

Libya daily security analysis report

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Latest Developments

Political Developments

- SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily and the Security Working Group for Libya co-chairs discussed with the chiefs of staff in the western and eastern regions and the 5+5 Joint Military Commission ways to move forward on the security track, the continuity of the ceasefire agreement and the reunification of military institutions.
- The United States Special Envoy to Libya, Ambassador Richard Norland stated that Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah should stand down if he was intending on running in elections as a presidential candidate.

Security Developments

- SDF carried out a series of raids in Tripoli on March 17 targeting gangs associated with drugs, alcohol, theft, and kidnapping. One raid led to heavy resistance necessitating the deployment of 44 Combat Unit.

Infrastructure Developments

- The Al-Bunya Investments and Services Company, a subsidiary of the state LPTIC Holding Company has presented initial architectural designs for Smart City projects for communications and information in Tripoli and Benghazi at an exhibition at Tripoli Fairgrounds.

Assessment

Political Developments

UN: Bathily continues to hold key meetings in Tunis

SRSG Abdoulaye Bathily and the Security Working Group for Libya co-chairs discussed with the chiefs of staff in the western and eastern regions and the 5+5 Joint Military Commission ways to move forward on the security track, the continuity of the ceasefire agreement and the reunification of military institutions. The meeting, which was held in Tunis, was attended by the envoys of the heads of state participating in the Security Working Group of the United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Italy, and the African Union. Bathily stressed that the elections are a top priority for UNSMIL and called on the co-chairs to provide collective support for holding national elections in order to restore legitimacy to Libyan institutions.

COMMENT: 'Libyan politics has entered another critical phase following the SRSG's last address on February 27 to the UN Security Council in which he announced his intent to create a high-level steering panel. Bathily has intensified his activities further since the announcement as he seeks to shape the political track towards elections this year. He is looking to secure domestic and international buy-in and minimise opportunities for spoilers however he is still faced with regional powers and Libya's domestic political elites' preference for the status quo.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

US: Dbeibah should stand down if he has presidential ambitions

The United States Special Envoy to Libya, Ambassador Richard Norland stated that Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah should stand down if he was intending on running in elections as a presidential candidate. He also stated that talks of a new unified executive distracted attention and caused confusion regarding the elections.

COMMENT: 'This largely reflects the current position of the SRSG regarding the possibility of a new unified executive prior to elections. The leadership of the HoR and HCS have been pushing for the creation of a new unified executive before elections, all of which they state can take place before November this year. Dbeibah is reportedly also not in favour of a new executive being formed.

Dbeibah had originally undertaken not to stand in the (non) elections of December 2021 when he took over as prime minister in the March of that year. However, he quickly abandoned that ideal and threw his lot in for president, helping the elections to unravel with many accusing him of using state coffers to build popular support through a series of policies aimed at giving money to the electorate.

Assertions that he should stand down beforehand are unlikely to appease his critics who will still state that he has had a few years now of using state coffers to build his support base. In addition, there is no clear direction as to when he should stand down. Prior to December 2021, other contentious candidates including Field Marshal Khalifa only stood down temporarily from their positions a few weeks before the elections, as per the HoR's election law.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Security Developments

Tripoli: SDF comes under fire during raids

SDF carried out a series of raids in Tripoli on March 17 targeting gangs associated with drugs, alcohol, theft, and kidnapping. During one raid, they encountered significant armed resistance, resulting in the death of one SDF member and the wounding of two others. 444 Combat Unit mobilized in support of SDF and were able to carry out the arrest.

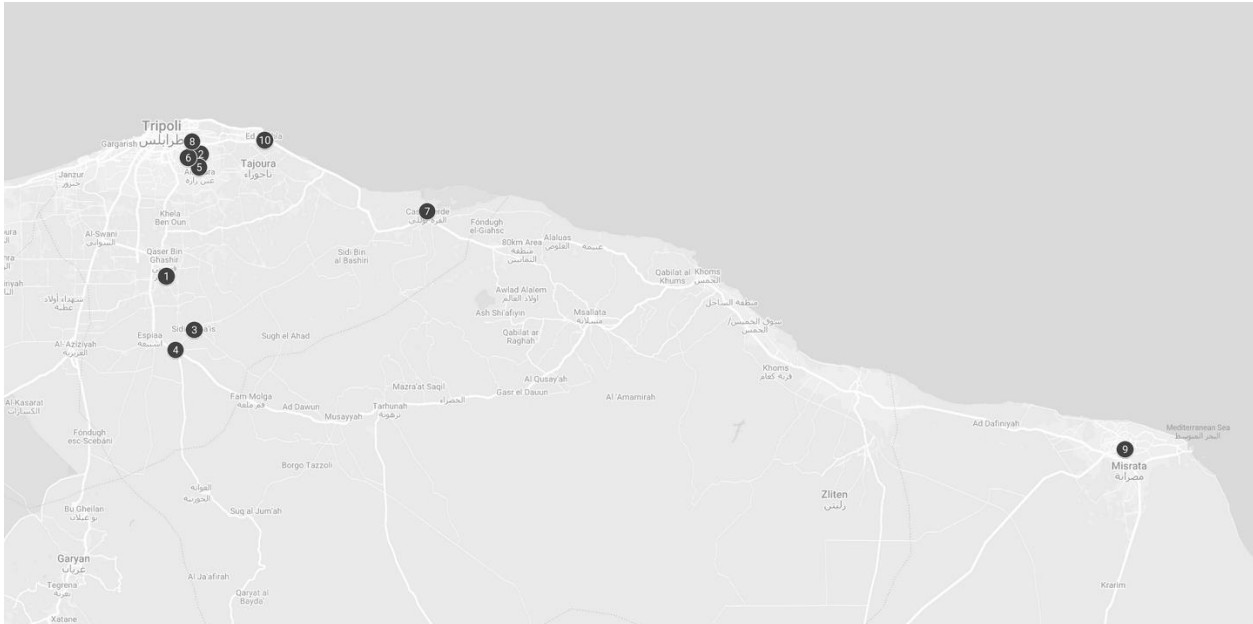
COMMENT: 'Various western militias have begun to carry out similar types of raids and operations over the past few weeks. This follows the launch of a joint operation by the LNA and the Ministry of Interior (GNS) in the east of the country which has been interpreted as a way for the LNA to reassert its reputation as a (if not the) key security provider in Libya in the face of upcoming political change which is expected this year. As such, it's possible other armed militias in the west are similarly motivated on a more localized scale.

444 Combat Unit emerged from the SDF's 20/20 Special Unit in 2019 after SDF refused to join the fight to defend Tripoli against the LNA, citing it was a police force, not military. 444 has now arguably eclipsed its former parent unit in size and influence and is building a reputation for mediation and intervention. While SDF continues to be characterised as more of a police force, 444 has developed a military capability and as such would have been better suited to dealing with the situation once SDF came under heavy fire.'

COMMENT ENDS.

Significant Incidents

Tripolitania Region



1 Security Operation - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Suq al-Sabt: SDF carried out large-scale raids against gangs involved in drugs, alcohol, theft and kidnapping.

2 Security Operation - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Alsabea: SDF carried out large-scale raids against gangs involved in drugs, alcohol, theft and kidnapping.

3 Security Operation - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Sidi Sayeh: SDF carried out large-scale raids against gangs involved in drugs, alcohol, theft and kidnapping.

4 Security Operation - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Suq al-Khamis: SDF carried out large-scale raids against gangs involved in drugs, alcohol, theft and kidnapping.

5 Armed Clash - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Alsabea: An armed clash erupted during an SDF raid against criminal gangs when they encountered heavy fire. A member of SDF was killed, and two others were seriously wounded.

6 Troop Movements - Mar 17, Tripoli Province, Alsabea: 444 Combat Unit mobilised in support of SDF after they came under heavy fire during a raid against criminals. 444 were able to apprehend the wanted person and the situation calmed.

7 RTA - Mar 17 14:32, Tripoli Province, Garabuli: A serious road traffic accident claimed the lives of a 20-year-old woman, her mother and brother as they went shopping for Ramadan.

8 Other - Mar 18, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Fuel queues have manifested once again in the city. This resulted in a call from Brega Oil Marketing Company to avoid "unjustified congestions" at petrol stations, confirming the availability of fuel. This comes as people begin preparing for the upcoming start of Ramadan.

9 Security Operation - Mar 18, Misrata Province, Al-Qoshi: Demolition operations have continued in the area.

10 Murder/ Execution - Mar 18 02:06, Tripoli Province, Tajura Heart Hospital: A young man, Al Tashani, was drifting in his vehicle with a friend when they hit a Toyota car. The driver of the Toyota exited his vehicle and began shooting at Tashani's vehicle, killing him. One person was arrested. One report claimed Tashani was a member of the Rahba al-Duru Battalion.

Cyrenaica Region



11 Kidnap - Mar 17 15:50, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Legal Counsel, Salah Baltmar, managed to escape his kidnappers following his abduction on March 14 by an unknown armed group. Baltmar was assaulted with pictures showing injuries to his low limbs.

12 Assault - Mar 17 20:13, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A group of men walked into the Al-Aqal Al-Naira School and attacked two or three students, assaulting them with fists and rods. It's unclear what triggered the incident with one report claiming the attackers were members of the LNA.

Fezzan Region



13 Security Operation - Mar 16, Murzuq Province, Qatrun: 10 Battalion (LNA) and GASO LEF targeted fuel smuggling and illegal structures.

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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