

Libya daily security analysis report

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Latest Developments

Threat Warning

- Tensions are likely heightened around Tripoli International Airport after SDF mobilized to the area, triggering further mobilizations for 444 and 111 Brigade. SDF triggered clashes with 111 Brigade on January 19 after mobilizing to the airport area in an apparent attempt to exert some control over the airport. The airport is a strategic site, one which is seeing its importance increase as reconstruction efforts look to reinstate it as a functional airport, altering the balance of power in Tripoli and having a direct impact on SDF which has control over Mitiga, the capital's only currently functional airport.

Political Developments

- Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha has been suspended by the HoR. Minister of Finance (GNS) Osama Hamad has been appointed to take over with immediate effect.
- Minister of State for Prime Minister and Cabinet Affairs (GNU) Adel Jumaa Amer has been suspended as a "precautionary measure" by the head of the Administrative Control Authority and referred for investigation.
- Prime Minister (GNU) Abdulhamid Dbeibah had a meeting via video link with Ambassador and US Special Envoy, Richard Norland, and Chargé d'Affairs of the US Embassy in Libya, Leslie Ordeman. The meeting discussed the electoral process, the political and economic situation in the region, and the situation in Sudan.
- Prime Minister (GNU) Dbeibah received the Dutch Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paul Huijts in the Cabinet Council of Ministers in Tripoli. The meeting comes after the reopening of the Dutch Embassy in Tripoli. Prime Minister Dbeibah expressed his appreciation for Libyan-Dutch bilateral relations and stressed the importance of facilitating the issuance of visas for Libyan citizens.
- The Dutch Deputy Foreign Minister also met with Deputy Presidential Council member, Abdullah Lafi in Tripoli to discuss the Libyan political path and to strengthen bilateral relations.
- Minister of Foreign Affairs (GNU) Najla Mangoush visited Kuwait on an official two-day visit where she was received by her Kuwaiti counterpart, Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. This follows visits to Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain and comes before the 32nd Arab League Summit which is to be held in Jeddah on May 19.
- SRSR Abdoulaye Bathily met with a number of ambassadors and representatives of African countries to update them on UNSMIL's mission in Libya and to "exchange opinions on the political and security challenges facing the country and region."
- Mohamed El-Senussi, the son of the late Crown Prince of Libya, Hasan El-Senussi, has given a critical statement of Libyan politicians but stated now was not the time for presidential elections due to tensions. He stated that no one would accept the results of the polls.

Military Developments

- An unconfirmed report claims that a meeting is due to take place in Cairo on May 16 between Saddam Haftar and western region militia commanders.
- Lt Gen Osama Jweli, commander of the Western Mountain Military Region, deployed forces to Alasaba, Mizdah and Owiniya.

Economic Developments

- The GNS has signed an agreement with a consortium of international communities to complete the implementation of the metro project, backed by 30 billion Euros. The project is to be completed within seven to nine years and does not "impose any funding from the general treasury of the Libyan State."

Assessment

Political Developments

GNS: Prime Minister Bashagha resigns before his suspension

Prime Minister (GNS) Fathi Bashagha has tendered his resignation and attempted to hand over his duties to his deputy, Ali Al Qatrani. The move came just before the HoR voted to suspend Bashagha and refer him for investigation for "wasting public money." They have appointed Minister of Finance (GNS) Osama Hammad to take over from Bashagha with immediate effect. Hammad will also continue in his duties as finance minister.

In response to the development, the head of the HCS, Khalid Mishri, stated that the: "HoR continues its political absurdity, and we call on it to agree with the State Council to form a mini-government for the purpose of holding elections and ending the transitional period."

COMMENT: 'Bashagha's decision to resign and hand over to Qatrani was likely a bid to exercise some control in a situation he was fast losing control of and save some face after the HoR officially started the moving against him in their May 15 session. While the "official" political process has seen little movement over the past few weeks, less transparent processes, namely the bilateral talks between the Dbeibah and Haftar families, were reported to be coming to a head at the weekend. Reports have indicated that talks have included discussions suggesting that in exchange for the presidency, Dbeibah had agreed to give Haftar the ministries of Finance, Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Interior as part of a new unified executive.'

The above significant development comes as an unconfirmed report claims Saddam Haftar, the Haftar family's main interlocutor with the Dbeibah's, is due to meet with key western military commanders in Cairo (see below). These talks are reportedly aimed at agreeing a division of ministries. The situation continues to evolve with further talks likely ongoing. Some reports have also claimed that there is pressure on Speaker Saleh's position also. The bilateral talks between Dbeibah and Haftar threaten to sideline the HoR/ HCS track.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Military Developments

Talks between western commanders and Saddam due in Cairo

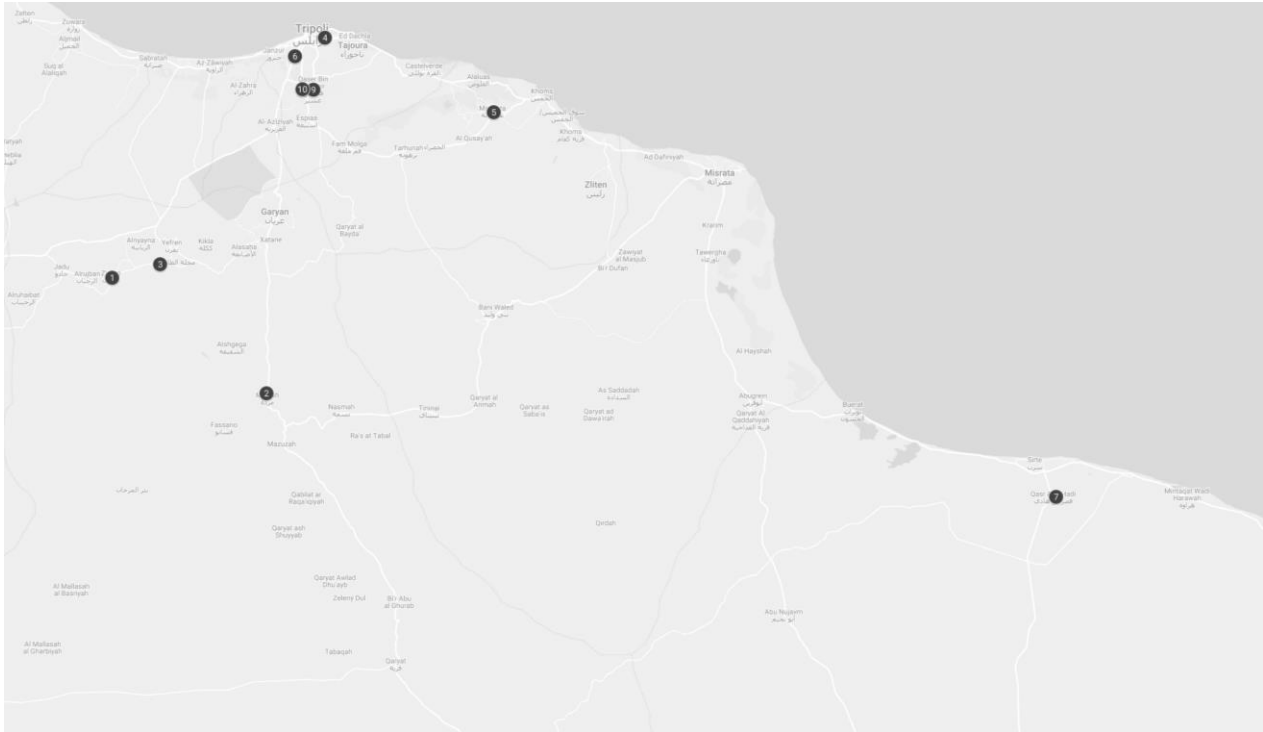
An unconfirmed report claims that a meeting is due to take place in Cairo on May 16 between Saddam Haftar and western region armed group commanders. Hossam Al-Qamati, a legal activist, claimed that Haftar will meet with Abdelsalam Zoubi commander of 111 Brigade, Mahmoud bin Rajab commander of 52 Infantry Brigade, Abdulghani al-Kikli commander of the Stability Support Agency, Mohammed Bahron (Al-Far) commander of First Force, Abdullah Trabelsi commander of the General Security Service and Fahim bin Ramadan of 301 Battalion.

The aim of the meeting is reportedly to "agree on modifying and supporting the GNU for three years so that Haftar receives the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Local Government and Finance." The report claims there is an agreement with the exception of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which Ibrahim Al-Dbeibah wishes to retain.

COMMENT: 'Securing the support of key western armed group commanders would be required to push through any political deal struck between the Dbeibah and Haftar families. This underlines the influence these commanders continue to have politically in Libya. While these commanders have likely been involved in the process to some degree already, bringing them to Cairo, timed with the removal of Bashagha, suggests a deal could be close. A three-year extension to the GNU mandate would also likely seal the fate of UNSMIL plans for elections by the end of 2023.' **COMMENT ENDS.**

Significant Incidents

Tripolitania Region



1. Military Announcement - May 15, Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Zintan: An unconfirmed report claimed that Lt Gen Osama Jweli moved a Pantsir Russian Air Defence System, sent to him by the LNA, to an ammunition warehouse, 25km south of Zintan.

2. Troop Movements - May 15 17:40, Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Mizdah: An armed convoy belonging to Lt Gen Osama Jweli moved from Alasaba and headed towards Mizdah city.

3. Troop Movements - May 15 20:59, Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Awiniya: An armed convoy belonging to Lt Gen Osama Jweli deployed to Awiniya, east of Zintan.

4. Arrest - May 15 21:19, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: GASO arrested a man accused of the embezzlement of 10 million LYD from accounts at the Trade and Development Bank.

5. Troop Movements - May 15 21:24, Al-Murqub Province, Msallata: Around 30 unidentified armed vehicles equipped with light and heavy weaponry mobilised in the area.

6. Troop Movements - May 15 22:44, Tripoli Province, 7 April Camp: A concentration of military vehicles were deployed around 7 April Camp.

7. Troop Movements - May 16 03:30, Sirte Province, Qasr Abu Hadi: The Tariq Bin Ziyad Brigade (LNA) mobilised in the area which is dominated by the Qadhadfa Tribe. This comes after a large security operation in the area in August and September 2022 against the tribe. The mobilisation could trigger further tensions between the two.

8. Troop Movements - May 16 12:13, Tripoli Province, Tripoli International Airport: SDF mobilised vehicles down Airport Road to Tripoli International Airport. Unconfirmed reports claim that this was to intervene in a dispute between armed groups protecting the site while construction is ongoing. SDF previously triggered an armed confrontation in February after it mobilised in an attempt to exert influence over the strategic site which is currently undergoing reconstruction.

9. Troop Movements - May 16 17:00, Tripoli Province, Qaser Bin Ghashir: 444 Brigade mobilised to the wider Tripoli International Airport area including Qaser Bin Ghashir.

10. Troop Movements - May 16 17:34, Tripoli Province, Tripoli International Airport: 111 Brigade has mobilised armed vehicles over the Oil Tanks Bridge on Airport Road heading towards TIP. This follows previous movements from 444 Brigade to areas adjacent to TIP including Qaser Bin Ghashir and SDF

earlier in the day. There remains an increased potential for heightened tensions and possible armed confrontations in the wider area of TIP. UAV activity has also been reported in the area.

Cyrenaica Region



11. Troop Movements - May 16 20:06, Al-Wahat Province, Oil Crescent: 128 Battalion (LNA) mobilised to patrol airports and airstrips in the oil basin.

Fezzan Region

NSTR

Offshore

NSTR

Outlook

Short Term Outlook

- Election momentum is failing to gain traction in Libya at present. The 6+6 Committee from the House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) remains the focal point of the political process for now but has failed to make any progress towards its goals. SRSB Abdoulaye Bathily is progressing his High-Level Panel for Elections (HLPE) concept with June given as a deadline for the 6+6 Committee to come to an agreement. Meanwhile, heads of both the HoR and HCS continue to meet in Cairo, however, political elites remain subject to accusations that they are employing stalling tactics to avoid elections. At the same time, some international stakeholders are becoming more wary of elections, suggesting they could bring about more instability and may not be the answer to solving Libya's complex issues.
- The security situation in and around Tripoli remains fundamentally unstable. After significant changes to the capital's security makeup in August and September 2022, tensions are once again

increasing as mistrust and competition grow. This is leading to increased concerns of a further outbreak of violence in or around Tripoli with tensions mainly building to the west of the capital at present.

- The outbreak of violence in Sudan has the potential to cause conflagration across the region and potentially destabilise the southern border areas with Libya. There has been speculation that the Libyan National Army (LNA) and even the National Oil Corporation (NOC) have been providing support to the Rapid Support Force (RSF), one of the belligerents of the Sudanese conflict, however there has been no evidence to support this. While the border has allegedly been closed on both sides, local reports suggest traffic is moving normally at this time. Efforts are underway in Kufra to establish mechanisms to support any refugees coming across the border, however, for now, reports suggest most Sudanese refugees moving over land borders are heading to other countries including Chad and Egypt.

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 whether elections are held or not. 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.
- The resurgence of Jihadist Salafism in Tripolitania remains a potential source of destabilisation with indications of renewed tensions between adherents and those of Madkhali Salafism. This competition between the opposing ideologies seeps into the political as well as the military spaces and is expected to slowly intensify as the Jihadist Salafi adherents gain strength in the region. This could increasingly become a defining factor for various groups involved in the political and military spaces.
- While the political process continues to falter, armed groups are exploiting the situation to increase their strength, influence and power across Libya which will likely have a longer-term negative impact on the political situation.
- 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
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
ISA – Internal Security Agency
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
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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