**Subject:** Libya -- Flash – Unsuccessful attempt by Government of National Stability (GNS/PM Bashaga) to take over the capital city Tripoli

**FACTS**

* Amid rising tensions in and around the capital Tripoli, attempts by the HoR appointed GNS to establish its rule in the Libyan capital within the self-set deadline of 10/3/2022 proved unsuccessful and were finally aborted during  the late evening hours.
* Forces loyal to the GNU had established sand barriers and defensive positions on major roads outside the capital, and as a result successfully prevented other forces loyal to GNS PM Bashaga from entering the city.
* There were apparently no military style clashes, and armed confrontations remained  limited to firing in the air.
* The smallest common denominator of the incoming conflicting news since then is  that GNU, GNS and other Tripolitanian political actors were able to reach a preliminary agreement to settle the question of GNS presence in the capital through peaceful negotiations.
* In media appearances, the political class in Tripolitania late last night displayed  relief that violence was successfully avoided. As of now, there was no public display by the GNU of any sort of victory over the GNS’s aspirations in the capital.
* Also last night, the US embassy commended the GNS and GNU PMs for their commitment to settle the dispute peacefully.
* There were conflicting news on potential foreign involvement in negotiating above agreement,  including possible mediation, namely by Turkey. This morning, several Libyan media outlets reported that GNU PM Dbeiba is currently attending an international  diplomacy event in southern Turkey.
* The disinformation battle between GNU and GNS and their supporters and backers continues, and both sides appear adamant to display confidence that their respective narrative of events shall prevail.
* Non-Tripolitanian Libyan actors have for now remained largely on the fence  in the above events. However, there were unconfirmed reports of preparations by the LNA to potentially play a role to support the GNS’s quest to assume power in the capital.

**COMMENTS/ASSESSMENT**

* The current situation of a successfully negotiated preliminary agreement to avoid violence over the GNU/GNS rivalry in the capital has opened an important window for further negotiations on a possible settlement involving elections, as suggested by UNSMIL and SASG Williams.
* In  the current constellation,  it appears that PM GNS Bashaga needs to further negotiate his GNS’s standing in Tripolitania with a view to all relevant implications involving his support by the LNA leadership and its backers.
* In Tripolitania, there appears to be common understanding that violence between local actors must be avoided by all means, and that peace could best be maintained by keeping any foreign interference at a minimum.
* As the GNS is maintaining its narrative that it shall be back to assume office in the capital soon, last night’s events can be seen as a “tactical withdrawal”.
* Any public positioning of the LNA adding heat in the current situation would be highly problematic. By the same token, any pressure by LNA and/or foreign actors on GNS PM Bashaga to further assert  himself against the backdrop of last night’s events could prove counterproductive.

*Signed-off: José Antonio SABADELL, HoD*