

Libya daily security analysis report

March 16, 2023

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Table of Contents

Latest Developments	3
Threat Warnings	3
Political Developments	3
Security Developments	3
Infrastructure Developments	3
Assessment	4
Threat Warnings	4
Political Developments	4
Infrastructure Developments	5
Significant Incidents	6
Tripolitania Region	6
Cyrenaica Region	7
Fezzan Region	8
Offshore	8
Outlook	9
Short Term Outlook	9
Medium to Long Term Outlook	9
Key Dates	9
Acronym List	11

Latest Developments

Threat Warnings

- The International Atomic Energy Agency has warned that 10 barrels containing around 2.5 tonnes of uranium ore have disappeared from a site in Libya "which is no longer under government control."

Political Developments

- SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily held a large meeting on March 15 in Tunis which brought together the 5+5 Joint Military Committee (JMC) and a number of armed group commanders from the west and east of Libya.
- Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha met with a number of HoR MPs to discuss political developments at the Prime Minister's Hall in Sirte. The meeting discussed the SRSG's initiative for moving towards elections which includes the new 6+6 committee to agree on the legal basis for elections in 2023.
- Presidential candidate and Chairman of the Ihya Libya Movement, Aref al Nayed, met with the ambassadors of Britain, Germany and France on March 15. Al Nayed stated that discussions focused on the importance of supporting the SRSG's elections initiative to achieve presidential and parliamentary elections in 2023.
- Nayed also met with Lieutenant General Abdel Razek Al-Nadhouri, Chief of Staff of the LNA during the evening of March 15. The two discussed the situation in Libya, its future and the possibility of elections in 2023.
- Nayed then met with US Envoy and Ambassador, Richard Norland to discuss the "current situation in Libya and the need to support the SRSG's initiative to move towards elections in 2023."

Security Developments

- The LNA arrested an alleged "prominent member" of IS in Obari. The same man was arrested in 2022 with some local reports claiming he is not associated with the terror group and this alleged link has been given as a pretext for his arrest.
- This comes as another statement was issued, this time by the "Twareg youth and civil society institutions" in Obari who have spoken out against the presence of 128 Brigade (LNA) in the city. While the authors have not demanded the unit's withdrawal, they have called out what they claim is collusion with criminal groups in the area.
- Chief of Staff (Western Forces) Mohammed Al-Haddad met with the general manager of the Havelşan for Aeronautical and Electronic Industries Company from Turkey to review a visual presentation of the company's products. The meeting included detailed explanations about the capabilities of the company, its products, and a discussion of the army's needs.
- A Ministry of Defense (GNU) delegation visited the Mobile Company for Border Control (CMCF2) of the Nigerien National Police, with the support of EUCAP Sahel Niger, "to research the implementation of similar projects in Libya," EUBAM Libya said in a statement.

Infrastructure Developments

- Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah gave a speech in Niger at the opening of a conference entitled "Made in Libya," in which he spoke about the establishment of a road from Misrata to Niger, replicating a historic caravan route.
- The Technical Committee of the Ministry of Interior (GNU) confirmed that they are ready to reopen the Al-Debdeb-Ghadames border crossing. The committee has suggested holding an initial meeting with the Algerian side in the coming days to study the final arrangements.

- The GNS is undertaking construction of the road linking the Lathif area and the “Greenhouses” in Misrata. The work highlights the ability of both governments to be able to operate to some extent in areas effectively outside their area of control by exploiting local influence.
- Maintenance work was due to begin on March 16 at the al-Jareed market and at the Al-Nour Market in Benghazi. The work will maintain the old style of the markets and is to be undertaken at the direction of Saddam Haftar.
- Work on the Martyrs Stadium in Benghazi has also begun at the behest of the LNA General Command in a bid to make the stadium ready to hold matches and received guest Arab Clubs.

Assessment

Threat Warnings

IAEA: Uranium ore has disappeared in Fezzan

The International Atomic Energy Agency has warned that 10 barrels containing around 2.5 tonnes of uranium ore have disappeared from a site in Libya "which is no longer under government control." IAEA inspectors discovered during a recent inspection that the barrels were missing. The barrels had reportedly been stored at the site for some time but it is unclear when the barrels went missing with a visit planned last year to the site postponed due to fighting between militias. There are fears that the uranium could pose a “radiological risk as well as nuclear security concerns” however in its current form (known as yellow cake) it cannot be made into a nuclear weapon and there is "little concern over radiation with the material as it is today," according to a global expert. The expert also claimed that the amount taken was approximately one-tenth of the material stored at the site and claimed that its absence would have been notable. He further stated that "if you're removing this material from this location you must really want it." The location was not confirmed however local reports suggest it was stored at a site under the control of 10 Battalion (LNA) between Tamanhint and Sabha. An unconfirmed report claimed that the dump had been “under the control of Wagner Group” since 2020 and that they may have moved the barrels to another location in Fezzan.

Political Developments

UNSMIL: SRSG holds meeting with military leaders

SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily held a large meeting on March 15 in Tunis which brought together the 5+5 Joint Military Committee (JMC) and a number of armed group commanders from the west and east of Libya. This included Deputy Interior Minister (GNS) Faraj Qaim, Omar Meraja, Hassan al-Zadmeh, Omar Baghdada, 52 Brigade's Mahmoud Bin Rajab, Head of Internal Security (GNU) Lofti Hararai, and Fahim bin Ramadan. The UN statement read:

On 15 March 2023, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) hosted a meeting in the presence of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General Abdoulaye Bathily bringing together the 5+5 Joint Military Committee (JMC) and a number of commanders of the military and security units in the West and East. The meeting aimed to establish a safe and conducive environment for the political process and for holding free and fair elections this year, 2023. The meeting stressed that the interests of Libya and its people come first and transcend all personal interests of all parties.

1. They agreed to come together and move forward towards organizing free and fair elections in Libya this year, 2023.
2. The participants stressed the need to communicate with each other and continue holding meetings inside Libya, in Tripoli and Benghazi, which sends positive messages and raises hope among Libyan citizens.
3. The participating commanders of the military and security units stressed the need to abstain from using force, violence, arrest, or threats for political or material gains or for regional or factional interests.

4. The participants reaffirmed their rejection of foreign interference in Libyan affairs.
5. They also agreed on the following confidence-building measures to foster national reconciliation:
 - a. Criminalize acts of violence against civil peace that jeopardize the political process and the holding of free and fair elections.
 - b. Reject hate speech that incites citizens and adversely affects the work of the 5+5 JMC and efforts of national reconciliation.
 - c. Criminalize acts of violence, attacks, kidnappings, and intimidation targeting civilians.
 - d. Prevent actions that impede or delay humanitarian aid and the protection of civilians.
 - e. Refrain from restricting the movement of persons and commodities across all Libyan regions and by all means of transportation.
 - f. Reparation, redress for grievances resulting from former armed conflicts, and return of IDPs and refugees to their regions are among the most important pillars of reconciliation efforts and reunification of the Libyans.
 - g. The meeting agreed to continue communication among the leaders of the security and military units for joint security work to ensure the security of the electoral process.

COMMENT: 'The timing of the meeting suggests Bathily is looking to ensure security stability as much as he can as he pushes forward with political change this year. Armed groups continue to exert significant influence in Libya and having them onside would be key to successful elections.'

The meeting was held in Tunis likely due to those attending. While the 5+5 JMC meets regularly together in Sirte, the other attendees, representing key individuals from the east and west, were likely less comfortable traveling to areas under the control of the opposition. Perhaps none more so than Bin Rajab who, after being extradited from Saudi Arabia to the east of the country in 2017, spent time in an eastern prison. He was released in 2019 with the apparent understanding that he would support the LNA's impending offensive into Tripoli that year. Bin Rajab reneged on this deal and was largely credited with stopping the LNA from taking control of Zawiyah.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Infrastructure Developments

Dbeibah visits Niger

Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah gave a speech in Niger at the opening of a conference entitled "Made in Libya," in which he spoke about the establishment of a road from Misrata to Niger, replicating a historic caravan route. The prime minister met with the President of Niger, Mohamed Bazoum at the event which was held at the Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre in Niamey under the slogan "Niger is the land of promising opportunities and transit trade."

The prime minister stated that the two countries would work together to achieve business and development projects as stated that they had the "will to confront terrorism and migration." He stated that the Islamic Bank would support economic projects related to trade and the private sector and that the Free Zone in Misrata had plans to allow companies to invest.



Image: Prime Minister (GNU) Dbeibah and President of Niger, Mohamed Bazoum

COMMENT: 'The prime minister's visit comes after the release of Abdullah Mansour on February 19 from Mitiga Prison. Mansour was the former head of Internal Security from the Gadhafi regime who had been granted asylum in Niger before he was extradited on charges of plotting against the then authorities in Tripoli in 2014. Upon his release, he flew immediately to Niger via private jet.'

His release is highly likely to have been part of a deal struck between Dbeibah (and others in Libya) and President Bazoum to increase cooperation between their governments with the president being instrumental in Mansour's release. In the days after Mansour's release, a trade convoy was dispatched from Misrata to Niger. The convoy was protected initially by Misratan forces before it was handed over to the LNA indicating Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar's involvement in the wider deal. While Dbeibah is clearly working in the interests of his home city, Misrata, a hub of business in Libya, the deal will also help to legitimize his government.

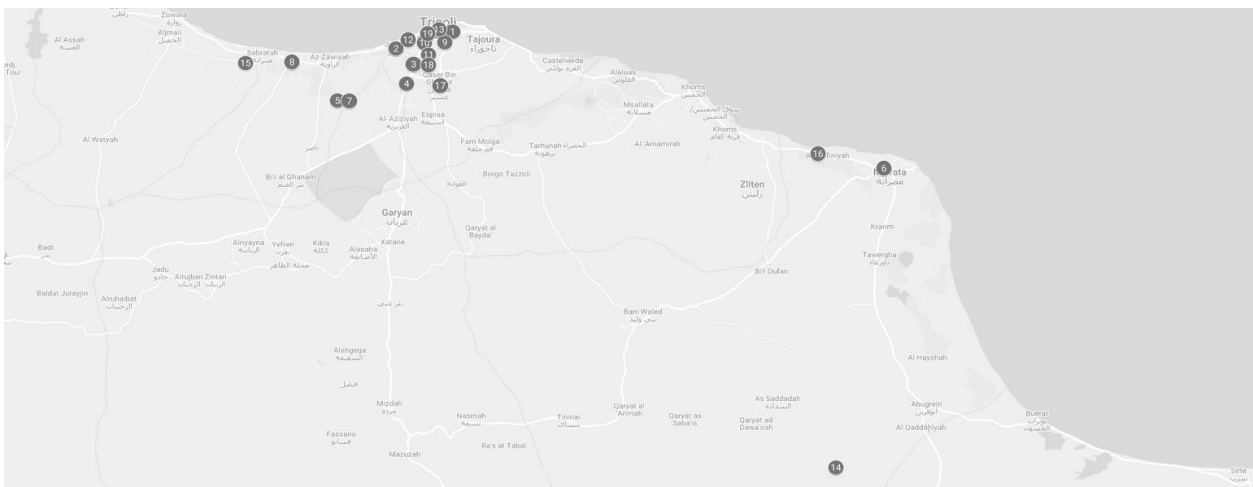
In addition to Dbeibah's visit, a Ministry of Defence (GNU) delegation visited the Nigerien border as part of efforts by EUBAM to "to research the implementation of similar projects in Libya."

President Bazoum has indicated that he is working on the release of another three senior former regime members currently held in prison in western Libya. The staged release of these individuals would indicate that the relationship between Niger and its northern neighbour is continuing to progress and may help Dbeibah to repair some of the domestic backlash he received from the extradition of a former regime member to the US in late 2022 on charges of been involved in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

An unconfirmed report claims that Prime Minister (GNU) Dbeibah met with Mansour at his home in Niger during his visit to Niger. Mansour could well prove a key figure within the developing relationship between Niger and Libya and help to anchor increased economic and political ties between the two nations.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Significant Incidents

Tripolitania Region



1 Demonstration - Mar 13, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: A number of investment portfolio owners protested demanding the payment of overdue salaries.

2 Arrest - Mar 14, Tripoli Province, Janzour: Two people were arrested for kidnapping an Egyptian national.

3 Security Operation - Mar 14, Tripoli Province, Kremiya: GSS and support forces carried out static and mobile security operations.

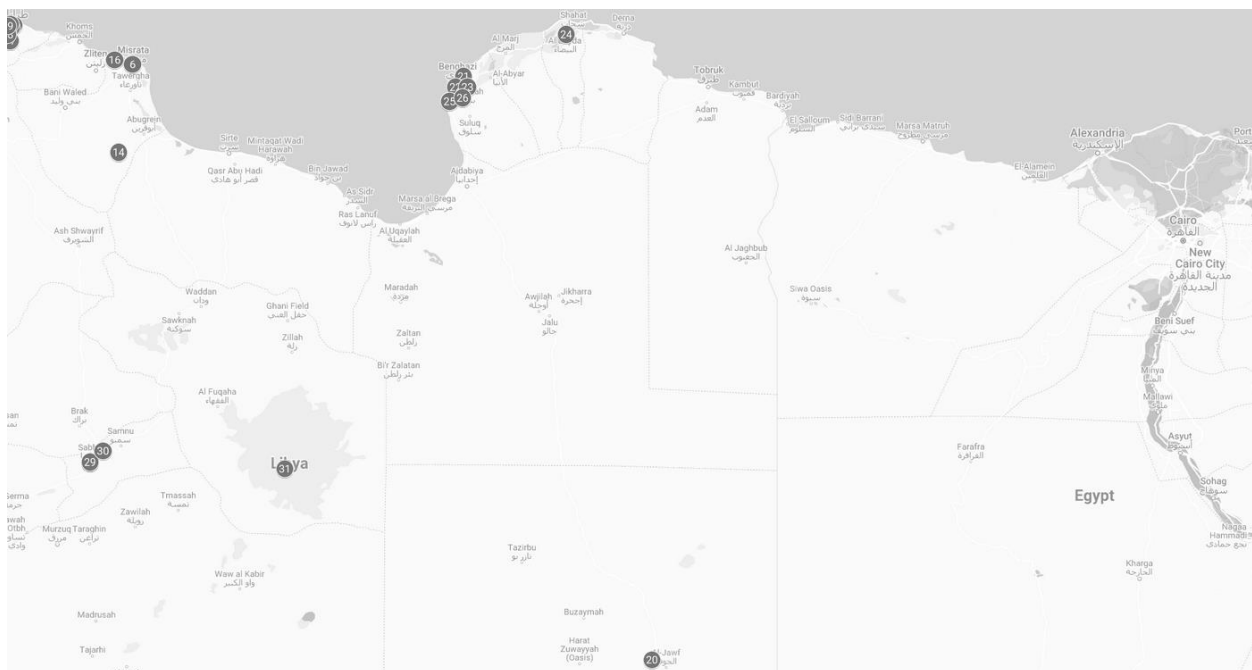
4 Security Operation - Mar 14, Al-Jafara Province, Zahra Bridge: GSS and support forces carried out static and mobile security operations.

5 Kidnap - Mar 15 00:00, Az Zawiyah Province, Bir Sardine: A man was taken in a suspected abduction by Al-Sila Militia.

6 Military Announcement - Mar 15, Misrata Province, Misrata: The Minister of Defence ordered the transfer of officers from 166 Battalion (under the command of Muhammad al-Hussan) to the Central Military Region. 3 Company and 4 Company were also transferred to 603 Battalion of the Central Military Region.

- 7 Troop Movements - Mar 15 00:19, Az Zawiyah Province, Bir Sardine:** As a result of an alleged abduction by Al-Sila, an unidentified group mobilised and closed the main road in the area as tension spiked.
- 8 Armed Robbery - Mar 15 12:15, Az Zawiyah Province, Surman:** The Sayara Shop on the Surman to Masif Road was targeted in an armed robbery with the owner shot and wounded. Mobile phones and cash were also stolen.
- 9 Arrest - Mar 15 13:19, Tripoli Province, Tripoli:** Three Tunisian women and a taxi driver were arrested for stealing clothes from several clothes shops and storing them in a hotel in Tripoli for resale.
- 10 SAF - Mar 15 17:40, Tripoli Province, Gypsum Gate:** Small arms fire was heard in the area. The area has seen recent activity from GSS and the SAF came just before Minister of the Interior (GNU) Emad Trabelsi, was due to give a press conference on the results of a security plan to secure the capital and its surroundings.
- 11 SAF - Mar 15 17:40, Tripoli Province, Airport Road:** Small arms fire was heard in the area. The area has seen recent activity from GSS and the SAF came just before Minister of the Interior (GNU) Emad Trabelsi, was due to give a press conference on the results of a security plan to secure the capital and its surroundings.
- 12 Security Operation - Mar 15 19:01, Tripoli Province, Ghiran Roundabout:** GSS deployed a heavy presence at the roundabout and was stopping and checking all vehicles.
- 13 Demonstration - Mar 16, Tripoli Province, Prime Minister's Office:** Members of the PFG announced a protest and sit-in in front of the Prime Minister's office on March 20 to demand the "settlement of their difficult living conditions."
- 14 RTA - Mar 16, Misrata Province, Wadi Zamzam:** Six people were killed in a two-car accident. One child survived.
- 15 SAF - Mar 16 09:00, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Ajaylat:** Small arms heard in the market area.
- 16 Troop Movements - Mar 16 12:00, Misrata Province, Dafiniyah:** Police vehicles gathered in the area due to the opening of a new Support HQ for the Misrata Security Directorate. Misratan forces have dominance over the area.
- 17 Armed Attack - Mar 16 13:00, Tripoli Province, Qaser Bin Ghashir:** An armed brawl in the Al-Ahdaid market has reportedly resulted in the deaths of two members of 444 Combat Unit.
- 18 Troop Movements - Mar 16 13:45, Tripoli Province, Brega Oil Tanks:** Vehicles belonging to the Zawiyah Operations Room were mobile at the Oil Tanks Bridge on Airport Road.
- 19 Demonstration - Mar 16 14:00, Tripoli Province, Prime Minister's Office:** Wounded military/ ex-military members protested to call for medical treatment in front of the Prime Minister's office.

Cyrenaica Region



20 Crime - Mar 07, Kufra Province, Kufra: A Sudanese national carried out a home invasion and stole an unspecified amount of cash. He was arrested by the Kufra Security Directorate CID.

21 Arrest - Mar 11, Benghazi Province, Kuwayfiah: Security forces arrested three people accused of committing a number of armed robberies.

22 Murder/ Execution - Mar 15, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Lieutenant Al-Fituri Mohammed al-Hasouni from 128 Brigade (LNA), was murdered in front of his home by a person affiliated with the committee of the removal of illegal and random buildings.

23 Arrest - Mar 15 12:00, Benghazi Province, Bohdema: CID Benghazi arrested four women for prostitution.

24 Kidnap - Mar 16 01:30, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: Abdullah Amtoul Al-Barasi was allegedly kidnapped from in front of the Jihad Bank. He is part of the local Municipal Council, mandated by the GNU.

25 Unknown Explosion - Mar 16 02:00, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: An unknown explosion was heard in the city.

26 Accident - Mar 16 14:58, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A fire in a family home claimed the life of a child.

Fezzan Region



27 Security Operation - Mar 14, Wadi Al-Hayaa Province, Obari: The LNA carried out a counter-terrorism operation to arrest Syed Omar Sheikh on charges of terrorism. Sheikh was arrested in 2022 and was described as a prominent member of IS. A number of people were detained with him during his latest arrest.

28 Armed Attack - Mar 14, Sabha Province, Sukrah: An armed attack involving a hand grenade took place.

29 Security Operation - Mar 14, Sabha Province, Sukrah: The Sukra and Jadid Police carried out an ambush to arrest a person responsible for an earlier armed attack involving a hand grenade.

30 Threat Warning - Mar 15, Sabha Province, Tamanhint: The International Atomic Energy Agency has warned that 10 barrels containing around 2.5 tonnes of uranium ore have disappeared from a site in Libya "which is no longer under government control."

31 RTA - Mar 15 16:45, Libya: Two brothers died in a car accident while on their way to their mother's funeral in an unknown area.

Offshore

NSTR

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, 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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