

Libya daily security analysis report

March 04, 2023

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Latest Developments

Political Developments

- Both the UK and US embassies in Libya released statements in support of SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily's plan to establish a high-level steering panel for Libya which would wrest some control from the HoR and HCS.
- The Russian Presidential Envoy for the Middle East and Africa and Deputy Foreign Minister, Mikhail Bogdanov, stated that Russia is ready to resume halted projects in Libya. He added that Moscow would "encourage Russian companies planning to return to the Libyan market when the situation in the country is settled, and security conditions are ensured."
- President of the Presidential Council, Mohamed Menfi, has finished a visit to Azerbaijan. He was given a guard of honour at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport where he was escorted to his plane by senior officials.

Economic Developments

- The Ministry of Economy and Trade stated that 182 foreign companies operated in Libya in 2022. This included 44 new companies and 58 companies which renewed their work permits and licenses. 35 companies work in the oil sector, 37 were contractors, 16 were in power generation and seven were in communications. 35 companies came from Turkey, 12 from Tunisia, eight from Egypt, seven from Britain, five from Germany, five from Italy, five from France, and three from America.

Travel Developments

- The Minister of Communications (GNU) Mohamed al-Shahbi held an expanded meeting with the Undersecretary of Maritime Transport Affairs and the head of the Ports Employment Department regarding the current preparations for the reopening of Ghadames land port.

Assessment

Political Developments

US and UK support Bathily's plans

Both the UK and US embassies in Libya released statements in support of SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily's plan to establish a high-level steering panel for Libya which would wrest some control from the HoR and HCS.

The US Embassy in Libya stated: "SRSG Bathily's proposal for an elections-enabling mechanism is galvanizing the Libyan body politic and will build on progress made between the HoR and HSC on the legal basis for elections." They urged Libyan political leaders to approach the plan with a "constructive spirit."

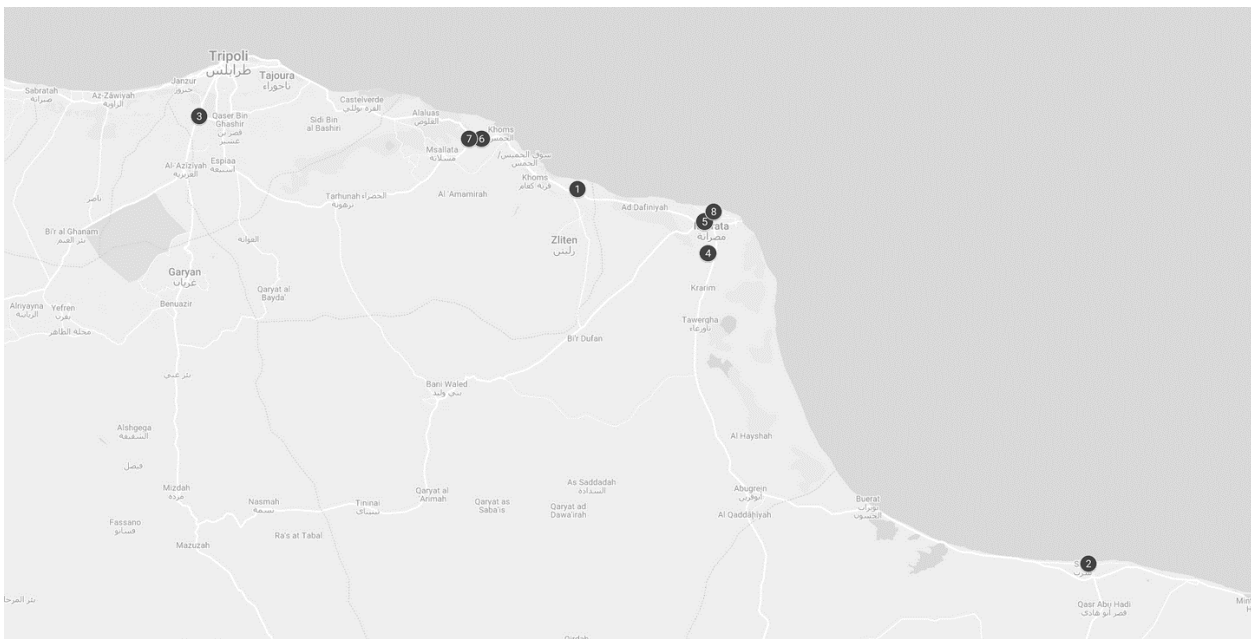
The UK Embassy in Libya stated: "The UK supports SRSG Bathily's plan to convene Libyan stakeholders to agree next steps for free and fair elections. Libyans deserve certainty and faith in their institutions. Those in power must compromise: conditions for elections must be agreed by all and the results respected."

On March 04, HoR MP Jibril Awahida, stated that the 13 constitutional amendment "blocks the way to the initiative announced by the SRSG." He went on to state that "Bathily seeks to control national sovereignty so that Libya remains hostage to the transitional stages." Awahida claimed that the drafting of legislation for the electoral process falls within the competence of the HoR alone. He claimed that Bathily's initiative was an attempt to "hijack the Libya-led solution and bypassing the powers of the country's parliament."

COMMENT: 'The above outlines the current attitudes towards SRSB Bathily's plans, announced on February 27. The move to establish a high-level steering panel by the SRSB aims to wrest some control from the HoR and HCS in a bid to move the country towards elections this year. While supported by external stakeholders, predictably it is facing push-back from some within the Libyan political elite, especially those within the HoR which face being sidelined. It's unclear if Bathily will be able to gather enough momentum and support to push through with his plan.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

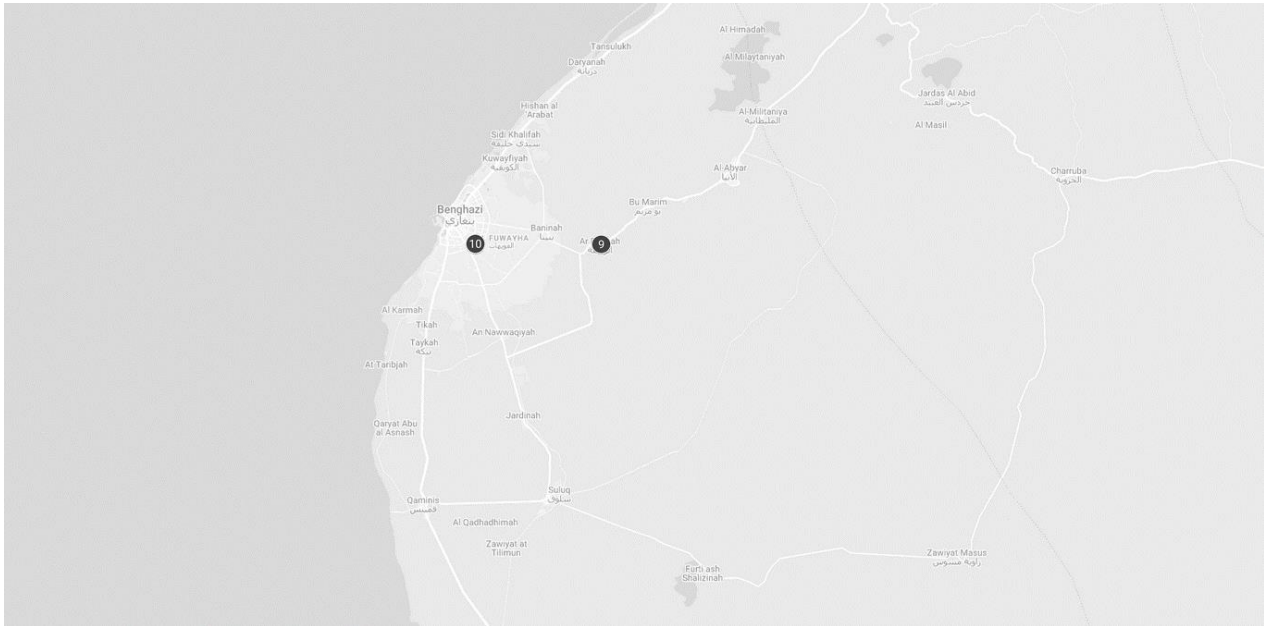
Significant Incidents

Tripolitania Region



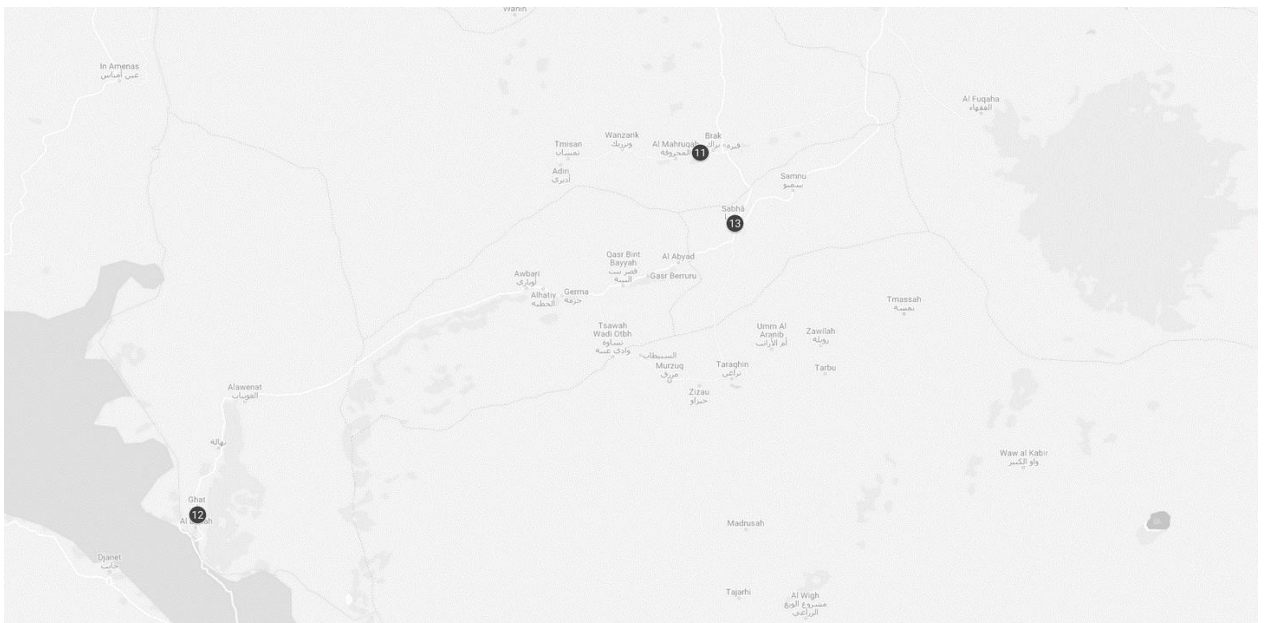
- 1 RTA - Mar 02 13:00, Al-Murqub Province, Zliten:** A car overturned in the area. The car contained a family from Misrata on its way to Tunisia. They were reported to be in a good condition afterwards.
- 2 Political Announcement - Mar 03, Sirte Province, Sirte:** Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha has begun a 20-day vacation due to "special circumstances." His first deputy, Ali Al-Qatrani, has taken over Bashagha's duties.
- 3 Arrest - Mar 03, Tripoli Province, Swani:** GECOL announced the arrest of a person for stealing wires inside a sub-power station at Swani junction. The person was arrested inside the station.
- 4 Arrest - Mar 03, Misrata Province, Tamina:** A man and his wife were arrested for theft.
- 5 Security Operation - Mar 03, Misrata Province, Misrata:** Reports indicate that there are preparations for launching a "major campaign against begging."
- 6 Troop Movements - Mar 03 21:34, Al-Murqub Province, Msallata Checkpoint:** An unidentified armed group deployed forces to the area with light and medium weapons.
- 7 Armed Clash - Mar 04 01:20, Al-Murqub Province, Msallata Checkpoint:** Skirmishes took place between the Constitution and Elections Support Force (CESF) and Ahmed Alzagel (aka Marinda Forces).
- 8 RTA - Mar 04 17:40, Misrata Province, Misrata:** A car was on fire on barbers street.

Cyrenaica Region



9 Murder/ Execution - Mar 02 23:00, Benghazi Province, Ar Rajmah: The body of an LNA support force member, Mutasem al-Ramli, was found in the Rajma area. He had previously been reported as "kidnapped."
10 Security Operation - Mar 03 23:00, Benghazi Province, Bohdema: The Benghazi Security Directorate seized 200 bottles of half-litre local wine along with bottles of medical alcohol inside an apartment overlooking the street in the Bohdema area. The person responsible had already fled the area due to the ongoing security operation targeting alcohol and drug dealers.

Fezzan Region



11 Security Operation - Mar 02, Wadi Al-Shatii Province, Aqar: The LNA carried out raids to arrest wanted people in the area.
12 Demonstration - Mar 02, Ghat Province, Ghat: An official celebration of the 46th anniversary of the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority and the proclamation of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya took place in Ghat. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, established by

Muammar Gadhafi in 1977, ran until the revolution in 2011. This marked an evolution of his regime after taking over in a coup in 1969.

13 Weapons Find - Mar 02, Sabha Province, Sabha: CID recovered 73 mortar shells, four launchers, a tank launched, 11 artillery shells and other remnants of war in an abandoned house. The ammunition was transferred to CID headquarters and destroyed by the Explosive Disposal Unit.

Offshore

14 Shipwreck - Mar 03, Libyan Territorial Waters, Undetermined Territorial East: A migrant boat overturned off the coast of Tobruk. The bodies of two children were recovered. Their parents remain missing. Nearly 25 migrants are still missing with most being from Syria. This route is becoming more popular for migrants trying to reach Italy.

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, SRSB 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. 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 including Zawiyah. 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
March 22, 2023	Start of Ramadan (+/-)	
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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SECURE EVERY DAY

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