

1. The Big Picture

Cautious optimism in Libya amid preparations for Palermo

Libyan political figures visited Italy over the course of the reporting period, including the head of the House of Representatives (HoR), Agila Saleh, and the head of the High Council of State (HCS), Khaled Meshri, ahead of the 12-13 Nov conference in Palermo, Italy. Giuseppe Conte, Italy's Prime Minister, confirmed the head of the Libyan National Army (LNA) Khalifa Haftar's participation in the scheduled conference. Meanwhile, Conte reaffirmed that the upcoming Palermo conference will be a "conference for Libya and not on Libya".

While the Palermo conference is gradually gaining traction, and the list of expected participants continues to expand, the absence of a clear agenda raises concerns over the potential for a breakthrough in the Libyan political impasse.

Thus far, cautious optimism has shaped attitudes towards the Italian initiative, with multiple analysts suggesting the only agreement to possibly come out of Palermo will be to delay elections.

Even in the unlikely scenario that differences between Libya's main political factions are somewhat overcome, competition between Italy and France over the course of action to stabilize Libya would remain a challenge. Absent a convergence of interests, tensions between foreign allies would potentially undermine Palermo's prospect and could obstruct the progress achieved thus far by Ghassan Salame, the head of the UN Special Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

Still, there is a possibility Salame will use the conference to advocate his idea of a national conference to solve the Libyan political stalemate and give momentum to the stalled UN Action Plan. A stronger

approach by Salame is likely, highlighted by recent threats of sanctions against individuals obstructing the implementation of the new security arrangements across Tripoli. Regardless of Salame's stronger approach, analysts argue that only a deeper involvement and engagement by the US would help pressure both local and international powerbrokers.

In a more positive scenario, the rivalry between Italy and France would have a limited impact, and Italy would be content with an outcome where elections are delayed as this would effectively render the French initiative obsolete.

In Tripoli, this political uncertainty has also meant that residents have welcomed the new security arrangements with a similar cautious optimism. While thus far militias have complied with the new security arrangements, the relative ease with which some militia leaders surrendered their camps has aroused suspicion over their potential political agendas. Some analysts have speculated that certain militia leaders could not have accepted the new arrangements without forming alliances against the Government of National Accord (GNA) and/or with factions outside of the capital city, including in the East, allegedly as part of hedging strategies to prepare for a new environment in Tripoli post-elections and potentially without the GNA in its current form.



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KEY POINTS

- Italy-France rivalry is a challenge
- UN to take stronger approach
- Tripoli arrangements impact unclear

2. National Security Map

Clashes between Anti-IS Ops. Room & Al-Ammu militia South of Sabratah; casualties

Key

THREAT INDICATORS

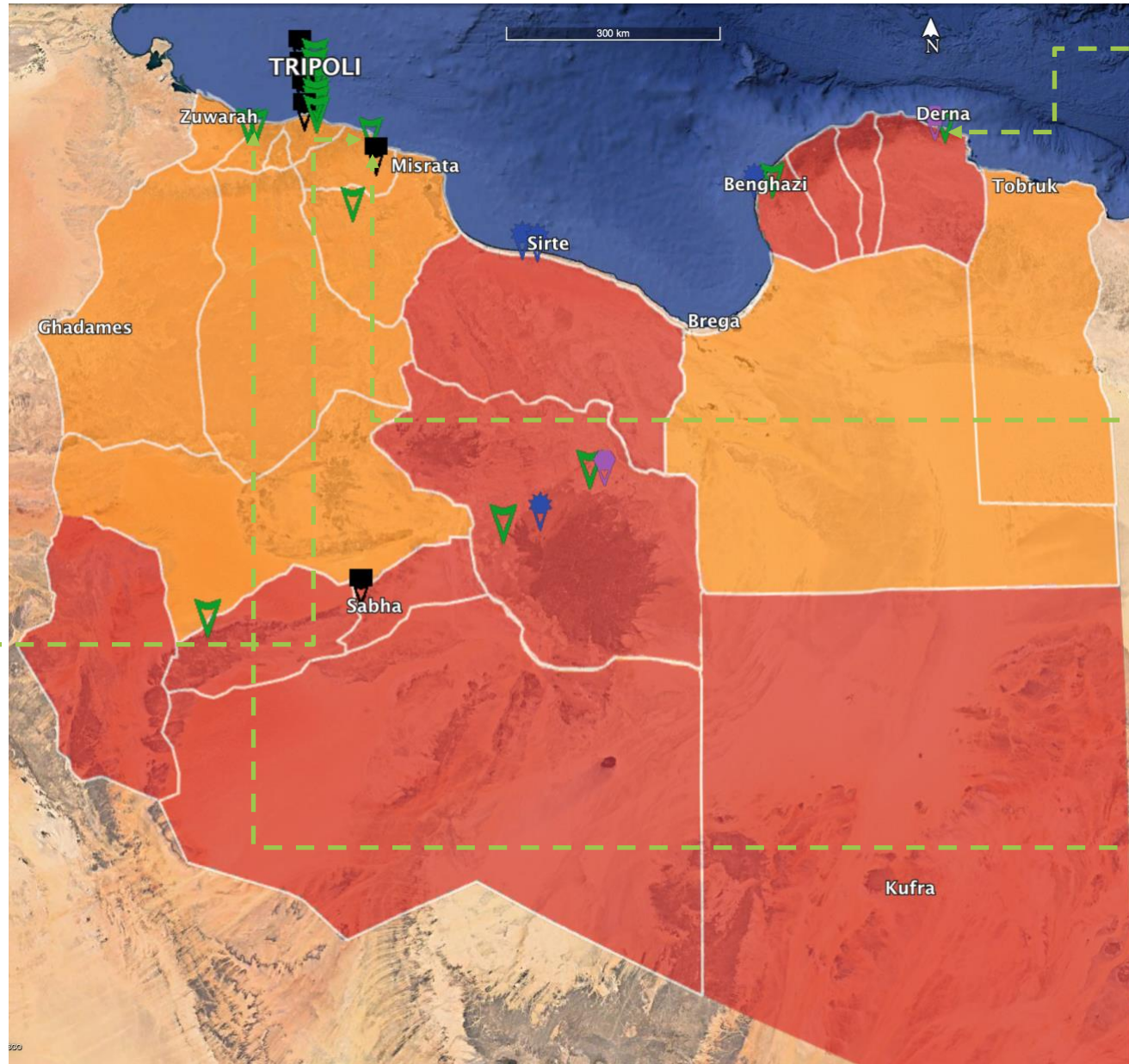
- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

- ★ IED | VBIED
- ▼ Violent Clash
- Isolated Gunfire
- ▼ Other

Local reports suggest the assistant commander of Sirte's Protection and Security Force, Colonel Ali Erfida survived an assassination attempt in Khoms on 04 Nov. Unidentified assailant(s) reportedly opened fire on Erfrida's vehicle.

The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) denied the visit of AFRICOM's commander, General Thomas D. Waldhauser, to Sirte to meet with the city's officials. AFRICOM stated that Waldhauser was in Stuttgart, Germany, at the time of the alleged meetings. The reports further speculated Waldhauser discussed the formation of an operations room to pursue Islamic State (IS) militants under AFRICOM's supervision.



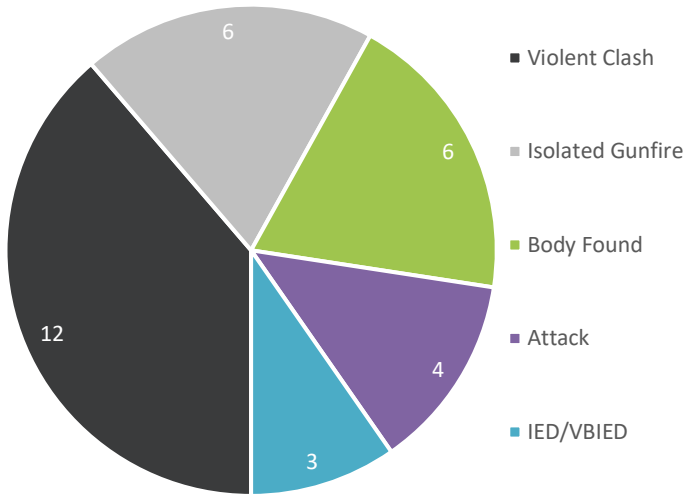
The Libyan National Army (LNA) reportedly killed twelve militants affiliated with the Derna Protection Force (DPF) as a result of security operations in Derna's Al-Mughar area on 31 Oct. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, the Libyan Red Crescent located eight unidentified bodies in Derna's Al-Mughar area on 31 Oct.

Unidentified assailant(s) reportedly opened fire on a farm and subsequently killed at least four men, whilst wounding another, in Khoms' Wadi Kaam area on 02 Nov. According to Khoms' Security Director, Hussein Al-Bakuri, security forces arrested the perpetrator and preliminary investigations revealed that the incident stands as criminally motivated.

Reports emerged over clashes between the Anti-Islamic State (IS) Operations Room and the Al-Ammu militia South of Sabratah at approximately 1000hrs on 04 Nov. According to reports, Al-Ammu militia mobilized from Al-Zawiya, towards Beir Ghnam South Al-Zawiya, advancing into Sabratah from the Beir Ghnam area. Three Anti-IS Ops. Room forces were reportedly injured in the clashes.

3. Nationwide Security Analysis Nationwide fatalities increase due to LNA operations in Derna's Mughar area

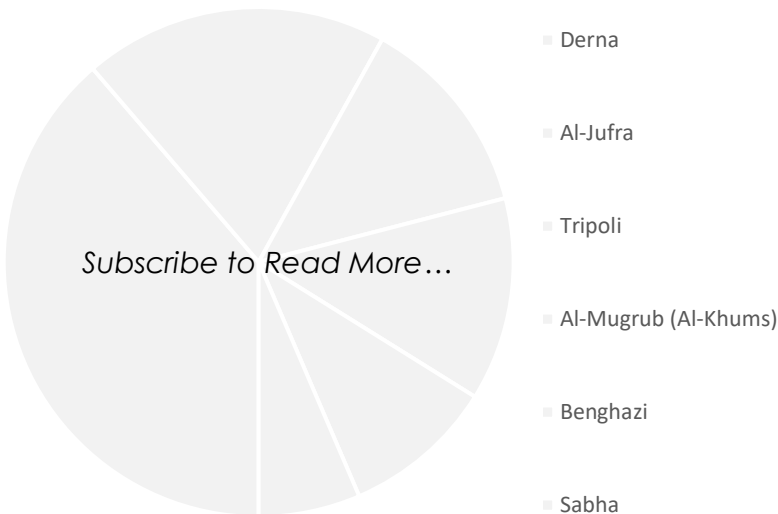
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



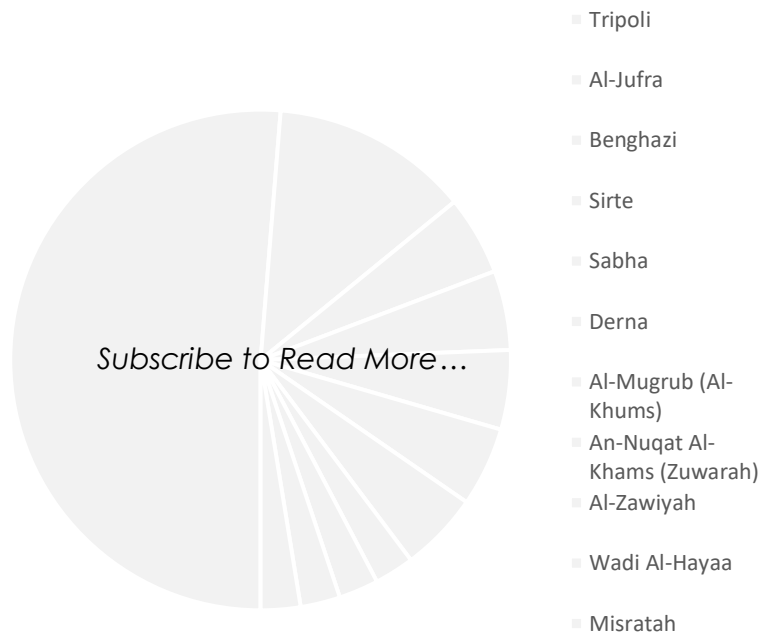
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



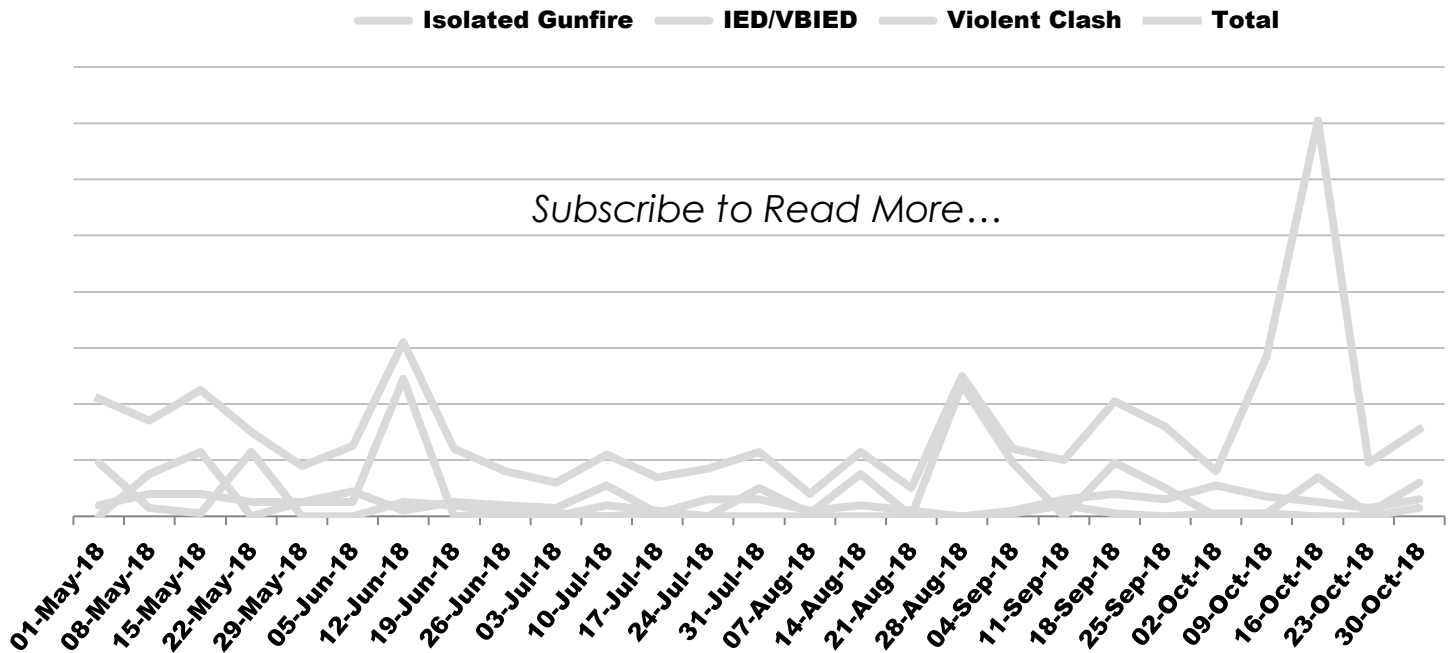
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



Nationwide incidents by national district (Past week)



Nationwide Fatalities by Type of Attack (Past 27 Weeks)



Data Analysis

Whispering Bell recorded this week a total of 31 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 19 deaths reported last week and 141 the week before. This week combined fatalities from violent clashes in Derna and Al-Jufra accounted for more than half of nationwide fatalities. While the number of incidents recorded in Tripoli increased, fatalities in the capital city dropped by half relatively compared with last week's report. Several security incidents were reported throughout the country, including 6 cases of isolated gunfire, 4 IED/VBIED incidents, 3 episodes of violent clash, and a kidnapping.

In Western Libya, Whispering Bell recorded a total of 24 incidents, including 20 incidents in the capital city, Tripoli. Whispering Bell recorded in Tripoli multiple robbery incidents. Reports suggest a white Hyundai Veracruz vehicle was stolen while parked in front of Tripoli's Al-Swani area in the morning on 29 Oct. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, reports suggest a silver Toyota Hilux vehicle was stolen in front of the Libyan Passport Authority on Tripoli's As-Sarim Street in the morning on 28 Oct. Beyond this, two gunmen riding a silver KIA Optima vehicle reportedly carjacked a Hyundai Azera vehicle in Tripoli's Qerqarish area in the morning on 28 Oct. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, local reports suggest the Special Deterrence Force (SDF) located the remains of two bodies belonging to armed groups involved in the Aug/Sep militia clashes in a damaged tank in Tripoli's South on 28 Oct.

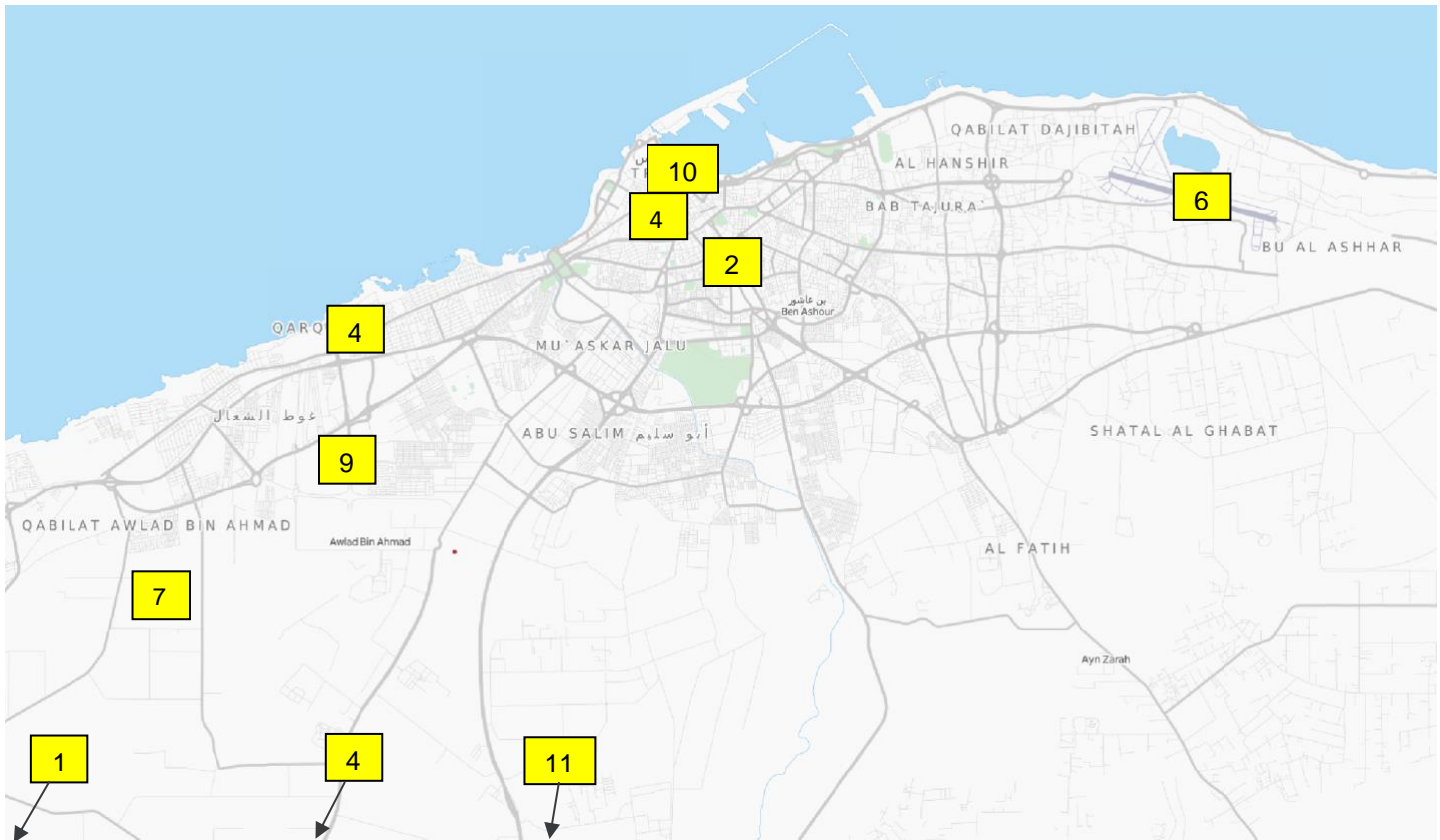
The week in Central Libya was marked by additional reports of explosive remnants of war (ERW). Local reports suggest the Demining Team of Sirte's Protection and Security Force dismantled improvised explosive devices (IEDs) following intelligence reports by locals in a farm the Abu Hadi area, South of Sirte, on 29 Oct.

Turning to southern Libya, Whispering Bell recorded multiple sporadic security incidents. In Sabha, reports suggest a drive-by shooting resulted in the death of two men at night on 02 Nov. Neither the identity of the assailant(s) nor the motive behind the incident are known. Meanwhile, reports suggest Sabha's Medical Centre accountant, Muftah Yunis, was kidnapped on his way home from his farm at approximately 1800hrs on 31 Oct. Yunis was reportedly accompanied by his wife and children when he was kidnapped. Neither the identity of the assailant(s) nor the motive behind the incident are known, though some indicate the involvement of Chadian foreign groups.

In Eastern Libya, the the Libyan National Army (LNA) continued its security/intelligence operations in Derna to combat residual militant presence after large-scale military operations officially ended. The LNA killed 12 militants affiliated with the Derna Protection Force (DPF) as a result of security operations in Derna's Al-Mughar area on 31 Oct. The Information Officer of the LNA's 73rd Infantry Brigade, Munther Al-Khartoush, stated that military units affiliated with the Omar Al-Mukhtar Operations Room mobilized in Derna's Al-Mughar area. the city.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Trabelsi-led forces raid Tobacco Factory; Janzour-Zintan tensions



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (27 Oct) Man's body from Al-Zawiya found in An-Najila
2. (28 Oct) Armed group storms LPTIC HQ & intimidates employees
3. (28 Oct) Two bodies found in damaged tank in Tripoli's South
4. (28 Oct) Carjackings in Al-Swani, Gergarish, Libyan Passport Authority
5. (29 Oct) CID of Janzour Security Department arrest wanted criminal
6. (30 Oct) Alleged kidnapping attempt of Chinese Charge D'affaires; denied
7. (30 Oct) Sounds of gunfire; tensions between Janzour & Zintani factions
8. (30 Oct) LIA condemns forced entry of parallel BOD on LAFICO
9. (31 Oct) Trabelsi-led Zintani forces raid Tobacco Factory
10. (03 Nov) Tajouri-led armed group raid black market; traders arrested
11. (04 Nov) Chief of staff reverses decision reinstating 301 Brigade in TIA

LAFICO offices stormed

The Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) condemned the forced entry of a parallel board of directors into its Libyan Arab Foreign Investment Company (LAFICO) subsidiary in Tripoli on 31 Oct. According to reports, a parallel board of directors, established under the Eastern Interim Government, forcibly entered the subsidiary's Tripoli office. It remains unclear how the latter gained entry into the LAFICO offices and why the Government of National Accord (GNA)-aligned security forces failed to react to the incident. In Aug 2018, the LIA was forced to abandon its headquarters in Tripoli Tower due to recurrent militia interference and sporadic security incidents, including the threatening and kidnapping of employees. Subsequently, the LIA moved its offices to an unknown location.

Factory raided; Janzour-Zintan tensions

There were reports of sporadic gunfire in Tripoli's Ghut Al-Shaal area at approximately 0000hrs on 31 Oct. Initial reports indicate a raid by Zintani forces led by Zintan Special Operations Forces (SOF) head, Emad Trabelsi, on Tripoli's Tobacco Factory due to outlawed Zintani factions stationed at the factory. Meanwhile, in a separate incident,

there were reports of sporadic gunfire in Tripoli's Al-Serraj area at approximately 2300hrs on 30 Oct. Initial reports indicate tensions between the Janzour Security Decorate and Fursan Janzour, against Trabelsi-led Zintani forces. Reports of tensions between Zintani and local militias corroborates

Assignment of 301 Brigade in TIA cancelled

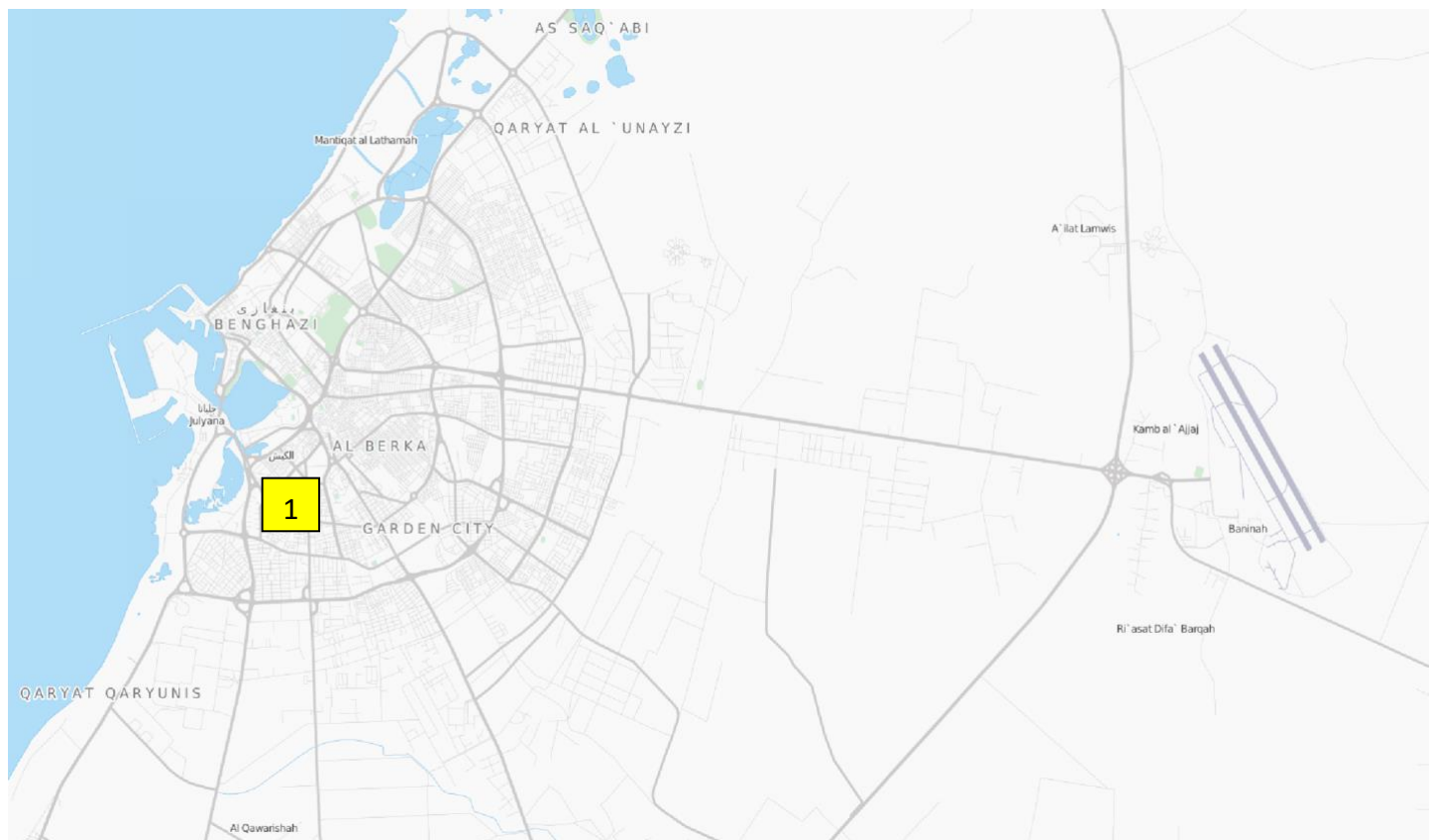
The chief of General staff, General Abdulrahman Al-Taweel, affiliated with the Government of National Accord's (GNA) Ministry of Defense, issued a decision to assign the 301st Brigade to station their forces and secure the Tripoli International Airport (TIA) on 01 Nov. On 04 Nov, Al-Taweel issued a statement on the immediate cancellation of the decision to reinstate 301 in the TIA. Disapproval to reinstate the 301 Brigade in the TIA, and subsequent potential tensions, may have prompted Al-Taweel's cancellation of the decision.

Alleged kidnapping attempt; denied

Reports emerged over a failed kidnapping attempt of the Chinese Charge D'affaires in Libya, Wang Qimin, by an unidentified militia after his arrival at Mitiga International Airport on 30 Oct. WB sources denied the incident. Other sources suggest the incident occurred near the airport when a rogue militia stopped the convoy, before the alleged intervention of RADA.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

Tripoli-based NOC holds first meeting with AGOCO in HQ



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (31 Oct) Tripoli-based NOC holds first AGOCO meeting
2. (Unknown) Institute of African Studies in Moscow visit

Russian delegation visit

Local reports suggest the Chairman of the Council of Businessmen in Benghazi, Fawzia Al-Farjani, received a delegation from the Institute of African Studies in Moscow in the council's headquarters. The delegation was reportedly on a visit to Benghazi and was highly interested in the humanitarian, political, economic and social fields. The parties reportedly discussed the current Libyan economy in light of the political and security obstacles on the ground. Al-Farjani introduced the Council and its objectives to the visiting delegation. Additionally, the meeting discussed the prospects of cooperation between the two institutions, including the return of Russian companies to implement and contribute to investments projects in Benghazi and across other Libyan cities.

Sanalla-led meetings

On 31, the Tripoli-based National Oil Corporation (NOC) Board of Directors held its first meeting in Benghazi's Meeting Hall of the Arabian Gulf Oil Company (AGOCO). The head of the NOC, Mustafa Sanalla, led the meeting in the presence of members of NOC's Board of Directors. The meeting reportedly discussed the visit

of the board of directors to the city of Benghazi in efforts to reach consensus on decisions concerning sustainable development activity in Benghazi's private institutions. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, on 01 Nov, in a meeting held at the NOC's Tripoli headquarters, Sanalla reportedly called for the establishment of an educational facility specialized in the oil field in the Eastern region through the establishment of the Benghazi Institute for Petroleum Technology. The meetings could have been an outcome of the International Forum of Oil & Gas in Benghazi held on 24-26 Oct.

6. What's next

Uncertainty over Palermo could escalate tensions in the West

POLITICAL FORECAST

SECURITY FORECAST

On 31 Oct, the House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) officially agreed on a mechanism to reform the Sarraj-led Presidential Council (PC). A copy of the joint agreement was reportedly handed to Ghassan Salame, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (UN SRSG) and UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) head. Upcoming steps to establish a timeframe and venue for the holding of electoral assemblies between the heads of the HoR-HCS Dialogue Committees were discussed. However, there are remaining challenges and a full reformation of the PC would require the HoR to recognize the legitimacy of the HCS. Meanwhile, in efforts to prepare for the upcoming Palermo Conference for Libya, the heads of the HoR and HCS, and the PC's deputy head, visited Rome at the invitation of Italian officials. There is mounting evidence that the Palermo conference has gained traction both domestically and internationally supported. The UNSMIL head, Ghassan Salame, is expected to give briefings to the UNSC ahead of the Palermo Conference, which will provide further clarity on expectations from Palermo. The conference would come amid Egypt-endorsed military unification efforts and the HCS-HoR push to reform the PC. Rivals may seek to push for these alternative frameworks as prerequisites to achieve a political breakthrough.

Tripoli's security arrangements continue to unfold, largely under the supervision of the Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) head, Haithem Tajouri. However, sidelined groups could seek to destabilize the security situation in an effort to obstruct the arrangements. Meanwhile, tensions between Janzour and Trabelsi-led Zintani factions could escalate. Zintan forces gained a larger territorial foothold in the aftermath of the Aug/Sep militia clashes, subsequently raising the likelihood of provoking local militias. In the wider West, clashes between Al-Ammu militia and the Anti-Islamic State (IS) Operations Room in Sabratah could escalate, potentially destabilizing the security situation in surrounding areas. Additionally, Khums' security services and residents will remain on high alert following a gunfire incident killing four on 02 Nov, and an assassination attempt on a Sirte Protection and Security Force official. In Jufra, unconfirmed reports of Islamic State (IS) movements and the fleeing of residents suggests fears of additional attacks. Meanwhile, the fate of the kidnapped locals by IS in Al-Fuqaha remains unclear. IS could exploit the context of political uncertainty to carry out further attacks. The Libyan National Army (LNA) will continue to combat illicit groups in the South, whilst intensifying its offensive targeting residual militants in Derna. Benghazi remains relatively calmer in contrast.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

In an article for *"Foreign Affairs"*, the authors, Federica Saini Fasanotti and Ben Fishman, highlight the ways in which Italian-French competition in Libya is adding yet another layer of complexity to an already fragile situation. "French-Italian differences are motivated more by politics than by divergent interests in Libya. Macron considers himself—and France—to be the standard bearer for the EU, defending liberal values and international cooperation in a time of rising populist nationalism. Naturally, he sees the new Italian government as a threat to his political vision. In a June 21 speech, Macron compared the spread of populism to "leprosy" and warned Europeans against those who "hate Europe"—a thinly veiled reference to the Italian government. Italy's Deputy Prime Minister Luigi Di Maio, the leader of the M5S, fired back, "The real leprosy is the hypocrisy" of Macron, who in June had criticized Italy's stance on migration but refused to allow a rescue ship with 600 migrants to dock in France. Macron doubled down on his views in his September speech to the UN General Assembly, proclaiming, "France will be there to ensure the world does not forget that the din of nationalism always leads to the abyss." With France's Libya policy run out of the Élysée and Salvini serving as the most powerful figure in Italy's coalition, this rivalry is sure to persist—at the expense of Libyans." said Saini and Fishman

In a statement to the UNSC on the situation in Libya, the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, rejected Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi's call for an international arrest warrant against him to be ruled inadmissible. "Fatou Bensouda, delivering her latest six-monthly statement to the Security Council on the situation in Libya, said that her office maintains that Mr. Gaddafi must be arrested and surrendered to the Court. In the international warrant, issued by the ICC in June 2011, Mr. Gaddafi is accused of playing a key role in planning the suppression of civilian demonstrations by any means, including lethal force, against his father's regime. In June Mr. Gaddafi argued that, because of ongoing domestic proceedings conducted against him in Libya, he cannot be tried at the ICC: this argument is rejected by the Court and the case, said Ms. Bensouda, remains admissible: because Mr. Gaddafi's challenge is currently *sub judice*, she was not willing to share further details. Mr. Gaddafi is just one of several individuals in Libya whose alleged criminal acts could fall within the jurisdiction of the ICC which, said Ms. Bensouda, continues to monitor criminal actions of armed groups in the country: "These armed groups represent a major threat to long-term peace and stability in Libya." said Bensouda."

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