



Whispering Bell

# Libya Daily Report



Strictly Confidential & Exclusive for ConocoPhillips Libya

# KEY DEVELOPMENTS



**25 July 2023**

## Tripoli

- MJI: ITA-operated flight from Rome lands
- Souq Al-Jumaa: Fire
- Central Tripoli: Celebratory gunfire & firework explosions

## Nationwide / General

- 6+6 denounce UNSMIL observations
- Benghazi: Haftar receives Bathily & Ambassadors
- Nationwide pro-Supreme Judicial Council protests
- Benghazi: HoR Speaker receives UN SRSG
- Turkish PM: Upcoming Libya visit
- Ras Ajdir BCP: Transit delays
- Benghazi: HoR adopts 6+6 roadmap

## Oil & Gas Update

- Attorney General receives NOC Chairman & military commanders

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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°6546:** MJI: ITA-operated flight from Rome lands

GNU Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah was onboard a test flight between Rome to Tripoli operated by ITA Airways on 24 July, marking the first flight between Italy and Libya following a 10-year hiatus. Dbeibah and his accompanying delegation were received by Transport Minister Mohamed Al-Shahoubi and Interior Minister Emad Trabelsi, as well as the Italian Ambassador to Libya. Dbeibah announced that commercial flights between Tripoli and Rome will officially commence in September.

**Analysis/Comment:** The GNU announced on 09 July that Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni informed the government that Italy lifted a decade-long ban on Libyan Civil Aviation Authority using Italian airspace and will resume flights between Italy and Libya in September. According to the agreement, flights would be operated by one carrier from each country. It will be recalled that all Libyan carriers were banned from operating in European airspace after being added to the EU Air Safety List in 2014 due to increased insecurity. Since then, flights have been restricted to the region including Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, and Turkey.

**Location:** MJI  
**Incident Date:** 24 July  
**Timestamp:** Unknown  
**Source:** Local Media  
**Veracity:** B  
**Actors:** GNU  
**Impact:** Low

**Recommendations:**  
 Continue to monitor aviation-related developments.

- **Report n°6547:** Souq Al-Jumaa: Fire

WB sources reported an electrical transformer in a residential quarter near Assafa Mosque in Tripoli's Souq Al-Jumaa area caught fire in the early hours of 25 July. The fire was caused by high temperatures as Libya is witnessing an ongoing heatwave. Of note, the electrical grid has remained stable with brief power cuts reported across various areas of Tripoli for maintenance purposes and not as part of the load shedding programme.

**Analysis/Comment:** Of note, the electrical grid has remained stable with brief power cuts reported across various areas of Tripoli for maintenance purposes and not as part of the load shedding programme.

**Location:** Assafa Mosque  
**Incident Date:** 25 July  
**Timestamp:** Morning  
**Source:** WB  
**Veracity:** A  
**Actors:** N/A  
**Impact:** Low

**Recommendations:**  
 Continue to monitor details surrounding fires breaking out across the country amid an ongoing heatwave.

- **Report n°6548:** Central Tripoli: Celebratory gunfire & firework explosions

WB sources heard brief sporadic gunfire and firework explosions across various areas in Tripoli including Qerqarish, Ghut Shaal, Zawiyat Al-Dahmani, Ben Ashour between 1345hrs-1400hrs on 25 July. Reports indicate celebrations of high school exam results.

**Analysis/Comment:** No further information.

**Location:** Central Tripoli  
**Incident Date:** 25 July  
**Timestamp:** 1345hrs-1400hrs  
**Source:** WB  
**Veracity:** A  
**Actors:** Locals  
**Impact:** Low

**Recommendations:**  
 Assess the motives behind gunfire & explosions heard across the capital.

## NATIONWIDE / GENERAL

- **6+6 denounce UNSMIL observations**

The 6+6 Joint Committee denounced the observations by the UN Support Mission in Libya's technical team on the electoral laws they prepared and referred to the development as an attempt by the Mission to adopt these observations in the electoral laws and thus prioritise their own will over of the Libyan people in a statement issued on 24 July. The Committee voiced their dissatisfaction with the political stance of UN SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily towards the parties involved in the political conflict and accused him of prioritising one party over another. In addition, the committee accused Bathily of failing to communicate with the committee to resolve points of contention. Further, the committee stated that the mission is not only calling for the amendment of the electoral laws but also an amendment of the Constitutional Declaration itself.

**Comment:** Apparent tensions between Bathily and the 6+6 Joint Committee casts doubt on the UN accepting a scenario in which elections are held on the basis of the electoral laws produced by the Committee and thus increases the likelihood of the UNSMIL utilising this growing discord to push forward with its previously announced proposal to form a High-level Steering Panel tasked with steering the country towards elections. It will be recalled that the UNSMIL previously denied its intention to announce a UN-led roadmap and confirmed its efforts to engage all stakeholders and institutions to overcome the points of contention in the 6+6's electoral laws in order for them to implementable.

- **Benghazi: Haftar receives Bathily & Ambassadors**

LNA commander Khalifa Haftar received UN SRSG Aboudalye Bathily and the Ambassadors of Italy, Egypt, France, Germany, Tunisia, Turkiye, and the UK in Benghazi on 24 July. Bathily stated the meeting discussed preparations for the Security Working group scheduled to take place in Benghazi on 25 July. Bathily stressed that security is essential to enable inclusive elections, establishing legitimate institutions, and prolonged stability.

**Comment:** The meeting has been perceived as an attempt to secure the Haftar's buy-in for elections to take place given his position as the east's main powerbroker. It is likely that the visiting delegation realises that the consequences of failing to engage Haftar in election-related talks is greater than the logistics of organising such meetings. It is worth noting that the meeting comes a day after Italy hosted the International Conference on Migration and Development in which Haftar was reportedly not invited. GNU Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah and Presidential Council (PC) Mohamed Menfi represented Libya in the Conference.

- **Nationwide pro-Supreme Judicial Council protests**

Judicial officials within the Court of Appeal in Benghazi, Tobruk, Sirte, Sabha, and Kufra held protests in support of the Supreme Judicial Council, a day after the ruling of the Tripoli-based Constitutional Circuit Court on the unconstitutional formation of the current Council as per a decision issued by the House of Representatives (HoR) on 24 July. The protesters called for a stop to attempts to undermine the Supreme Judicial Council and drag it into political conflicts.

- **Benghazi: HoR Speaker receives UN SRSG**

House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker Aguila Saleh received UN SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily and discussed the legal framework for elections in Benghazi on 24 July. The two sides agreed to resolve the outstanding issues to move forward with implementing the electoral process. Bathily affirmed that the UNSMIL remains committed to engaging with all actors to overcome contested issues, including a "unified administration."

- **Turkish President: Upcoming Libya visit**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that he would visit Libya "soon" as part of a possible tour that would include other countries in North Africa. Erdogan's remarks came on his return flight from a tour that included Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and northern Cyprus. Of note, Erdogan stated that Gulf countries welcomed the announcement of Turkey and Egypt raising their diplomatic relations in early July.

- **Ras Ajdir BCP: Transit delays**

Reports indicate a passport system glitch on the Libyan side of the Libyan-Tunisian Ras Ajdir border crossing point (BCP) caused an approximate four-hour halt in transit movement in the afternoon/evening on 24 July.

- **Benghazi: HoR adopts 6+6 roadmap**

House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker Aguila Saleh announced the opening of candidacy for the post of Prime Minister for a period of 20 days after approving the elections roadmap emanating from the 6+6 Joint Committee in a televised session in Benghazi on 25 July. The candidates are required to obtain the recommendation of 15 MPs and 10 High Council of State (HCS) members.

# 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°6549:** Attorney General meets NOC Chairman & military commanders

Attorney General Al-Siddik Al-Sour met with National Oil Corporation (NOC) Chairman Farhat Ben Guedara and discussed illegal revenues generated from fuel smuggling in the western region and its impact on work at the Al-Zawiya Refinery on 24 July. The meeting was also attended by the commanders of the West Coast Military Region Salah Al-Din Al-Namroush and 52nd Brigade commander Mohammed Bin Rajab. The attendees agreed to implement a plan to pursue those carrying out crimes affecting the Libyan economy.

**Analysis/Comment:** Of note, the Coordination of the Zawiya Youth Movement stated that fuel smuggling via Al-Zawiya Refinery witnessed a significant decline after the GNU security operation in the west coast region targeting smuggling sites in May/June.

**Location:** Attorney General Office  
**Incident Date:** 24 July  
**Timestamp:** Unknown  
**Source:** Local Media  
**Veracity:** B  
**Actors:** Attorney General; Military Commanders

**Impact:** Low

**Recommendations:**  
 Continue to monitor the NOC's role in combatting nationwide fuel smuggling.

# 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