

Libya weekly security analysis report

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Prepared by:
Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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Executive Summary

- The threatened seizure of the NOC's accounts, or the imposition of an oil blockade gathered pace during the week and also resulted in a spat between the US Ambassador, Richard Norland and those supporting an embargo. On Jun 26 PM(GNS) Osama Hammad met with the Chairman of the NOC, Farhat Bengdara. Hammad and Bengdara reportedly discussed the mechanisms for implementing Resolution No. (49) regarding the distribution of national wealth, and the formation of a committee that includes the Ministry of Financial Planning, the Central Bank, the Administrative Control Authority and the Audit Bureau.
- US Ambassador Richard Norland stated that "The United States calls on Libyan political actors to refrain from the threat of an oil shutdown, which would have devastating repercussions on Libya's economy and harm all Libyans. We call on all Libyan leaders to put in place a comprehensive revenue control mechanism as a constructive way to address grievances over the distribution of oil revenues and to establish transparency without risking the health of Libya's economy or the apolitical nature of the NOC."
- In response to US Ambassador Richard Norland's social media post warning against an oil blockade, PM (GNS) Osama Hammad asserted that Norland's comments on the issue of the closure of oil terminals and the distribution of oil revenues were a blatant interference in Libya's internal affairs. He called on Norland to respect the sovereignty of the Libyan judiciary and not intervene in the favour of any party, claiming that Norland's statement was supporting the one party (GNU) that benefits from squandering. The statement from Hammad shows the political nature of the threat to close off oil production or control oil revenues. The issue of the formation of a new interim unified government appears to be at the core of the threat, however, this has received a decidedly lukewarm response from the wider international community.
- On Jun 27, PM (GNU) Dbeibah met with the new Russian Ambassador to Libya, Aidar Aghanin. The two discussed the resumption of Russian diplomatic work in Libya and the plan to reopen the Russian Embassy in Tripoli in August. Aghanin also conveyed Russian President Vladimir Putin's emphasis on the importance of strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries and supporting the efforts of the national unity government to achieve stability and implement elections.
- Unconfirmed sources then reported an airstrike against al Khadim (al Kharouba) Airbase in Eastern Libya on Jun 29. The base is a home to Wagner group operations, however, the report indicated no casualties were inflicted. The incident has generated a flurry of speculation, over whether the attack actually took place, and if so, who was the perpetrator. The GNU confirmed that the attack had not been perpetrated by their drones, as did AFRICOM.
- In a closed session of the HoR on Jun 26, Najib Abdel Salam Mohared was voted in as the President of the Constitutional Court. The decision has proved extremely controversial as only 14 members were present at the session. In protest at the decisions, a group of forty HoR members later threatened to boycott future HoR sessions and hold a consultative session in Tripoli after Eid al-Adha. In a statement the members described the decisions as invalid and that the closed session did not rise to the level of legislation or a parliamentary decision.
- A suspected airstrike by the Sudanese Government was reported on Jun 25 against an alleged RSF camp near al Aweinat on the Libyan side of the border. If the reporting is correct, this is the first episode of conflict spillover from the Sudanese conflict. Sudanese Sovereign Council, Malik Agar, also claimed that they had information on the cooperation of Wagner Group Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in southern Libya.

Outlook

Short Term Outlook

- The HoR/HCS track slowed, however, the HoR due to debate the election laws that have emanated from the 6+6 committee. Saleh has already raised concerns on the issue of dual nationality, a mandatory second round and the size/allocation of the parliament. Running in tandem is the concept of a new unified government to replace the GNU. The concept has the support of the HoR, HCS, LNA and the GNS, with all seeing such a government as a means to exert control and influence. For the very same reasons, the GNU remains resolutely opposed to it, while UNSMIL and the International community's reaction has been decidedly lukewarm. Both UNSMIL and the IC likely view the replacement of the GNU as an unnecessary threat to political security and by extension the election process, while also being concerned that any interim government would attempt to extend its tenure and prove to be an election spoiler.
- Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar has once again positioned himself well with influence over both the HoR/HCS track and the competing power-sharing talks between his family and the Dbeibah clan. With progress appearing possible on the HoR/HCS track, pressure is now growing on the power-sharing talks to come to an agreement, an agreement which could yet cause a significant rupture in the political landscape in the short term.
- The threat of an oil blockade or GNS control of NOC accounts both represent a further threat to the GNU and would see funding cut off for the GNU's cash-heavy projects. The coming week is likely to see a reaction from the CBL, who would be required to allow the GNS control of the NOC accounts. Likewise should this cooperation not be forthcoming and the GNS move to impose a force majeure, this would require action from the LNA. To date, Haftar or the General Command has yet to comment on the threat, and their cooperation cannot be guaranteed.
- The outbreak of violence in Sudan has the potential to cause conflagration across the region and destabilise the southern border areas with Libya. Speculation continues to suggest that the Libyan National Army (LNA) is providing material support to the Rapid Support Force (RSF), one of the belligerents of the Sudanese conflict. Convoys heading south from Libya have been targeted by the Sudanese Armed Forces, an activity which may well have encroached on Libyan territory. While the border has allegedly been closed on both sides, local reports suggest traffic is moving normally at this time.

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.

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-Extreme	High	High	Low-Moderate
Sabha	High	Moderate	High	High	High	Moderate

Threat Scale

Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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Weekly Assessment

Administrative Seizure of NOC Accounts or Oil Blockade Gathers Pace

The threatened seizure of the NOC's accounts, or the imposition of an oil blockade gathered pace during the week and also resulted in a spat between the US Ambassador, Richard Norland and those supporting an embargo.

The HoR Energy and Natural Resources Committee has supported the decision of the GNS to take legal measures related to the administrative seizure of oil revenues. This is linked to recent reporting that the Benghazi Court of Appeal confirmed the freeze on the bank accounts of the NOC. This has not yet been enforced and may prove difficult to implement. Later, on Jun 26, 73 members of the HoR also expressed their support for the GNS decision to legally secure the nation's oil revenues. The statement argued that it was necessary to safeguard these assets and prevent potential mismanagement by the "Dbeibah administration."

On Jun 26 PM(GNS) Osama Hammad met with the Chairman of the NOC, Farhat Bengdara. Hammad and Bengdara reportedly discussed the mechanisms for implementing Resolution No. (49) regarding the distribution of national wealth, and the formation of a committee that includes the Ministry of Financial Planning, the Central Bank, the Administrative Control Authority and the Audit Bureau. The two also

discussed the increase in oil production rates, the corporation's plan to increase them, and the need for equitable distribution of the national wealth to all Libyan cities.

Following the meeting, unconfirmed open sources reported that the Chairman of the NOC, Farhat Bengdara has submitted his resignation and is to be replaced temporarily by NOC board member, Hussein Saffar. Bengdara also claimed that "Haftar's sons" were planning on closing oil fields in areas under their control. Reportedly individuals close to Dbeibah were attempting to dissuade Bengdara from following through on his resignation. Notably the supposed resignation has neither been confirmed nor denied since it was first reported.

Bengdara's stance on the threatened oil blockade is not known, however, as he was appointed as a result of an agreement between PM (GNU) Dbeibah and LNA Commander Khalifa Haftar it is probable that he would not be aligned with Hammad on the issue of the cessation of operations and both Haftar and Dbeibah will move to stop Bengdara from standing down. Bengdara has also been keen to show that the NOC is not politicised, having recently made the point to US Ambassador Norland, and this most recent blockade is primarily viewed as a political move by the GNS to starve the GNU of finances rather than the alleged protection of finance which Hammad has claimed.

Norland Comments on Oil Blockade

During a dialogue seminar on Jun 30, the Special US Envoy and Ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland conceded that it is challenging to persuade Libyan politicians to hold elections. He noted the “enormous level of mistrust” between Libya politicians as a root cause. He also stated that the US has been examining means of “how to assist Libyans in reaching a mechanism for distributing oil revenues.”

Later in a tweet on social media, Norland stated that "The United States calls on Libyan political actors to refrain from the threat of an oil shutdown, which would have devastating repercussions on Libya's economy and harm all Libyans. We call on all Libyan leaders to put in place a comprehensive revenue control mechanism as a constructive way to address grievances over the distribution of oil revenues and to establish transparency without risking the health of Libya's economy or the apolitical nature of the NOC."

In response to US Ambassador Richard Norland's social media post warning against an oil blockade, PM (GNS) Osama Hammad asserted that Norland's comments on the issue of the closure of oil terminals and the distribution of oil revenues were a blatant interference in Libya's internal affairs. He called on Norland to respect the sovereignty of the Libyan judiciary and not intervene in the favour of any party, claiming that Norland's statement was supporting the one party (GNU) that benefits from squandering. He then once again repeated his threat to 'raise the red flag' to stop the flow of oil revenue in order to protect it from misuse by "corrupt individuals." Lastly, he called on the HoR and the HCS to expedite practical steps towards presidential and parliamentary elections and proceed with forming a new unified government.

The statement from Hammad shows the political nature of the threat to close off oil production or control oil revenues. The issue of the formation of a new interim unified government appears to be at the core of the threat, however, this has

received a decidedly lukewarm response from the wider international community. This has been noted both in this most recent verbal attack, and previous statements vilifying both Norland and SRSG Bathily and claiming that both were working against the prospect of elections due to a perceived bias towards the GNU.

In a publicly released statement, the HoR's Energy Committee echoed Hammad's comments and asserted that Norland's statement on the threat of an oil closure was “a blatant interference in the internal affairs of the Libyan State.” The statement added that Norland was concerned with the flow of oil while ignoring the suffering of the people of Cyrenaica and Fezzan. The statement also claimed that Norland ignored the corruption of the GNU.

Russia Restores Diplomatic Mission

On Jun 27, PM (GNU) Dbeibah met with the new Russian Ambassador to Libya, Aidar

Aghanin. The two discussed the resumption of Russian diplomatic work in Libya and the plan to reopen the Russian Embassy in Tripoli in August. Aghanin also conveyed Russian President Vladimir Putin's emphasis on the importance of strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries and supporting the efforts of the national unity government to achieve stability and implement elections.

Later The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov commented that Libya had been turned into a “black

hole” and that through its southern borders bandits smuggled weapons to the Sahara-Sahel region as well as “terrorists of all stripes, extremists, and drug dealers poured in who are still terrorizing the corresponding countries of the African continent.” He blamed this development on the actions of NATO in 2011 claiming "They violated a UN Security Council resolution that prohibited such actions. They ruined the Libyan state, which the entire international community is still collecting piece by piece and cannot implement it." The comments came as Lavrov was explaining the

“The United States calls on Libyan political actors to refrain from the threat of an oil shutdown, which would have devastating repercussions on Libya's economy and harm all Libyans.”

US Ambassador Norland – Jun 30

presence of Wagner Group in Mali and the CAR, claiming that the security situations in both nations were a result of the collapse of Libya.

Lavrov also announced that “African countries which dealt with Wagner Group were not panicked” by the short-lived insurrection led by Wagner Group leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin. Lavrov added that “This situation cannot change the strategic relationship between Russia and its African partners” as those countries that hired Wagner also had direction security cooperation with Moscow. Separately, Prigozhin released an 11-minute address, in which he reminded Russians of the group’s service to Moscow in Africa, Arab countries and Ukraine. However, the continued role and presence of Wagner Group in Libya remains in question given the developments in Russia over the weekend. A single report indicates that a group of five Wagner Group vehicles departed Jufra Airbase on Jun 26 and were noted moving around the area.

Unconfirmed sources then reported an airstrike against al Khadim (al Kharouba) Airbase in Eastern Libya on Jun 29. The base is a home to Wagner group operations, however, the report indicated no casualties were inflicted. The incident has generated a flurry of speculation, over whether the attack actually took place, and if so, who was the perpetrator. Initial reports indicated that the attack had been perpetrated by the GNU using a Turkish-produced Akinci drone. This was denied by GNU CoS Muhammad Haddad who stated that

“None of our drones targeted any military site in the eastern region. This news is intended to ignite the fuse of war between the Libyans and bring Libya into a regional conflict fueled by its people.”

LNA sources claimed that “There is no truth to what the Dbeibah government leaked to the Qatari Arabi 21 website and the Agence France-Presse about its bombing of a site in Marj.” The source also added that “If Al-Dabaiba and his government dared to do such a thing, the ceasefire agreement would be considered void, and the response would be in Tripoli.” Other theories have been speculated, including the strike having been perpetrated by either the US or Russia. The US has since denied any involvement with Kelly Kahlan, head of the

media operations team at the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), stating that “We have nothing to do with the aerial bombardments that targeted some sites in Libya in the past two days, and the last raid we carried out was in September 2019.”

The strike itself is in doubt, and the total absence of any pictorial evidence casts some doubt on the attack. Likewise, if the attack did take place, the perpetrator is unlikely to be made public in light of the potential negative repercussions.

HoR Controversially Appoints the President of the Constitutional Court

In a closed session of the HoR on Jun 26, Najib Abdel Salam Mohared was voted in as the President of the Constitutional Court. The decision has proved extremely controversial as

only 14 members were present at the session which was moderated by the second deputy of the HoR, Mosbah Duma (neither Speaker Aqila Saleh nor First Deputy Nuwari were present. The group also voted to dismiss the current head of the Administrative Control Authority (a Sovereign position) Suleiman Shanti and appointed Khalid Amrajeh Mabrouk as his successor.

In protest at the decisions, a group of forty HoR members later threatened to boycott

future HoR sessions and hold a consultative session in Tripoli after Eid al-Adha. In a statement the members described the decisions as invalid and that the closed session did not rise to the level of legislation or a parliamentary decision. They also gave the HoR’s presidency a deadline to cancel the decisions issued in the session no later than the date of the consultative session in Tripoli, which “will be decisive in the history of the HoR’s tenure.”

The contested appointment of the President of the Constitutional Court and the head of the ACA has the potential to be divisive on several levels. The Supreme Court in Tripoli rejects the formation of an eastern-based Constitutional Court, as does the HCS which views such a body to be above the remit of the HoR. The

“None of our drones targeted any military site in the eastern region. This news is intended to ignite the fuse of war between the Libyans and bring Libya into a regional conflict fueled by its people.”

GNU CoS Major General Haddad – Jun 30

head of the HCS, Khaled Mishri, later affirmed his adherence to the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court on the appointment.

The issue also threatens to split the HoR itself given that the votes were held without a formal HoR session and were only voted on by a small select group of the HoR. Such a split poses issues with the expected debate on the election laws which was planned for after Eid al-Adha and may result in further delays to the amendment or ratification of the laws.

Sudanese Government Strike RSF in Libya

A suspected airstrike by the Sudanese Government was reported on Jun 25 against an alleged RSF camp near al Aweinat on the Libyan side of the border. If the reporting is correct, this is the first episode of conflict spillover from the Sudanese conflict. RSF forces have long had a presence in Libya, with RSF personnel being supplied to the LNA in 2019 to

provide rear area protection so that LNA personnel could be released to partake in the assault on Tripoli. If RSF is to use the immediate Libyan border area as a 'safe haven' or logistic hub, further attacks can be expected. To date, there has been no formal acknowledgement from either the Libyan or Sudanese authorities that the attack did take place.

Later in the week the Deputy Chairman of the Sudanese Sovereign Council, Malik Agar, claimed that they had information on the cooperation of Wagner Group Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in southern Libya. Since the outbreak of the conflict between the RSF and Sudanese Government Forces, there have been reports of Wagner Group assistance to RSF as well as alleged direct involvement by Wagner Group forces in the fighting. RSF also appear to be present in Southern Libya with the earlier alleged airstrike by Sudanese Government Forces near the border in southeast Libya.

Weekly Statistical Overview

Region	Incident Count	Injuries	Fatalities	Kidnapped	Arrests
Tripolitania	10	0	3	0	8
Cyrenaica	7	0	1	1	38
Fezzan	2	0	0	0	0
Offshore	1	0	0	0	0
Total	20	0	4	1	46

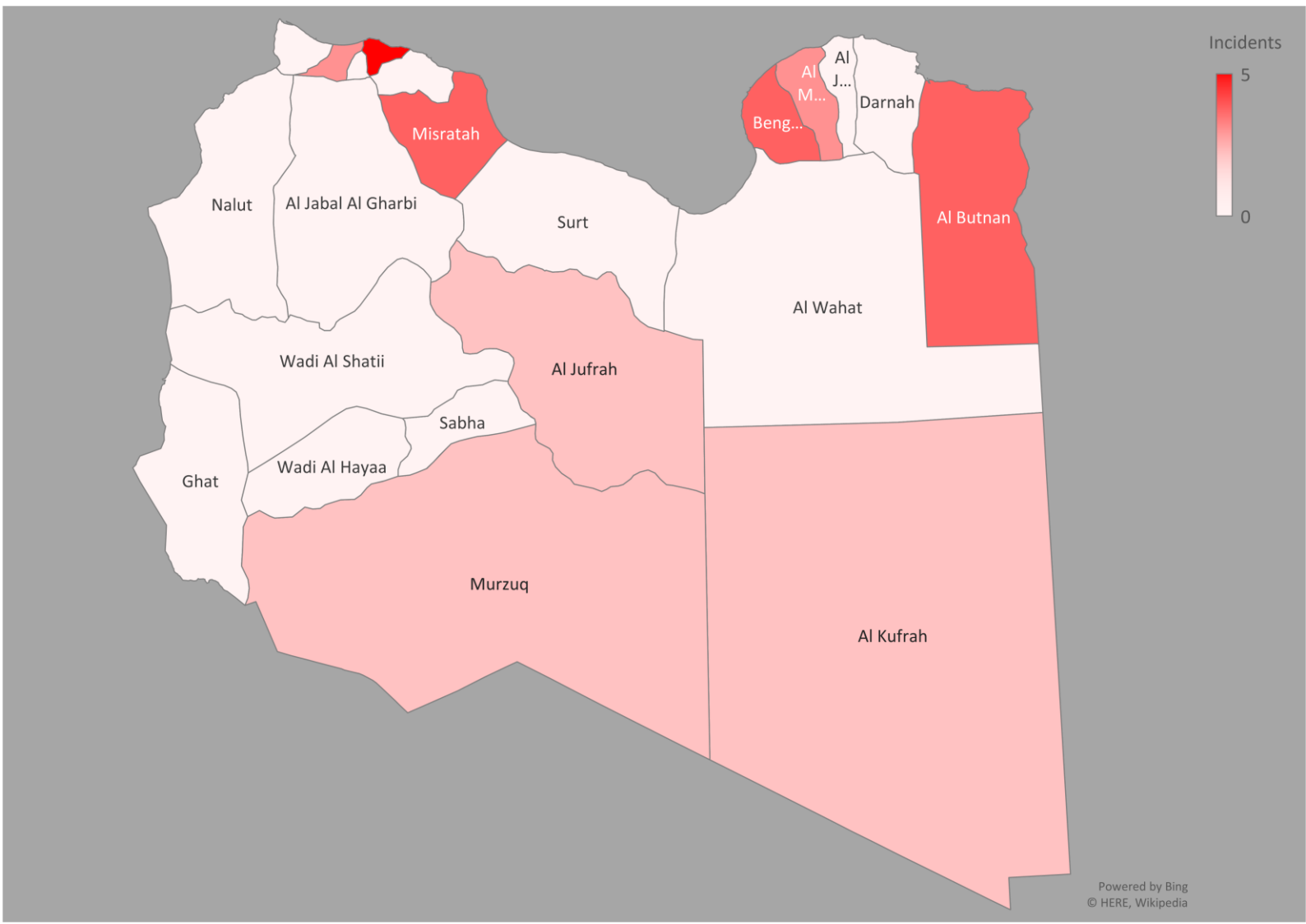


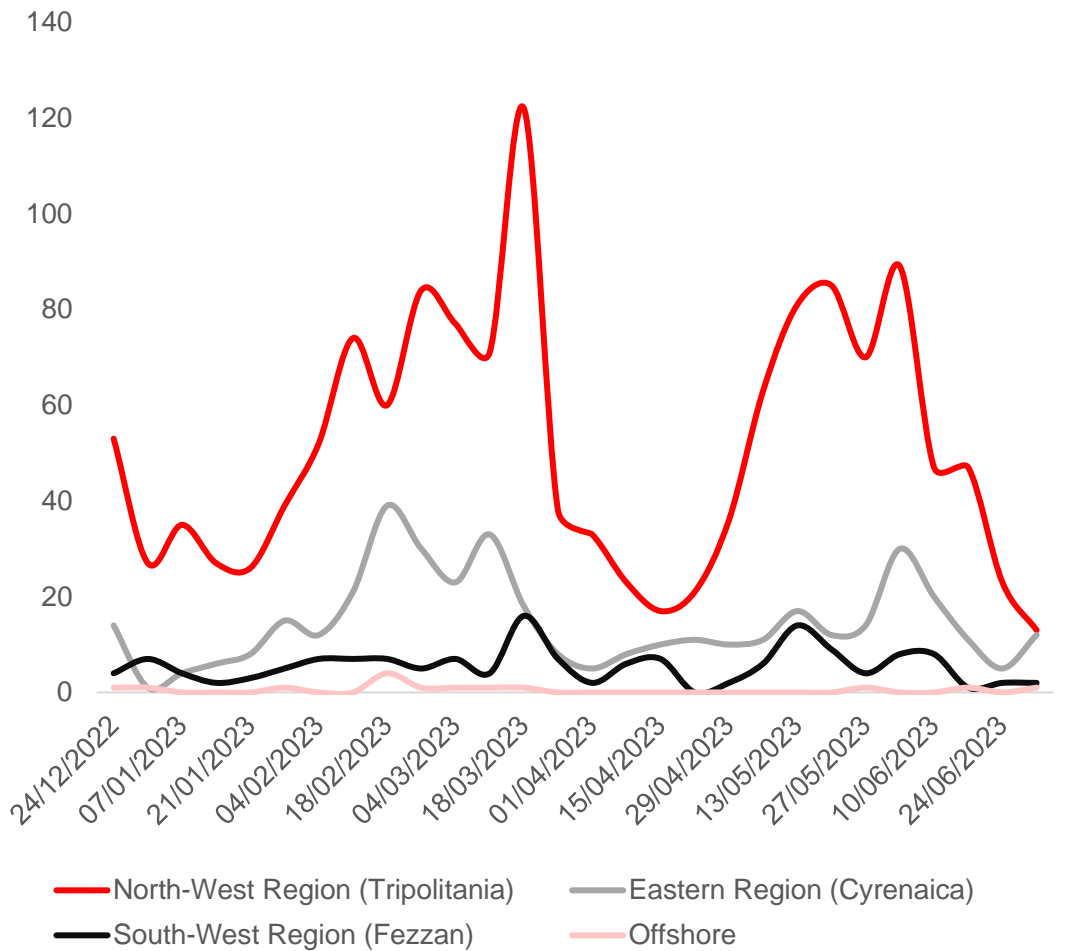
Image: Weekly security incidents across the country by province

Activity levels decreased from 30 to 21 this week.

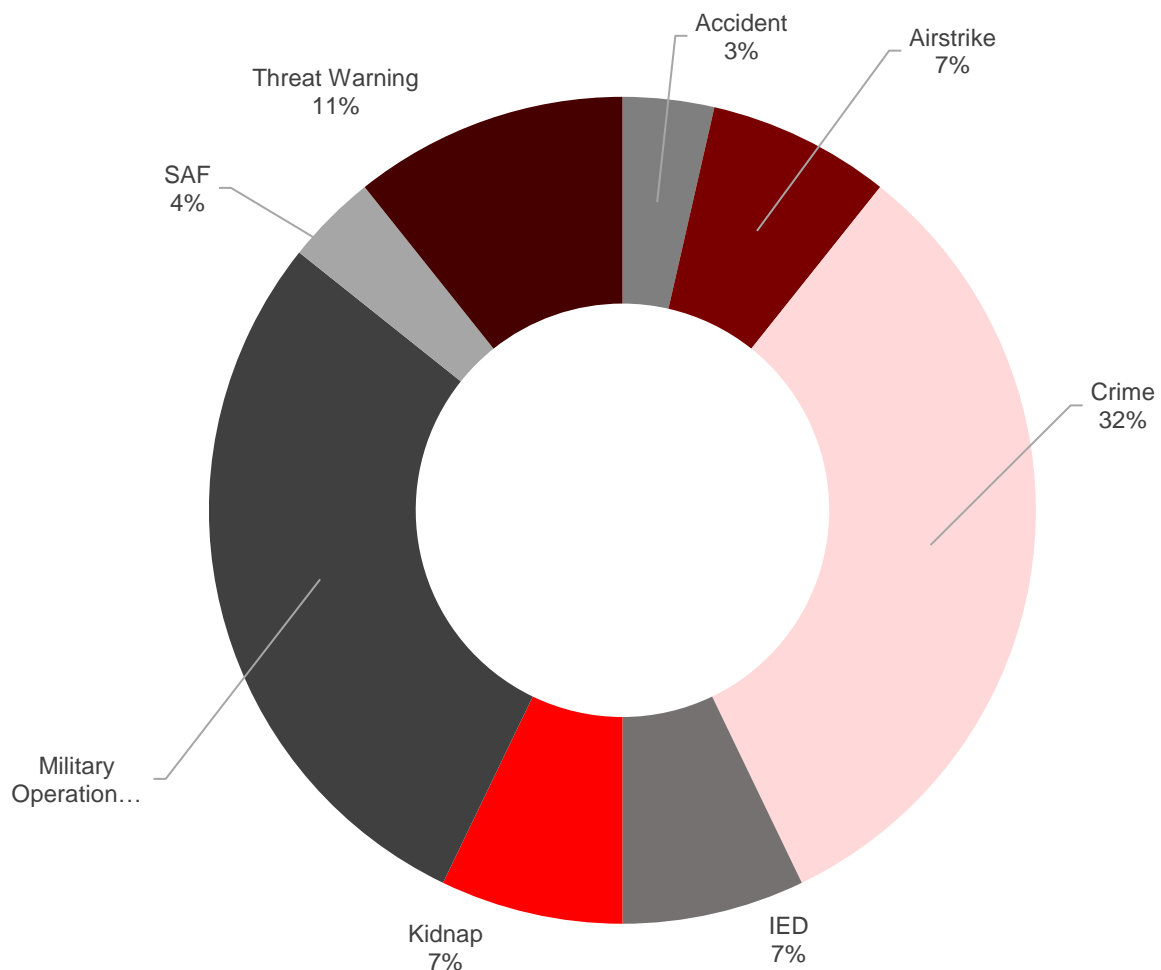
Tripolitania saw a decrease with ten incidents this week compared to 23 from last week. Several meetings discussing security along the northwest coastline were reported and a large forum is also expected to be held in the coming period which will bring together security actors, mayors and dignatories to discuss the implementation of the security plan. The sharp decline in incidents is assessed as being due to the Eid al Adha Holiday period.

Activity levels in Cyrenia increased this week with seven incidents. TBZ were reported as conducting anti-smuggling operations between Tobruk and Egypt. Airstrikes were also reported, with one targeting Wagner Group in Khadim airbase and the other RSF in the far south.

Activity remain low in the south with two incidents. 128 Brigade were reported as conducting border operations on the Libya Chad border.



Graph: Weekly security incidents across the country by region for the past six months



Graph: Weekly security incidents across the country by incident category for the week

Weekly Significant Incidents

Tripolitania

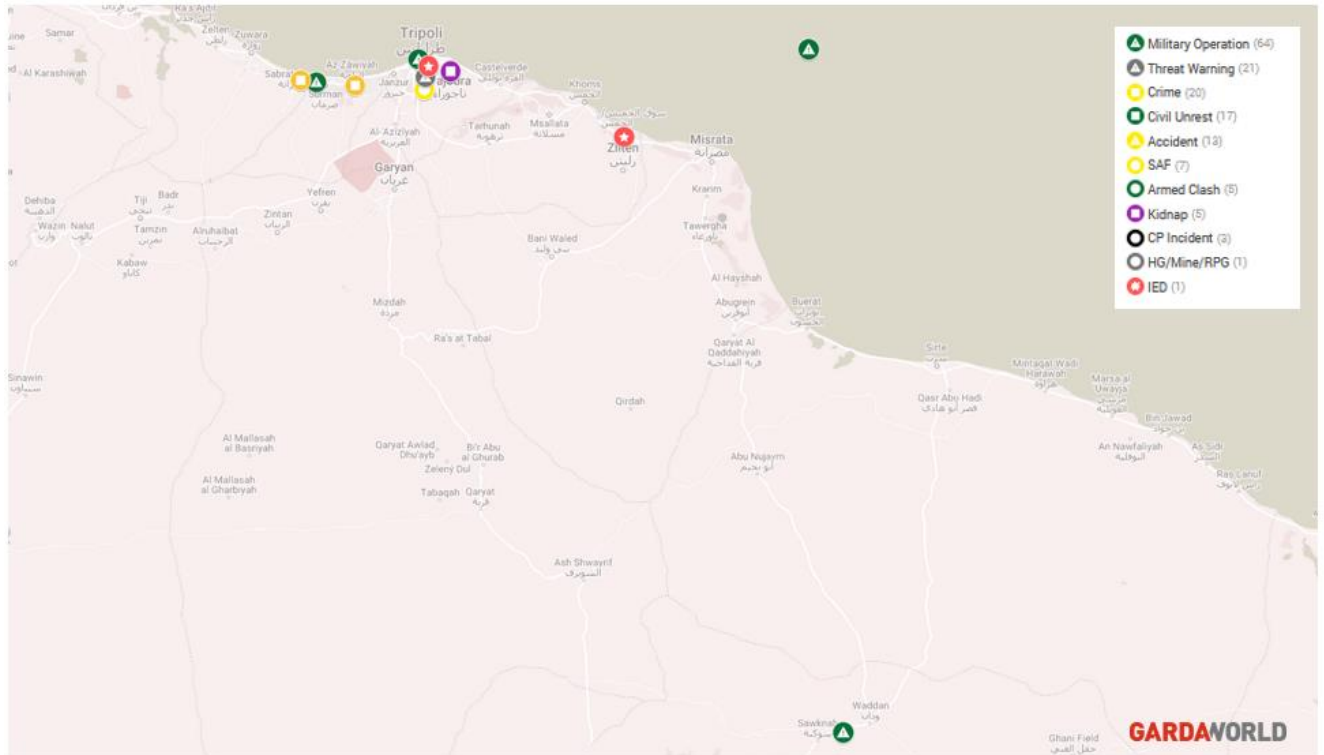


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Tripolitania

Security Incidents

- Jun 26** Troop Movements - Tripoli Province, Omar al Mukhtar Road: A suspected mobilization of Judicial police was reported near the savings and real estate investment bank on Omar al Mukhtar Road.
- Jun 27** Murder/ Execution - Tripoli Province, Tajura: An African national was killed by another African national due to a money dispute. The perpetrator was arrested.
- Jun 28** Murder/ Execution - Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A member of the al Saqr family was killed following a dispute with a local security actor.
- Jun 30** Kidnap - Tripoli Province, Tajura: An individual was detained/kidnapped by an armed group. Separate sources claim the individual was detained on the orders of the Military Prosecutor.
- Jun 30** Forced Seizure of Land - Tripoli Province, Khallat al-Furjan: Suspected 444 Brigade allegedly took over the GIS National Security Department HQ.
- Jun 30** Security Operation - Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: A security operation targeting human trafficking recovered a boat used in the trade.
- Jun 30** SAF - Tripoli Province, Wadi Alrabea: A suspected SAF attack was reported against a CP at Wadi Alrabea
- Jul 01** Unknown Explosion - Al-Murqub Province, Zliten: A fire with accompanying explosions was reported at a warehouse in Zliten. The warehouse is reported as belonging to the Ahmed al-Futaisi armed group.

- Jul 01** | Arrest - Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratabh: Sabratabh CID arrested an individual who had previously escaped from a CID detention room. The individual is charged with a kidnapping in Nov 2022.
- Jul 01** | Unknown Explosion - Tripoli Province, Fornaj: A fuel tank exploded at the HQ of the Judicial Police

Cyrenaica

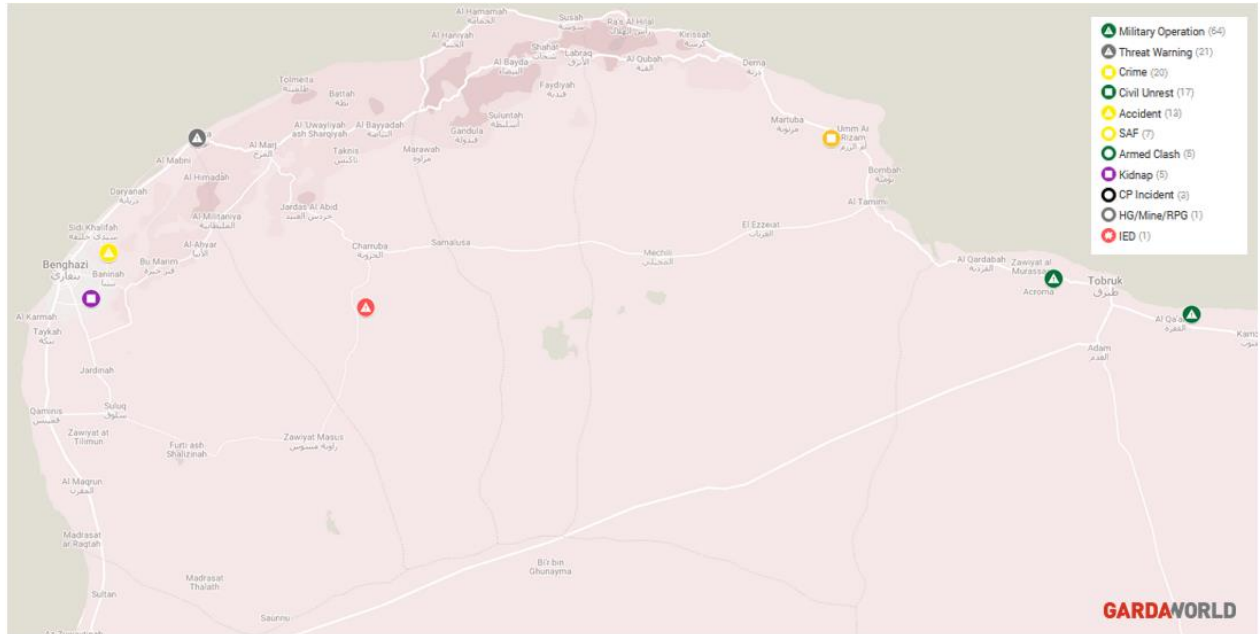


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Cyrenaica

Security Incidents

- Jun 27** | Security Operation - Al-Butnan Province, Tobruk: The DCIM raided a house in Tobruk and detained 34 undocumented migrants of Egyptian, Pakistani and Sudanese nationals. The group was transferred to the Immigration Detention Centre in Tobruk.
- Jun 28** | Security Operation - Al-Butnan Province, Tobruk: LNA forces were reported as conducting an anti-smuggling operation between Tobruk and the Egyptian border.
- Jun 28** | Kidnap - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: An individual named as Belqasem al Jardi was detained/kidnapped by suspected ISA Benghazi. Jardi is a member of the Obeidat.
- Jun 29** | Other - Al-Marj Province, Tokra: The Libyan Red Crescent recovered a body from Tokra beach.
- Jun 29** | Airstrike - Al-Marj Province, Khadim Airbase: A suspected air strike was reported at al-Khadim (al Karrouba) Airbase. The attack was reported as targeting Wagner Group forces stationed at the base. No injuries were reported and the attack has been denied by both LNA and GNU sources.
- Jun 30** | Crime - Derna Province, Umm al-Rizam: Several kilos of heroin were recovered from a beach west of Umm al Rizam.
- Jul 01** | Accident - Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A gas pipeline fire was reported in the Ras al-Mankar area.

Fezzan

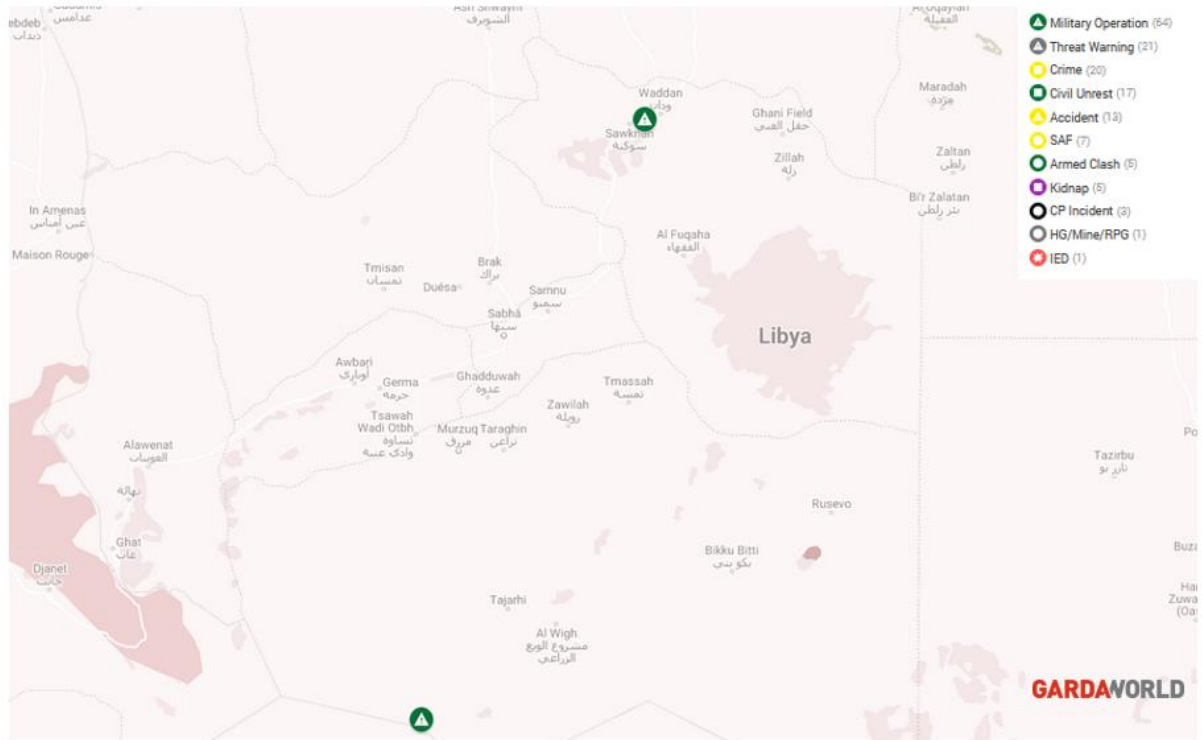


Image: Weekly security incidents reported across Fezzan

Security Incidents

- Jun 26** | Troop Movements - Al-Jufra Province, Jufra Airbase: An alleged group of Wagner Forces was reported as leaving al-Jufra Airbase in five vehicles and moved around the immediate area of the base.
- Jun 30** | Security Operation - Murzuq Province, Libya - Niger Border: The LNA's 128 Brigade were reported as conducting operations in the vicinity of the Libyan-Niger border.

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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