

Libya daily security analysis report

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Latest Developments

Political Developments

- Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah has suspended all travel permits and vacations for officials and GNU ministers from February 15 – 20. In addition, roads around Martyr's Square in Tripoli were also closed on February 14. This is in preparation for the celebration of Revolution Day on February 17 and suggests a series of events over a number of days around the event are being planned.
- The UN envoy to Libya, Abdoulaye Bathily, met with the French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Catherine Colonna on February 14.
- A member of the HCS, Al-Qasim Qazit, said that the HoR and the HCS are in agreement on the provisions of the 13th constitutional amendment, which is considered a development of the constitutional base agreed upon in Cairo. Qazit claimed that the constitutional amendment is a step towards a solution to the current crisis that Libya is suffering from, to hold presidential and parliamentary elections.
- The head of the Audit Bureau, Khaled Shakshak met with the Director General of the National Council for Economic and Social Development, Dr. Mahmoud Al-Futaisi, at the headquarters of the Audit Bureau in Tripoli on February 13. The office's media office said that the meeting discussed the council's vision on the national strategic plan for the oil and electricity sectors, which aims to provide modern reliable energy to citizens at affordable prices.
- The Deputy President of the Presidential Council (PC), Abdullah al-Lafi met with the Norwegian Ambassador to Libya, Hilde Klemetsdal to discuss the current political situation and the outcomes of the preparatory forum for national reconciliation.

Security Developments

- Clashes were reported amongst cousins in the Zawiyat al-Mahjoub area of Misrata. At least one person was killed and two wounded.
- The Hira Checkpoint, to the north of Gharyan, was closed by a local armed group. The move was in response to a visit by the prime minister with the armed group claiming he had failed to make good on promises made during a previous visit.
- Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha and Minister of the Interior (GNS) Essam Bouzriba toured the Bohdema and Wahieshi areas of Benghazi after security operations targeting drug and alcohol dealers in the area.
- Prime Minister (GNU) Dbeibah has agreed to a request to establish an emergency room in Marj following two minor earthquakes in recent days, one of which reportedly measured 3 on the Richter scale on regional sensors. Dbeibah gave orders to equip the emergency room in coordination with the National Safety Authority, the Support and Emergency Medicine Apparatus, the Ambulance and Emergency Services Apparatus, the Apparatus for Support and Development of Therapeutic Services, and the Medical Supply Apparatus.
- The Minister of Interior (GNU), Emad Trabelsi, attended the ministerial conference of the EU and MENA nations to activate the strategic partnership in policing fields and security cooperation in Lisbon over February 13 and 14.

Oil & Gas Developments

- President of the Presidential Council (PC), Mohamed Menfi, met with Chairman of the NOC, Farhat Ben Qadara on February 13. According to the communication office of the PC, Ben Qadara briefed Menfi on the challenges facing the oil sector, foremost of which is the increase in production rates according to future plans.

Infrastructure Developments

- Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah has called for the reopening of hotels which have been closed for the last ten years. The call came during a meeting with the management committee of Al-Daman Company for Investments of the Social Security Fund. Dbeibah named Al-Kabir, Goz al-Tik, Al-Jawhara Al-Zawiyah, and Al-Wahat Tripoli hotels.
- The LNA announced that the restoration of Sabha Castle has now been completed. The castle was damaged during the 2011 revolution as well as in subsequent fighting over the years with it being used as a military base at times by various armed groups.

Humanitarian Response

- Minister of Foreign Affairs (GNU), Najla Mangoush, has promised \$50 million to support reconstruction efforts in Turkey following the widespread devastation caused by the February 06 earthquakes. This is allegedly the first pledge with more to follow.

Assessment

Security Developments

Hira: Checkpoint closed north of Gharyan

At 1240hrs on February 14, the Abughilan Martyrs Brigade, which is commanded by Nasser Ashtiba, closed Hira Checkpoint. This was in direct response to the arrival of Prime Minister (GNS) Dbeibah. The prime minister visited the city to open a youth hostel however the Abughilan Martyrs Brigade took the action after claiming the prime minister has failed to make good on promises made to the city.

COMMENT: 'This is the second time this checkpoint has been closed recently. On February 08, a group closed it in protest at the transfer of development projects away from Gharyan. Prior to this, the checkpoint was closed on July 02, 2022. The current closure is in line with current assessments of the likelihood of increased transportation disruptions with various armed groups and unions looking to create leverage in a bid to elicit funds and other agreements from the GNU.' **COMMENT ENDS.**



Image: Hira Checkpoint closure (social media)

GNS: Bashagha given credit for Benghazi operations

Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha and Minister of the Interior (GNS) Essam Bouzriba toured the Bohdema and Wahieshi areas of Benghazi after security operations targeting drug and alcohol dealers in the area. Of note, one report gave credit to the men, from Misrata and Zawiyah respectively, for purging the area of criminal activity within 48 hours after "years of incompetence and failure of the security services." Other reports have credited Deputy Minister of the Interior, Faraj Qaim, with the operations.



Image: Prime Minister (GNS) Bashagha touring the Bohdema area (Libia Live)

Further reports state that the Committee for Reconstruction and Stability announced the start of maintenance and development projects in Bohdema following the operation and the demolition of buildings connected to criminal activity. The maintenance and development projects include the construction of a parking lot and parks as well as the maintenance of street lighting, footpaths, and squares. Gaim later stated that all those properties connected to crime would be demolished and replaced with children's play parks.

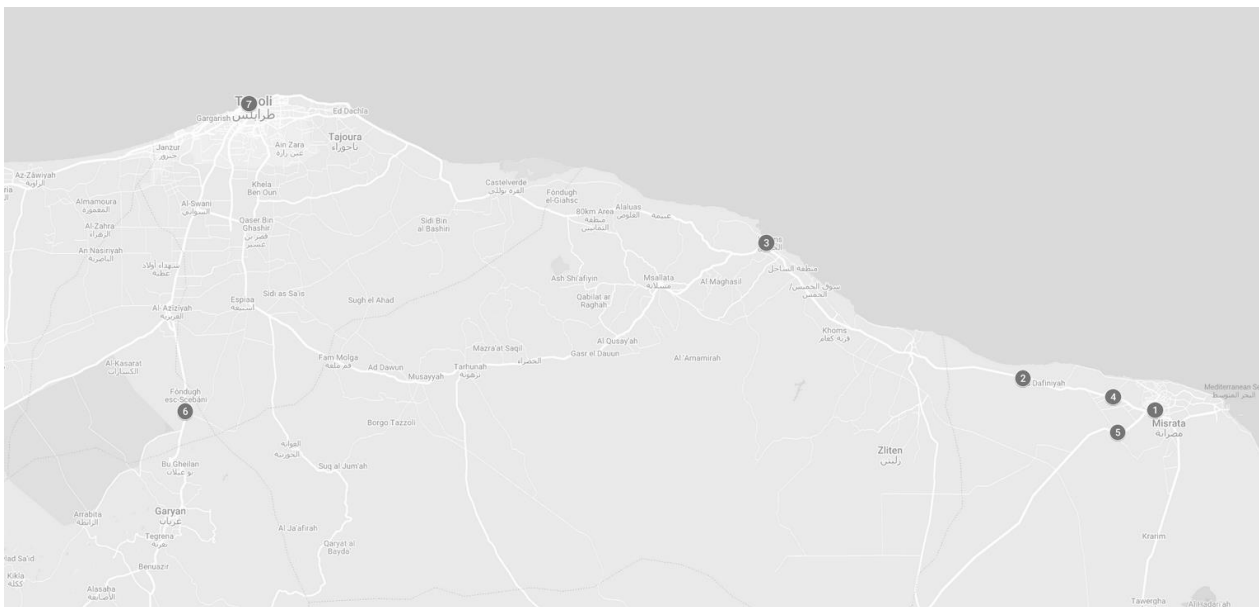
COMMENT: 'This framing is interesting and suggests some attempt to shore up the GNS by some eastern influencers. Although both Bashagha and Bouzriba would have the pre-requisite skill sets to develop and direct this type of operation, its perhaps more likely that the two men were touring the areas in connection with the construction and maintenance projects, something which Bashagha in particular, has been involved with in Benghazi in recent months.

The anti-drug and alcohol operations in Benghazi are very unlikely to have occurred without the backing of Saddam and/or Khalid Haftar. A joint Mol and LNA force began operations in Bohdema on February 11 before moving into the Wahieshi area. Troops made a number of arrests and destroyed seized goods which included a significant amount of alcohol. Buildings associated with criminal activity were then demolished and at least one car was destroyed by an armoured troop carrier.

The Bohdema area has a reputation as a high crime area, with locals blaming the military and their families who have settled in the area following the Battle for Benghazi. Their participation in the battle has allegedly led some to develop an arrogant attitude and belief that they were "above the law." The operations were likely part of a drive by the LNA to rehabilitate its reputation following pressure from its support base and were at least in part aimed at serving LNA officers involved in criminal activity.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Significant Incidents

Tripolitania Region



- 1 RTA - Feb 13 10:50, Misrata Province, Misrata:** A four-year-old child died after he was hit by a car.
- 2 CP/ Roadblock - Feb 14, Misrata Province, Dafiniyah:** Dafiniyah Checkpoint remained closed after the Samoud Brigade took control of it on February 11 and shut it over a lack of salaries. There was some speculation it may reopen on February 15 however it's unclear what this was based on.

3 Weapons Find - Feb 14, Al-Murqub Province, Khoms: Ministry of Interior (GNU) forces discovered a weapons cache inside a 40ft container after the arrest of a gang of smugglers in Khoms. The weapons were later destroyed in a controlled explosion in the desert.

4 Armed Clash - Feb 14 02:31, Misrata Province, Zawiyat al-Mahjoub: An armed clash erupted between cousins of the Tawil family resulting in one person, Omar Tawil, being killed. A further two were wounded. The clashes included the use of medium weapons in a built-up area.

5 Accident - Feb 14 11:23, Misrata Province, Tawnisah Market Roundabout: A fire started in an electricity station on Al-Sikt Road near the Al Tawnisah Market Roundabout.

6 CP/ Roadblock - Feb 14 12:40, Al-Jafara Province, Hira: Abughilan Martyrs Brigade, which is commanded by Nasser Ashtiba, closed Hira Checkpoint.

7 CP/ Roadblock - Feb 14 13:00, Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: Authorities began to close roads around Martyrs Square in preparation for February 17 celebrations.

Cyrenaica Region



8 Security Operation - Feb 12, Benghazi Province, Bohdema: Security forces carried out patrols in the area following an operation against alcohol and drug dealers.

9 Security Operation - Feb 13, Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: Security forces used an armoured troop carrier to destroy a car belonging to drug and alcohol dealers who they have arrested in recent days in the area. The Salem Afaret café was also destroyed.

10 Prisoner Release - Feb 13, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Qarnada Prison: The LNA released former undersecretary of the Ministry of Defence (2012), Siddiq Ghaithi al-Obeidi after serving seven years in Qarnada prison. Obeidi, from Derna, was arrested for opposing the LNA in Sousse. He was allegedly part of a delegation from Misrata who was on a mission to the east to "help heal rifts with the eastern tribes" following the outbreak of hostilities in Benghazi in 2014. He was also a member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). Obeidi is a friend of Abdulhakim Belhaj, another former senior member of the LIFG. Obeidi's release comes after Belhaj endorsed Haftar's presidential candidacy and confirmed he had been in communication with Rajma.

11 Other - Feb 13, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Labraq Airport: An unconfirmed report claimed that the Bubladel family were key to a national drug smuggling operation. The family were in charge of securing the Labraq Military and Civil Airport which is under the command of Rabee Boubladel, a member of the Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade.

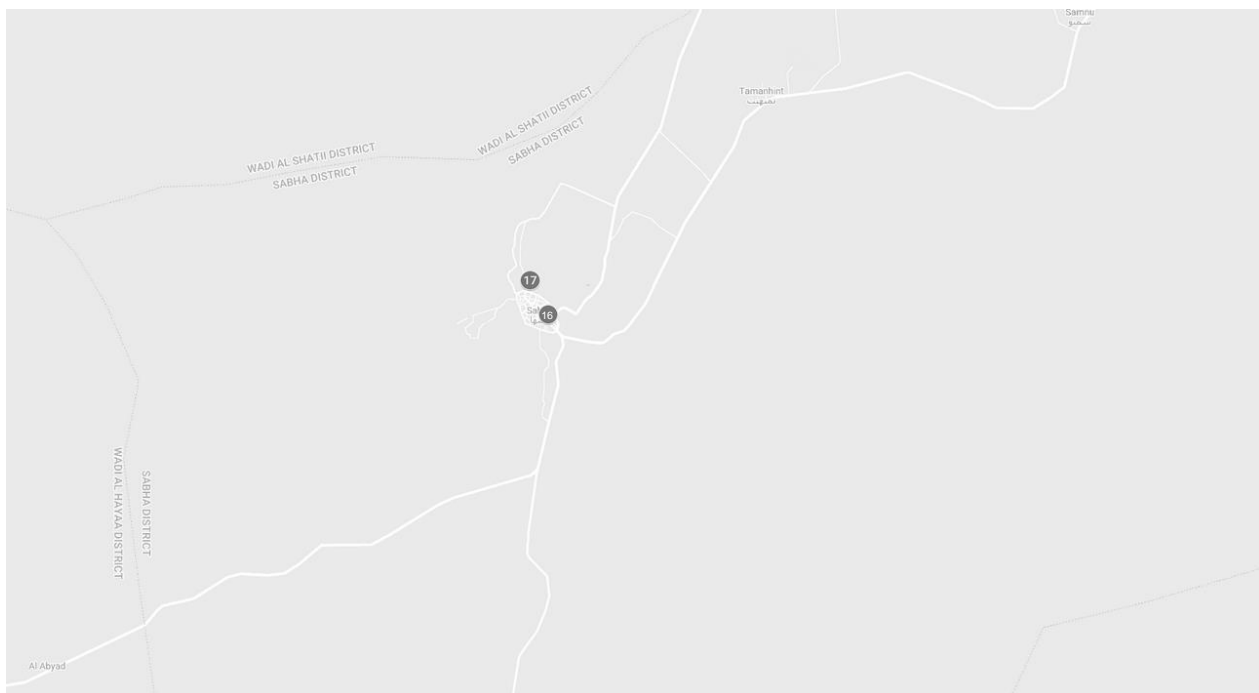
12 Armed Clash - Feb 13 02:26, Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: Rounds were exchanged as the LNA moved in to carry out security operations against criminal elements who were described as "formerly supporting forces." This came after the LNA encircled the area before moving into the area.

13 Threat Warning - Feb 13 19:40, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Saeed al-Arafi allegedly called his tribe to discuss the demolition of his home and that of his parents in Benghazi, presumably as part of the recent operations against drug and alcohol dealers. Arfi is described as an LNA soldier who is a cousin of Salah and Khalid Bulghib. The men are from the Awagir Tribe and were prominent members of the LNA, being key players in Operation Dignity to oust Islamist groups from Benghazi by the LNA. In the years after however, they were marginalised with Khalid refusing an offer to re-form his Military Intelligence Support Forces in 2019 to assist the failing LNA offensive in Tripoli. Relations between the LNA and some elements of the Awagir Tribe appear tense at present and could trigger further incidents.

14 Military Exercise - Feb 14, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: 128 Brigade carried out a live firing exercise which took place over a number of days under the supervision of Brigadier General Hassan Maatouq al-Zadma.

15 Accident - Feb 14, Benghazi Province, Masr Street: A house fire resulted in the death of a mother and her two daughters. Their father was taken to the emergency room.

Fezzan Region



16 Other - Feb 13, Sabha Province, Sabha: An unconfirmed report claimed that Hassan Al-Jadid, brother of Omar al-Jadid, a commander in the Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade, was a key player within a national drugs smuggling operation and was based in southern Libya. He has allegedly developed strong links with drug dealers in Ghadames, Ajaylat and Tabraq.

17 Murder/ Execution - Feb 13 14:30, Sabha Province, Abdul Kafi: Abu Bakr Dhiab al-Megrahi was shot and wounded in a drive-by shooting by unknown perpetrators mobile in a Hyundai Verna.

Outlook

Short Term Outlook

- Libyan remains locked in a political impasse with two governments, both of which are slowly weakening. The House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) continue to dominate the current political scene, with their efforts to resolve key issues like the constitution taking centre stage. After years of backtracking however, SRSG Bathily has made clear that without

real progress, the two risk entities risk being sidelined. Various factions are beginning to position themselves for expected change in 2023 as the UN continues to push towards elections, while regional and global issues, not least the Ukraine offensive, continue to shape the international communities' agendas in Libya.

- Although more settled at present, the security situation in and around Tripoli remains fundamentally unstable. After significant changes to the capital's security makeup in August and September 2022, new faultlines are emerging as militia commanders continue to consolidate their positions. This includes expanding their influence through ministries and other state apparatus. In addition, plans to reconstruct Tripoli International Airport threaten to destabilise the delicate balance of power in the city with Misratan entities looking to claim significant influence over the location. Armed groups in Tripoli continue to be empowered via financial, military, and political means, ensuring they will continue to exert significant influence over the political situation.

Medium to Long Term Outlook

- The solution to Libya's political impasse remains elections for many stakeholders with UNSMIL attempting to develop a new pathway. Realistically, elections are unlikely to occur in 2023 however, there is a real chance that much-needed groundwork could be achieved. While UNSMIL heads efforts towards elections, other international stakeholders are prioritising more short-term objectives as they look to shape not just Libya, but regional and global issues.
- Terrorist groups remain active but contained in Libya. Islamic State (IS) will continue to present a threat to security forces, primarily in the south, and may re-establish the capability to mount sporadic attacks along the coastline in the future. The group continues to suffer from years of attrition and is more likely focused on providing support for more active IS theatres in sub-Saharan Africa. Al-Qaeda-aligned groups remain active in the country with their integration into societies in the south and some armed groups in the Tripoli area potentially posing a longer-term issue for Libya.

Key Dates

Date	Occasion	Comment
February 17, 2023	Revolution Day (2011)	Public Holiday
April 22 - 24, 2023	Eid Al-Fitr (+/-)	Public Holiday
May 01, 2023	May Day	Public Holiday
June 27, 2023	Arafat Day	
June 28 – 30, 2023	Eid Al-Adha	Public Holiday
July 19, 2023	Islamic New Year	Public Holiday
September 16, 2023	Martyrs' Day	

Acronym List

AQ - Al-Qaeda
BAM – Al Bunyan Al Marsous (Misratan-led)
BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade / Saraya Defend Benghazi (SDB) (Al Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
CBL – Central Bank of Libya
CESF - Constitution and Election Support Force
CNI – Critical National Infrastructure
DACOCT - Deterrence Apparatus for Combating Organized Crime and Terrorism (SDF)
DDR - Disarmament, demobilising and reintegration
DF – Direct Fire
GASO – General Administration of Security Operations
GACS – General Administration of Central Support
GECOL – General Electricity Company of Libya
GMMR – Great Man-made River
GNA – Government of National Accord (2016)
GNC – General National Congress (2012)
GNS – Government of National Stability
GNU – Government of National Unity (2021)
GTUC - Greater Tripoli Union Council (Tripoli militias and others, established in June 2020)
HCS – High Council of State
HNEC – High National Elections Commission
HoR – House of Representatives (Tobruk-based)
IDF – Indirect Fire (mortars/rockets)
IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
IED - Improvised Explosive Device
IOC - International Oil Company
IS - Islamic State
JMC – Joint Military Commission
LIFG – Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
LNA – Libyan National Army
LPA – Libyan Political Agreement (2015)
LPDF - Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (2020)
LROR - Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
MoD - Ministry of Defense
MoF - Ministry of Finance
MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoI - Ministry of Interior
MoJ - Ministry of Justice
MoO - Ministry of Oil
MoT - Ministry of Transportation
NFDK - No Further Details Known
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation (aid/charity)
NOC – National Oil Company
NSG – National Salvation Government (GNC)
NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
P3+2 – France, Germany, Italy – UK, US
PC – Presidency Council (GNA)
PG – Presidential Guard
PFG - Petroleum Facilities Guard
RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
RTA - Road Traffic Accident
TIP – Tripoli International Airport
SSA – Stability Support Authority
SAF - Small Arms Fire
SDF – Rada Deterrence Force/ Special Deterrence Force/ Rada
UXO - Unexploded Ordnance

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SECURE EVERY DAY

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