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## Syrian warplanes continue to bomb rebels as UN wastes days arguing over how to condemn its border attack on Turkey

- UN Security Council finally responds two days after attack that left five dead
- Statement warns of impact of Syrian conflict on regional stability
- Response delayed after earlier draft was blocked by Syria's ally Russia
- Syrian regime continues to bombard rebel held areas
- White House representatives have expressed support for Turkey's retaliation

By [Sam Adams](#)

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The UN has finally condemned Syria for shelling a Turkish border town in an attack that left five civilians dead.

The UN Security Council released a joint statement two days after the assault took place on the border between the two countries.

The delayed response comes as Syrian warplanes and artillery continue to pound the cities of Homs, and Aleppo - killing and injuring civilians.

**WARNING: GRAPHIC CONTENT**



© REUTERS/Sham News Network/Handout

**Destruction: Damage from shelling by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad in the northern city of Aleppo. The Assad regime's military campaign has shown no let-up despite escalating tensions with Turkey**



© AFP PHOTO/ZAC BAILLIEZAC BAILLIE/AFP/GettyImages

**Survivor:** A Syrian civilian, wounded from shelling on a refugee centre by government forces, receives treatment at the Dar al-Shifa hospital in Aleppo. The city has been a focal point of the conflict since mid-July



**Victim:** A badly injured Syrian civilian is treated for his wounds in Aleppo. Civilians and children have become regular casualties during the ongoing conflict

The reported tank, mortar and airstrikes come alongside a push by government forces on the embattled northern city of Aleppo.

The UN response to the cross border shelling was reportedly delayed after Russia, an ally of Syria, blocked an earlier draft of the statement.

The statement said the attack showed the impact the Syrian crisis was having on peace and stability in the region.

An earlier draft, blocked by Russia, included the phrase 'international peace and security,' [the BBC reports](#).

Ankara's parliament on Thursday authorised cross-border military operations following the Syrian attack.

Turkey's planes pounded targets inside Syria for two days in retaliation for the killings.

Although both Damascus and Ankara moved Thursday to calm tensions, the parliament's approval of the cross border operations made it clear that Turkey is retaining a military option if threatened.



Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan warned Syria in a speech in Istanbul on Friday not to make a 'fatal mistake' by testing Turkey's patience as the Turkish army retaliated for a third day running after more mortar rounds from Syria landed on its soil.



**Desperate:** Civilians in Aleppo have suffered months of shelling by government forces. Hospital staff have battled to deal with the number of badly wounded who arrive for treatment (pictured above)



**Suffering:** A Syrian boy, wounded by the shelling, sits close to a dead body at the Dar al-Shifa hospital in Aleppo



**Loss:** A man grieves the loss of his relatives killed in the shelling of Aleppo. Forces loyal to the government had promised the 'mother of all battles' to clear the city of rebels

Speaking to a large crowd in the Turkish capital, Prime Minister Erdogan warned that although Turkey do not want war, they will not be intimidated by Syria.

'We are not interested in war, but we're not far from war either. This nation has come to where it is today having gone through intercontinental wars,' Mr Erdogan said in his speech.

'Those who attempt to test Turkey's deterrence, its decisiveness, its capacity, I say here they are making a fatal mistake.'

At least two mortar bombs fired from Syria landed in farmland in Turkey's southern Hatay province on Friday, one of them around 50 metres into Turkish territory, and a military unit responded immediately, Hatay Governor Celalettin Lekesiz was quoted as saying by the state-run Anatolian news agency.







A Syrian boy and his father lay critically wounded from shelling on a refugee centre by government forces (above left and right)

Turkish broadcaster NTV said Syria had given the order for its warplanes and helicopters not to enter an area within 10 km (six miles) of the Turkish border and had ordered its artillery units not to fire shells in areas close to the border.

There was no confirmation of this from the Syrian authorities.

In the United States, representatives from the White house have expressed support for Turkey's retaliation against Syria.

'The United States condemns the violence and the aggressive actions of the Syrians,' a White House spokesman told reporters travelling with President Barack Obama to Cleveland.

'The Turks have taken some actions that are designed to ensure that their sovereignty is no longer violated by Syrian aggression and we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them as they take those actions. They are certainly appropriate.'



Patrol: Turkish soldier stands guard in an armoured personnel carrier on the Turkish-Syrian border near the Akcakale border crossing

The stepped-up pace of Syrian government attacks on rebel-held areas nevertheless suggests that the Damascus regime's forces have not been distracted by escalating tensions with Turkey.

Activist Mohammed Saeed, who is based in the Damascus suburb of Douma, said rebels captured an air defense base in the Eastern Ghouta area near the capital.

A video showed dozens of gunmen outside an area where smoke was billowing. One of the gunmen says that a 'missile air defense battalion' was captured. Another video showed missiles inside a room.

Mr Saeed said the rebels claimed to have captured the base on Monday.

If confirmed, the capture of a stock of working anti-aircraft missiles would be a boost to a lightly-armed force.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Friday's attack on Homs is the worst on the city for five months.

The Observatory, which relies on a network of activists on the ground, said the bombardment had hit the city's Khaldiya neighborhood.



**On alert: Turkish soldiers gesture as they stand guard near the Turkish-Syria border in the southern Sanliurfa province**



**Armed and ready: A Turkish soldier watches for attack from Syria**

'Around dawn, the regime went crazy and started shelling hysterically,' a Homs-based activist known as Abu Rami said on Friday.

'An average of five rockets a minute are falling.'

Abu Rami was speaking from the central rebel-held old quarter known as Old Homs.

He said the government forces are mainly firing rockets and heavy mortars at the rebel-held neighborhoods of Old Homs, Khaldiya, Qusour and Jouret el-Shayah.



Abu Rami also said the Assad regime's forces have been shelling villages around Homs and the rebel-held town of Rastan, just north of the city.

The Observatory also said the Syrian military has been shelling the neighborhood of Sakhour in Aleppo as government forces battle rebels in the country's largest city.



**No fear: A boy rides a horse past Turkish soldiers near the Syria border**

State-run Syrian TV said that government forces 'cleansed Sakhour of terrorists and mercenaries.'

The transformation of the conflict into an open war has attracted in foreign fighters and extremists, analysts say.

The uprising against President Assad erupted in March 2011 and gradually morphed into a bloody civil war which has so far killed around 30,000 people.

Turkey deployed troops along the border with Syria today - with soldiers seen patrolling the area on foot and in armored personnel vehicles.

People in the border town of Akcakale, where the Syrian shell landed on Wednesday, feared more violence in the volatile border area.

Halil Deniz, who lives in Oncul, says he still fears for his life.

Oncul is a village on the Turkey-Syria border where people fled from Akcakale.



**On the move: Turkish soldiers walk as they keep guard on the Turkish-Syrian border following Syrian attacks**



© AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Life goes on: Goats pass in front of Turkish soldiers, not far from where artillery shells were flying overhead two days earlier

'We do not know if we will live or die,' Deniz said.

'Children go to other villages in the evenings, and return back when the next day dawns.'

'Our store owners, our citizens and our children are all very concerned.

'We did not sleep until morning,' said Ahmet Sabritur, who lives in Akcakale.

He praised Turkey's military response to the Syrian shelling, saying that Damascus should be made aware that deaths of Turkish civilians will not go unpunished.

'If our government had not retaliated, maybe it could have been worse,' Sabritur said.

'They [the Syrians] could have attacked this town a second time,' he said.

### Video: Amateur videos appear to show Syrian rebels capturing regime missile base in Damascus

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Come on - four shells landed on Turkey from Syria. It's not even clear who fired them, but anyway, this is scarcely a reason for

declaring a full war. An apology should suffice.

- [Thomas Goodey](#) , Comanesti, 05/10/2012 17:03

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of course they are going to take forever to sort it out, it is just another jolly for the lot of them, fine wine and dine the longer it takes for them the better.....

- [zeb](#) , chislehurst, United Kingdom, 05/10/2012 16:26

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