

Moscow Urges to 'Restore Order' as Syria Rocked By Unexpected Insurgent Assault

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Fighters fire towards Syrian Army troops in the Rashidin district on the outskirts of Aleppo. **Bakr Alkasem / AFP**

Russia said Friday it hoped its ally Syria will quickly "restore order" in Aleppo, where jihadists launched a major offensive against government troops that has sparked some of the deadliest fighting the country has seen in years.

The Kremlin [said](#) Moscow sees the attack as "an infringement on the sovereignty of Syria."

"We are for the government of Syria to quickly restore order in this district and restore the constitutional order," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Peskov also declined to comment on unconfirmed reports that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad made an unplanned trip to Moscow following the offensive by anti-government forces.

The Russian and Syrian air forces bombed the insurgent offensive in northwest Syria to push

back rebels led by the militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), designated by [Russia](#) and the [U.S.](#) as a terrorist organization.

Jihadists and allies seized dozens of towns and villages in government-held parts of Syria's north and northwest, AFP reported.

On Friday, they also shelled a university student residence in Aleppo, northern Syria's main city, according to state media.

The violence has killed 242 people, according to a Syrian war monitor, most of them combatants on both sides, AFP said. At least 24 civilians have also been killed, most of them in Russian air strikes.

Over the years, the conflict in Syria has morphed into a complex war drawing in jihadists and foreign powers.

Russia intervened in Syria's civil war in 2015, turning the momentum of the war in favor of the president, whose forces at the time had lost control of most of the country.

While Assad regained control over most of the territory that it lost earlier in the war, the area where the jihadists and their allies are based has been subject to a truce brokered by Turkey and Russia after a Syrian government offensive in March 2020.

HTS, led by Al-Qaeda's former Syria branch, controls swathes of the northwest Idlib region as well as small parts of neighboring Aleppo, Hama and Latakia provinces.

AFP contributed reporting.

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