

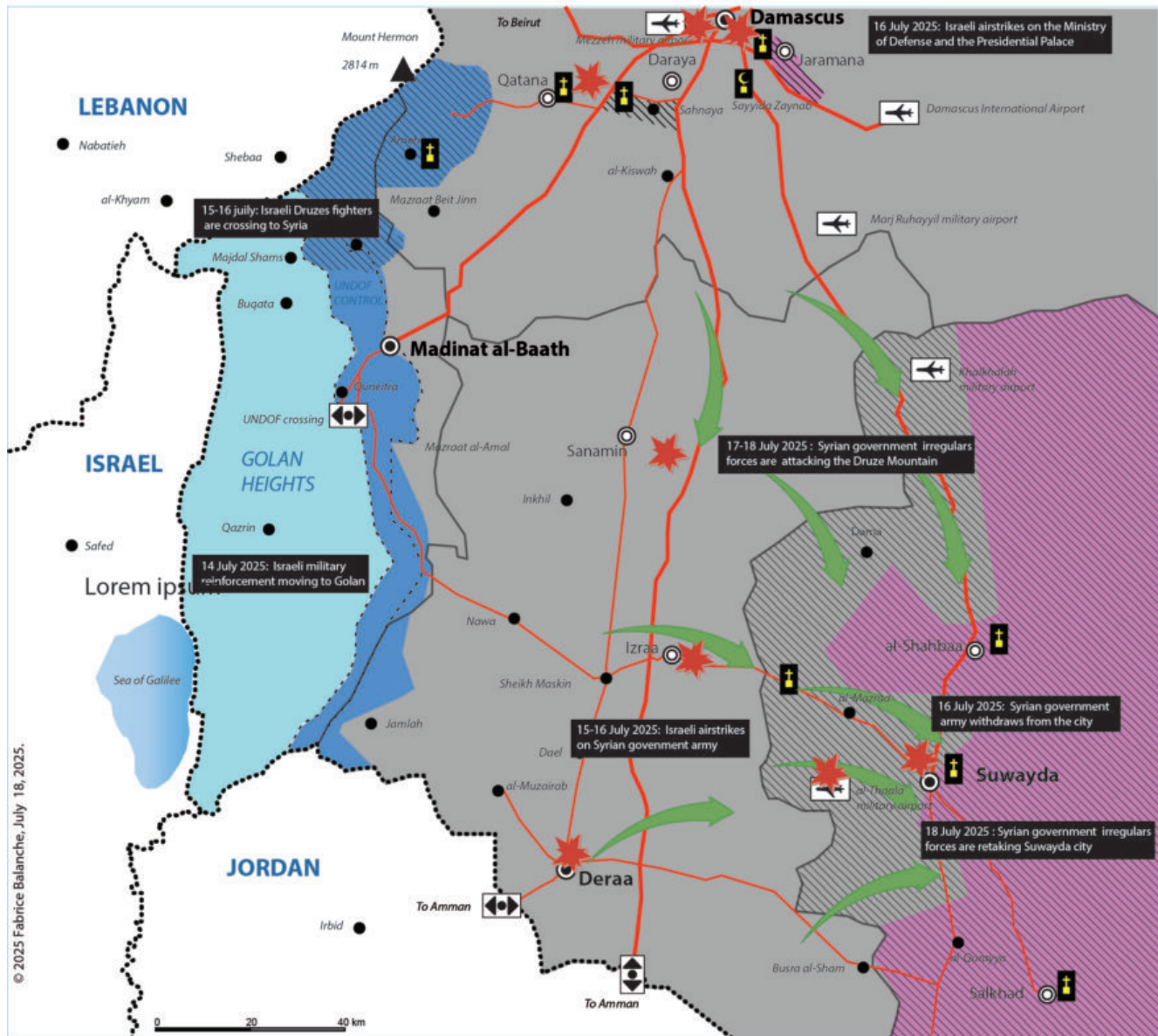
On July 16, 2025, the Syrian army left the city of Sweida, as well as every other piece of land it controlled within that region, having held them for just two days. This was due to the tenacity shown by the Druze militias, particularly following Israel's bombardment of the Defense Ministry, the presidential palace, and the tanks heading towards their position. Since July 17, irregulars from Daraa and other parts of Syria have gathered to continue fighting the Druze. Along the way, they have committed acts of looting and destruction. They are, on July 18, approaching again the city of Sweida. Until then, Israel had not done much. It had only destroyed a convoy of fighters, traveling between Palmyra and Homs, and bombed an irregular fighter position in the Druze Mountains.

I have recently discussed the Druze Mountain situation in the Revue Conflits ([Druze Mountain on Fire: Israel and al-Sharaa are Playing for Their Credibility](#)) and L'Opinion ([Why Druze Mountain is Burning](#)). Israel and al-Sharaa are both at a critical juncture in their credibility. Israel imposed a humiliating ceasefire on the Syrian president by bombing his forces, prompting him to leave Damascus, according to the Lebanese channel *al-Mayadin* (verification pending). The Syrian skies are now in Israeli control, since the country does not have a functional air force. It is therefore technically possible to inflict on him the same fate as that of Hassan Nasrallah.

The Syrian leader seems determined to continue his efforts, secretly encouraging militias, tribes, and other irregular groups to join in a new offensive. However, these new fighters have expressed a desire for revenge against the Druze, seeking to inflict an even worse fate upon them than the Alawites. The Syrian military has suffered heavy losses in these skirmishes, prompting their allied clans to seek retribution. The Druze militias will find it difficult to resist this attack on their own. So, what can Israel do? How can the aviation stop thousands of pickup trucks filled with fighters from all sides from converging towards the Druze Mountains? Will airstrikes suffice, or will Israel need to send in ground troops?



Military situation in South Syria, 14 -18 July 2025



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