

U.S. drone raid in Syria kills at least 17 civilians and militants

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An occupying US military convoy drives past a poster showing Syrian President Bashar Assad in the town of Qamishli in northern Syria. (Photo: AP)

Damascus, October 25 (RHC)-- U.S. military forces have reportedly killed 17 militants and civilians in a drone strike in northwest Syria near the Turkish border, identifying the targets as leaders of an al-Qaeda-linked group.

"U.S. Forces conducted a strike against a group of al-Qaeda in Syria (AQ-S) senior leaders meeting near Idlib, Syria," said the spokeswoman for the US Central Command (CENTCOM), Maj. Beth Riordan, as cited in an AFP report on Saturday.

"The removal of these AQ-S leaders will disrupt the terrorist organization's ability to further plot and carry out global attacks threatening US citizens, our partners and innocent civilians," Riordan claimed in a statement.

Although the CENTCOM spokeswoman did not specify the number of those killed in the unauthorized intrusion and assassination strike in Syria, the UK-based group, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said at least five civilians were among those killed in the U.S. drone attack.

The Western-backed group, believed to have links within Takfiri terrorist groups fighting since 2011 to overthrow the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad, further explained that the drone strike targeted "a dinner meeting of Jihadists in the village of Jakara in the Salqin area" that killed at least 17, "including 11 leaders," according to the report.

The term "jihadist" is a term invented by Western media and government agencies to falsely refer to radical militants engaged in terrorist acts in the name of Islam, although most of them have actually been directly or indirectly recruited, financed and supplied by Western countries and their client Arab dictatorships.

The village lies in Syria's last major territory held by Western- and Saudi-sponsored terrorist groups in Idlib province, dominated by the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) group, led by a former al-Qaeda affiliate – al-Nusra Front -- and its terrorist allies.

However, other terrorist groups, including the rival al-Qaeda affiliate, Hurras al-Deen faction, are also present and active in the area.

The report further cited SOHR chief Rami Abdel Rahman as claiming that five non-Syrian citizens were among those killed in the US drone attack, but added that their nationalities were not immediately known.

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