

Syria Declares Victory as Last Anti-Government Forces Leave Aleppo



Damascus, December 23 (RHC)-- The last of the anti-government forces evacuated from the besieged city of Aleppo, Syria on Thursday, as they rode away in the green government buses that have now come to symbolize their surrender of the city.

Over the course of the week, 34,000 people have been a part of the evacuation, traversing through the winter cold. The evacuations are part of a deal between the Syrian government and opposition, brokered by Turkey and Russia, which allows for the retreat of defeated forces and their families from eastern Aleppo, in exchange for the departure of civilians from the northern rebel-held villages of al-Foua and Kefraya, Idlib province, which is largely controlled by the Islamist Ahrar al-Sham group.

The evacuation of civilians, including wounded people from the two villages, was a demand by the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad and its allies before agreeing to allow anti-government forces to retreat.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution Monday requiring U.N. monitors be placed at evacuation points, sending 31 already.

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