the rate of migration, to intensify the shortage of and decrease in aid available to camps, and to cause a rise in poverty and unemployment."

In a press conference, AANES' Foreign Relations Department's Bedran Kurd said: "These attacks are war crimes. All international agreements, the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols, say civilian infrastructure and civilians should not be a target. It is forbidden. But as has been seen, Turkey violates this. No other states raise their voice against this." When asked if there was any Turkey-AANES dialogue ongoing: "Turkey gave a statement, said it would attack infrastructure, and did so. There was no communication at all between Turkey and the AANES. [...] The objective is to make life as unbearable as possible for the people." When questioned on the position of America: "No major changes have occurred in the reactions of America and the Coalition. They state their dissatisfaction with the strikes, say it disrupts stability and harms the fight against ISIS, like they have said before, [...] but there is a... .. lack of stronger condemnation of the Turkish government and we would like a stronger statement in this regard."

When asked about the position of the Government of Syria: "The [Syrian] regime says nothing. With previous attacks too. Even when regime points are struck and people killed, they make no statement. Syria talks of Turkish occupation of Syria but despite this is silent. [...] Both Turkey and the regime... want that AANES and SDF become weaker. The regime should know that these attacks are on all of Syria, on all Syrian people, all the potential of Syria. [...] There is some dealing between the regime and Turkey. The regime will be silent for Turkish attacks on NES and Turkey will be silent for regime attacks on Idlib. This is not in the interests of the Syrian people. This situation of the people worsens because of this."

LIST OF AERIAL STRIKES SO FAR

1. Mushairfah area, Heseke; 2. Darbasiyah/Heseke/Tel Tamir Junction; 3. West of Washokani IDP camp, Heseke; 4. Mushairfah area, Heseke; 5. Near Cil Axa dam; 6. Tal Habash, Amude; 7. Al-Tawila, Tel Tamir; 8. Gerdahol oil facility, Tirbespi; 9. Saida oil facility, Tirbespi; 10. Qasf, Sarrin; 11. Al Qaws oil facility, Cil Axa; 12. Power station, Qamishlo; 13. Jalabiyah, Kobane; 14. Al-Rakbah, Tel Tamir; 15. Electricity Substation, west of Heseke; 16. Amude electricity station; 17 Al-Zarba oil facility, Tirbespi; 18. Dardara, Tel Tamir; 19. Odeh oil facility, Tirbespi; 20. Qamishlo construction site; 21. Covid-19 hospital facility, Derik; 22. Tel Khatoun oil wells, Tirbespi; 23. Teqil Beqil power station; 24. Kharbi Khoy, Amude; 25. Segirka Daro power station, Girke Lege; 26. Ice factory, Karbawi, Qamishlo; 27. Suwaydiyah gas plant; 28. Qamişlo electricity station (2nd time); 29 Menagh airport, Shehba; 30. Malikiye, Shehba; 31. Girke Lege oil well. 32. Xana Sere water pumping facility, Derik; 33. Paint factory, Kobane; 34. Mirkamira nylon factory, Derik; 35. Amude grain silos; 36. Covid-19 hospital facility, Kobane; 37. Dugurka oil well, Girke Lege; 38. Asayish training center, Hamza Bek; 39. Odeh oil facility, Tirbespi (2nd time); 40. Gerhaol oil facility, Tirbespi (2nd time); 41. Teqil Beqil power station (2nd time); 42. Hemduniye village, Darbasiye; 43. Gunde Mezin village, Shehba.

In addition to aerial strikes, there has been intense shelling from Turkey and the Turkish proxy Syrian National Army (SNA) along the 'M4 Strip' contact line, the Manbij contact line, and along the border near Kobane, Tirbespi, Amude, and Girke Lege, as well as the exclave Shehba region.

CONTACT

Contact Rojava Information Center via WhatsApp on: +963 992 461 683 for photos, videos, comment and contact to interviewees on the ground.