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Syria Ceasefire Holding, Calm Prevails Across Country

By Jason Ditz
February 26, 2016

A last minute flurry of endorsements for the US-Russia ceasefire plan meant nearly 100 rebel factions were on board, and even though most of them expressed doubts that the deal would hold, that's a huge number to get behind a scheme to end the civil war.

The real success happened at midnight, local time however, when the ceasefire went into effect and the fighting simply stopped across the vast majority of the country. Though there were isolated reports of heard gunfire and explosions, there as yet have been no confirmations of any serious fighting since.

Fighting had been escalating in the week leading up to the halt, and indeed the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported 40 Syrian troops and 18 rebels were killed on Friday, in the hours leading up to the ceasefire. There haven't been any deaths since.

UN Syrian envoy Staffan de Mistura said he wants to hold a new round of peace talks on March 7, assuming the ceasefire “largely holds” over the next week and a half. While there’s a lot of pessimism about that still, they are certainly off to a good start.