



By: TA | AP Brief

# Syria announces ceasefire after days of clashes with Kurdish fighters



Syria's Defense Ministry announced a ceasefire after three days of clashes between government forces and Kurdish fighters in the northern city of Aleppo that **displaced tens of thousands of people**.

The statement said the ceasefire was effective at 3 a.m. in the neighborhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud, Achrafieh and Bani Zaid and gave armed groups six hours to leave the area.

It said departing militants would be allowed to carry their "personal light weapons" and would be provided with an escort to the country's northeast, which is controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.

Aleppo Governor Azzam al-Gharib toured the contested neighborhoods with an escort of security forces overnight.

There was no immediate public response from the SDF, and it was not clear if Kurdish forces in Aleppo had agreed to the deal.

U.S. envoy to Syria Tom Barrack welcomed the announcement in a statement on X and extended "profound gratitude to all parties — the Syrian government, the Syrian Democratic Forces, local authorities, and community leaders — for the restraint and goodwill that made this vital pause possible."

Barrack said the U.S. was working with the parties to extend the ceasefire beyond the six-hour deadline.

Some 142,000 people have been displaced by the **fighting**, which broke out Tuesday with exchanges of shelling and drone strikes.

## Political negotiations

Each side has accused the other of starting the violence and of deliberately targeting civilian neighborhoods and infrastructure, including ambulance crews and hospitals.

Kurdish forces said at least 12 civilians were killed in the Kurdish-majority neighborhoods, while government officials reported at least

nine civilians were killed in the surrounding government-controlled areas in the fighting.

Dozens more on both sides have been wounded. It was not clear how many fighters were killed on each side.

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The leadership in Damascus under interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa had signed a deal in March last year with the SDF, which controls much of the northeast, for it to merge with the Syrian army by the end of 2025. There have been disagreements on how it would happen.

Some of the factions that make up the new Syrian army, formed after the fall of former President **Bashar Assad** in a rebel offensive in December 2024, were previously Turkey-backed insurgent groups that have a long history of clashing with Kurdish forces.

The SDF has for years been the main U.S. partner in Syria in fighting against the Islamic State group, but Turkey considers the SDF a terrorist organization because of its association with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has waged a long-running insurgency in Turkey. A **peace process** is now underway.

Despite the long-running U.S. support for the SDF, the Trump administration in the U.S. has also developed close ties with al-Sharaa's government and has pushed the Kurds to implement the March deal.