

SECURITY RELATED EVENTS IN ZAWIYA'S AREA IN APRIL-MAY 2023

- **02 APR:** A protest was reported at the Zawiya Courts complex, with demonstrators calling for their inclusion in the unified salary scale;
- **03 APR:** Armed clashes involving the Abu Khdair and Al Forhat families were reported in Zawiya; **Comment:** *The clashes were triggered by a dispute over a suspected criminal issue linked to vehicles. The Abu Khdair and Al Forhat families have a long-standing blood feud over a killing that has yet to be avenged;*
- **04 APR:**
 - Approximately 160 armoured vehicles, allegedly belonging to the al Salaa Bde, were reported as moving Westwards, reportedly to the border areas in Zawiya;
 - A convoy of approximately 50 armoured vehicles was reported on the coastal road in Zawiya;
- **05 APR:**
 - The Western Region Directorate Support Force was reported as conducting mobile and static security operations in Zawiya;
 - A mobilization of an unspecified Zintan group was reported in Qaryat;
- **07 APR:** Unconfirmed local sources report the destruction of a private property in al Zawiya; **Comment:** The incident was believed to relate to the former incarceration of the perpetrator, Mamdouh Hammad, who was seeking compensation from the property's owner, Abdul Hamid al Rih, for his time in detention. Hammad was reportedly arrested in connection with the disappearance of Miloud Hassan following an accusation by the al Rih.
- **08 APR:**
 - GNU border guard security was reported as conducting operations in the 50 acre area from al-Assah to al Naqa;
 - The 130th Infantry Bn of the Western Coastal Military Region was reported as conducting VCPs on the coastal road between Zawiya and the Tunis border;
- **09 APR:** The so-called “*Union of Libyan Revolutionaries*” from the Western region stated their rejection of the 13th Amendment, the militarization of the state, and dismissed dual nationals for any sovereign position appointment;
- **10 APR:** The Joint Zawiya Security Room launched an operation to crack down on the sellers of black market fuel, focusing on the area between Judaim and Sabriyah, East of Zawiya;
- **16 APR:** The GNU-MoI announced the restructuring of security directorates according to geographical areas, including control of ports;
- **18 APR:** Tensions were initiated in Zuwara amid reports stating that GNU-MoI would extend its control over all the ports in Libya, starting from Ras Ajdir;

- **20 APR:** In the Municipality of Zuwara, the city elders and armed groups issued a statement against the remarks of the GNU-MoI, calling upon the GNU-PM to restrain the GNU MoI in its initiatives;
- **23 APR:**
 - Security patrols were conducted on the Libyan-Tunisian border from Ras Ajdir in the North to the Al Assah area;
 - Unconfirmed sources reported that the Samoud Bde was preparing to deploy an unspecified number of forces from Misrata to Tripoli, reportedly against the process of East-West reconciliation;
 - Clashes broke out at the Eastern entrance of Zawiya against the backdrop of a previous killing;
- **24 APR:**
 - The GNU-PM stressed that the GNU-MoI was ready to secure elections;
 - Gunmen affiliated with the GNU-MoD 103rd Bn-Al Selaa militiath targeted two camps affiliated with the GNU-MoI First Support Force - Al Far militia, in Surman, Zawiya;
- **25 APR:**
 - Unconfirmed reports alleged a military gathering affiliated with the GNU-MoD 103rd Bn-Al Selaa militia in the Beer Terfas area in the Southern suburbs of Zawiya;
 - Unconfirmed reports indicated a military gathering affiliated with the 444th Bde in Tarhunah's Fam Molga area, in preparation to mobilise towards Zawiya to secure the city at the orders of GNU-PM;
 - Unidentified assailants opened fire on Sabratah Municipal Council HQ. *Comment:* Unconfirmed reports alleged the attackers were supporters of cleric Al-Ghiryani;
 - A force of 100 vehicles from the Western Military Region deployed to the "Southern Line of Tripoli" in order to conduct counter smuggling operations;
 - The Facilities Security Authority (FSA) issued a statement urging foreign security and safety companies operating across Libya to register and obtain special permits to carry out their in-country activities;
- **27 APR:** Zawiya residents demonstrated in the streets of Zawiya; *Comment: They were demanding the departure of security officials, whom they blamed for the deteriorating security conditions in the city;*
- **29 APR:** GNU-CoS held a meeting with a number of Zawiya leaders and city elders after the unrest that had swept through the city of Zawiya;
- **03 MAY:** Cleric Al Ghiryani demanded an end to armed formations in Zawiya hiring Sub-Saharan Africans to carry out criminal activities;
- **08 MAY:** The Zintan military Cdr, Osama Juwaili, attended live ammunition drills conducted by a new Bn named the Union of Revolutionaries Libya in Bi'r al Ghanam area, approximately 50 km South of Zawiya;
- **11 MAY:** Armed individuals launched an attack on the Counter-Terrorism Force which was being supported by the 60th Infantry Bn; *Comment: Alleged use of drones was reported to support mortar attacks against the Counter Terrorism Force Headquarters;*
- **12 MAY:** Clashes resumed in the Gammoudi area;

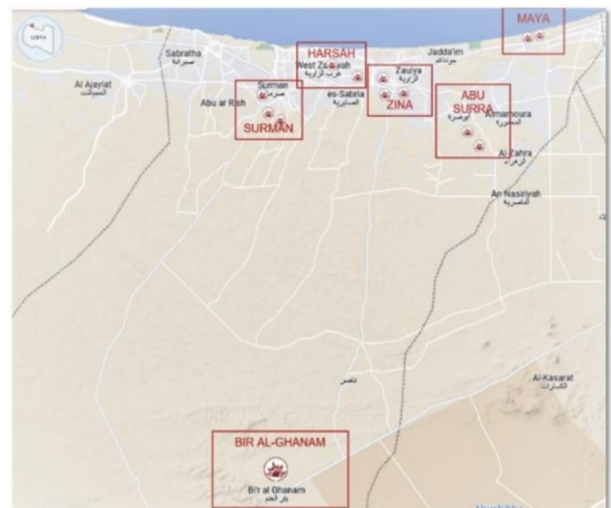
- **13 MAY:** Clashes broke out in the Dai Al Hilal area in Zawiya. Libyan security forces were said to be deployed in Zawiya;
- **15 MAY:** The PC Deputy Head met with GNU-CoS to review the security measures in place to resolve issues related to irregular armed formations in Zawiya;
- **17 MAY:**
 - Sources reported that Zawiya elders were mediating between a Zawiya-based militia and the Counter Terrorism Force, based in Zawiya, since the former was planning to attack the HQ of the latter; **Comment:** *The information emerged after militia mobilizations were reported in the Al Shurafa area, Zawiya;*
 - GNU-CoS stated that the security environment in Zawiya was “normal” and “reassuring” and that the government were addressing the demands of Zawiya’s residents in coordination with a committee representing them; **Comment:** GNU-CoS attributed the recent uptick in unrest in Zawiya to competition over influence, as well as the occurrence of a murder and its aftermath; In addition, GNU-CoS referred to an unnamed party that seeks to drag Libya into wars, fighting, and chaos for its own interests and thus impact the current state of stability achieved by the GNU;
- **18 MAY:** Reports indicated that unidentified assailants raided the house of a member of the 103th Infantry Bn “Al Lefaa” nicknamed “Al Kalkha” and assassinated him in Zawiya’s Al Mutrud area; **Comment:** *Unconfirmed reports alleged the assailants were affiliated with pro-LNA Cdr Hatem Al Ghaeb (Zawiya); In addition, reports indicated that drones flew over Zawiya in conjunction with a mobilisation of multiple military vehicles affiliated with 103rd Infantry Bn “Al Lefaa” in Al-Mutrad and Al Rabash Road areas;*
- **21 MAY:** Locals from Zawiya gave the GNU a 24-hour ultimatum to respond to local demands and threatened to resort to the closure of all entrances and exits of the city, secede from the GNU’s administrative control, and form a new government;
- **21 MAY:** The anti-GNU former Presidential Guard (PG) Cdr, Ayoub Abu Rass, was spotted during live-fire military drills at the Wadi Al Atahl Sanctuary, south of Surman; **Comment:** *The timing of the development is significant given reports of coordinated anti-GNU manoeuvres to undermine GNU-PM’s foothold in the western region and expel pro-GNU forces, as highlighted by the wave of security incidents in Zawiya;*
- **21 MAY:** The Police Institute in Sabratah city hosted the graduation ceremony of the first batch of the new “**Force Combating Security Threats**” directly affiliated with GNU-PM; **Comment:** *Zawiya’s First Isnad Force “Al Far” Cdr, Mohamed Bahroun, aka “Al Far”, supervised the graduation ceremony;*
- **25 MAY:**
 - Additional security measures, including blast walls and blocked roads, were established around the Turkish Embassy;
 - Drone strikes targeted sites in Libya’s western city of Zawiya, which has seen a rise in criminality and unrest in recent months ; **Comment:** The targets were located in Busra, al Mutrad, Harsha, and Maya Port;
 - The Abu Surra Martyrs Bn stated that their HQ were hit by an airstrike, causing injuries. They say the attack was carried out by a Turkish drone and consider it an act of

aggression against them and their people; **Comment:** The Abu Surra Martyrs Bn is a SSA branch in Zawiya led by Hassan Abu Zarib. The Turkish drones that were operating in the area were Bayraktar-TB2;

- The MoI-Coast Guard (GACS) officially condemned the drone strike that targeted *Maya Port, which it claimed resulted in human loss and material damage;*
 - *Ali Abu Zariba, a member of parliament for Zawiya, accused GNU-PM of attacking rival armed groups in the city under the pretext of combating organized crime;*
 - Parliament-backed GNU called on UN envoy UN SRSG to “*intervene urgently to protect civilians*” in Zawiya;
 - Parliament-backed GNU called on the Attorney General to “*initiate legal procedures to hold accountable those who endangered the lives of citizens*” following the military operation led by the GNU in Zawiya;
 - The GNU-Spokesman, Mohammed Hamouda, said that the GNU-forces ongoing operation in Zawiya was “*part of a security plan to combat fuel-smuggling, drug trafficking, and illegal immigration in the West Coast region.*”;
 - The GNU-MoD claimed responsibility for the aerial bombing in the West Coast region. The Ministry stated the strikes were carried out under the direct supervision of GNU-PM;
 - The security committee recently formed by GNU-CoS to address the demands of Zawiya’s protesters stated that the strike was not coordinated with them;
 - The residents of Zawiya’s Abu Surrah area issued a statement on May 25 holding the GNU fully responsible for the strike and attributing the attack to Turkish drones commissioned by the GNU-PM and supervised by the GNU-CoS;
 - The GNU planned to launch a ground military operation in the West Coast region;
- Comment:** The government warned against the excessive use of force that “*could ignite war*” and thwart reconciliation efforts;

- 26 MAY:

- Airstrike against an oil smuggling site at the Zuwara port;
- An airstrike targeted a Al-Sifaw HQ, likely south of the bridge in Bir Al-Ghanam, Zawiya; **Comment:** *Reports suggest a weapons depot was targeted;*
- Surface-to-air small arms fire was reported in the area in association with airstrikes in Bir Al-Ghanam, Zawiya;
- An airstrike targeted a suspected TRB position in Surman, Zawiya;
- An airstrike targeted an armed group location in Harsha, Zawiya, affiliated to Ottoman al-Lahab;



- 27 MAY:

- Further airstrikes were reported on alleged Abu Surra Martyrs Bn locations as well as Nasr Bn locations; **Comment:** Reports indicate there may have been some casualties;
- Fuel trucks, allegedly belonging to Riad Belhaj, were targeted in an airstrike resulting in several people being wounded;

- An airstrike targeted Hatem Al-Fahri's guesthouse;
 - An airstrike targeted a Kabuu Militia location in Al Keeb Mosque, Nuqat Al-Khams Province. **Comment:** The strike targeted armed vehicles, destroying three and resulted in the wounding of five people;
 - Among the flow of media speculations, it was reported about an alleged Iranian drone (type Shahin) that could have been detected by the "Flight Radar Global" network to take off from Mitiga and to head towards Zawiya. **Comment:** although rumours were already circulating on the presence of Iranian "Kamikaze" drones in Libya, the open source was offering contradictory information as the picture available on the report was depicting a possible Iranian drone type Shahed, while the text was referring to a Shahin model.
- **28 MAY:**
- Drones targeted sites in Harsha area, east of Zawiya;
 - Two drone attacked target Maya Port;
 - Drone strikes kill two and injure Member Parliament's nephew in Zawiya.
- **29 MAY:**
- The HoR gathered in Benghazi to discuss the recent developments in Zawiya;
 - The use of the Bayraktar-TB2 led many to accuse Türkiye of involvement in the campaign;
 - Armed individuals loyal to Ali Abu Zariba halted gas and fuel supplies feeding Tripoli power stations by closing valves at Zawiya Refinery, in demand of the GNU PM's dismissal over the recent drones strikes in the city;
 - Locals from Zawiya closed off the Coastal Road west of Zawiya between Mutrud and Surman in protest of the GNU drones strikes targeting the Western Coast;
 - The GNU-MoD commended its Air Force for successfully completing the **1st phase of its security Operation** and achieving mission objectives across the Western Coast Region, claiming the destruction of seven boats (allegedly used for the smuggling of migrants), six depo of drugs and weapons, and nine oil depo (allegedly used for the smuggling of oil). **Comment:** *The GNU-MoD announced the commencement of the 2nd phase of its Operation, renewing its call on citizens to fully cooperate and remain distant from suspicious sites used by criminal gangs;*
 - The US Embassy in Libya stated that it is monitoring with concern the situation in Zawiya amid reports of weapons being used in civilian areas and the potential for further violence, calling on Libyan leaders to de-escalate and take precautionary measures to protect civilians. A similar statement was immediately after released by the UK Embassy;
 - The 55th Bde Cdr condemned GNU drones strikes in the Western Coast Region that killed one of his members on 28 May.