



Whispering Bell

Libya Daily Report



Strictly Confidential & Exclusive for ConocoPhillips Libya

KEY DEVELOPMENTS



20 July 2023

Tripoli

- PC Office: Menfi chairs security meeting

Nationwide / General

- Western Mountains: Roads reopened
- Update: Conflicting reports over clashes in southeast
- Unconfirmed: Dbeibah-Trabelsi tensions
- Benghazi: GNS PM meets Supreme Financial Committee
- Amnesty Intl. accuse LNA of kidnapping
- Ras Ajdir BCP: Transit delays
- Libyan citizen files US lawsuit against Wagner Group commander

Oil & Gas Update

- Nothing Significant To Report (NSTR)

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SUMMARY

Key Points

- East: Seizure of O&G revenues edges closer
- Limited oil blockade lifted
- HoR session to hold session on 24 July

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. Multiple proposals and roadmaps are now making the rounds after the 6+6 committee's failure to break the political deadlock and produce electoral laws that are unanimously approved. High Council of State (HCS) Head Khaled Al-Meshri announced that the HCS and House of Representatives (HoR) will issue a political roadmap aimed at holding elections, which will include the formation of a new government and electoral laws. Al-Meshri provided a new election timeline, stating that elections will be held no later than mid-March 2024. The HoR is due to hold an official session in Benghazi on Monday 24 July to discuss the political roadmap and electoral laws. Of note, the HoR roadmap stipulates a new unified government must be formed ahead of elections.

Security

Against the backdrop of heightened political uncertainty and shifting political sands involving multistakeholder backchannel negotiations, the risk of a politically-motivated high-impact/lowlikelihood incident is high across cities such as Tripoli and Al-Zawiyah. The threat is particularly tied to mounting anti-GNU sentiment across pockets of the western region such as Al-Zawiyah and the Western Mountain. Of note, security forces discovered an improvised explosive device (IED) attached to a telecommunications tower in Al-Zawiya's Beir Terfas area in the morning on 11 July. The IED was allegedly placed with the intent to target infrastructure used to relay signals for GNU-operated unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Meanwhile, in Al-Zawiyah, locals gave the GNU until 25 July to cede power, threatening to use civil disobedience and direct action against the government. In addition, multiple road closures have been reported in the Western Mountain area, including the road linking Al-Aziziyah and Nalut on 18 July, which would restrict road moves from Tripoli towards the south and southwest. At a tactical level, competition over key positions such as the Administrative Control Authority (ACA) and other high-profile government entities will continue to result in security incidents including arrests, raids, mobilisations of armed groups, and other similar incidents potentially resulting in sporadic operational disruptions for clients on the ground. Meanwhile, allegations that Tunisian security forces are rerouting irregular migrants towards the Libyan border will likely temporarily impact Libyan-Tunisian bilateral relations, subsequently undermining the situation at the Ras Ajdir border crossing

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°6535:** PC Office: Menfi chairs security meeting

Presidential Council (PC) Head Mohamed Menfi chaired an expanded security meeting and discussed with the attendees matters related to combating terrorism, irregular migration, and border security on 19 July. Menfi stressed the need to monitor, control, and secure borders to combat irregular migration, terrorism, and suspicious activity and vowed to provide support to secure land and sea ports from any security breaches.

Analysis/Comment: No further information.

Location: PC Office
Incident Date: 19 July
Timestamp: Unknown
Source: Local Media
Veracity: B
Actors:
Impact: Low

Recommendations:
 Continue to monitor the PC's role across the political, economic, and security fields.

NATIONWIDE / GENERAL

- **Western Mountains: Roads reopened**

Reports indicate the road inking Al-Aziziya and Nalut, specifically at Shakshouk Checkpoint, was reopened in the afternoon on 19 July after protesters closed the aforementioned road in protest of the GNU Interior Ministry's decision to restructure the security directorates in the western mountain region. The Mezda checkpoint was also reopened on 19 July.

- **Update: Conflicting claims over clashes in southeast**

The LNA's 177 Battalion confirmed the death of three of its members in confrontations with "armed formations" attempting to seize strategic positions in the southwest on 16 July. Meanwhile, in a conflicting overview of the events that occurred, the 444 Fighting Brigade reported engaging smugglers and intercepting their convoy of armoured vehicles (AVs) in an unidentified desert area on 16 July. 444 Fighting Brigade commander Mahmoud Hamza stated that six non-Libyan smugglers were killed and three others were arrested, while all their vehicles were destroyed. Hamza stated that the ambush came as part of a security plan to target drug smugglers and outlaws in the Libyan desert. Of note, reports indicate the confrontation between the two sides took place in Adri village located in Wadi Al-Shatii District.

Comment: The conflicting claims come ahead of a scheduled 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) meeting in Benghazi on 25 July to discuss the formation of a joint force to protect Libya's southern border. Such developments cast doubt on the success of a joint force operating in the LNA-controlled southern region.

- **Unconfirmed: Dbeibah-Trabelsi tensions**

Unconfirmed reports allege associates of GNU Prime Minister Abdel Hamid Dbeibah have advised him to dismiss Interior Minister Emad Trabelsi and refer him for investigation amid Dbeibah's dissatisfaction with Trabelsi's latest behaviour along with his brother Abdullah, commander of the Zintan General Security Apparatus.

- **Benghazi: GNS PM meets Supreme Financial Committee**

GNS Prime Minister Osama Hammad met with three members of the Supreme Financial Committee formed by the Presidential Council (PC) on 19 July. The attendees discussed the financial arrangements for the distribution of state revenues and a government spending mechanism. For his part, Hammad briefed the members of the committee on public spending and government financing for all its affiliates that are funded by the state's public treasury.

Of note, reports indicate the Supreme Financial Committee will hold its first meeting in Sirte on 20 July under the chairmanship of PC Head Mohamed Menfi. The meeting will discuss mechanisms to regulate public spending, enhance transparency, and the fair distribution of wealth revenues, primarily oil and gas revenues.

- **Amnesty Intl. accuse LNA of kidnapping**

On 19 July, Amnesty International reported that the Internal Security Agency (ISA) - Benghazi branch kidnapped local activist Belqasem El-Gared from his residence for posting anti-LNA content on his social media account in June. The organisation accused the ISA of targeting LNA opponents with arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, and torture. Of note, the targeted individual works as a university professor across the east. The victim's fate remains unknown to date.

- **Ras Ajdir BCP: Transit delays**

Video footage corroborated long queues at the Libyan-Tunisian Ras Ajdir border crossing point (BCP) on 19 July, with reports of up to a 12-hour wait to transit into Tunisian territory.

- **Libyan citizen files US lawsuit against Wagner Group commander**

Libyan citizen Mohammed Abu Ajila Anis filed a lawsuit in the US against Russian Wagner Group commander Yevgeny Prigozhin, accusing the latter of killing three of his family members near Tripoli in 2019 during the LNA's offensive on the capital during which the Wagner Group fought alongside the LNA. According to the Washington Post report, the victims were stopped by members of the Wagner Group in a village near Tripoli and pursued them until they reached their residence, later killing three family members. Anis faked his death by laying in a pool of blood until the Wagner Group fled the scene, according to the report.

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°6536:** Nothing Significant To Report (NSTR)

Analysis/Comment: N/A

Location: N/A
Incident Date: N/A
Timestamp: N/A
Source: N/A
Veracity: N/A
Actors: N/A

Impact: N/A

Recommendations:
N/A

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