

# Libya weekly security analysis report

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# Executive Summary

- SRSB Abdoulaye Bathily updated the United Nations Security Council regarding Libya. The core message was that the Libyan people want elections and that the security institutions had made a breakthrough with the 5+5. He offered UNSMIL's technical expertise and logistical support to the 6+6 Committee of the HoR and HCS to enable its work in preparing the electoral laws. He also welcomed the answer from both the HoR and HCS designated committees to accept the support from UNSMIL.
- On security matters, Bathily noted that while the overall security situation remains tense, the ceasefire continues to hold and there were positive developments in cooperation between the GNU and the Libyan National Army and on the withdrawal of foreign fighters and mercenaries.
- Fighting has continued in Sudan throughout the week. Several unconfirmed sources indicate that government forces have reversed some of the gains made by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the initial fighting, with increasing speculation that the RSF may be expelled from the capital. However, the reality is unlikely to be as clear cut with an obvious information war being waged on social media between supporters of both sides of the conflict. In Libya, the ongoing conflict to the south has raised concern about the deterioration of security on the southern borders. As previously assessed, the current conflict is likely to impact the security in the southern border areas, however, the scale and nature of this impact will be dependent on how the conflict develops in terms of winners and losers. As precautionary measures, the LNA was reported as deploying additional forces to the area and closing the Ain Kazit border crossing point to Sudan.
- Following an article in the Wall Street Journal, which alleged that the LNA had sent a flight to resupply the Rapid Support Force (RSF) in Sudan, the spokesman for the LNA, Ahmed Mismari, issued a statement strenuously denying the accusation. Mismari stated that "The General Command categorically denies what is being reported by some cheap and paid media outlets about the Libyan Arab Armed Forces providing support to one party against the other." The WSJ claimed that the LNA had sent a flight with ammunition to the RSF at Merowe. The LNA and its commander, Khalifa Haftar have an existing relationship with the RSF leader, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.
- Subsequent articles claimed that resupply of the RSF included support being provided through Wagner Group at Jufra and Khadim airbases. Other reports claim Kufra is also being utilized. The reporting concentrated on the movements of an Ilyshin 76 cargo aircraft that was recorded travelling between Latakia (Syria), Jufra and Khadim. Wagner group was also reported as air-dropping surface-to-air missiles to RSF forces in Northern Sudan.
- The LNA announced the arrest of a terrorist cell in the eastern region (no specific location). The cell consisted of six individuals, including one woman, and that they had intended to target LNA units. Reportedly the group had been under surveillance for two months and the operation was conducted with the assistance of the ISA Eastern Branch.
- The occasion of Eid resulted in a divide in the country, with areas outside Tripoli seeing Apr 21 as the start of Eid and the majority of those in Tripoli seeing Apr 21 as the last day of Ramadan. The development has led to confusion, with the Tripoli-based religious Fatwa Council announcing that Eid falls on Saturday as the Shawwal crescent moon was not sighted. However, the General Authority of Endowments and Islamic Affairs in Libya's east said the moon was visible and Eid would be on Friday. This dispute is not limited to Libya, with Iran, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan and India all marking the start of Eid as Saturday. However, Libya is the only nation where Eid is being celebrated at different times within the same country, with many remarking that the dispute is yet another example of the deep rifts in the country and the politicization of issues outside the political realm.

# 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.

# Threat Matrix

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

Threat Scale	Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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# Weekly Assessment

## Conflict Continues in Sudan

Fighting has continued in Sudan throughout the week. Several unconfirmed sources indicate that government forces have reversed some of the gains made by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the initial fighting, with increasing speculation that the RSF may be expelled from the capital. However, the reality is unlikely to be as clear cut with an obvious information war being waged on social media between supporters of both sides of the conflict. In Libya, the ongoing conflict to the south has raised concern about the deterioration of security on the southern borders.

While the focus appears to remain on Khartoum, the conflict has been reported outside the capital, with civilian fatalities being reported throughout the Darfur region as well as Kassala, Qadarif, Ad-Damazin (all near the Ethiopian border) and north of the capital around the town of Merowe. A 24hr ceasefire that was announced following pressure from the International Community to allow civilians to leave the conflict zone, collapsed after minutes with Government forces and the opposing Rapid Support Forces blaming each other for not respecting the cessation.

Libya's permanent representative to the UN, Taher al-Soni, raised the issue of the conflict during the UNSC meeting on Apr 18, warning that "The situation in Sudan will undoubtedly have a direct and negative impact, not only on Sudan, but also on Libya and neighbouring countries, especially in the Libyan south." The prospect of foreign forces transiting the Libyan/Sudanese border has been raised on numerous occasions since fighting broke out. Recent reporting indicates that additional LNA forces have been deployed to the border area with calls to close all border crossing points as was implemented when conflict broke out in Chad.

HoR member, Saeed Amgheib, who represents Kufra also warned that the situation will "negatively affect the security of Libya's southern borders" due to the presence of

"mercenaries and traitors who possess weapons and money outside the framework of the military establishment." As previously assessed, the current conflict is likely to impact the security in the southern border areas, however, the scale and nature of this impact will be dependent on how the conflict develops in terms of winners and losers.

## LNA Accused of Supplying RSF

Following an article in the Wall Street Journal, which alleged that the LNA had sent a flight to resupply the Rapid Support Force (RSF) in Sudan, the spokesman for the LNA, Ahmed Mismari, issued a statement strenuously denying the accusation. Mismari stated that "The General Command categorically denies what is being reported by some cheap and paid media outlets about the Libyan Arab Armed Forces providing support to one party against

the other" and added that "We are currently conducting urgent contacts with the concerned parties, and we are ready to play a mediating role between the brothers in Sudan, to stop the fighting immediately and open the way through peaceful means." The LNA General Command has also called for a joint mediation committee, comprised of Arab League and African Union officials to be formed.

The WSJ claimed that the LNA had sent a flight with ammunition to the RSF at Merowe. The LNA and its commander, Khalifa Haftar have an existing relationship with the RSF leader, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. Daglo previously sent troops to support the LNA in the 2019/20 Libyan conflict, and Khalifa Haftar's son, Siddiq Haftar, was pictured at Iftar with Daglo two days before the outbreak of fighting in Khartoum.

Subsequent articles claimed that resupply of the RSF included support being provided through Wagner Group at Jufra and Khadim airbases. Other reports claim Kufra is also being utilized. The reporting concentrated on the movements of an Illyshin 76 cargo aircraft that was recorded travelling between Latakia (Syria), Jufra and Khadim. Wagner group was also reported as

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Tahir al-Soni – Apr 18

air-dropping surface-to-air missiles to RSF forces in Northern Sudan. The reporting is based primarily on the movement of one single Il76 aircraft, however, movement between Latakia and Eastern airbases has been a pattern since the entry of Wagner group into Libya as Russia maintains a large airbase in Latakia. Wagner Group's founder, Yevgeny Prigozhin published an open letter via telegram offering to mediate between the two sides in the conflict. He also offered to send flights with medical supplies and other humanitarian cargo. Prigozhin then claimed that Wagner group has not operated in Sudan for more than two years.

Claims by Prigozhin are rarely based on fact, and while the current media accusations of Wagner Group resupplying RSF forces cannot be verified and are currently based on limited evidence, the conflict does present an opportunity to Wagner to shape the conflict to their advantage given their existing relationships with both RSF commander Hemeti Dagalo and the head of the Armed Forces Abdel Fatta al Burhan.

## **SRSB Bathily Briefs UNSC**

SRSB Abdoulaye Bathily updated the United Nations Security Council regarding Libya. The core message was that the Libyan people want elections and that the security institutions had made a breakthrough with the 5+5. He offered UNSMIL's technical expertise and logistical support to the 6+6 Committee of the HoR and HCS to enable its work in preparing the electoral laws. He also welcomed the answer from both the HoR and HCS designated committees to accept the support from UNSMIL.

The main points of the briefing were that he had engaged key Libyan political leaders through shuttle diplomacy to seek common ground and encourage them to make compromises that will clear the path for elections. They all expressed their readiness to discuss the parameters of the organisation of elections. This action will continue and intensify as relevant actors will need to negotiate and agree on the most contentious issues about the holding of inclusive elections this year.

He also welcomed the commitment of these actors and called for the translation of their engagement into concrete steps on the ground. The meetings between military units and security formations from the east, west and south represent a breakthrough. These meetings were of great symbolic value on the path to reconciliation and unifying the country.

Bathily then urged political actors to follow the example set by military and security leaders.

In closing on the election process, he offered UNSMIL's technical expertise and logistical support to the 6+6 Committee of the HoR and HCS to enable its work in preparing the electoral laws. Both Chambers have announced their respective members to the Committee based on regional representation. However, he noted that regrettably, the Committee does not include any women.

Although the committee as a whole has yet to convene, on 5 April its six HCS members met for the first time with three of their six HoR counterparts to discuss their work plans and identify priority issues to be tackled by the Committee. Bathily also announced that in the course of the last few days he had received a positive answer from both the HoR and HCS designated committees to accept the support from UNSMIL. He hoped that genuine political will and wisdom will guide their deliberations. He called on the leaders of the two chambers to expedite the work of the 6+6 Committee and publish a timebound work programme; for elections to take place this year, the electoral laws must be completed in time for the High National Elections Commission to begin implementing the electoral process by early July.

On security matters, he noted that while the overall security situation remains tense, the ceasefire continues to hold and there were positive developments in cooperation between the GNU and the Libyan National Army and on the withdrawal of foreign fighters and mercenaries. Turning to the human rights situation he highlighted that during the reporting period, civic space has been further restricted, and operations of civil society organisations deemed illegal. On 27 March, the Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya issued its final report, which expressed concern about the situation and recommended further efforts to combat impunity. The people of Libya are eager to enter a new dawn for peace, stability and prosperity in their collective lives. Let us support them in achieving this legitimate aspiration.

Following the briefing from several sitting members of the council gave statements on the Libya situation. In the main, these echoed long-standing demands, including calls for free and fair elections, respect for human rights, and praise for the continued work of the JMC 5+5.

However, the Russian permanent representative to the UNSC, and current president of the

UNSC, Vasily Nebenzya, stressed that the most important element is making progress in a sustainable settlement in Libya in the context of a controlled political process and that this is determined by Libyans with no outside interference. He also called on Libyan parties to remain flexible and stressed the importance of “participation of all political forces without any discrimination in the elections.” On security matters, Nebenzya stressed the need to integrate all military units into a unified national army and expressed Russia’s desire to see the removal of all foreign military forces from Libyan soil, adding this must be conducted in a gradual and balanced manner.

While Nebenzya’s comments are similar to those of other speakers at the meeting, several points are notable and underline that there has been little to no change in the Russian position on Libya. Russia has been well documented as being supportive of Saif Ghaddafi’s candidacy for any future presidential election, and Nebenzya’s call for the participation of all political forces signals that this position remains unchanged.

Alongside Haftar, Ghaddafi remains one of the most contentious potential candidates and Russia’s support for Ghaddafi is likely based on lessening Western influence in Libyan affairs, given the well-founded belief that Ghaddafi would be hostile to Western outreach. Furthermore, Russia has long voiced its objection to the removal of Muammar Ghaddafi by the 2011 NATO operation and did not vote to support the UNSC resolution to authorize the use of force, instead abstaining from the vote.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is at pains to continually emphasize the destabilizing role that NATO and the West had on Libya, raising it as a point in nearly all statements on Libya. The comments on the withdrawal of foreign forces also show a consistency in the Russian position, with the gradual and balanced withdrawal concept being voiced on several occasions before. Russia has maintained that

unbalancing the opposing forces may prompt the stronger side to resume the conflict, and while this has some currency, it also allows for continued delay given the range of actors involved in the removal of all foreign forces, including those of Russia.

## **Migrant Resettlement Scheme Rejected**

Civil society organizations in Fezzan called on the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to stop the work of the Italian Ara Pacis NGO and

investigate its activities in all regions and cities of Libya. The request related to the organization’s initiative to integrate illegal immigrants in the southern region. The mayors of Sabha and Ghat announced their explicit rejection of the idea of settling immigrants in southern Libya, stressing that they had informed the Italian side that any agreement of this kind must be concluded with the state represented by the Ministry of Local Government and not with the municipalities directly.

The issue was also addressed by the Libyan National Security Council which released a statement asserting “its rejection of any projects that could potentially affect national security, especially regarding immigration issues.” The migrant integration initiative was launched by the ‘Italian organizations in Libya’, and “aims to enhance employment opportunities and better working conditions of full-time and seasonal migrant and local workers in Sabha, Murzuq, Ghat and Wadi Al-Hayaa districts of Fezzan region.”

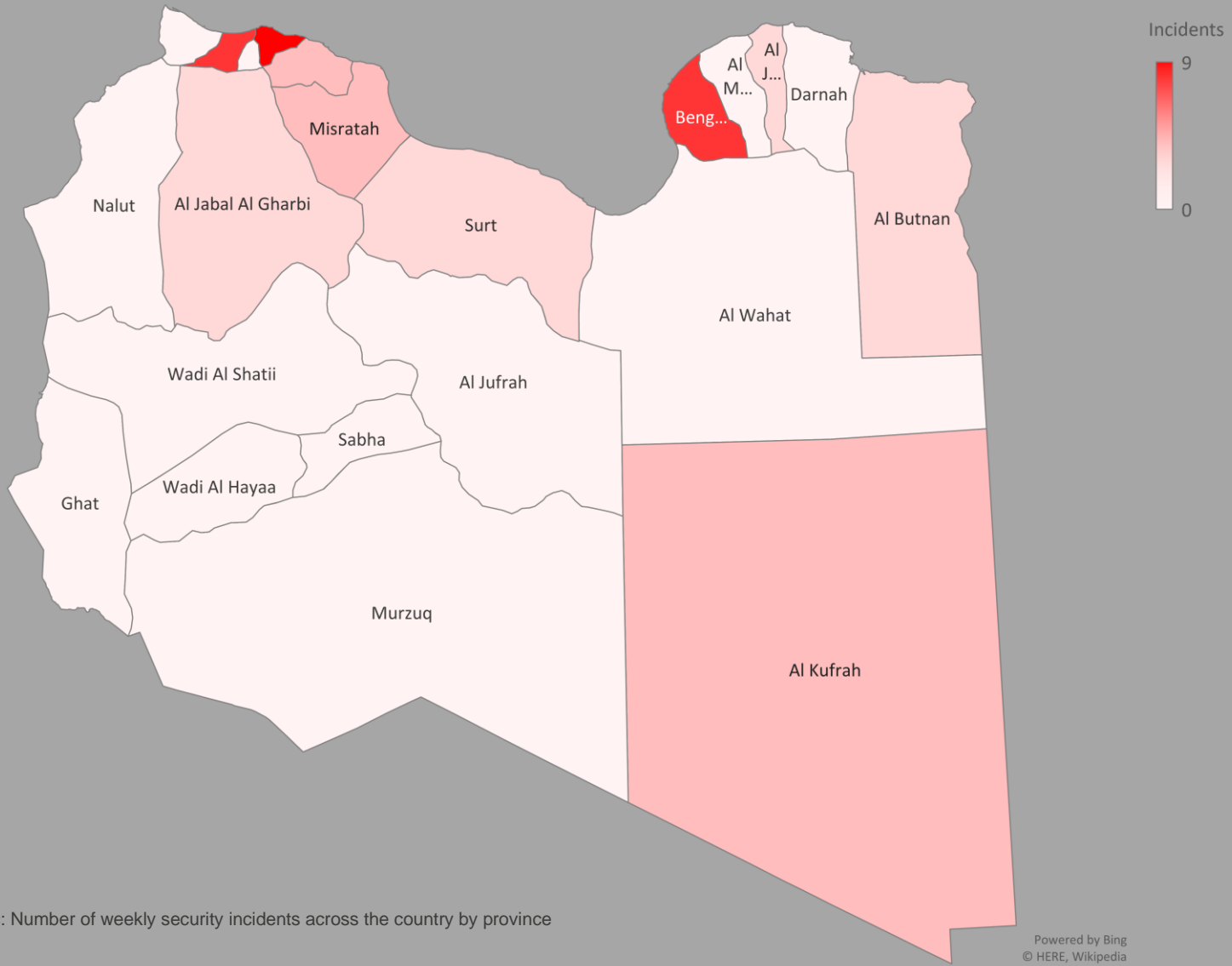
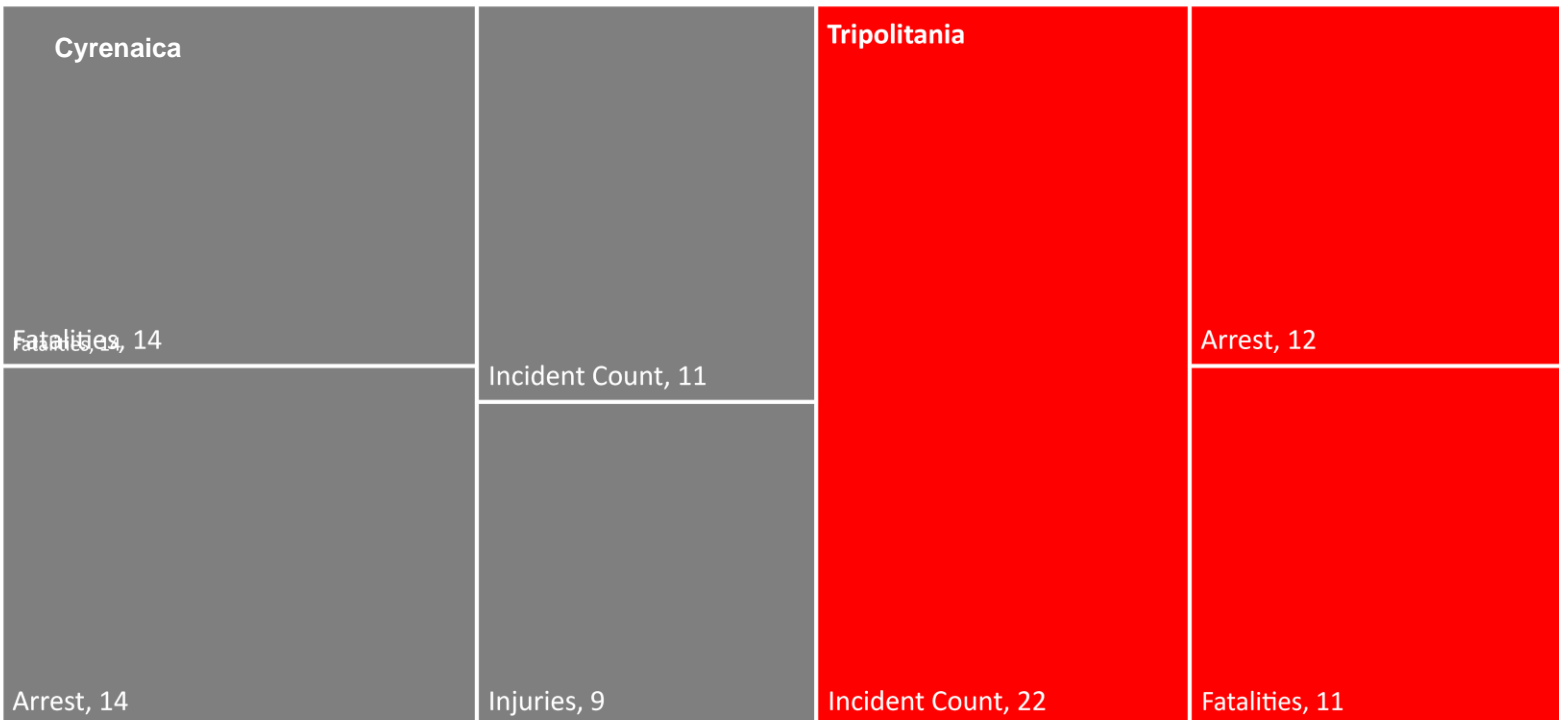
The two-year project is to be implemented by the Italian intergovernmental organization CIHEAM Bari, whose website states the project has €5 million in funding from the Directorate General for Italians Abroad and Migration Policies of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI – DGIT) through Italy’s Migration Fund.

**A settlement in Libya could only be achieved through a controlled political process, “which must be developed and determined by the Libyan people themselves without external interference.”**

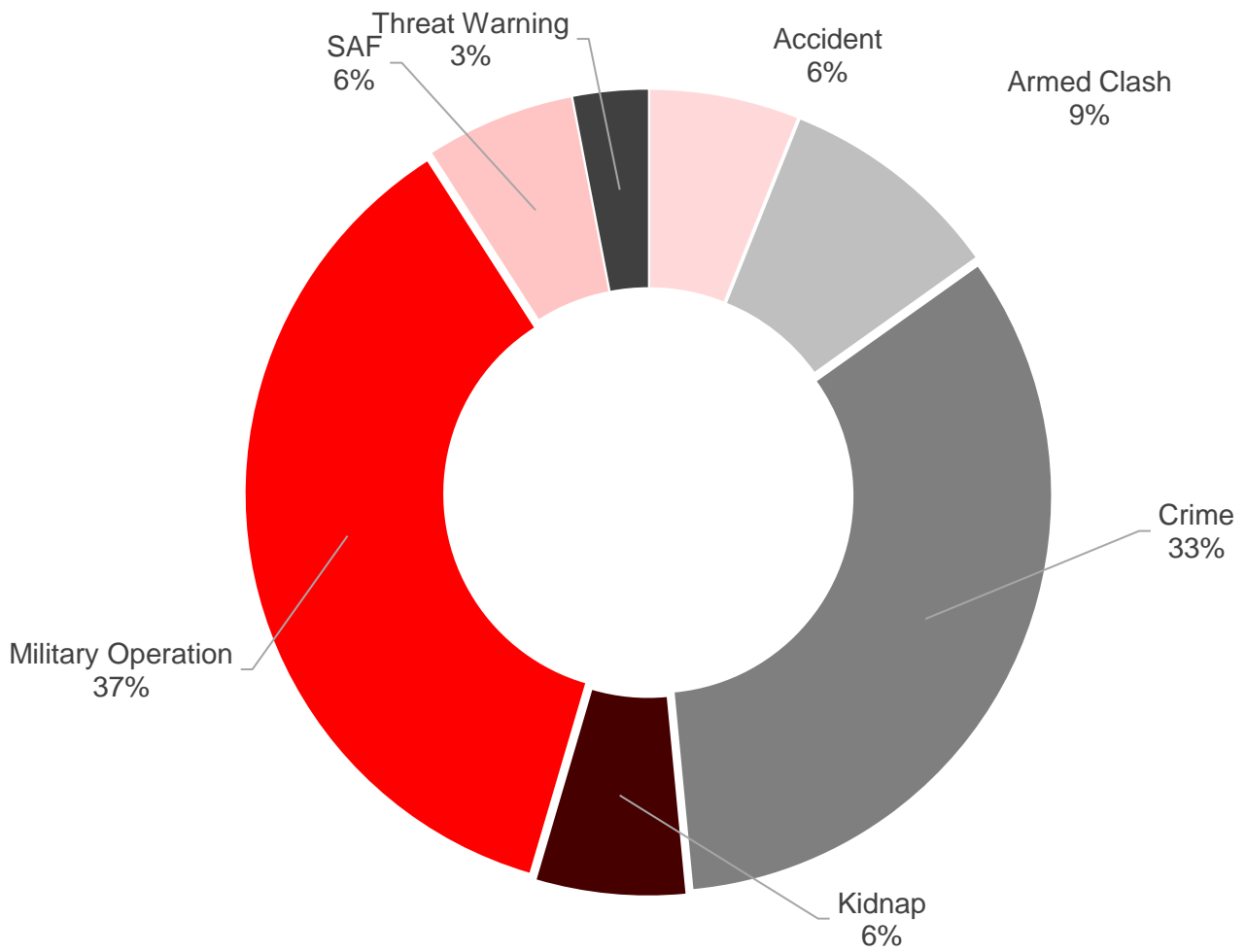
Russian UN Permanent Representative - Apr 18.

# Weekly Statistical Overview

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





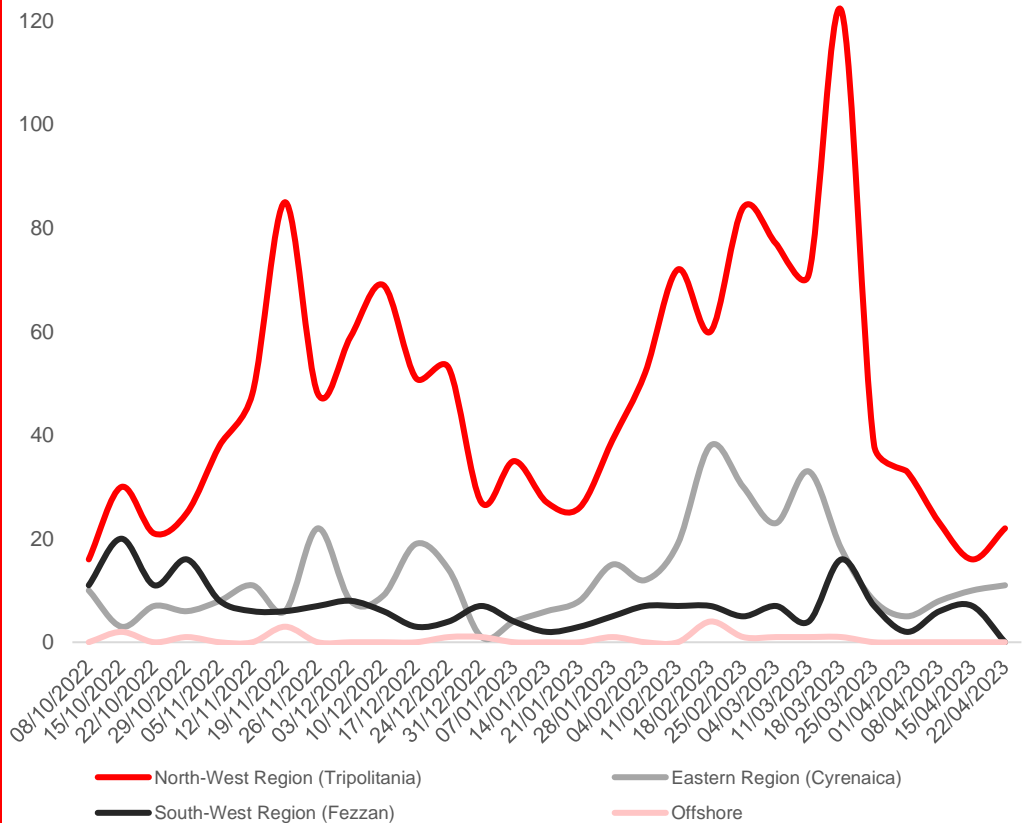


Activity levels remain unchanged this week with 33 incidents nationally

Tripolitania saw levels increase slightly, but remain low during the Ramadan and Eid period. Zawiyah saw the only kinetic activity with continued raids on illegal fuel vendors and one murder. The remaining activity in the region primarily related to security operations and criminality.

Cyrenica saw an increase this week from nine to 12. Anti Immigration operations have continued, however, this period also saw military deployments and increased security activity on the Libyan border with Sudan in response to the ongoing conflict.

Activity saw a notable decrease with no incidents reported.



# Weekly Significant Incidents

## Tripolitania

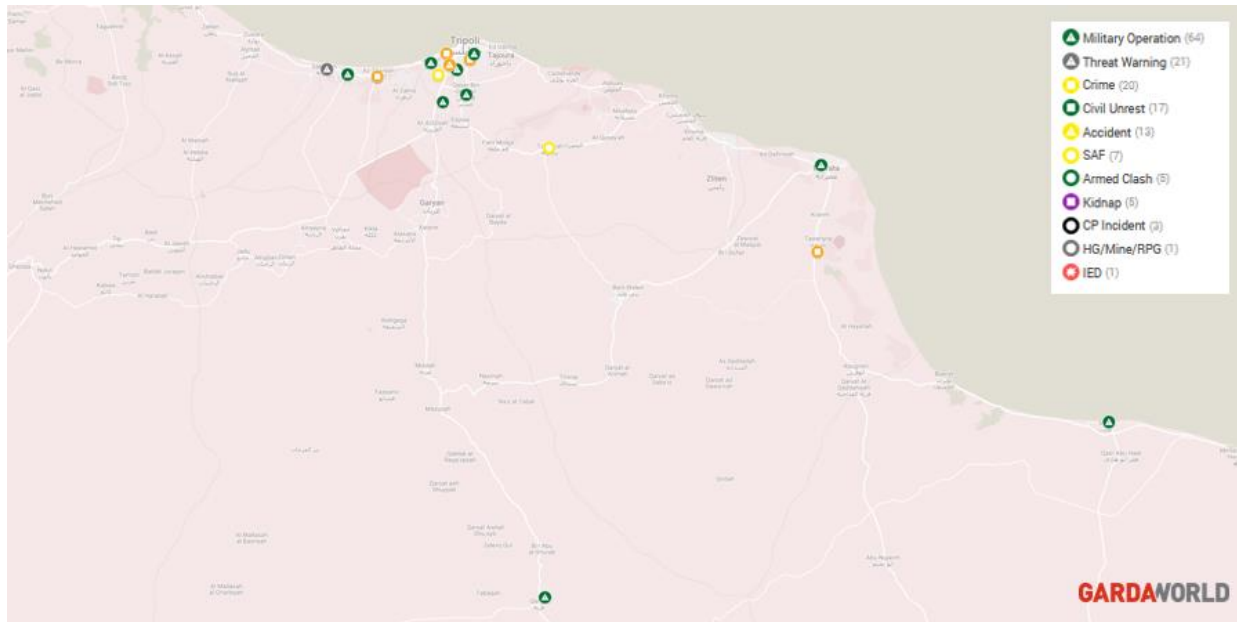


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Tripolitania

## Security Incidents

- Apr 16** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Airport Road: A movement of a 444 Brigade forces was reported on Airport Road.
- Apr 16** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Qaser Bin Ghashir: A large convoy of 444 Brigade forces assembled on the airport road.
- Apr 17** Arrest - Tripoli Province, Salahuddin: RADA and ISA arrested a Libyan national for online activity.
- Apr 17** Armed Clash - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A suspected armed clash was reported.
- Apr 18** Security Operation - Az Zawiyah Province, Surman: The Western Region Security Directorate Support Force provided security for the delivery of fuel to six petrol stations.
- Apr 18** Security Operation - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A series of raids on illegal fuel was conducted in the Zawiyah area and on the coast road. One raid near Refinery Bridge was engaged with SAF.
- Apr 18** Security Operation - Sirte Province, Sirte: ISA Sirte Branch and Sirte Security Directorate shut down symposium held by the 'Together for the Homeland' political party at approx. 2300hrs on April 18. Suspected party members, Saleh Abdel-Salam Al-Zarrouk and Al-Mabrouk Abdel-Rahman Onaiza, as well as a photographer were detained.
- Apr 18** Security Operation - Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Qaryat: Qayrat Desert Patrols unit was reported as conducting patrol operations.
- Apr 18** SAF - Al-Murqub Province, Tarhunah: A local youth was shot and injured by an unknown armed actor.
- Apr 18** Armed Clash - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A suspected armed clash, including explosions, was reported in the area of Martyrs square.
- Apr 18** Crime - Tripoli Province, Ghut al-Shaal: A home invasion was reported in Ghut al Shaal. The perpetrators were alleged to be African nationals.
- Apr 18** Other - Az Zawiyah Province, Sabrathah: A number of bodies of migrants were recovered from the shorefront near Sabrathah. A burnt rubber boat was found nearby.

- Apr 19 Security Operation - Tripoli Province, Janzour: SSA Janzour Branch conducted patrols and VCPs.
- Apr 19 Security Operation - Misrata Province, Misrata: Misrara GASO Special Task faced arrested four persons who were attempting to smuggle 140,000 litres of fuel in four trucks. The fuel had been sourced in Misrata and was destined for Jufra and Sirte.
- Apr 19 SAF - Tripoli Province, Najila: SAF was reported, along with a possible armed group mobilization.
- Apr 20 Arrest - Misrata Province, Tawergha: Two individuals were arrested for the theft of MMR pipelines which they had intended to sell on as scrap metal.
- Apr 20 Security Operation - Tripoli Province, Twaisha: 444 Brigade were reported as taking over the Albaryyat VCP in al-Twaisha.
- Apr 20 Security Operation - Tripoli Province, Fornaj: The Judicial Police were reported as conducting mobile and static security operations in the Fornaj area.
- Apr 20 Accident - Tripoli Province, 7 April Camp: A civilian property was damaged during a military exercise at the Apr 7 Camp.
- Apr 21 Murder/ Execution - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: An individual named as Abdo Zaaït was shot and killed in the Zawiyah area.

## Cyrenaica



Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Cyrenaica

## Security Incidents

- Apr 16** | Arrest - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: The LNA Information Division announced the arrest of an IS cell that was planning attacks against the LNA. The statement added that a total of six individuals were arrested, including a woman, and that the arrests took place with the assistance of the ISA Eastern Region.
- Apr 16** | Security Operation - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Benghazi Security Directorate and the Joint Security Room conducted snap VCPs throughout Benghazi in order to impose security and apprehend wanted persons.
- Apr 16** | Carjacking - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: An armed carjacking was reported in the Bouatni area. One suspected was arrested afterwards with searches continuing for two other perpetrators.
- Apr 17** | Crime - Benghazi Province, Kuwayfiah: Gas Cylinders were stolen during a home invasion. Two suspects were later arrested.
- Apr 17** | Carjacking - Kufra Province, Kufra: An armed carjacking of two vehicles was reported in the Tazir area.
- Apr 17** | Kidnap - Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: The attempted kidnapping of a female was thwarted by passersby. The perpetrator fled the scene by was later arrested.
- Apr 18** | Crime - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Water pumps and copper wiring were stolen during a home invasion in al-Faakat. A suspect was later arrested.
- Apr 19** | Arrest - Benghazi Province, Suluq: Three Chadian nationals were arrested for the theft of copper wiring.
- Apr 19** | Armed Clash - Al-Butnan Province, Tobruk: An armed clash was reported between two families of the Masameer tribe. The incident resulted in 3 killed and 9 injured.
- Apr 20** | Accident - Benghazi Province, Hay al-Salam: A vehicle, reportedly driven by a minor, collided with a minibus resulting in the death of 11 Egyptian labourers.
- Apr 20** | Security Operation - Kufra Province, Ain Kazit BCP: Reported announcement by Subul al-Salam Brigade Border Crossing Official, Abdul Rahim Sultan of suspending the movement of cross-border trade movement at the Ain Kazit Border Crossing as of April 20. Ain Kazit Border crossing is said to have been taken over by a new security authority.

## Fezzan

No reported incidents

# 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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