

# Libya daily security analysis report

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# Latest Developments

## Threat Warnings

- Fuel queues in Tripoli have also been driven in part by Ramadan with many people in the capital preparing to drive to their hometowns to spend at least some of the upcoming holy month with family. As a result, the demand for fuel has increased which has also likely sparked some level of panic buying as well.

## Political Developments

- In a briefing to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, stated that the US is actively working towards establishing a diplomatic presence in Tripoli.
- During a press briefing that the end of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin, both expressed their desire to help strengthen a Libyan-owned political settlement that preserves the independence and sovereignty of the country.
- On Mar 22, PM (GNU) Dbeibah met with the UAE Ambassador to Libya, Mohammed Ali Al Shamsi. The two discussed the UAE's desire to develop trade and economic relations and expressed his support for the latest UN initiative to break the political deadlock. Shamsi also confirmed that "all procedures related to the issuance of travel visas for Libyan citizens, and the opening of airspace between Libya and the UAE are completed" and that the Emirati Embassy is due to resume its work from Tripoli where they can facilitate the issuance of visas to Libyan nationals directly.
- A group of Libyan political parties met with the National Security Advisor, Ibrahim Boushaf to discuss the guarantees and mechanisms for the participation of political parties in the political process, including their involvement in the high-level committee proposed by SRSG Bathily, the process emanating from the 13<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment and participation in the parliamentary elections. **COMMENT:** Libyan elections have not operated on a party-based system since 2012 with the last elections in 2014 seeing all candidates having to stand as independents. This was continued with the same requirement for candidates being included in Law Number 2 (parliamentary election law) in the failed Dec 2021 elections. The rationale in both 2014 and 2021 was that parties had a weak and immature performance during the 2011-2012 period, "which contributed to the political distortion that they are still suffering from." The issue of party representation through a party list system is likely to be a key component of the discussions on the election laws to be adopted for any forthcoming election with the return to a party system having potential benefits to limiting candidates under party guidelines and formalizing the stance of a candidate through party manifestos. **COMMENT ENDS.**

## Security Developments

- **Unconfirmed** sources reported the suspected abduction of Brigadier General Muhammed Bousada of Bani Walid Garrison with sources claiming he was abducted by 444 Brigade personnel.

## Infrastructure Developments

- On Mar 22 the Minister of Transport, Mohammed al-Shahoubi met with the Ambassador of Niger to Libya, Isid Kato, to discuss the practical requirements to facilitate the start of construction of the planned Misrata-Tamhant-Agadez road.

# Assessment

## **US Moving towards the reopening of its Embassy**

In a briefing to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, stated that the US is actively working towards establishing a diplomatic presence in Tripoli. Blinken added that "I can't give you a timetable other than to say that this is something we're very actively working on. I want to see us be able to re-establish an ongoing presence in Libya." Blinken also reaffirmed the US stance on the current process explaining "There's also an important moment where through the work of the UN envoy, there may be, and I emphasize maybe, a path forward to moving Libya in a better direction including getting election for legitimate government and our diplomats are deeply engaged in that."

**COMMENT:** The increased level of US engagement in Libya has been evident to see in 2023, with the visits of CIA Director William Burns in January and US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Barbara Leaf in March.

Libya has arguably assumed a more significant role in terms of European energy security, given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and European efforts to move away from Russian gas to alternative suppliers. Due to this, the US has been open in its intention to limit Russian influence in Libya with its continued calls for the eastern authorities to expel Wagner Group from the country. Though the increased focus on Libya is not solely based on energy issues, it is a significant factor in the consideration of the stabilization of the political and security sectors within the country. While the latter has seen a marked improvement since the US closed its Embassy in 2014, the uncertain political landscape appears to continue to pose a problem for the US, given that its continued dysfunctionality would likely prove a trigger to conflict if it were to persist. Therefore, the current US focus aims to see the political sector being stabilised and acting as a foundation for a normalisation of the security sector. To that end, the US's increased involvement is likely to be beneficial, due to its ability to both provide pressure and incentives to move the process forward and in this a permanent US diplomatic presence would prove advantageous. **COMMENT ENDS.**

# Significant Incidents

## Tripolitania Region



- 1. Other - Mar 22, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Aqrabeya:** The military engineering department removed and destroyed approximately two tons of war remnants in Aqrabeya in cooperation with the Military Police and Military Intelligence. The team also inspected areas in Ain Zara and the Airport Road following reports of ERW in the area.
- 2. Armed Clash - Mar 22 18:30, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah:** A suspected armed clash involving SAF and RPG fire was reported south of Sabratah
- 3. Murder/ Execution - Mar 22 17:30, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah:** The body of Miloud Mukhtar Hussein was recovered from Mutarad beach. Hussein is reported to be linked to armed clashes in Zawiyah in February.
- 4. Security Operation - Mar 21, Tripoli Province, Mansoura:** A joint operation by the SSA and the GASO LEF was undertaken to reclaim land that was seized two years ago.
- 5. Arrest - Mar 22, Sirte Province, Sirte:** The LNA's 166 Battalion arrested an individual named as Ihad Hammad. Hammad is reportedly affiliated with Hassan Abuzriba (SSA Western Branch) and is thought to be wanted on murder charges.

## Cyrenaica Region

NSTR

## Fezzan Region



**6. Security Operation - Mar 21, Murzuq Province, Taraghin:** The LNA's 68th Taraghin Battalion of the 73rd Brigade was reported as conducting patrols from Taraghin, through Waw Kabir to the Chadian border.

## Offshore

NSTR

# 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. SRSB Abdoulaye Bathily is attempting to wrest some control away from the two entities in a bid to make progress towards elections in 2023, however, they continue to enjoy the support of key regional and international backers. 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.
- 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. The resurgence of Jihadist Salafism in Tripolitania is also a potential source of destabilisation, one which is currently being felt in Tajura and along the north-west coastline. This instability along the coastline may be positively impacted by efforts in Zawiyah to reorganise armed groups which could increase cooperation. 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, the path to elections in 2023 will be fraught with difficulties 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
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	Public Holiday
September 27, 2023	The Prophet's Birthday	Public Holiday
October 23, 2023	Liberation Day	Public Holiday
December 24, 2023	Independence Day	Public Holiday



# Acronym List

AQ - Al-Qaeda  
BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade (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  
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 (2021)  
GNU – Government of National Unity (2021)  
GTUC - Greater Tripoli Union Council (Tripoli militias and others, established in June 2020)  
HCS – High Council of State (Tripoli-based)  
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  
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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