

Libya weekly security analysis report

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Executive Summary

- The devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria on February 06 are beginning to have an impact on the region's geopolitics. Disaster diplomacy may create space for new dialogue for Turkey within its more contentious international relationships however, the earthquakes have thrown planned elections for May into the air. In Syria, the disaster is providing a pretext for the possible rehabilitation of Syria's President Assad by key regional players like the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.
- Speaker of the House of Representatives (HoR), Aquila Saleh, announced a new initiative to form yet another new interim government. The initiative is similar to 2021's Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, however, Saleh's incarnation would see the HoR and High Council of State retain significant influence. It's unclear if the initiative will win enough support, especially from international stakeholders, some of whom oppose another interim period. A pattern of meetings however suggests that talks are ongoing domestically over possible positions within a new unified executive. In addition, Lt Gen Osama Jweli, commander of the Western Mountains Military Region, has been over to the east with reports suggesting he has been to Rajma and met with the HoR.
- This week saw the return of two Tripoli commanders, ousted in the August 27, 2022 clashes which pitted GNU-aligned armed groups against GNS armed groups. The clashes assured the survival of the GNU and resigned the GNS to a placeholder government for eastern authorities. Following extensive negotiations, Mustapha Qaddour, commander of the now defunct Nawasi Brigade, visited his home area of Suq al-Juma while his onetime ally, Haythem Tajuri, commander of 777 Brigade, visited Muammar Dhawi, commander of 55 Battalion in Warshefana.
- This week, Shaaban Hadiya, better known as Abu Obeida, succeeded in returning to his hometown of Zawiyah from Turkey. Abu Obeida was a former commander in the Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room (LROR), an umbrella group established by Nouri Abusahmain, president of the General National Congress (Libya's parliament in 2012). The LROR was heavily involved in the 2014 civil war and was declared a terrorist organization by the HoR. Abu Obeida retains key armed support in Zawiyah but has an extant arrest warrant issued by Tripoli authorities. His return could herald a destabilization along the north-western coastline.
- Tajura in the east of Tripoli remains unstable. Although this has fallen short of armed confrontations, tensions have erupted on a number of occasions again throughout the week with mobilisations from both 51 Brigade and the Martyrs Sabria Sassi Battalion. Tensions were reported to have been triggered by the growing influence of Abdelhakim Belhaj over the Martyrs Battalion which suggests Belhaj may be looking to secure some political influence in Tripoli.
- On February 11, elements of the Samoud Brigade, commanded by Saleh Badi from Misrata, closed Dafiniyah Checkpoint on the coastal road (east). The checkpoint was reopened on February 16. The closure was said to be over the non-payment of dues although an unconfirmed report also claimed that Badi was advocating for the release of Shura Council members from SDF custody at Mitiga Prison. The closure came as another armed group closed Hira Checkpoint north of Gharyan, a closure which resulted in an armed clash. The incidents highlight a now tried and tested method of armed groups disrupting transportation links in Tripolitania in a bid to create leverage and force the GNU into negotiations.
- The Libyan National Army (LNA) has continued its efforts to rehabilitate its reputation and re-enforce its image as a strong provider of security in the eastern and southern regions. Operations against criminals in the eastern region are aimed at supporting these efforts and encompass crackdowns on internal security problems as well as tribal competition. The implementation of a new cybercrime law has also seen its first arrests with two high-profile females on social media detained. While the law allows for action against online fraud and crime, it also includes a morality law which may be open to exploitation in a bid to crack down on dissent.

Outlook

Short Term Outlook

- Libya 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.

Threat Matrix

Region	Political	Terrorism	Militancy	Crime	Kidnap	Civil Unrest
Tripolitania	High-Extreme	Moderate	High-Extreme	High	High	Moderate - High
Tripoli	High-Extreme	Moderate	High-Extreme	High	High	Moderate - High
Cyrenaica	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Benghazi	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Fezzan	High	High	High-Extreme	High	High	Low-Moderate
Sabha	High	Moderate	High	High	High	Moderate

Threat Scale	Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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Regional Developments

Disaster diplomacy may lead to positive developments

The devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria on February 06 are beginning to have an impact on the region's geopolitics. Disaster diplomacy may create space for new dialogue for Turkey within its more contentious international relationships however, the earthquakes have thrown planned elections for May into the air. In Syria, the disaster is providing a pretext for the possible rehabilitation of Syria's President Assad by key regional players like the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.

The earthquakes have proved devastating and are the worst Turkey has faced since 1939. The current death toll stands at 46,000 people across Turkey and Syria as the rescue effort begins to wind down. The international response has so far come from 74 countries who have sent rescue teams, equipment and aid with many mobilising support in the immediate aftermath of the disaster.

Turkey

Some of those countries sending support include Armenia, which does not have formal relations with Turkey and Sweden whose accession to NATO was in question after Ankara indicated it was not ready to approve them. The US, whose relationship with Turkey is generally characterised by mistrust, has also mobilised significant support.

Greece, who has historic animosity with Turkey, is also one of the 74 countries to send support. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis had his first phone call with President Erdoğan in almost a year. The Greek foreign minister, Nikos Dendias, was quick to follow up with a visit, being the first European foreign minister to do so. Dendias was greeted by his Turkish counterpart, Mevlut Cavusoglu with "open arms, a huge hug, and a meaningful message." This is in stark contrast to the frosty relations between the two which have dominated for

decades with competition in the Aegean Sea and Turkish expansion in the Mediterranean Sea current issues. This competition in the Mediterranean has seen Greece establish relations with eastern authorities in Libya over the last couple of years as Athens and the HoR/LNA seek to contain and reduce Turkish expansion and influence.

Tripoli, which has traditionally been the weaker entity within the Tripoli – Turkey dynamic over the last few years, has also sent support to Turkey in her hour of need. Along with aid and donations being sent from Tripoli, Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah and Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, Sadiq Kabir travelled to Turkey to meet with President Erdoğan where they discussed reconstruction efforts.

The mobilisation of support from so many countries, especially those with which Turkey

“We experienced the biggest disaster of our history. If you go on site, you will understand how grave the situation is compared to what you see on your TV screens.”

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu – Feb 18, 2023

has difficult or non-existence relations, highlights the opportunity for disaster diplomacy which could see some positive improvements in key relationships for Turkey, emulating the breakthroughs achieved between Greece and Turkey in 1999 after earthquakes affected both countries in close succession. While this won't necessarily solve specific issues between Turkey and those with

whom it has difficult relationships, it will create new room for dialogue with Turkish domestic politics and foreign policy often closely linked.

This link between domestic politics and foreign policy is perhaps intensified in what is an election year for Turkey. Polls were scheduled for May after the president brought them forward by a month prior to February 06, however, it is difficult to see how Turkey will be able to physically hold elections with such widespread devastation and the displacement of such large numbers of people. The president can delay the elections by a month under current laws, with a delay of a year currently only possible under a conflict scenario according to Article 78 of the country's constitution. In addition, the quakes may well have created a whole new voter pool from those affected, directly or indirectly, by the disaster. With worlds turned upside down

overnight, many will see their priorities fundamentally change.

It remains unknown how the president will look to tackle the looming issue of elections however there have already been some indications from the government that they will look to delay. A delay may however present President Erdoğan with another hurdle with one constitutional expert stating that he would be ineligible to stand for a third term unless parliament called an early election before his second term expired. In order to stand, a constitutional change for an individual, would have to be sought. While the government may have no choice but to seek a delay, the opposition has stated the constitution is clear and the vote must go ahead. They have however yet to name a presidential candidate with infighting hampering their efforts.

The 2023 vote was already being labeled as the president's "toughest test yet" with opinion polls showing his popularity was being eroded by a soaring cost of living and a slump in the value of the lira. The quake complicates the picture and adds further uncertainty. The areas affected

with key policies and possible corruption exposed in the worst way at a time when it was already coming under significant economic pressure. This narrative however does not take into account Turkey's own significant outgoing humanitarian aid which totalled \$5.5 billion in 2021. Comparing this as a percentage of gross national income, this placed Turkey a global first in the amount of humanitarian aid sent although this also included support to the significant numbers of foreign refugees hosted by Turkey. It's clear that Turkey is not just facing a humanitarian disaster on a significant scale, but is also facing political uncertainty, the resolution of which could have significant ramifications for Libya and the wider region.

Syria

While Turkey has arguably suffered the worst impact of the earthquakes, Syria's situation is complicated by the ongoing civil war. The war began in March 2011 when an uprising began against the regime of Bashar al-Assad and has since seen the country divided into several parts. Fighting began to decrease in 2019 but peace talks remain at a stalemate, complicated

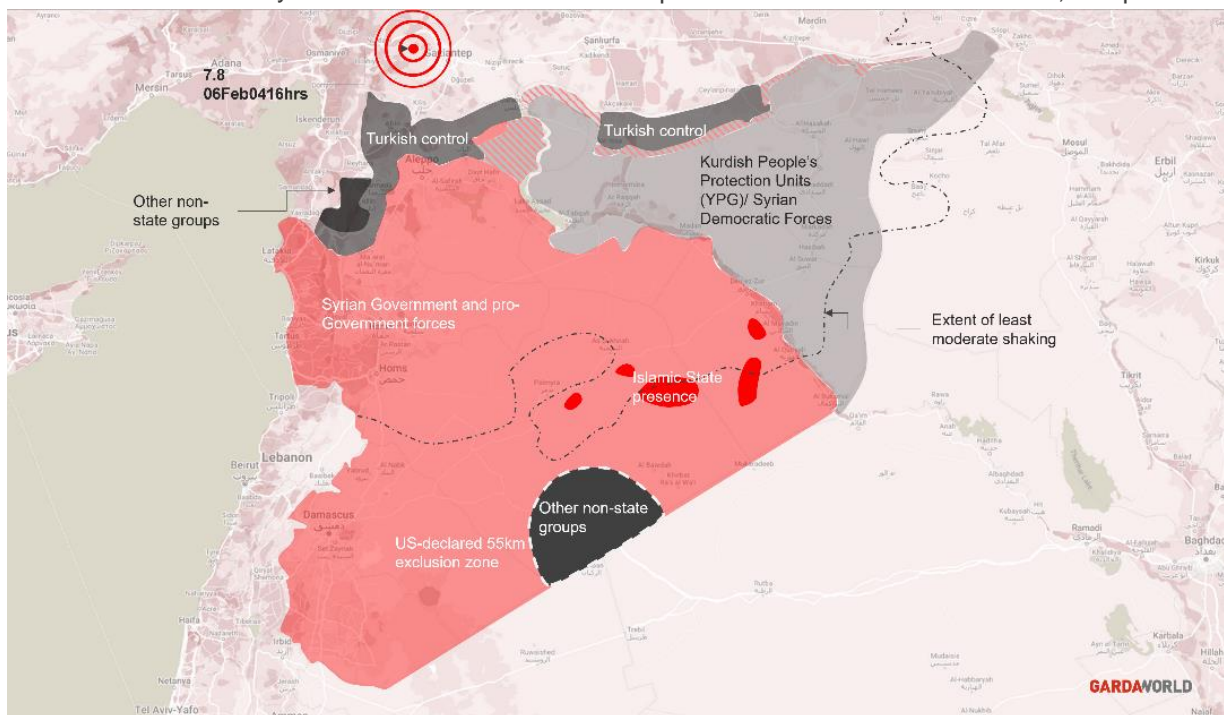


Image: Syria showing areas of control and earthquake information from February 06

have traditionally backed the president however disasters have swayed voters in the past. This could prove pivotal for the president and his party with the government facing criticism over the initial response to the disaster as well as serious questions over the widespread collapse of buildings.

The earthquakes have arguably weakened the image of Turkey as a regional power to some extent, revealing a country reliant on foreign aid

further by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The northwest of Syria has been most impacted by the earthquakes with over 4,400 people now reported to have died in the area which is largely held by Turkish-based opposition groups. Entire neighbourhoods were levelled in just seconds by the quakes with more collapsing during the many aftershocks. Tens of thousands of people have been left homeless in an area home to around 4.6 million people. 2.7 million of

whom are refugees from other parts of Syria, housed in at capacity camps.

Due to the civil war, Syria remains subjected to sanctions whilst its own economy and healthcare system are in tatters. The humanitarian situation in some areas was already dire with basic services severely lacking and people going hungry. The devastation left in the wake of the quakes is therefore being seen as an emergency within an emergency. With the support of his Russian allies, Assad has retaken much of the country over the years but has continued to struggle for cash, turning to the private sector to help keep things running.

It is against this backdrop that Assad has begun to accelerate his ambition to end his country's international isolation and have sanctions lifted. The US has ensured that for 180 days, all Syrian transactions on humanitarian grounds which may have fallen foul of sanctions, will be allowed, a move which saw the Syrian pound strengthen.

A week after the disaster, Assad finally agreed to international demands to allow aid into effected regions not under state control, after originally trying to direct all aid through Damascus. In order to facilitate this, he has agreed to open two border crossings with Turkey for the next three months, supplementing the one existing crossing. Assads original position and the restrictions presented by one open border crossing meant aid going into effected areas of Syria in the immediate aftermath of the quakes has been slow.

Assad appears to have been prioritizing his attempts at a return to the international stage

above relief efforts, however with this now starting to pay off, relief efforts are improving. The Syrian government is now seeing increasing support from Arab nations, which in some ways was already in motion prior to the disaster.

“Assad is trying to rehabilitate his image by showing a willingness to make concessions through negotiations with international actors. These concessions are minor, but his hope is that they will be enough to build a belief in European capitals and elsewhere that engaging with the regime is a productive way to improve conditions for Syrians in need.”

Will Todman, Centre for Strategic and International Studies – Feb 15, 2023

Egyptian President Abdel-Fatteh al-Sissi has called Assad for the first time since the start of the civil war in 2011 with Cairo now coordinating aid deliveries with Damascus. Qatar and Oman, who have both opposed Assad, have established an air bridge to Turkey with some aid being directed to the Syrian people over the land border. Turkey had already signalled a possible thawing of relations with Assad prior to February 06, a position which may gain some traction in the aftermath of the shared disaster however, Ankara will remain firmly against Assad regaining control over the border areas any time soon. Iraq has used the situation to reiterate its calls for Syria to return to the Arab League after its suspension in 2011. In addition, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Lebanon, Oman and Algeria have all signalled they are willing to look at restoring Syria's

position on the international stage. Saudi Arabia sent its first direct plane flight to Syria in a decade while Tunisia has recently re-established formal ties with Assad.

In Libya, while Tripoli sent support to its traditional ally, Anakara, Benghazi focused on Syria. Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar had established relations with the Assad regime, largely facilitated by Russia, during Operation Flood of Dignity and has a number of Syrian mercenaries supporting his forces, although this number falls far short of those supporting Tripoli under Turkey. Benghazi has sent a number of flights filled with aid to Damascus, likely strengthening existing ties.

Security Developments

Ousted commanders reappear in Tripolitania

This week saw the return of two Tripoli commanders, ousted in the August 27, 2022 clashes which pitted GNU-aligned armed groups against GNS armed groups. The clashes assured the survival of the GNU and resigned the GNS to a placeholder government for eastern authorities. Following extensive negotiations, Mustapha Qaddour commander of the now defunct Nawasi Brigade, visited his home area of Suq al-Juma while his onetime ally, Haythem Tajuri, commander of 777 Brigade, visited Muammar Dhawi, commander of 55 Battalion in Warshefana.

Qaddour has spent the months since his fall from power in Turkey. It's unclear how long he was in Suq al-Juma, however it is assessed at present that this was a short-term visit. His areas in Tripoli were taken by fellow Suq al-Juma based armed group, SDF on August 27. SDF was assessed not to have been a protagonist in the clashes, but likely moved when it became obvious Nawasi Brigade was close to collapsing. Fearing their areas would fall to rival groups, General Security and Abu Saleem Central Security/ SSA, SDF moved to ensure Suq al-Juma's traditional spheres of influence were protected in the capital. As a result, Qaddour claimed he had been betrayed by the SDF, with whom he has a long association. SDF's take over was largely smooth with lower-level members of Nawasi given a t-shirt change although they did carry out some clearance operations in the old city in an effort to dislodge the local armed group and extend full control over the area.

In addition, Dhawi met with Haythem Tajuri, commander of 777 Battalion, who like Qaddour, was ousted from Tripoli in the August clashes. Dhawi supported both Qaddour and Tajuri during the clashes against the GNU, but unlike the Tripoli based commanders, he was able to hold on to his territory in Warshefana long enough to strike a deal with the GNU, assuring his position. In the immediate aftermath of the clashes, Dhawi hosted both Qaddour and Tajuri in Warshefana. Dhawi is assessed as harbouring higher ambitions for himself and may be looking to emulate fellow militia commanders like Emad Trabelsi who was recently appointed

Minister of the Interior. He is currently looking to raise his profile and his meeting with Tajuri may be designed to position himself as a mediator.

Tajuri has been a part of the Tripoli security scene for years. After losing command of Tripoli Revolutionary Brigades (TRB) in 2019 after UAE efforts to align the force with the LNA failed, he made a comeback with the support of Zintan and Zawiyah-based groups in 2020, exploiting the post-Operation Flood of Dignity security situation to muscle in on territory in central Tripoli with his newly formed 777 Battalion. TRB was taken over by Ayoub Aburas who found himself also ousted from Tripoli in early September. Although he had not publicly aligned with the GNS, SDF had already begun moves to dislodge them from Tripoli, a move completed in early September which saw Aburas and his remaining 200 vehicles follow Tajuri to Warshefana.

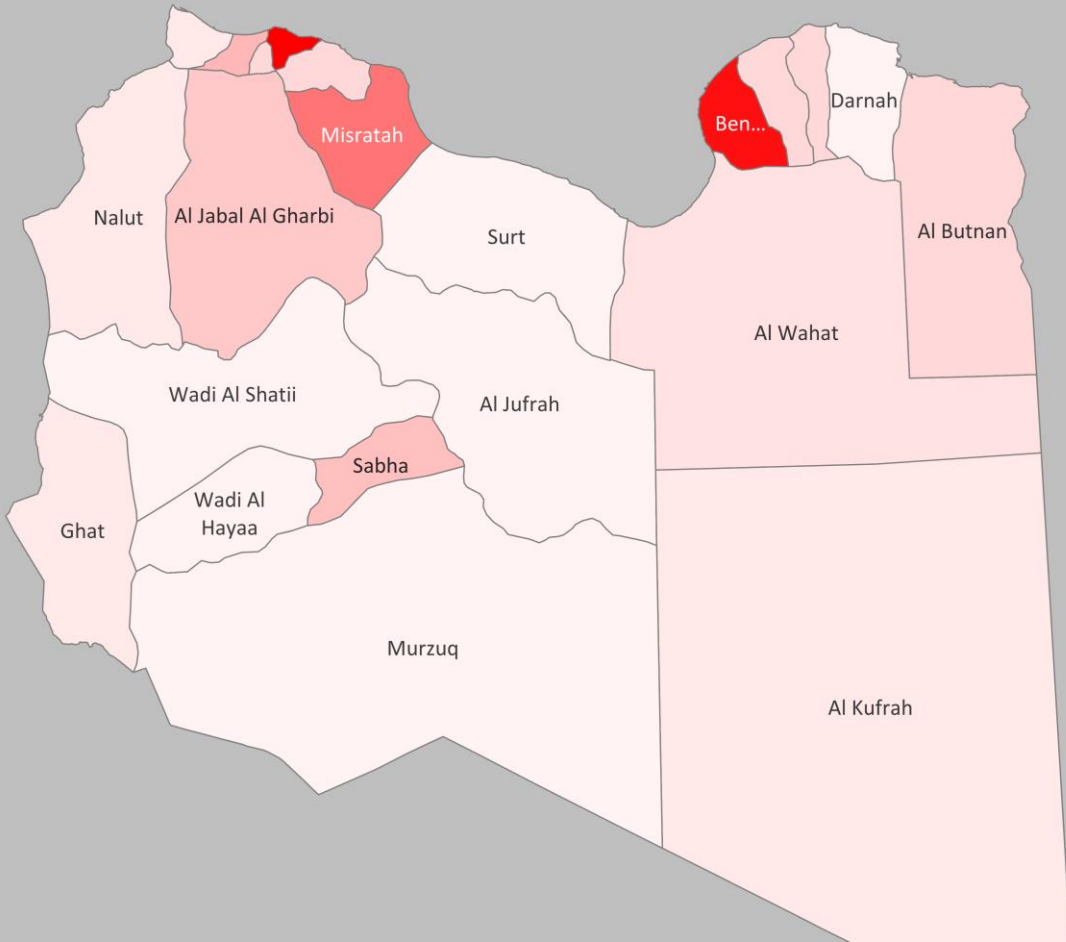
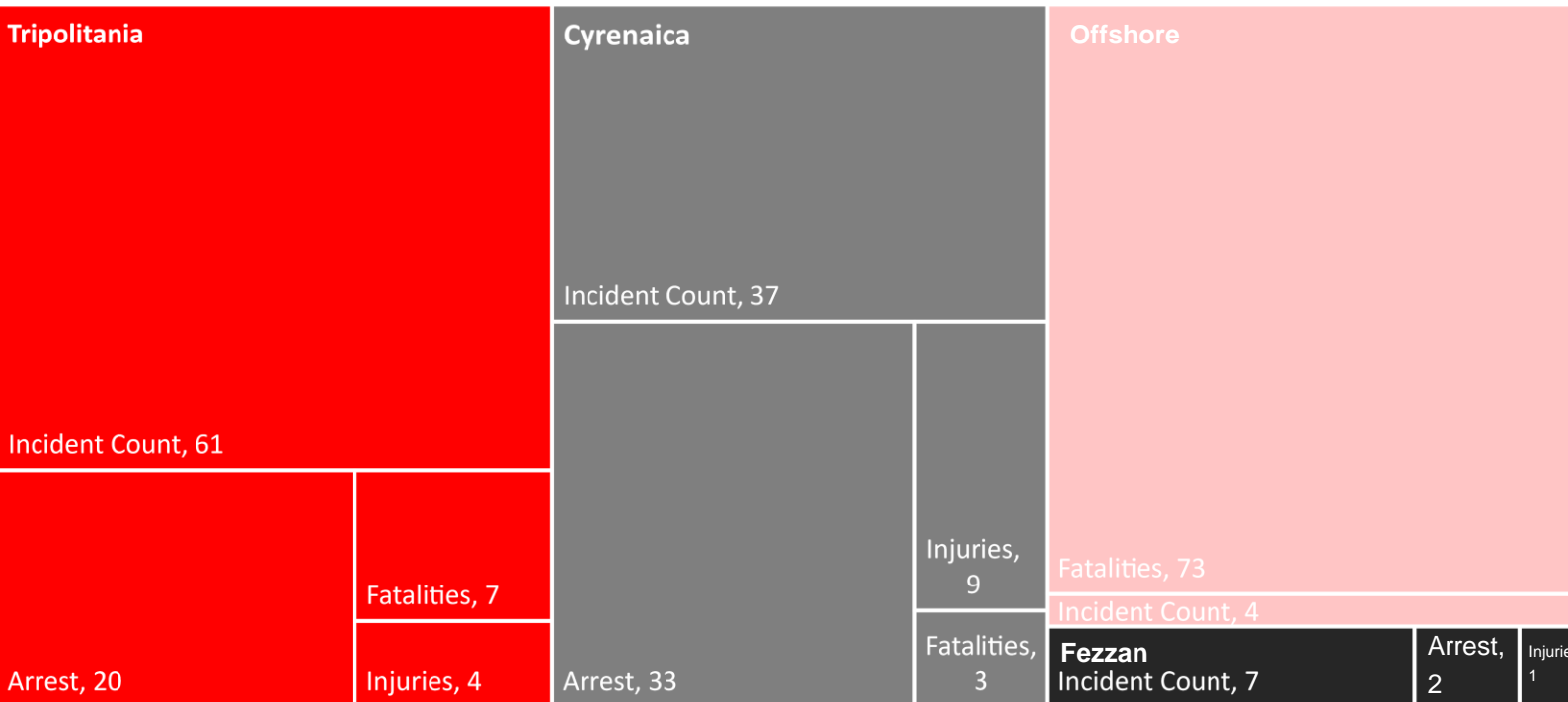
The reappearance of both men, however temporary, in the same week is of note. Although this may have in part been encouraged by the celebration of Revolution Day on February 17, it's likely their appearances go deeper and suggest talks are ongoing with both. Whether this sees them making an eventual return or not, it signals possible reconciliation efforts are ongoing with external stakeholder influence at play.

It is also of note that this comes as two prominent political Islamic actors, Abu Obeida and Abdulhakim Belhaj, make their own moves to re-install themselves in Tripolitania, and in Belhaj's case, on a national stage. This week saw the release of a colleague of Belhaj's from Qarnada Prison after nine year's incarceration. The move comes after Belhaj publicly endorsed Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar's presidential ambitions after talks with Rajma.

Overall, the developments indicate that various actors are looking to extend their influence and control in Tripolitania. This will see deals being brokered by former enemies and allies with further government positions distributed and state resources plundered. The moves will see subtle, yet potentially significant changes taking place in the short to medium term as the region sees a further evolution in its security makeup.

Weekly Statistical Overview

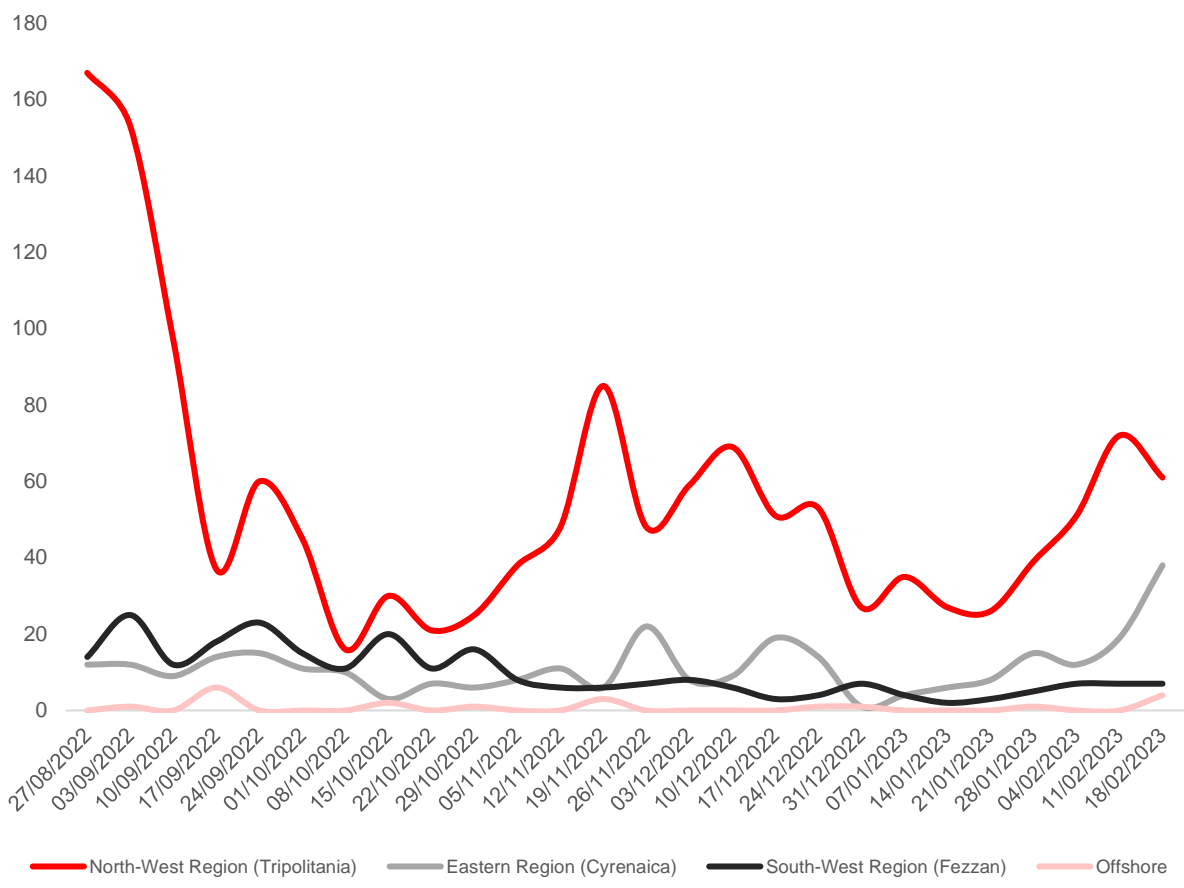
Graph: Breakdown of weekly statistics including incident count, fatalities, injuries, kidnaps and arrests by region



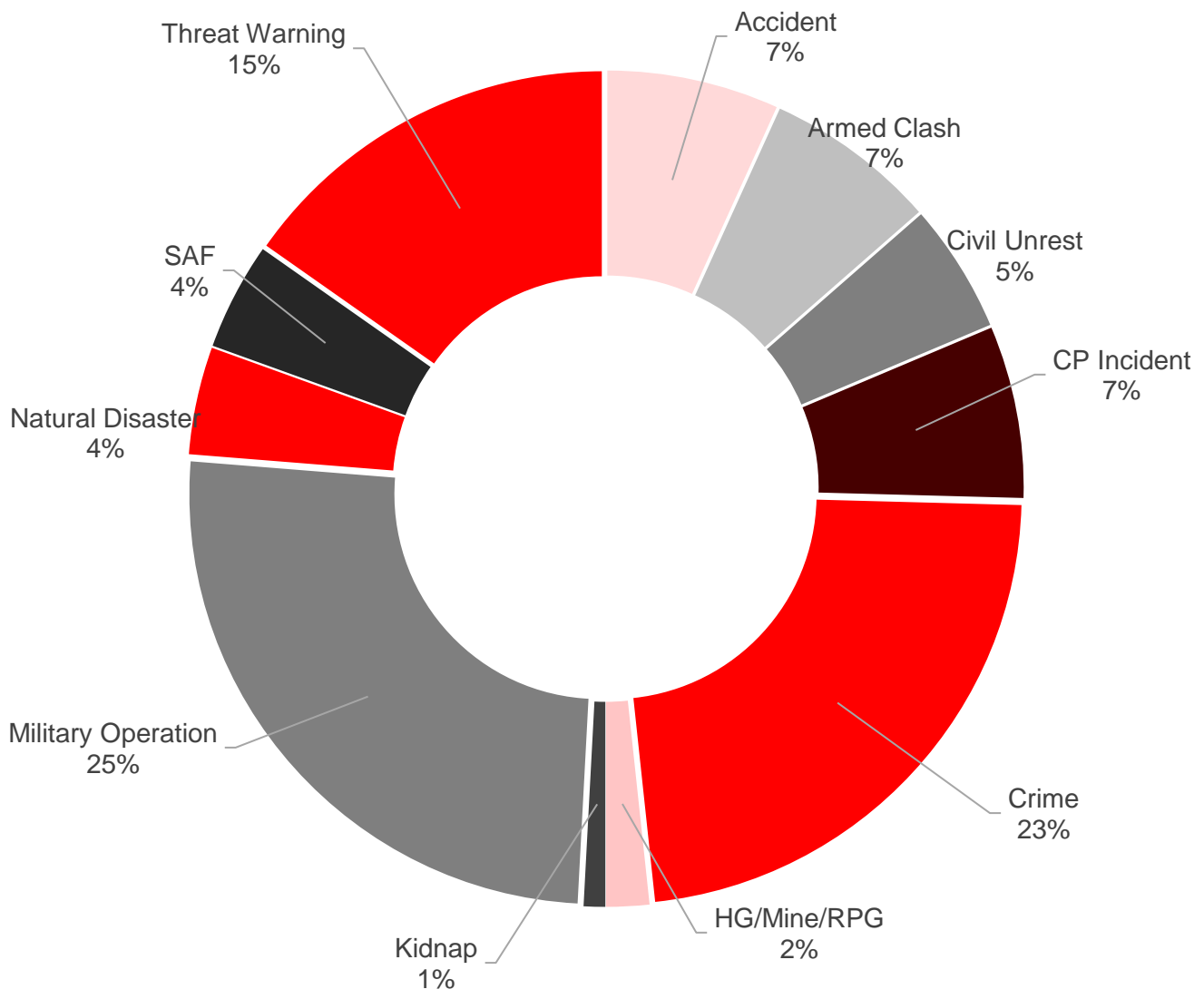
Activity levels increased this week with 114 incidents reported compared to 103 last week.

Despite the overall increase, Tripolitania saw a decrease from 72 to 61 incidents this week. Cyrenica saw a significant increase with 38 reported compared to 19 last week. This was largely driven by security operations as part of a wider push by the LNA to rehabilitate their reputation and re-enforce their position as a strong security provider. Activity continues to remain steady in Fezzan with seven reported.

Minor earthquake activity felt in Marj has also caused concerned in the area and resulted in the establishment of a new operations room in preparation for any intensification of seismic activity.



Graph: Weekly security incidents across the country by region for the past six months



Graph: Weekly security incidents across the country by incident category for the week

Weekly Significant Incidents

Tripolitania

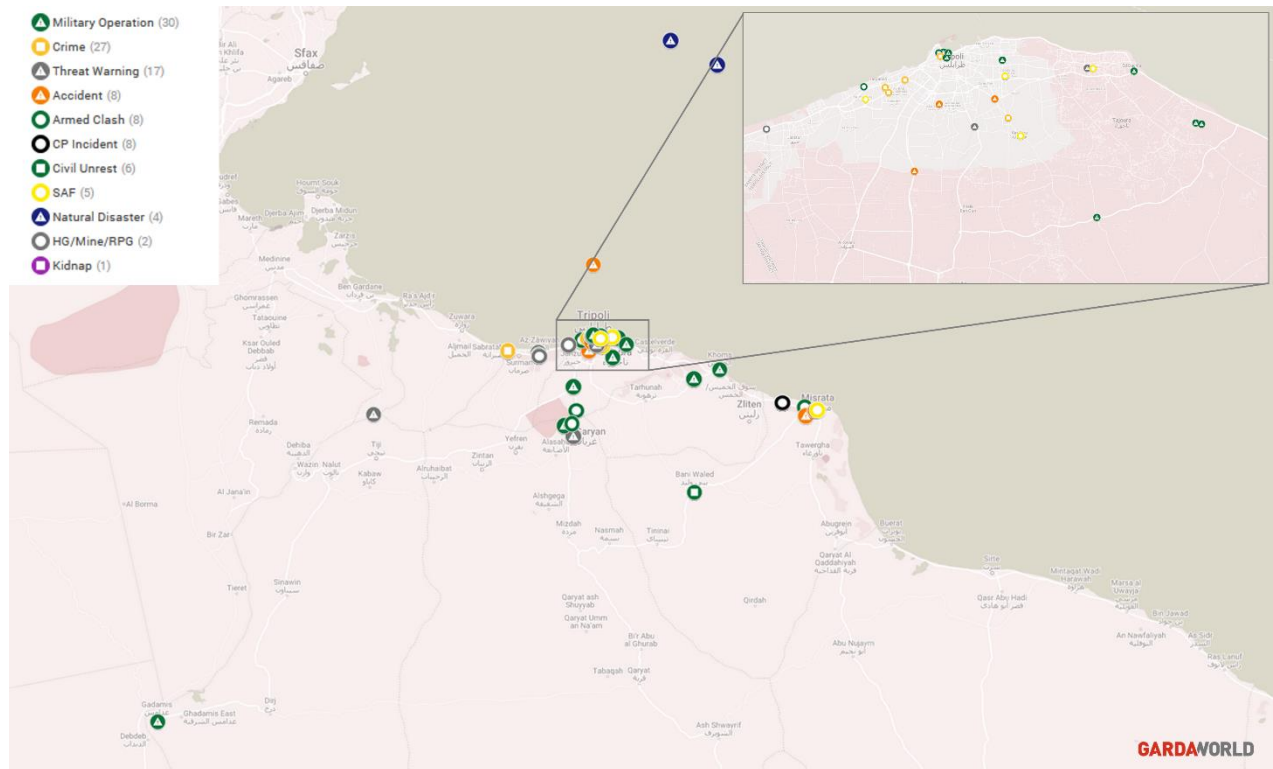


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Tripolitania

Security Incidents

- Feb 12** | Arrest - Al-Murqub Province, Msallata: 444 Combat Unit arrested Hisham Sweidan, the Mayor of Msallata on charges he headed a criminal gang carrying out armed robberies and kidnappings. Two other people were also arrested for their alleged involvement. 444 seized over 11 cars from his garage stating that they were stolen while over 20 cars were seized in all.
- Feb 12** | CP/ Roadblock - Misrata Province, Dafiniyah: Dafiniyah Checkpoint remains shut by the Samoud Brigade although it may have been reopened temporarily overnight.
- Feb 12** | Murder/ Execution - Tripoli Province, Hay Al-Islamy: A quarrel resulted in the murder of one of those involved.
- Feb 12** | Threat Warning - Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Libya - Tunisia Border: A single source, uncorroborated report has claimed a "very large force affiliated with ISIS is currently stationed along the Tunisia border ready to cross into Libya." This allegedly follows the ingress of a IS group on February 11 into the Wazin area. The "very large force" is allegedly set to separate into smaller batches and will cross the border and spread around the western region. This comes after a report on February 05 claiming a possible IS presence in the Mukhaizen and Wadi Aloun areas near Tiji, prompting a security force reaction.
- Feb 13** | Threat Warning - Tripoli Province, Tajura: Tensions were again reported in the area. Tensions were triggered in January and again on February 09 with reports suggesting this is largely due to an alignment of the Martyrs Sabria Battalion with Abdulhakim Belhaj.

- Feb 14** CP/ Roadblock - 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.
- Feb 14** Weapons Find - 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.
- Feb 14** Armed Clash - 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, Omar and his brother Adnan, were wounded. The clashes included the use of medium weapons in a built-up area.
- Feb 14** CP/ Roadblock - Al-Jafara Province, Hira: 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. 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.
- Feb 14** CP/ Roadblock - Misrata Province, Dafiniyah: Reports indicate that Dafiniyah Checkpoint was reopened by Samoud Brigade. The force had closed the checkpoint on February 11 over alleged non-payment of entitlements.
- Feb 14** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Al Bugra Camp: The Rahba al-Duru Battalion and 51 Infantry Brigade mobilised in the area with medium weapons. Both forces are heavily influenced/ controlled by Bashir Bugra and have ongoing tensions with the Martyrs Sabria Battalion.
- Feb 15** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Tajura Heart Hospital: The Rahba al-Duru Battalion and Martyr Sabria Sassi Battalion began mobilising as tensions rose again in the area.
- Feb 15** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Al Bugra Camp: The Rahba al-Duru Battalion and Martyr Sabria Sassi Battalion began mobilising as tensions rose again in the area.
- Feb 16** Kidnap - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: Six Egyptian Coptic Christians were detained by an armed group at an entry checkpoint to Zawiyah. The detention, reported by the victim's families, comes on the 8th anniversary of the massacre of 21 Coptic Egyptians in Sirte by IS likely adding to the families' concerns regarding the incident. Later reports suggest that the kidnappers have demanded 15,000 LYD for each person (around \$18,000 in total). The victims are from Al-Harja Qibli village in Al-Balina town, Sohag, Upper Egypt. On February 17, reports indicate that the men had been released. It is unclear if any ransoms were paid or if political pressure was enough to force their release.
- Feb 16** CP/ Roadblock - Misrata Province, Dafiniyah: The Dafiniyah Checkpoint was reopened, again, this time after alleged reassurances from the GNU "to pay outstanding dues." This comes after an escalation earlier in the day which saw Samoud Brigade start closing down a back road being used by the public to circumvent the checkpoint. The checkpoint was closed on February 11 with the closure characterised by partial and full reopenings however this is the first time a reopening has been backed by reports of an alleged deal.
- Feb 16** Armed Attack - Al-Jafara Province, Hira: GACS allegedly attacked Hira Checkpoint in a bid to force its reopening. The checkpoint was closed by an armed group on February 14.
- Feb 17** Armed Clash - Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Abu Rashadat: An armed clash erupted between the Gharyan Brigade and GACS. The clashes came after an alleged attack Hira Checkpoint in which three policemen were killed.
- Feb 17** Security Announcement - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: Shaaban Al-Zawi (Abu Obeida) has arrived back in his hometown of Zawiyah.
- Feb 17** Troop Movements - Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Abu Rashadat: Force belonging to Nasser Ashtiba withdrew from the Abu Rashadat Checkpoint following clashes in the area the day before.
- Feb 17** Demonstration - Misrata Province, Bani Walid: A gathering around cars occurred in the city with people flying Green Flags marking the start of the 2011 revolution 12 years ago.
- Feb 17** Demonstration - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A large crowd with oil-flamed torches gathered under rows of small hanging Libyan flags to celebrate the start of the 2011 revolution.

- Feb 17** | Demonstration - Tripoli Province, Tripoli: A small group of people gathered in Tripoli around a vehicle with green flags and images of Muammar Gadhafi to commemorate the start of the 2011 revolution.
- Feb 17** | Assault - Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: A woman was allegedly attacked by a group of men in the middle of Martyr's Square during the celebrations. She was taken to hospital.
- Feb 17** | RPG - Az Zawiyah Province, Al Anwar Hotel: A rocket-propelled grenade impacted near Al Anwar Hotel.
- Feb 17** | Military Parade - Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: 444 Combat Unit carried out a parade in Martyr's Square as part of the wider celebrations. Some soldiers were cammed up while others were in their number one uniforms.
- Feb 18** | Security Operation - Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: Reports indicate that SDF moved in to bring celebrations in Martyr's Square to a close.
- Feb 18** | Carjacking - Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: A GECOL vehicle was taken in an armed carjacking. Security forces responded and recovered the vehicle.
- Feb 18** | Armed Attack - Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Abu Ghailan: A police officer, Anas al-Badiri, was shot and seriously wounded while driving his vehicle. His mother who was with him was killed with the car crashing at the side of the road. The attack was in retaliation for the killing of the perpetrator's brother during an attack on the Abu Ghailan police station 18 months ago. The perpetrator handed himself into 10th Force after carrying out the attack.

Cyrenaica

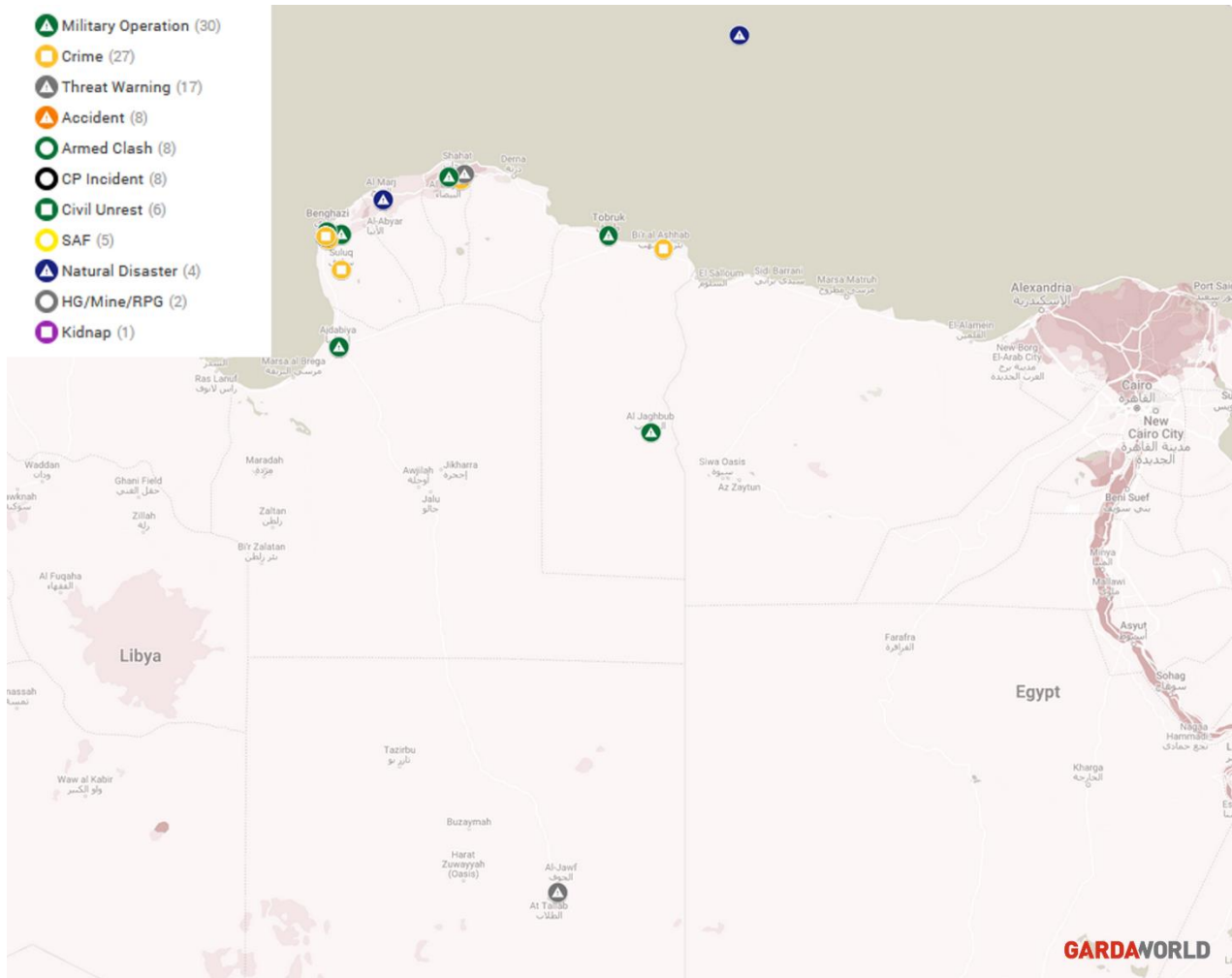


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Cyrenaica

Security Incidents

- Feb 12** | Threat Warning - Al-Marj Province, Marj: The Chairman of the Administrative Council of the Marj Municipality requested that the GNU prepare an Emergency Room and provide it with all the necessary medical preparations and facilities in preparation for any emergency. This comes after

- two minor earthquakes in the area on February 09 and 12. Marj was leveled on February 21, 1963 and was rebuilt by 1970 close to the old city. The recent minor quakes come after the significant earthquake activity in Turkey and Syria in which over 30,000 people have so far been reported to have died. The incident will no doubt add to concerns in Marj after the two minor shakes felt this week.
- Feb 12** Security Operation - Al-Butnan Province, Tobruk: The General Administration for Criminal Research seized 380kg of marijuana, over a million tablets of Tramadol and cigarettes have been smuggled into Libya. Various weapons and ammunition was also seized during the operation. CID later announced that one of their members was killed during the incident while three were wounded.
- Feb 12** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A drug dealer named Naveen Equin was arrested by police in a sting operation using undercover police officers. This is part of an ongoing crack down against drug and alcohol dealing in the city.
- Feb 12** Other - Benghazi Province, Bohdema: Following security operations in Bohdema, reports indicate that the LNA targeted a localised social media source which has now begun posting pro-LNA content. It is assessed that the profile is likely now under pro-LNA actor control. The same has been seen for Sabha and Awbari and so follows a pattern that the LNA is controlling the information space.
- Feb 12** Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Bohdema: Security forces carried out patrols in the area following an operation against alcohol and drug dealers.
- Feb 12** Armed Robbery - Benghazi Province, Bohdema: An individual was subjected to an armed robbery and had cash stolen by two people mobile in a white Avanti.
- Feb 12** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Bohdema: Two people were arrested for an earlier armed robbery of an individual. They were in possession of a firearm, illegal substances, and military clothing.
- Feb 12** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Suluq: The LNA arrested former Military Intelligence Support Commander, Salah Bulgheib, as well as a number of Al Awgir youth. This came after a meeting of the tribe where various speakers demanded the establishment of a special military council for the tribe, and the dismantling of government bodies. They further threatened to escalate if elections were not held in 2023.
- Feb 13** Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: A booth and associated vehicle were burned in Wahieshi by security forces. The booth had allegedly been used to sell drugs from. Other buildings were also destroyed by heavy plant for being associated with drugs and alcohol. This is a continuation of raids against drug and alcohol dealers in the Bohdema and Wahieshi areas.
- Feb 13** Security Operation - 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.
- Feb 13** Prisoner Release - Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Qarnada Prison: The LNA released former undersecretary of the Ministry of Defence (2012), Siddiq Ghaithi al-Obeidi after serving nine years in Qarnada prison. Obeidi, from Derna, was arrested in 2014 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.
- Feb 13** Arbitrary Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Muammar Werfalli, brother of Mahmoud Werfalli, was allegedly detained by the Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade (LNA). Werfalli's family contacted Ali Al Mashai, commander of the Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade, who denied the force has Muammar. Muammar's family found his car without its key with no sign of Muammar. His brother, Mahmoud Werfalli, was a special forces commander (LNA) who achieved notoriety during the Battle for Benghazi for his videos of extra-judicial killings. After a twin VBIED attack on a Mosque in Benghazi on January 23, 2018, Werfalli took ten prisoners to the mosque the following day, lined them up and executed them personally. While many denounced his actions, Werfalli had a strong support base from his tribe and from Benghazi from people who had lived through the atrocities of the extremist groups the LNA was fighting at the time for control of the city. Werfalli became subject to an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court due to his actions, placing Haftar in a difficult position. He was eventually assassinated on March 22, 2021 along with his cousin in a drive-by shooting in Benghazi. This came after a wave of attacks against businesses in the city, including one against a car dealership owned by the influential Soussi family at the beginning of March 2021.

- Feb 13** | Armed Clash - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: Rounds were exchanged as the LNA moved into 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.
- Feb 13** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: Homes were destroyed by the LNA in the area. The homes had been raided on February 11 as part of an anti-corruption operation against alcohol and drug dealers. Communications were also restored in the area after been purposefully disrupted due to the operation.
- Feb 13** | Threat Warning - 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.
- Feb 14** | Military Exercise - 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.
- Feb 14** | Accident - 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.
- Feb 14** | Security Operation - Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: Ministry of Interior (MoI) forces, under the direction of Deputy Minister of the Interior (GNS), Faraj Gaim, carried out raids on drug dens in the city. The force involved was led by the Head of the Security Directorate Rescue Department Captain Rabih Afkirin and Security Directorate Director, Major Khalid Al-Basta. This comes after similar raids by MoI and LNA forces in the Bohdema and Waheishi areas of Benghazi.
- Feb 14** | Other - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Walid Werfalli (dressed in military fatigues), brother of Muammar and Mahmoud Werfalli, called on the Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade to "respect their sacrifices and what they gave for Benghazi." He further stated that his family were unable to travel abroad. This comes after the apparent kidnap/ detention of Muammar Werfalli. Their brother, Mahmoud, an LNA commander, was assassinated in March 2021. He was subject to an ICC arrest warrant due to his alleged involvement in extra-judicial killings in Benghazi during the battle for Benghazi.
- Feb 14** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: The home of Ahmed Gamaika, a member of the LNA, was demolished and a car burned by the LNA as part of their operation against drug and alcohol dealers in the area.
- Feb 14** | Arrest - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: Five Egyptians accused of being drug dealers were arrested as part of the ongoing security operations in the area.
- Feb 14** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Majouri: The Special Task Force, Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade (LNA) demolished the Al Hawl family house which had allegedly been used to deal drugs. This comes as part of a wider push against drug and alcohol dealers in Benghazi and Bayda.
- Feb 15** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Benina Airport: The Department of Relations and Cooperation in the Eastern Region deported 160 illegal Bangladeshi migrants. Eleven were said to be carrying infectious disease (Hepatitis). The deportation was carried out in cooperation with IOM.
- Feb 15** | Arrest - Al-Butnan Province, Bir Al-Ashhab: The Bir al-Ashhab Security Directorate and Military Police arrested 17 Pakistani nationals who were in the country illegally.
- Feb 15** | Security Operation - Al-Wahat Province, Ajdabiya: Minister of the Interior (GNS) Essam Bouzriba has announced an amnesty for civilians to hand over their weapons to the local security directorate.
- Feb 15** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Wahieshi: The LNA allegedly attacked Arouba Police Station, likely as part of ongoing security operations in the area. As a result, local people staged a video in which they called on Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar to "intervene and arrest" those involved.
- Feb 15** | Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: The Anti-Narcotics and Psychotropic Service in Benghazi arrested the "largest drug dealer" in eastern Libya. The man had had an arrest warrant issued

- against him in absentia for bringing narcotic tablets from Egypt to Libya. The arrest was connected to the previous find of 37,600 narcotic tablets in a Mercedes traveling from Egypt.
- Feb 15** Earthquake - Al-Marj Province, Marj: Another minor quake was felt by residents in Marj. This is the third in recent days and has prompted an emergency room to be established in preparation for any intensification of seismic activity.
- Feb 16** Security Operation - Al-Wahat Province, Ajdabiya: 152 Mechanised Infantry Battalion (LNA) and 40/40 Special Task Forces secured southern areas of Ajdabiya.
- Feb 16** Security Announcement - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: The Deputy Minister of Interior (GNS) has announced the activation of the Cybercrime Law No. 5 stating that the ministry "will start using the latest deterrent technologies, and that arrest and habeas corpus operations started on February 15 for anyone whose behaviour or actions constitute a violation of public morals or other crimes of extortion, fraud, and sorcery spread through social networking sites."
- Feb 16** Assault - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A teenager stabbed his brother with a knife, resulting in the victim being admitted to intensive care at Al-Jalaa Hospital. The perpetrator was then arrested after his father turned him in.
- Feb 16** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Haneen Al-Abdali was arrested by Ministry of Interior Forces (GNS) on charges relating to "cases, violating honour and public morals, and for violation of Cybercrime Law No.5 of 2022."
- Feb 16** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Ahlam Yemeni, a popular actress, was arrested by the Ministry of Interior Forces (GNS) under the new Cybercrime No 5 Law of 2022.
- Feb 17** Arrest - Benghazi Province, Qawarishah: Benghazi Criminal Investigation raided an apartment after neighbours complained of suspicious movements. The raid allegedly uncovered a brothel and the flat owner, a female, was arrested along with another three women.
- Feb 17** UXO - Kufra Province, Al Shaibani Camp: A Sudanese national was killed by explosive remnants of war which detonated in the area of Al Shaibani Camp.
- Feb 17** Demonstration - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A small crowd of people gathered with Libyan flags to celebrate the start of the 2011 revolution. An unconfirmed report suggested that a planned celebration by Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha, to be held in Benghazi, was cancelled for an unknown reason.
- Feb 18** Assault - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Several members of the Falcons Football Club were physically assaulted following a match against Alhada Club in a mid-league competition.
- Feb 18** Weapons Find - Al-Butnan Province, Jaghub: The Tobruk Security Directorate found a large weapons cache near the Egyptian border. The cache included heavy machine guns, missiles, mines, rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition, hand grenades and explosives. The cache had been stored in a remote desert location.

Fezzan

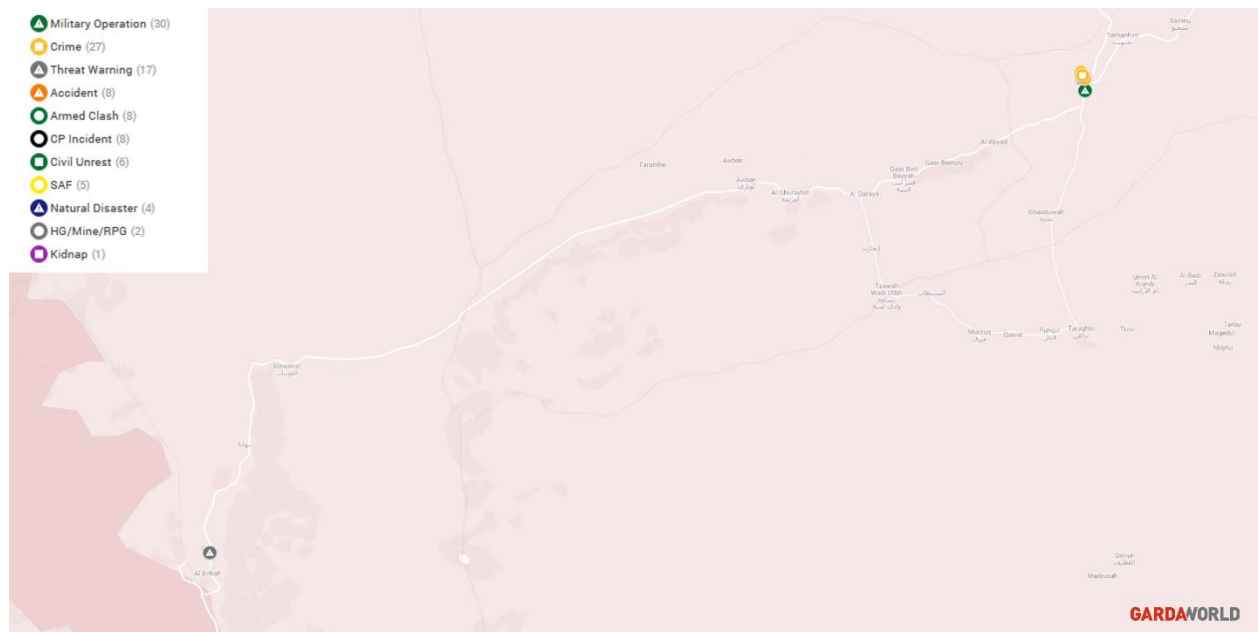


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Fezzan

Security Incidents

- Feb 12** Security Operation - Sabha Province, Indian Company Area: Security Forces "removed" a petrol station inside the Indian Company at the Obari Junction and confiscated all its contents. The station was described as illegal, and the removal came after the owner had been instructed to evacuate and remove the contents.
- Feb 13** Other - 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 drug smuggling operation and was based in southern Libya. He has allegedly developed strong links with drug dealers in Ghadames, Ajaylat and Tabraq.
- Feb 13** Murder/ Execution - 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.
- Feb 15** Arrest - Sabha Province, Sabha: Sabha Security Directorate arrested a man whose wife was allegedly carrying out work as a prostitute.
- Feb 17** Armed Attack - Sabha Province, Sukrah: An armed attack took place on the home of a civilian.
- Feb 17** Arrest - Sabha Province, Sukrah: An arrest took place in relation to an earlier armed attack on a civilian's home.
- Feb 18** Other - Ghat Province, Ghat: The LNA sent a cargo plane loaded with 70,000 LYD to support the people of Ghat.

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
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
SSA – Stability Support Authority
SAF - Small Arms Fire
SDB – Saraya Defend Benghazi / BDB (Al Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
SDF – Rada Deterrence Force/ Special Deterrence Force/ Rada
TIP – Tripoli International Airport
UXO - Unexploded Ordnance

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