



Whispering Bell

Libya Daily Report



Strictly Confidential & Exclusive for ConocoPhillips Libya



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

18 July 2023

Tripoli

- Abu Salim/Hadba: Firework explosions
- Tajoura: Medical staff strike
- Talks on reopening of Oman & Iran embassies
- Senussi trial postponed again

Nationwide / General

- Al-Ajaylat: Unidentified military gathering
- Ajdabiya Court nullifies municipal elections
- Ras Ajdir: Security reshuffle allegedly commences
- Saif Al-Islam political team denounce LNA
- Berniq Airways operates BEN-DWC flight
- GNU declares public holiday
- Shakshouk: Road closure

Oil & Gas Update

- Benghazi: NOC launches graduate training programme

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SUMMARY

Key Points

- PC forms financial oversight committee
- HoR yet to ratify election laws
- HCS approves political roadmap

Political

Whispering Bell continues to assess presidential elections are unlikely in 2023, despite momentum towards the polls. In the current context, Libya stands at the political crossroads of new government announcements. Political outcomes rest on the House of Representatives (HoR) and High Council of State's (HCS) adoption of the political roadmap and electoral laws produced by the 6+6 committee, which stipulate presidential elections must be held within 8 months of the ratification of the electoral laws.

However, the HoR fell short of ratifying the electoral laws produced by the 6+6 committee during its session on 10 July after an altercation between MPs. The dispute was allegedly sparked by MPs closely aligned with Haftar. Against the backdrop of tensions within the HoR, HCS members proposed ratifying the electoral laws produced by the 6+6 committee and sending them directly to the High National Election Commission (HNEC) to move ahead with presidential and parliamentary elections. For its part, the HCS adopted the roadmap for the implementation of the electoral laws in its session on 11 July, albeit with some technical observations. Still, the ball remains in the HoR's court to ratify the laws. Instead, the HoR appears to be laying the groundwork for another roadmap that aims to form a new government.

On 10 July, HoR Speaker Aguila Saleh presented to his deputies a mechanism to form a new limited government tasked with overseeing the transitional period until elections are held. According to the proposal, the process of forming a new government begins with opening the door for the candidacy for the post of Prime Minister for a period of 15 days from the date the roadmap is approved. The winning candidate is required to obtain 15 recommendations from the HoR and 12 recommendations from the HCS and the government is considered to have gained confidence once the Prime Minister obtains the required votes. The newly-elected Prime Minister must then present his cabinet and government programme to the HoR within 20 days from the date of his assignment.

Given the stalemate, the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) will reportedly convene key Libyan stakeholders over the next few days to reach a settlement on the electoral laws.

Security

Stable atmospherics prevail across the country. An uptick in tensions was recorded along the coastal road westwards from Al-Zawiya to Ras Ajdir. Travellers are advised to exercise caution.

Oil & Gas

The threat of an LNA-induced oil blockade has significantly increased across all scenarios and is now assessed a likely in the next three months. Against the backdrop of mounting political tension, backchannel negotiations to form a new government, and diplomatic pressure, the LNA may be compelled to utilize the "oil card" to raise its bargaining leverage in the medium term (3-6 months). The LNA is unlikely to directly sanction a blockade but may instead do so by exploiting local grievances to restrict oil exports and exert pressure on the GNU.

TRIPOLI

- **Report n°6523:** Abu Salim/Hadba: Firework explosions

WB sources reported the sounds of explosions from fireworks in Tripoli's Abu Salim and Al-Hadba Al-Mashro' areas at approximately 0000hrs on 18 July.

Analysis/Comment: The motive is unknown, though Al-Ahli Football Club fans have been celebrating their latest victory with fireworks across various areas of the capital over recent days.

Location: Abu Salim; Al-Hadba Al-Mashro
Incident Date: 18 July
Timestamp: 0000hrs
Source: WB
Veracity: A
Actors: Unknown
Impact: Low

Recommendations:
Identify the motives behind explosions heard across the capital.

- **Report n°6524:** Tajoura: Medical staff strike

Medical staff at Dermatology Hospital in Tripoli's Tajoura area entered a general strike as of 17 July in protest of an unidentified armed group opening fire on a fellow colleague on 16 July.

Analysis/Comment: No further confirmation.

Location: Dermatology Hospital
Incident Date: 16 July
Timestamp: Unknown
Source: Social Media
Veracity: B
Actors: Locals
Impact: Low

Recommendations:
Continue to monitor the nature of security incidents targeting soft targets across the capital.

- **Report n°6525:** Talks on reopening of Oman & Iran embassies

The GNU Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that talks between Director of the Department of Administrative and Financial Affairs Rashid Abu Ghafeh and an Omani diplomatic delegation led by Oman's Ambassador to Tunisia Hilal bin Abdullah Al-Sanani discussed the necessary arrangements to reopen the Embassy of Oman in Tripoli on 16 July.

Separately, Head of Iran's diplomatic delegation in Libya Einollah Soury stated that the Iranian Embassy in Libya is ready to provide

Location: Unknown
Incident Date: 17 July
Timestamp: N/A
Source: Local Media
Veracity: B
Actors: GNU; Foreign Diplomats
Impact: Low

Recommendations:
Continue to monitor details surrounding the reopening of foreign embassies in Tripoli.

consular services, noting that the embassy's building is currently being prepared and organised on 17 July.

Analysis/Comment: The aforementioned developments coincide with a number of foreign embassies reopening their doors in Tripoli instead of operating from neighbouring Tunisia thanks to an improvement in Tripoli's overall security environment, particularly over the past year.

▪ **Report n°6526: Senussi trial postponed again**

Local reports indicate the trial session of Gaddafi-era Intelligence Chief Abdallah Senussi scheduled to take place in the afternoon on 17 July was postponed for a fifth time until 07 August. Senussi's lawyer stated that despite the presence of the lead judge, other court members and representatives of the public prosecution as well as the defendant himself were absent.

Analysis/Comment: Senussi's defense team has previously accused the executive authority of preventing the attendance of their client in previous sessions.

Location: Mitiga Airbase
Incident Date: 17 July
Timestamp: Afternoon
Source: Local Media
Veracity: B
Actors: Judiciary
Impact: Low

Recommendations:
 Continue to monitor details surrounding trials of former regime officials.

NATIONWIDE / GENERAL

▪ **Al-Ajaylat: Unidentified military gathering**

Reports indicate an unidentified military gathering was monitored in Al-Ajaylat's Al-Shabika and Al-Jadida areas in the evening on 17 July. Unconfirmed reports allege the military gathering is linked to the arrest of two members of an armed formation from Al-Ajaylat by the 103 Battalion "Al-Selaa" (Al-Zawiya) south of Al-Ajaylat on the same day.

▪ **Ajdabiya court nullifies municipal elections**

The Ajdabiya Court of First Instance issued a ruling nullifying the results of the municipal elections in Ajdabiya after a list supported by Al-Azywa tribe won on 17 July. The Court accepted the appeal submitted by another list supported by Al-Furjani tribe from which LNA commander Khalifa Haftar's son-in-law hails.

Comment: It will be recalled that the list of LNA commander Khalifa Haftar's son-in-law, Ayoub Al-Ferjani, secured second place with the list of Moftah Bukhmada proving victorious. In protest of his loss, Al-Ferjani ordered the cancellation of the municipal elections and threatened Bukhmada with imprisonment. The development highlights the level of control the LNA enjoys in areas under its control, including influence over the judiciary.

- **Ras Ajdir: Security reshuffle allegedly commences**

Unconfirmed reports allege the process of replacing the existing custom authorities hailing from Zuwara and Al-Zawiya at the Libyan-Tunisian Ras Ajdir border crossing point (BCP) has commenced. It will be recalled that GNU Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah instructed the Ministry of Interior (Mol) to replace all members of the security services and employees at the Ras Ajdir BCP in a decision issued on 08 July.

- **Saif Al-Islam political team denounce LNA**

The political team of Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi issued a statement on 17 July denouncing LNA-sanctioned “arbitrary arrests” of the leaders of the "Together for the Homeland" party and political activists including faculty members, media professionals, journalists, and tribal sheikhs and notables. The statement noted that Gaddafi’s political team as well as all political parties operate freely in the western region without facing threats, intimidation, or harassment. The statement denounced the LNA’s intimidation of the House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker and MPs, accusing the LNA of preventing HoR Speaker Aguila Saleh from chairing this week’s official session with the aim of disrupting the electoral process.

Comment: The statement could exacerbate existing tensions between the pro-Gaddafi bloc in Libya and the LNA, including in Sirte where tensions between the two sides are common.

- **Berniq Airways operates BEN-DWC flight**

Berniq Airways conducted its first flight from Benghazi’s Benina International Airport (BEN) to Al Maktoum International Airport (DWC) on 17 July, making the commencement of the first route between Libya and Dubai following a years-long hiatus. It will be recalled that Berniq Airways announced the launch of the BEN-DWC route on 04 July. Similar announcements of the resumption of flights between the two countries have been made in the past, but failed to materialise.

- **GNU declares public holiday**

GNU Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah declared 19 July and 20 July a public holiday on the occasion of the Islamic New Year 1445 in a decision issued on 17 July.

- **Shakshouk: Road closure**

Reports indicate the closure of Bottom Western Mountains Road links Al-Azzizziya with Nalut, specifically at Shakshouk CP by locals by burning tyres in the afternoon on 18 July. The protesters were denouncing the recent Mol decision to restructure the security directorates in the western mountain region on 13.

OIL & GAS UPDATE

Terminal Status

Es-Sider	Operational
Ras Lanuf	Operational
Mellitah	Operational
Zawiya	Operational
Zueitina	Operational
Marsa	Operational
Brega	
Marsa	Operational
Hariga	
Bouri	Operational
Jurf	Operational

Es-Sider: Stable terminal operations and security atmospherics reported as of 1700hrs LT.

- **Report n°6527:** Benghazi: NOC launches graduate training programme

National Oil Corporation (NOC) Chairman Farhat Ben Guedara announced the launch of a training programme for over 7k graduates from across Libya in an event held in Benghazi on 17 July. Ben Guedara stated that those enrolled will receive a monthly allowance of 1k Libyan Dinars (LYD) and will be appointed across affiliated oil and gas companies upon successful completion.

Analysis/Comment: Given oil and gas graduates hold routine protests outside the NOC HQ in Tripoli in demand of job opportunities within the oil and gas sector, it is likely that the aforementioned initiative will spark similar protests in protest of bias in terms of those selected for the programme.

Location: Benghazi
Incident Date: 17 July
Timestamp: Unknown
Source: Local Media
Veracity: B
Actors: NOC

Impact: Low

Recommendations:
 Monitor details surrounding NOC-endorsed programmes for the local population.

VERACITY SCALE

A – Reliable:

This information is almost certainly true. A is Reliable, "No doubt of authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency; has a history of complete reliability". It is reported by one or more credible publications, and if an author is listed we have no reason to suspect them to be biased. The reporting is sourced based on widely available or verifiable information. The information is consistent with everything our team knows about this subject.

B – Fairly Reliable:

This information is probably true. This information is possibly true. B is "Fairly Reliable" for "minor doubt". It is reported one or more mostly credible publications, and if an author is listed we have no reason to suspect them to be biased on this subject. The reporting is primarily based on verifiable information. The information is mostly consistent with everything our team knows about this subject, but may contain new or surprising information given credibility on the strength of the publication or author.

C – Unreliable:

This information is probably false. This information is almost certainly false. "not usually reliable" for "significant doubt," and "unreliable" for "Lacking in authenticity, trustworthiness, and competency; history of invalid information". It appears in social media or an unreliable publication, and may be written by an author that is not known to us or is known to be less reliable. The reporting is thin, largely dependent on anonymous sources or unverifiable accounts from social media or limited access areas. The information is consistent enough with our knowledge of the subject to be possible, but contains sufficient discrepancies to make it seem unlikely. The information is mostly or entirely inconsistent with our knowledge of the subject.

ACRONYM LIST

AQ	Al-Qaeda
BAM	Al-Bunyan Al-Marsous
BCP	Border Crossing Point
BEN	Benghazi International Airport
BDB	Benghazi Defence Brigade
BPMC	Brega Petroleum Marketing Company
BRSC	Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council
CBL	Central Bank of Libya
CESF	Constitution and Elections Support Force
CNI	Critical National Infrastructure
CDA	Constitutional Drafting Assembly
DACOCT	Deterrence Apparatus for Combating Organized Crime and Terrorism
DDR	Disarmament, demobilising and reintegration
DF	Direct Fire
DMSC	Derna Mujahideen Shura Security Council
GACS	General Administration of Central Support
GASO	General Administration of Security Operations
GECOL	General Electricity Company of Libya
GMMR	Great Man-Made River
GNA	Government of National Accord
GNC	General National Congress
GNS	Government of National Stability
GNU	Government of National Unity
GTUC	Greater Trpoli Union Council
HCS	High Council of State
HNEC	High National Election Commission (HNEC)
HoR	House of Representatives
IDF	Indirect Fire
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOC	International Oil Company
IS	Islamic State
JMC	Joint Military Commission
LAB	Libyan Audit Bureau
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
LNA	Libyan National Army
LPA	Libyan Political Agreement
LPDF	Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
LROR	Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
MJI	Mitiga International Airport
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOGC	Mellitah Oil and Gas Complex
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoO	Ministry of Oil

MoT	Ministry of Transportation
MRA	Misrata International Airport
NEE	No Expected Exposure
NIEE	No Immediate Expected Exposure
NFDK	No Further Details Known
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOC	National Oil Company
NSTR	Nothing Significant To Report
P3+2	France, Germany, Italy, UK, US
PC	Presidential Council
PFG	Petroleum Facilities Guard
RASCO	Ras Lanuf Oil and Gas Processing Company
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
RTA	Road Traffic Accident
SAF	Small Arms Fire
SSA	Stabilisation Support Agency
SDF	Special Deterrence Force
TPF	Tripoli Protection Force
UNSRSG	United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WOC	Waha Oil Company