# GEOS



Libya WEEKLY BRIEF

May  $17^{th}$  – May  $23^{rd}$ , 2023



# LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

POLITICS: Following the suspension of Fathi Bashagha from his role as Prime Minister of the GNS, this week saw the first meetings of Osama Hammad in his official position of GNS' acting PM. On 17/05, he met with the Head of the HoR, Aguila Saleh, at the latter's office in Al-Qubbah. It is worth noting that an HoR vote is the one who decided the suspension of Bashagha and the following investigation over Bashagha's performance as Prime Minister, reportedly including financial aspects. In his 17/05 meeting with Saleh, Hammad, who is also GNS' Finance Minister, reportedly discussed the workflow of the HoR-appointed government in the current situation.

On the same day, Osama Hammad met in Benghazi with the Deputy Governor of the CBL and Head of the CBL's eastern branch, Marai Moftah Al-Barassi. During the meeting, as reported by local media, they reviewed facilitating bank clearing procedures, ways to provide cash, and necessary and emergency services to citizens. Talks with Al-Barassi highlighted Hammad's continuing focus on financial aspects and attention to perspectives of currently stalled efforts for a reunification of the Central Bank. In Benghazi, Hammad met also with the GNS' Deputy Prime Minister, Ali Al-Qatrani, to discuss the continuation of the GNS' work at this new stage.

Days later, on 21/05, Osama Hammad delivered his first televised speech as GNS' Prime Minister, showing his government's availability to political dialogue. In his speech, he declared that the GNS' is ready to "extend a hand to all" in the framework of a comprehensive national dialogue, launching an initiative to open "channels of communication with everyone", in order to achieve "free, fair and democratic elections that will end differences and divisions". Hammad also called on international actors, namely diplomatic missions and the UNSMIL, "to play their role and push for the success of national reconciliation" in Libya and confirmed his intention to stay committed to international agreements and the relative international obligations.

Regarding reconciliation, Hammad expressed the hope that Libya's military institution will be reunified across the country and praised dialogue efforts between the eastern and the western branches of the CBL. Speaking of continuity with Bashagha's mandate, he affirmed that his GNS will continue to work to achieve the same goals that Bashagha's GNS had, "extending a hand" to "all national forces" in every Libyan region and aiming at the holding of free and fair elections, the results of which will have to be accepted by all parties.

Bashagha's suspension and Hammad's appointment on 16/05 had sparked strong criticism from the HCS's Head, Khaled Al-Mashri, raising concerns over the possible effects of this on the ongoing HCS-HoR negotiations about electoral laws in the framework of the 6+6 Committee. However, on 18/05, HoR's Speaker Aguila Saleh intervened on the subject of the 6+6 Committee's performance, declaring that he expected the two delegations to reach an agreement by the end of May and the elections to be organized before the end of 2023. Furthermore, in an interview on 20/05, Saleh added that he did not agree with the parliamentary assembly's decision to suspend Bashagha, saying that such decision had been taken hastily and that he had asked not to rush it. In the same interview, he reiterated his stance that the formation of a new transitional "mini-government" will be necessary to lead the country to elections, and that the formation of such executive will be done in cooperation with the HCS after agreement is reached with it on election laws.

Assessment: The first meetings and declarations of Osama Hammad as the GNS' acting Prime Minister evidenced the intention of the new PM — who was already Finance Minister of the same government — to commit to continuity and to the goals of the Bashagha administration. Nonetheless, no reference to the aim of taking up office in Tripoli was made by Hammad, who rather focused on openness to dialogue with all parties. A similar approach was shown by Saleh, who did not go against Al-Mashri's rejection of Bashagha's suspension, but rather stressed the need to focus on ongoing HCS-HoR talks for electoral laws and the



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formation of a third government as alternative to both GNU and GNS before elections, a plan on which HCS and HoR top officials have already agreed in principle over since late 2022.

POLITICS: On 22/05, a new meeting session of the 6+6 Committee started in Bouznika, Morocco. On the following day, the committee announced the achievement of full consensus regarding the points related to presidential and parliamentary elections. The committee also confirmed – as already established with by the 13<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment passed in February – that the next legislative authority, the National Assembly, will be composed of two chambers (the HoR and the Senate), and that presidential and legislative elections will be organized simultaneously. Furthermore, the committee made progress on issues including defining and distributing seats in the HoR and Senate according to constituencies, the procedures to form and approve lists of candidates, and representation of women. It also announced its commitment to complete electoral laws and its support for the formation of a new government leading to elections.

Assessment: The announcement made by the 6+6 Committee on 23/05 signaled a positive continuation of dialogue between HCS and HoR, and the achievement of progress on important points at the basis of the electoral laws to be drafted. It must be noted that a full legal framework for elections, which is the main and final task of the 6+6 Committee, is yet to be established, as electoral laws are yet to be completed. However, further progress might be reached during the next week as dialogue continues in Morocco.

DIPLOMACY: This week saw the holding of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Arab League Summit in Jeddah, which saw the participation of delegations from all Arab League's member states, most of which were represented by heads of state. On 19/05, the summit was concluded with the issuing a final statement, now known as Jeddah Declaration, evoking the strengthening of joint Arab action based on common foundations and interests.

At the Jeddah meeting, the Chairman of the PC, Mohamed Menfi, delivered a speech, urging the Arab League to have a more active and clearer role in Libya and in supporting the efforts of the UN and the AU to achieve national reconciliation, a goal to which the PC itself has committed through plans for a National Conference among all of the country's main political actors and civil society representatives. Menfi also touched upon joint efforts and collaboration between UNSMIL, PC, and 5 + 5 JMC to facilitate a reunification of Libya's military institution and expressed support for steps taken by the HCS and the HoR through the 6 + 6 Committee tasked with reaching consensus on electoral laws.

Assessment: Menfi's declarations in Jeddah showed the PC's intention to continue to present itself as a neutral actor, to be considered a potential mediator in the Libyan context, a position it maintained with the promotion of its National Reconciliation initiative and conference over the past months. Menfi's speech also highlighted the PC's intention to gather international support and consolidate such role from the viewpoint of international actors.

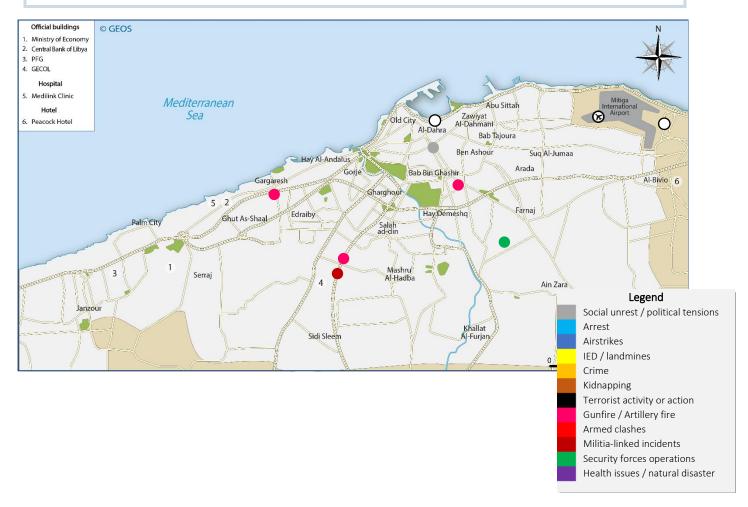
DIPLOMACY: During the week, the Head of the LNA, Khalifa Haftar, held two diplomatic meetings in Benghazi, on 21/05 and 22/05, respectively with French and the Swedish representatives. On the first meeting, he met with the French Ambassador to Libya, Mostafa Mihraje. They discussed the latest developments in Libya, the ongoing crisis in Sudan, and how the situation in that country can have an impact on Libya. Joint cooperation was discussed by Haftar with the Swedish Ambassador to Libya, Anna Block Mazoyer, on the following day.

Assessment: The meetings held by Haftar showed the persisting involvement of the LNA in diplomatic talks, mainly revolving around military and security issues, and the importance given by international actors to the LNA's role as regards such issues. Earlier this month, Haftar visited Rome, for talks with the Italian PM and ministers, mainly focusing on illegal migration and security.



# **SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS**

# TRIPOLI



Main incidents of the week				
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Tripoli, Gargaresh: On 23/05, unidentified shooting was reportedly heard in Tripoli's Gargaresh neighbourhood. No further information available.			
May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tripoli: On 22/05, 2 civilians were arrested by the SSA during 2 separate security operations in Tripoli. They are accused of kidnapping and murder.			
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripoli, Ben Ashour: Unidentified shooting was heard in the late hours of 18/05 in central Tripoli's Ben Ashour neighborhood.			
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripoli, Al-Dahra: A fire broke out in the late hours of 18/05 in the garden of the Egyptian Embassy in central Tripoli's Al-Dahra neighborhood, reportedly due to fireworks during the passage of a wedding procession. No casualties or significant damages were reported. The fire was extinguished by National Safety Authority staff and security forces were deployed around the building.			
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Tajoura: On17/05, 14 civilians were injured in a road accident in front of the Marine Research Centre in Tajoura.			
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Tripoli, Al-Seka Road: On 17/05, dozens of engineering graduates protested in front of NOC's offices on central Tripoli's Al-Seka Road, demanding employment.			
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Tripoli, Tripoli International Airport Road (south): Armed convoys, allegedly coming from Zawiya and Al-Swani, were seen on 17/05 while heading towards Tripoli International Airport Road in southern Tripoli.			



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May 17th

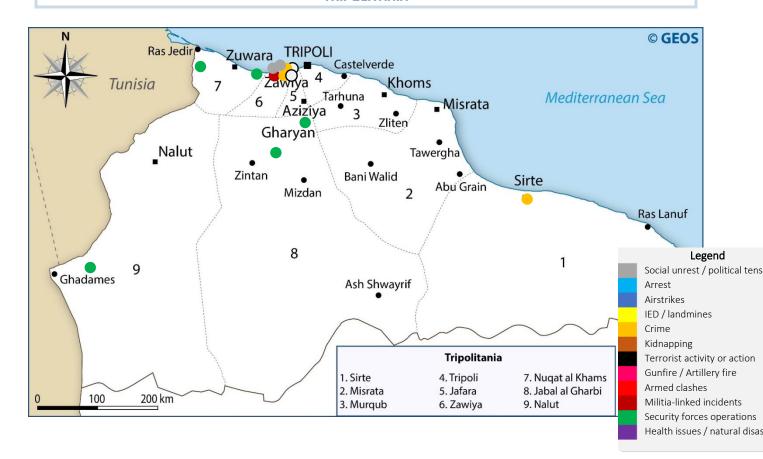
Tripoli, Tripoli International Airport Road (south): Unidentified shooting was heard on 17/05 in southern Tripoli's Tripoli International Airport Road.

### Outlook

- → High tensions between armed groups, risk of armed clashes and of retaliatory attacks (targeted killings, kidnappings);
- → Increased risk of protests linked to the political transition process and the deterioration of socioeconomic conditions;
- → Latent terrorist threat in the capital;
- → Volatile security environment due to the high circulation of weapons among the population;
- → Pursuit of the **reinforcement of the security apparatus and anti-criminal operations**, especially in the city's southern outskirts;
- → Risk of ERW and IED explosions in the southern outskirts.



# **TRIPOLITANIA**



Main incidents of the week				
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Tripolitania, Sirte: In the early hours of 23/05, a civilian was killed when unidentified gunmen opened fire on him in Sirte. No further information available			
May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya: On 22/05, the Coastal Road in western Zawiya's Al-Mutrad neighborhood was reopened after being closed for several days, blocked by armed vehicles since 18/05 due to the killing of an armed group member on that day			
May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tripolitania, Al-Assah: On 22/05, 17 illegal migrants were arrested by security forces during a security operation in Al-Assah. They are accused of illegal entry into Libyan territory.			
May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya: A video circulated online on 22/05, showing 2 civilians allegedly kidnapped by unidentified perpetrators in Zawiya. The circumstances of the kidnapping remain unclear.			
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya: On 21/05, a number of civilians protested in Zawiya, condemning the security situation in the city in regard to recent murders and kidnappings, and threatening to dissolve the local government and close entrances to the city if their demands are not met.			
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya: In the early hours of 21/05, a number of protestors set tires on fire at the Zawiya entrance gate, in response to a kidnapping in the city.			
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya: On 20/05, a civilian was allegedly killed by an unidentified perpetrator in Zawiya. No further information is available.			
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya, Al-Mutrad: A member of the Zawiya-based Sela armed group was killed by unidentified gunmen in western Zawiya's Al-Mutrad neighborhood on 18/05.			
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Zawiya, Al-Mutrad: On 18/05, a number of armed vehicles gathered on the Coastal Road in western Zawiya's Al-Mutrad neighborhood, blocking the road, reportedly against the killing of a member of the Zawiya-based Sela armed group earlier on the same day			



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May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Al-Ajaylat: On 18/05, 2 civilians were arrested, and a child was freed by security forces during a security operation in Al-Ajaylat. The arrested are accused of kidnapping for ransom.	
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Dirj - Ghadames Road: On 18/05, 2 civilians were arrested, and 100 Kg of cannabis were seized by security forces during a security operation on the Dirj - Ghadames Road. They are accused of drug trafficking.	
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	May 18 <sup>th</sup> Tripolitania, Gharyan: On 18/05, 2 foreign nationals from Egypt and Nigeria were arrested by securit forces during a security operation in Gharyan. They are accused of murder	
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tripolitania, Yefren: On 18/05, a civilian was arrested by security forces during a security operation in Yefren. They are accused of murder.	

SECURITY: This week, significant incidents took place in Zawiya, reflecting once again the deteriorating security situation in the area, despite measures that have recently been put in place by local and national authorities to better the situation.

On 18/05, a member of the Zawiya-based Sela armed group was killed by unidentified gunmen in western Zawiya's Al-Mutrad neighbourhood. As a response, the same day, a number of armed vehicles gathered in the same neighbourhood, on the Coastal Road, and blocked the road. The road reportedly stayed blocked until 22/05. On 21/05, protests started in Zawiya as a number of civilians condemned the security situation in the city in regard to recent murders and kidnappings. They also threatened to dissolve the local government, and close entrances to the city if their demands were not answered. On the following day, social media sources shared a video showing 2 civilians allegedly kidnapped by unidentified perpetrators in the city. The circumstances of the incident remain unclear.

Assessment: As tensions and discontent in Zawiya remain high over the local security situation, protests held by civilians continue to take place. This week's incidents highlighted persisting frictions between local armed groups, often leading to mobilisations, and at times to clashes. Such incidents have recently led to demonstrations condemning insecurity and eruptions of violence in the city. Further protests are to be expected in the next few months if no significant security improvement is achieved and accepted by the local civil society groups involved in such demonstrations.

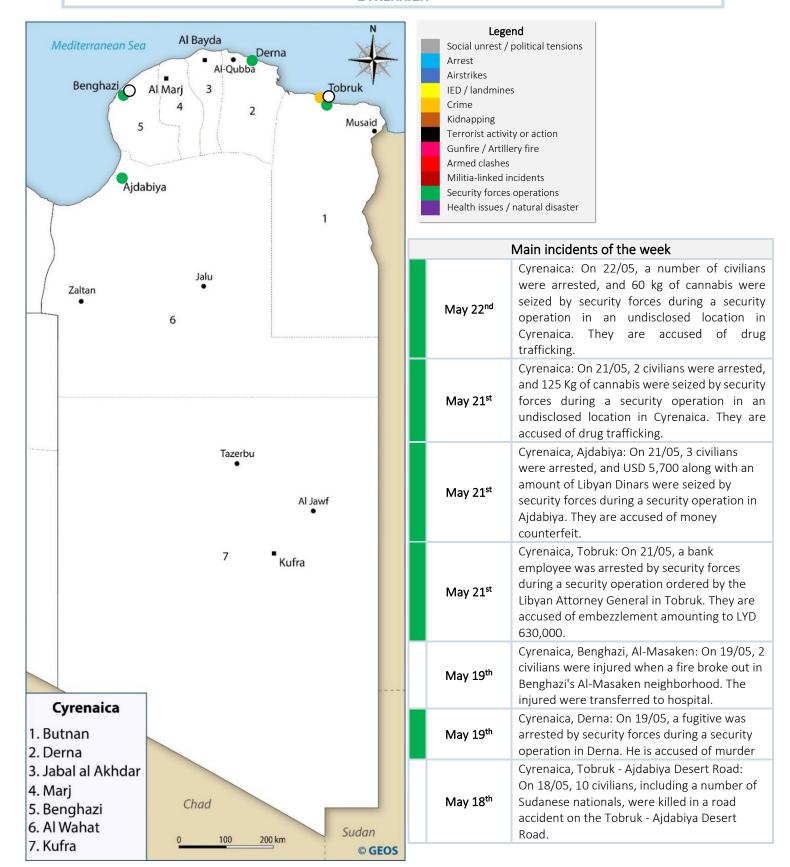
### Outlook

- → Tensions between armed groups which can lead to targeted attacks (drive-by shootings, kidnappings) and escalate into armed clashes, notably in the localities west and south of Tripoli and along the western coastal road;
- → Tensions linked to the continued presence of mercenaries and foreign armed forces;
- → Risk of sporadic clashes between security forces and criminal groups during anti-criminal operations;
- → **Risk of demonstrations** linked to insecurity, the deterioration of socio-economic conditions, and the ongoing political divide;
- → Risk of blockades of oil sites;
- → Latent terrorist risk.



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# **CYRENAICA**





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May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Cyrenaica, Benghazi, Ras Abaydah: On 18/05, a civilian was arrested by security forces during a security operation in central Benghazi's Ras Abaydah neighborhood. He is accused of kidnapping.
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Cyrenaica, Tobruk: On 17/05, a number of civilians were reportedly injured when others opened fire following a brawl at Tobruk Medical Centre in Tobruk

### Outlook

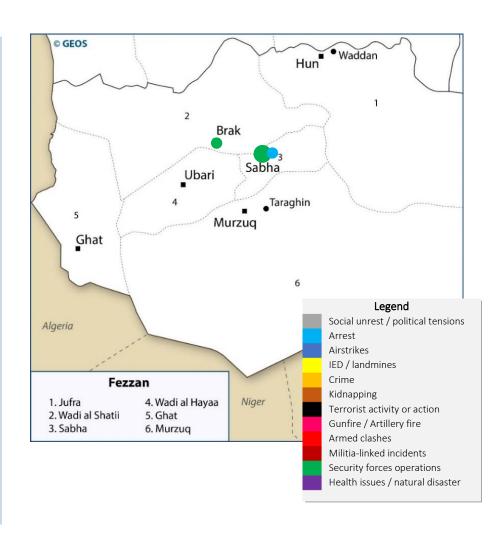
- → Latent tensions between LNA-affiliated units leading to sporadic skirmishes and targeted attacks/killings and retaliations;
- → Tensions between the LNA and the population/local tribes;
- → High crime rate in Benghazi;
- → Increase in protests linked to insecurity, the deterioration of socio-economic conditions and the political transition process;
- → Risk of blockades of oil sites.



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# **FEZZAN**

Main incidents of the week				
	May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Fezzan, Sebha: On 23/05, a civilian was arrested by security forces in Sebha. He is accused of murder.		
	May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Fezzan, Sebha: On 20/05, a Chadian national was arrested by security forces during a security operation in Sebha. He is accused of human trafficking, illegal migration, and murder.		
	May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Fezzan, Brak: On 19/05, a civilian was arrested by security forces during a security operation in Brak. He is accused of murder.		
	May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Fezzan, Sebha: The Head of the Sebha office of the Internal Security Agency was allegedly arrested on 18/05 by security forces in Sebha in unclear circumstances.		
	May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Fezzan, Sebha: On 17/05, a civilian was arrested by security forces in Sebha. He is accused of armed robbery.		



### Outlook

- → Very high criminal rate in Sebha: regular attacks targeting properties (carjackings, armed robberies) and people (drive-by shootings);
- → Risk of protests and blockades of oil sites to denounce the deterioration of life conditions and ongoing political divide;
- → Latent terrorist risk in the region;
- → Latent tribal tensions which can lead to skirmishes or retaliation acts between tribes or with LNA forces in the area;
- → Tensions between the GNU and the LNA due to military deployments;
- → Deteriorated situation along the Chadian border and continued incursion of Chadian armed groups.



# OFFSHORE

NSTR



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# **ACRONYM LIST**

AAS – Ansar al-Sharia

 ${\sf ACA-Administrative\ Control\ Authority}$ 

AFRICOM – United States Africa Command

AGOCO – Arabian Gulf Oil Company

AQ - Al-Qaeda

AV – Armoured Vehicles

bpd – Barrel per day

BPMC – Brega Petroleum Marketing

Company

CP/(I)VCP - Check Point / (Illegal) Vehicle

**Check Point** 

CBL - Central Bank of Libya

CID – Criminal Investigation Department

Col – Chief of Intelligence

ERW – Explosive Remnants of War

EU – European Union

EUDEL - Delegation of the European Union

to Libya

FACT – Front for Alternance and Concord in

Chad

GECOL – General Electrical Company of

Libya

GMR – Great Man-Made River

GNA - Government of National Accord

GNC – General National Congress

GNS – Government of National Stability

GNU – Government of National Unity

HCS – High Council of State

HNEC - High National Election Commission

HoR – House of Representatives

HVT – High-Value Target

ICC – International Criminal Court
IED – Improvised Explosive Device
IDP – Internally Displaced Person

IOM – International Organization for

Migration

IS – Islamic State

JMC – Joint Military Commission (5+5)

JTF - Joint Task Force

LIA – Libyan Investment Authority

LNA - Libyan National Army

LPDF – Libyan Political Dialogue Forum

LSM – Libyan Stock Market

MBL – Muslim Brotherhood in Libya

MoD – Ministry of Defence MoF – Ministry of Finance

MoFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoH – Ministry of Health MoI – Ministry of Interior MoJ – Ministry of Justice

MoO - Ministry of Oil

MoT – Ministry of Transportation

NCDC – National Centre for Disease Control NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

NOC - National Oil Company

O&G - Oil and Gas

PAX – Person or Passenger

PC - Presidency Council

PFG - Petroleum Facilities Guard

PM – Prime Minister

PMCs – Private Military Contractors

RADA SDF – RADA Special Deterrence Forces

RPG – Rocket Propelled Grenade SSA – Stabilization Support Authority

TPF – Tripoli Protection Force

TRB – Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade

TURAF - Turkish Air Force

UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

UN – United Nations

UNSMIL – United Nations Support Mission in

Libya

UAE – United Arab Emirates
USA – United States of America
UXO – Unexploded Ordnance

VBIED – Vehicle-borne improvised explosive

device

WHO – World Health Organization



# GEOS IN LIBYA - A 12-YEAR PRESENCE



Through its permanent representation in Tripoli since 2011, GEOS supports the development of national and international institutions and companies in Libya. Based on its strong local network, knowledge of the region and expert teams, GEOS advises and supports its clients at any stage of their projects.

### **YOUR NEEDS**

Securing your projects

Understanding the Libyan environment

Protecting your people and assets 24/7 operational assistance

Crisis assistance

Medical support and evacuation

Transportation and logistics expertise

### **OUR SOLUTIONS**

Expert advice

Accurate and updated reports on the security situation

Skilled staff (CPOs, drivers & guards)

Adapted vehicles (armoured and soft skin)

Defence and protective equipment

Safe havens

Logistics and accommodations
Sea, air and land solutions





Groupe ADIT



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