



Weekly Libya .Xplored report preview

September 29, 2017

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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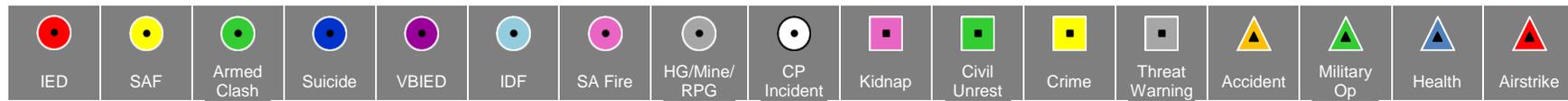
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ACTIVITY MAP



OUTLOOK

Short term outlook

- Heavy clashes in Sabratah threaten to draw in fighters from other areas after pro-GNC and LNA troops threaten to join the battle on either side.
- Tensions have increased in southern Tripoli with reports of reinforcements arriving from Misrata and militia movements near Tripoli International Airport. Any clashes are likely to remain in southern parts of the city.
- An increase in IS activity has prompted both the LNA and BAM to reinforce positions east of Sirte. An increase in troop levels from BAM and the LNA once again increases the risk of confrontation between the two with the LNA still perceived as being a threat to BAM. There is an increased threat towards the LNA held oil installations along the crescent.
- Tensions remain elevated along the Zuwara, Sabratah and Zawiyah coastal areas due to a number of issues including a complex security environment involving fuel smuggling and people trafficking.

Medium to long term outlook

- The unveiling of a UN sponsored action plan, aimed at resolving the crisis in Libya, is expected to see long term changes in the political and security landscape in the country. Efforts will be made to return all stakeholders to the discussions and push forward a national political constitution. Presidential and Parliamentary elections will be prepared for late-2018.
- GNA President Serraj and LNA Commander Khalifa Haftar, remain central to international stakeholders' attempts to unify east and west. However, alternative solutions are being pursued by other entities with opposing factions. As factions move closer to a possible deal, tensions are likely to increase inside Libya, and there is potential for some level of fragmentation of their support bases. As a result, new alliances may be formed as progress leaves some with reducing levels of influence.
- The remnants of the GNC, which has allegedly benefited from Qatari support, remain politically isolated after losing their footprint in the capital at the end of May. Their last attempt to take territory in the capital by force failed when their fighters were forced from Garabuli on July 11, and support appears to be waning. The threat is assessed to be evolving as the GNC, and associated forces adapt to the changing environment. While intent is assessed to remain, especially for the hardliners, tactics may alter.
- There are indications that IS is beginning to regroup in Libya. Some reports suggest fighters from Iraq and Syria are heading to North Africa. The group is reported to be present in some areas south of Sirte, Bani Waled, and Sabratah.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Governance

- A meeting was held in Tunisia involving HoR and HCS dialogue committees with the intent of amending the LPA. The UN envoy to Libya expressed hopes that the process would be finalized within weeks, ready for HoR approval by the end of November.
- Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar has visited Rome for talks with the Italian Defense Minister and a closed meeting with the Italian Interior Minister. Illegal migration was likely a key topic in the talks. Haftar was then due to fly to Paris towards the end of the week for further meetings.
- The US travel ban, preventing Libyans from visiting the US has been renewed indefinitely. In response, the eastern government in Libya has banned US citizens from travelling through Libya. The order is unlikely to affect travel in Misrata or Tripoli, but could have an impact on international operations in Benghazi or Tobruk.
- The leader of the High Council of State (HCS) Abdulrahman Asswehly met with the governor and directors of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) on Tuesday. Discussions included the liquidity crisis and exchange rates.

Security

- Basit Igtet's anti-government protest in Tripoli passed peacefully, with an attendance of over 1,000 people. Protests also occurred in Misrata, Sabha, Nalut and Zawiyah.



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- Despite GNA MoD calls for a ceasefire, fighting in Sabratah continues. The Anti-IS Operations Room (AIOR) has the upper hand although reinforcements have arrived for the Anas Dabbashi.
- The AIOR has closed coastal waters around Sabratah and threatened to attack any vessels that enter the area.
- Clashes have occurred near Gharyan as opposing forces travelled through the area to join Anas Dabbashi militia fighting in Sabratah.
- Protestors in Sabha have threatened to close the Great Man-Made River pipeline, if two officials from Sabha, arrested in Tripoli recently, are not released. Tuareg groups in Obari have also threatened to close the Sharara oilfield.
- US AFRICOM has announced that it conducted airstrikes in Libya on September 22 and September 26, killing at least 20 IS militants. IS has responded by posting a video showing their activities during recent months in Libya.

Travel

- The Ras Ajdir border crossing, between Libya and Tunisia remains closed.

KEY DATES

Date	Occasion	Comment
07 – 08 October 2017	Oil sector conference in Tunis	
23 October 2017	Liberation Day	National holiday
24 December 2017	Independence Day	National Holiday

THREAT MATRIX

Region	Political	Terrorism	Militancy	Crime	K&R
Tripolitania	High-Extreme	High	High	High	High
Cyrenaica	Moderate	High-Extreme	Moderate	High	High
Fezzan	High	Moderate	High	High	High

Threat Scale	Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Governance

LPA begins to make progress

During the reporting period political developments continue to emerge in the wake of the new action plan, which was unveiled at the UN General Assembly in New York last week. Internationally, the plan has been well-received but opposition remains in Libya. Satisfying all parties in a country as diverse as Libya is a huge challenge that will not be easily achieved. The criticisms alone are therefore unsurprising and not a major obstacle to progress at this time. However, many stakeholders remain silent on the subject, including prominent parties which could have the power to interfere with or delay the process.

Eastern government introduces travel ban

The eastern government has issued an order banning US citizens from entering Libya. The ruling is a response to a US travel ban which prevents Libyans, along with citizens from seven other countries, from visiting the US.



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Often this sort of proclamation can be an outward show of defiance, in reality having little impact on the ground. The week ahead should provide some indications of whether this ruling is being enforced in areas such as Tobruk and Benghazi. Tripoli and Misrata airports will ignore the ruling unless it is endorsed by the Presidency Council, something that is very unlikely at this time.

Security

Tripoli Protest Update

Basit Igtet's anti-government protest held in Martyrs' Square, Tripoli on September 25, passed peacefully. Tripoli's Security Directorate, citing security concerns, had banned the protest in the days before but relented at the final hour, allowing over 1,000 protesters to flood into Martyrs' Square and voice their concerns. A counter-protest, of around 100-200 people did little to aggravate the situation and security forces were able to reduce their profile, thereby lowering tensions later in the afternoon.



Protestors in Martyrs' Square, Tripoli. September 25, 2017

Heavy storms cause disruptions in Tripoli

Hailstorms and heavy rain caused flooding throughout Tripoli this week. Major roads have become difficult to pass and many smaller roads remain completely blocked. In the mountains to the south of Tripoli the rain caused flash floods which led to at least three people drowned.



Flooding in Tripoli. Source: Social Media

WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Tripolitania

Significant activity

- IDF - Sep 20, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Mortars hit the east wing of the Sabratah teaching hospital during clashes between warring militias. No casualties were reported.
- IDF - Sep 22, afternoon, Az Zawiyah Province, Dahman: A civilian car was hit by a mortar round as it travelled along the Coastal Highway through Daman, east of Sabratah. The driver was killed and his wife injured.
- Armed Clashes - Sep 22, Tripoli Province, Ain Zara: TRB fighters launched a small attack on an area housing alleged LIFG members, recently arrived in Tripoli.
- Armed Clashes - Sep 22, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: AIOR continued to clash with Anas Dabbashi fighters in Sabratah. At least one fatality was reported.
- Airstrike Update - Sep 22, Misrata Province, As Saddadah: An LNA airstrike targeted a location in Sedada to the west of Bani Waleed. The LNA air force command confirmed that it had targeted BDB and Chadian forces in the area.
- Armed Clashes - Sep 23, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Clashes continued throughout the night and into the morning between AIOR and Anas Dabbashi fighters. Loud explosions were heard for the first time during the conflict in areas to the west of the city, indicating expanding areas of operations.
- Armed Clash - Sep 24, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Clashes continued between AIOR and Anas Dabbashi in Sabratah.
- Demonstration - Sep 25, 16:00, Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: An anti-government protest led by Basit Igtet was held in Martyrs' Square. Numbers are thought to have exceeded 1,000. A small counter protest was also held involving around 200 people. The protests were peaceful.
- Demonstrations - Sep 25: Anti-government protests in support of Basit Igtet were held in Misrata, Zawiyah, Zliten, Gharyan, Nalut and Sabha.
- Accident - Sep 25, Nalut Province, Kabaw: A fuel truck crashed in to a CP, killing 1 and injuring 14. Some local witnesses suggest that the incident was intentional but this is unconfirmed.
- Armed Clash - Sep 25, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Heavy clashes continued in Sabratah. Sabratah Hospital states that a total of 17 bodies and 28 injured people have been taken to the hospital during the fighting. The actual number of fatalities and injuries is likely to be significantly higher.
- Demonstration - Sep 25, Az Zawiyah Province, Abu Issa: Truck drivers in Abu Issa, Zawiyah blocked the road in protest of militia CPs along the Coastal Highway between Zawiyah and Ras Ajdir. They claim that militia groups manning the CPs extort money from them.
- Shooting - Sep 25, Tripoli Province, Suq Al-Juma: Bashir Garira, a security advisor to Basit Igtet who was photographed with him prior to the protest on September 25 has been shot and killed. The incident appears to have been an accident.
- Rescue - Sep 26, Az Zawiyah Province, Offshore: 70 Migrants were rescued by a German NGO. Around 750 migrants were picked up in 6 different rescues from Save the Children. SOS Mediterranee picked up 20 Libyans.
- Naval interdiction - Sep 26, Az Zawiyah Province, Offshore: An NGO boat, from the Mission Lifeline charity, was boarded by the Libyan Coastguard. A video of the incident shows a member of the coast guard telling the boat to go back and warning that this was Libyan territory, before boarding the vessel. Warning shots were reportedly fired, although this was not recorded. According to media reporting, the coast guard demanded that 70 migrants, that had been picked up earlier, be handed over. The NGO refused and the Coast Guard departed.
- Armed Clash - Sep 26, evening, Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Wadi Ghan Dam: Local militia from Gharyan clashed with another militia in the area of Wadi Ghan Dam. Unconfirmed reports state that the militia included BDB fighters moving to support Anas Dabbashi in Sabratah. Casualties are not known.
- CP/ Road Block - Sep 26, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Suq Al-Khamis: Al-Kani militias have increased activity in the areas of Souq Al Khamis and Sbai'a. The group has also allegedly deployed CPs near the satellite station and the cement plant in Souq Al Khamis.

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- Armed Clash - Sep 26, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Armed clashes continued in Sabratah. Casualties are not known.
- Armed Clash - Sep 27, Az Zawiyah Province, Sabratah: Clashes continued in Sabratah between AIOR and 48 Bde. The intensity of clashes appear to have reduced. No casualties were reported. Reports indicate that the AIOR is making progress and has taken control a 48 Bde HQ.
- Kidnap - Sep 27, Sirte Province, Ras Lanuf: An oil worker from the Ras Lanuf Oil and Gas Company was abducted, allegedly by the Ajdabiya Counter Terrorism Force.
- Airstrike - Sep 26, Sirte Province, Sirte: US AFRICOM conducted airstrikes targeting an IS camp approx. 100m south east of Sirte. Several IS fighters were killed.

Cyrenaica

Significant activity

- Military Operation - Sep 21, Sudanese Border: Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (SRF) clashed with human trafficking gangs travelling towards the Sudan- Libya-Egypt border triangle. A spokesman for the group claims that 17 human traffickers were killed and seven arrested. 41 migrants were arrested including individuals from the Comoros, Somalia, Bangladesh, Syria and Ethiopia. Two SRF fighters were killed and six injured during the clashes.
- Kidnap - Sep 22, Derna Province, Derna: The Omar Al-Mukhtar Operations Room of the LNA is alleged to have abducted a doctor from the Wihda Hospital in Derna. Mohammed Al-Jadaemi was allegedly abducted as he travelled to Soussa District as Kersa Road was opened by the LNA for a number of hours.
- Accident - Sep 23, Al-Butnan Province, Tobruk: A civilian was shot and killed during celebratory fire.
- Kidnap - Sep 23, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A female was abducted at the “Eve World Club” in Benghazi, allegedly by a female gang who injected her with a narcotic substance. The woman was later later released on Sunday morning after a ransom was paid by the woman's family. Media reports claim the woman was tortured.
- Health - Sep 26, Derna Province, Derna: Four trucks carrying flour have been allowed to enter Derna to alleviate a growing humanitarian disaster in the city, following the LNA's siege.
- Armed Clash - Sep 26, Derna Province, Derna: LNA clashed with MSCD in Derna. Clashes including IDF. Casualties were not reported.
- Armed Clash - Sep 27, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: RSCB fighters clashed with LNA near the municipal hotel in Benghazi. Casualties were not reported.

Fezzan

Significant activity

- Armed Clashes - Sep 20, Murzuq Province, Umm Al-Aranib: Fighters from Tebu and Zaghawah tribes clashed in Umm al-Aranib south of Sabha. The conflict began when a Zaghawah armed group attacked a Tebu CP killing five Tebu. The Tebu retaliation targeted the headquarters of a Chinese company, Siniya, where Zaghawah attackers were based. A ceasefire was later agreed following intervention from local elders.
- Airstrike - Sep 22, 19:05, Al-Jufra Province, Zillah: US AFRICOM conducted airstrikes targeting an IS camp approx. 150m South East of Sirte. 17 IS fighters were killed and three vehicles destroyed.
- Shooting - Sep 25, morning, Sabha Province, Sabha: Armed men opened fire on a vehicle killing two passengers near Independence Square in Sabha. The men had allegedly stolen the vehicle from the attackers earlier.
- Kidnap - Sep 25, 17:00, Sabha Province, Sabha: The head of Sabha's Radiology department of Sabha Medical Center was kidnapped outside the Electoral Commission building. He was released two days later.
- Shooting - Sep 27, Sabha Province, Sabha: Armed men attacked guards at Sabha Medical Centre. Two guards were killed and their weapons robbed.

Armed Clash - Sep 28, Sabha Province, Tamanhint: Eight Force and 116 Battalion have clashed over control of a fuel storage depot.



ACRONYM LIST

AQ - Al-Qaeda
 BAM – Al-Bunyan Al-Marsous (Misrata aligned)
 BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade / Saraya Defend Benghazi (SDB) (Al-Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
 CNI – Critical National Infrastructure
 GATMJB - Operations Room for the Liberation of the City Ajdabiya and Support for Benghazi Rebels
 GECOL – General Electricity Company of Libya
 GMMR – Great Man-made River
 GNA – Government of National Accord (UN backed)
 GNC – General National Congress
 HCN - Host Country National
 HoR – House of Representatives (Tobruk based)
 IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
 IED - Improvised Explosive Device
 IOC - International Oil Company
 IS - Islamic State
 LIFG – Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
 LNA – Libyan National Army
 LPA – Libyan Political Agreement
 LROR - Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
 MoD - Ministry of Defense
 MoF - Ministry of Finance
 MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 MoHE - Ministry of Higher Education
 Mol - Ministry of Interior
 MoJ - Ministry of Justice
 MoO - Ministry of Oil
 MoT - Ministry of Transportation
 MSCD – Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna (AQ aligned)
 NFDK - No Further Details Known
 NGO - Non-Governmental Organization (aid/charity)
 NOC – National Oil Company
 NSG – National Salvation Government (GNC)
 NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
 PAX - Person, Persons or Passenger
 PC – Presidency Council (GNA)
 PG – Presidential Guard
 PFG- Petroleum Facilities Guard
 PSC - Private Security Company
 PSD - Private Security Detail
 RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
 RSCB - Revolutionary Shura Council of Benghazi
 RTA - Road Traffic Accident
 SDB – Saraya Defend Benghazi / Benghazi Defense Brigade (BDB) (Al-Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
 TCN - Third Country National
 Technical - An improvised weapon-mounted pick-up truck
 UXO - Unexploded Ordnance

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