

A War Without End

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Context : Syria's civil war, which began during the **Arab Spring** of 2010, has become one of the longest and most devastating conflicts in modern history. Triggered by protests against President **Bashar al-Assad**, the war has drawn in numerous regional and global powers, making it a complex, multi-faceted crisis.

Renewed Conflict

The war has gained renewed global attention following a major **rebel offensive**. Insurgents have seized **Aleppo**, Syria's largest city, along with several nearby towns and villages, marking the most intense clashes since the **2020 ceasefire**. Rebels have also taken full control of **Daraa province**, their third major conquest after **Aleppo** and **Hama**, with plans to advance into **Homs** and **Sweida**.

Origins of the War

- Began during the **Arab Spring**, with protests against Assad's regime.
 - Social media platforms, especially **Twitter**, helped spread pro-democracy movements.
 - Global powers like the **U.S.** and **Russia** intervened based on strategic interests.
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Current Conflict Status

While Assad's regime controls most of the country, some regions remain contested:

- **Rebel-controlled areas** in parts of the north and south.
 - **Kurdish-majority areas** in the east.
 - **Islamic State offshoots** in fragmented zones.
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The 2020 Ceasefire

A ceasefire in **Idlib**, brokered by **Turkey** and **Russia**, brought temporary calm:

- **Turkey** supports Syrian rebels and shields Idlib from large-scale attacks.
 - **Russia** backs Assad's regime, with Syrian and Russian forces targeting rebel areas.
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Key Players

1. **Syrian Government:** Assad, backed by **Russia**, **Iran**, and **Hezbollah**, has regained most lost territory.
 2. **Rebels:** Include groups like **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)**, which controls Idlib.
 3. **United States:** Focused on combating the **Islamic State** and supporting **Kurdish forces**.
 4. **Turkey:** Targets Kurdish-led groups while supporting Syrian rebels.
 5. **Russia:** Assad's key ally, providing airstrikes and military aid.
 6. **Iran and Hezbollah:** Critical in opposing U.S. influence and Israel.
 7. **Israel:** Focused on weakening Hezbollah and Iranian assets in Syria.
 8. **Kurdish Forces:** The U.S.'s main ally in fighting the Islamic State, but targeted by Turkey.
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New Phase of the War

A surprise **rebel offensive** launched on November 27 has intensified the conflict:

- Rebels captured **Aleppo** after battles in **Idlib**, **Hama**, and surrounding areas.
 - Assad's allies, **Iran** and **Russia**, responded with airstrikes on rebel-held zones.
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Key Implications

- **Rebel resurgence:** The offensive is their strongest in years, but Assad's regime has experience quelling similar efforts.
- **Regime vulnerabilities:** Assad's allies, like **Iran** and **Hezbollah**, face other crises, and **Russia** remains focused on Ukraine.
- **Regional instability:** Violations of the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire highlight persistent tensions.

