



## Weekly Libya .Xplored report preview

November 17, 2017

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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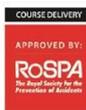
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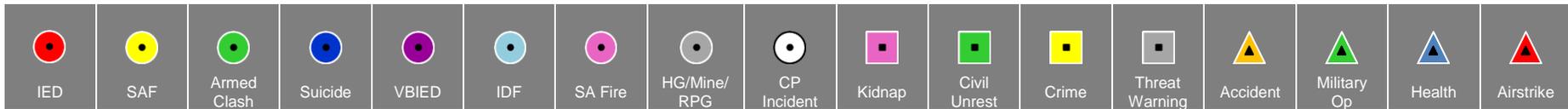
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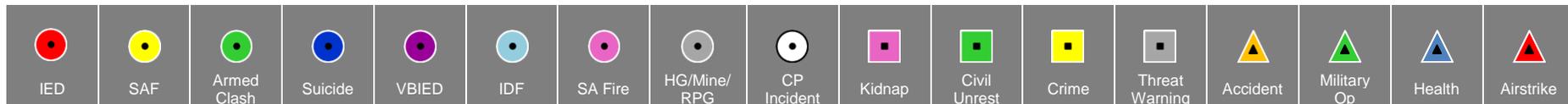
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**ACTIVITY MAP**



**TRIPOLI ACTIVITY MAP**



**OUTLOOK**

**Short term outlook**

- Tensions remain in Benghazi following the challenge to Field Marshal Haftar’s leadership. Further fall out is expected as the LNA moves to dismantle the GNA deputy minister of the interior’s support base.
- The GNA continues to consolidate its control over Warshefana and roll out a new security plan for the area which includes 301 Battalion, TRB and the Presidential Guard. The focus is now moving towards Zawiyah which remains tense with various factions vying for control however there remains the potential for further clashes and security operations within Warshefana.
- GNA/ LNA forces around Sabratah and Surman continue to consolidate on recent gains. Existing militias are being subsumed or forced out. There are recent indications that Islamic leaning militias are looking to regain lost influence in the area. Further localized clashes are possible.
- Smaller militias and criminal gangs may be targeted in Tripoli as the more dominant militias look to consolidate and strengthen their positions. As such, sporadic, localized clashes are possible.

**Medium to long term outlook**

- While there are some positive indicators that talks over the unification of the military are progressing, the political situation remains divided. Talks in Tunis have not yielded any major progress and have prompted the LNA to reissue its threat to ‘liberate Tripoli’ should dialogue fail. Issues like Article 8 remain significant hurdles; however, events on the ground may well overtake political decision making over the next six months.
- Although the influence wielded by the GNC has reduced over the last six months as militia groups aligned to them have lost ground, other political factions are emerging including the Green Movement and the Monarchists, which could complicate the political situation further. Despite its waning influence, the GNC still retains a support base, some of which is armed and could still prove a threat to any potential deal between the GNA and Field Marshall Haftar.
- IS continues to become bolder, mounting temporary checkpoints, taking over village mosques and launching attacks against security forces. IS is reported to be regrouping and may well be receiving manpower into the south of Libya from Iraq and Syria as the ‘caliphate’ disintegrates. IS will continue to benefit from the lack of political and security unity in Libya with the possibility that they are establishing a fresh alliance with other extremist groups like al-Qaeda.

**SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

**Governance**

- Tensions have increased between the GNA and HoR following the challenge to Haftar’s leadership in Benghazi by the GNA deputy minister of the interior. Abdullah al-Thinni, the HoR Prime Minister, ordered the suspension and arrest of mayors and councillors from his parliament that have been in contact with the GNA as Haftar looks to re-establish his authority. The General Military Prosecutor, General Faraj Sousaa, has also ordered the arrest of GNA deputy minister of the interior Faraj al-Gaem by the Military Police.
- Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar travelled to the UAE for the Dubai Airshow this week where he met with the deputy prime minister and minister of presidential affairs.
- Benghazi’s fish market has reopened after three years. The area had been a stronghold of RSCB. The clean-up continues in other areas as businesses start to reopen. UXO remains a significant hazard.
- The GNA has stated that 30 embassies have returned to Libya following three years of closure. Libya is also in current negotiations with the US State Department and is ‘working to meet the requests by the US embassy to return to Libya.’
- Malta is ‘ready to have a resident ambassador in Libya’ according to the Maltese Foreign Minister Carmelo Abela who visited Tripoli on November 14. Abela also discussed fuel smuggling between the two nations, and it was agreed to expand information sharing regarding smuggling operations in a bid to combat the problem.



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- The Zliten municipal council has held a general meeting to ‘develop a vision and strategy for the future development of the municipality.’ The meeting comes after armed groups closed down council offices and demanded to know why council members had allegedly met with Haftar.
- The Russians have extended their influence into Fezzan, resolving a dispute over Mayoral elections in Obari. The Russians were asked to mediate by the Tuareg and Tebu tribes in negotiations with the GNA.
- The HoR has stated it will announce the final amendments to the political agreement next week. The HCS has however declared that a proposal to amend articles which refer to executive powers in the LPA submitted by the UN Envoy excluded the HCS and claimed that rejection of the proposal is ‘very possible.’
- Human rights lawyers have provided ‘viable evidence’ to the ICC regarding abuses by the LNA. The evidence is from two incidents in 2014 and 2017 which amount to war crimes.
- The foreign ministers of Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria have warned of the ‘deteriorating security situation in Libya’ and renewed their countries’ support to resolving the crisis.
- The Central Bank of Libya has ‘raised the red flag’ over the Libyan economy and described the situation as ‘very terrible.’ The bank did, however, state it had come up with a package of reforms over the last five months which it now wants the HoR to approve.

**Security**

- Staff Major General Sulayman al-Ubaydi has claimed that he is making tribal alliances to lift the LNA siege on Derna and claimed that Haftar is losing support.
- GNA Deputy Minister of the Interior Faraj al-Gaem launched a leadership challenge against Haftar following a VBIED attack against his convoy on November 05 and an IDF attack against the Mol building on November 10. The LNA responded to his ultimatum for Haftar and his close supporters to leave Benghazi within 48 hours by taking over the Mol building. Tensions remain, and the LNA has continued to take follow up action to dismantle Gaem’s support base in the city.
- Tensions remain in Zawiyah which has seen a number of small-scale clashes through the week. The LNA continue to pressure the city from the south while the Presidential Guard are now located along the coastal road to the east.
- The LNA has claimed that ‘defections in Warshefana’ took them by surprise and that they were not aware of what was behind the defections but that payments and cash ‘played a vital role.’
- The LNA has taken control over the Sidi Akribesh district following an offensive between November 05 and 11. Sporadic fighting continues to take place around the Municipal Hotel.
- LNA Spokesman Ahmed al-Mismari has permitted civilians to defend themselves from arrests in Benghazi during dark hours by masked men. The statement comes after increasing reports of residents being subjected to armed robberies and night raids in the city.
- IS has been active again in Sirte Province. A number of temporary checkpoints have been reported while the LNA launched airstrikes at a logistics camp which they had under surveillance for a week. The camp, near Harawa, was said to have vehicles, food and fuel supplies for the group.
- A ‘reliable source’ has stated to the media that Turkish authorities had warned of an attack 48 hours prior to the kidnapping of four expatriates in Obari on November 03.
- A number of prisoners connected to RSCB and BDB have been released in Misrata as tensions rise following the death of a senior RSCB commander in custody last week.
- Just before midnight on November 14, the official website of Bushra Agency (the media wing of the BDB) www.boshra.ly, was shut down shortly after its launch. It is unclear if the issue was a technical one or a precaution by moderators after news the agency had received a national domain name from Libya Telecom and Technology Company, which is a government company, caused controversy.

**Migrant Crisis**

- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad al Hussein has stated that the EU’s support for anti-migrant patrols by the Libyan coastguard is ‘inhuman.’ The UN criticism came after a report was published of a monitoring visit between November 01 and 06 of Libyan detention centres.
- The Libyan coastguard has asked for further European aid for its ‘obsolete fleet’ warning it may not be able to rescue migrants in the Mediterranean next year. The request came as the UN criticized EU support for the coastguard.
- Italy and Germany has defended EU support for the Libyan coastguard following criticism from the UN Human Rights Commissioner.



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- A report by CNN has highlighted the issue of modern slavery in Libya where migrants are being sold at auctions.
- Another 258 Nigerians have been repatriated to Lagos via a Libyan Airlines plane. The vast majority were females with seven males.
- UNSMIL has stated that 25 migrants from Niger have been repatriated from Tripoli. The group included 15 women, six men, and four children.

**Health**

- There has been a spread of mosquitoes in the Abu Salim district of Tripoli. The spread is attributed to the negligence of the sewage and drainage systems in the Wadi Imjeneen valley. Health authorities in the district have issued a warning for unusual mosquito bites after 18 cases of swelling, redness, and soreness were reported.
- The National Center for Disease Control has denied receiving any cases of malaria in Tripoli following rumours on social media.

**Travel**

- Zintan airport has stated that the expansion project is progressing well despite the prevailing high prices and the difficulty in obtaining state funds for the project. The airport has regular flights to Tobruk.
- Tripoli experienced flooding in many areas following heavy rainfall at the start of the week. As a result, traffic across the city has been affected. The heavy rainfall also added 6 million cubic meters to the Wadi Mjenin water dam.
- The US travel ban affecting Libya has been partially reinstated. Citizens of Libya without a ‘bonafide’ relationship to the US like close family in the country, will now be denied visas.
- Misrata airport reopened on November 16 after the Libyan Ground Handling Company went back to work. Workers had gone on strike on November 12 over 17 months of delayed wages.

**KEY DATES**

Date	Occasion	Comment
November 25	Tripoli Marathon	Possible disruptions to movements through the city
December 01	The Prophet’s Birthday	Public Holiday
December 24	Independence Day	Public Holiday
February 17	Libyan Revolution Day	Public Holiday
May 01	May Day	Public Holiday

**THREAT MATRIX**

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



**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**Security**

**Benghazi: Challenge to Haftar’s leadership at the heart of his power base**

Tensions escalated between GNA deputy minister Faraj al-Gaem and Haftar further this week after an IDF attack against the Mol building in Benghazi which killed three people and wounded a further seven on November 10. An angry Gaem then gave Haftar and his close advisors 48 hours to leave the city and hand over command to Wanis Bukhamada, commander of the LNA Special Forces. A spokesman from the Special Forces was quick to distance the force stating they would not be getting involved in the dispute. Gaem also called for all officers to attend a meeting in Barsis on November 11. The following morning, the LNA responded by storming the Mol building in the city and taking control from the Special Task Force. They also launched an attack in Barsis, taking control of Gaem’s second HQ, where an LNA officer was killed in clashes.

Since the takeovers, the LNA has moved to dismantle Gaem’s support base in and around Benghazi. An arrest warrant was issued for Gaem while a number of his supporters have been arrested. Haftar ordered that any member of the Special Task Force applying to join the LNA was to be welcomed. The Security Backup Brigade, commanded by Salah Bulgheib has also been ordered to amalgamate with the LNA’s Military Intelligence Unit. Bulgheib is seen as a supporter of Gaem and the GNA minister of defence, Mahdi al-Barghathi who also led an LNA unit in Benghazi.

**Migrant Crisis**

**Libya’s migration crisis hits the headlines after reports of slavery and abuse**

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad al Hussein has stated that the EU’s support for anti-migrant patrols by the Libyan coastguard is ‘inhuman.’ Hussein’s comments come after human rights monitors visited four migrant detention camps in Tripoli at the beginning of November. The monitors reported seeing thousands of emaciated and traumatised people, locked in hangars. There are no functioning toilets and those detained are often ‘beaten or prodded with electric sticks’ if they ask for food or medicine. Rape and other sexual violence appeared to be commonplace.

**WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Tripolitania**

**Significant activity**

- Armed Clashes - Nov 08, Al-Aziziyah Province, Zahra: TRB took control of Az-Zahra at dawn following fierce clashes with Warshefana militias. TRB is also reported to now be in control of the coastal road running through Warshefana.
- Arrest - Nov 08, Al-Jafara Province, Warshefana: TRB has arrested Mohammed al-Supporto, the brother of the commander of the Supporto Battalion in Warshefana. Mohammed is accused of involvement in kidnapping operations in the area. Reports also indicate that they have gone after the Supporto HQ at the Naval Academy.
- Security Announcement - Nov 08 13:30, Al-Jafara Province, Warshefana: Tripoli and Zintani troops have announced that they have full control over Warshefana.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 08 13:30, Al-Jafara Province, Mayah: Clashes erupted along the coastal road in al-Mayah involving 27 Brigade (Salah Wadi from Zawiyah) and Supporto Brigade (Warshefana).
- Armed Clashes - Nov 08, Al-Jafara Province, Aziziyah: Clashes took place along the Aziziyah to Gharyan road during the morning. The road was reported as closed on November 08.
- Kidnap - Nov 08, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: A bank manager was kidnapped during a bank robbery at the Bank of Commerce and Development in Abu Masmasmah.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 08, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: Two policemen from Zawiyah were killed as they attempted to set up checkpoints on the coastal road.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 09 14:45, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: Clashes were reported near the Zawiyah oil refinery.



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- Demonstration - Nov 10, Al-Murqub Province, Zliten: Armed militias shut down the municipality building in Zliten after the Mayor refused to condemn 'the crimes of Haftar and his militias.' Zliten revolutionary commanders have also urged the municipal council to clarify its position on Haftar and the LNA after reports that delegation from the town met with Haftar
- Armed Attack - Nov 11, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: The Bab Tajoura Brigade, led by al-Azhari, stormed the Bank of Commerce and Development in Tripoli and arrested the director and two other managers. The brigade ordered the bank to close and threatened to arrest any bank tellers if they resumed work. The brigade claimed that the bank was behind the recent drop in the value of the dinar because they were buying dollars on the black market by cheque at a high price of around LYD 14 dinars for one dollar. The three managers were released after six hours in detention.
- Murder/ Execution - Nov 11, Al-Jafara Province, Warshefana: Twenty-eight bodies have been found in Wadi al-Hira, western Warshefana. The National Human Rights Commission states it has reports some of those found are military personnel from Warshefana who were arrested by the Zintan Military Council during the recent operation to take control of the area. Another seven bodies with gunshot wounds were found in Kasarat, Warshefana.
- CP/ Road Block - Nov 11, Sirte Province, Sabein: IS established a temporary checkpoint in al-Sabein, south of Sirte during the evening. They were allegedly looking for people they knew and for members of the police and security forces.
- Demonstration - Nov 12, Misrata Province, Misrata Airport: Ground handling staff at Misrata airport went on strike over 16 months of unpaid salaries. Flights were suspended and diverted to Matiga Airport in Tripoli.
- Armed Attack - Nov 12 21:35, Tripoli Province, CP 27: Armed men from Warshefana attacked a Presidential Guard checkpoint along the coastal road.
- Accident - Nov 12, Tripoli Province, Suq Khamis: A man drowned after his vehicle broke down in flood water at the source of the Kharoae Valley in southern Tripoli. His wife was rescued.
- Demonstration - Nov 13, Tripoli Province, Martyrs' Square: A demonstration took place in Martyr's Square in support of the HoR and the LNA.
- CP/ Road Block - Nov 13, Sirte Province, Abu Hadi: IS established checkpoints early on November 13 in the Abu-Hadi area. IS fighters were searching civilians with some reportedly assaulted. The checkpoints were collapsed prior to any response from BAM in Sirte. A local security source stated that IS fighters were taking refuge in mountainous valleys located 80km from Abu-Hadi. Sporadic attacks against shops in the area have also been reported.
- Demonstration - Nov 13, Misrata Province, Misrata: IDPs staged a protest in front of the Misrata Security Directorate to demand information regarding their family members. Protestors state 32 people from the eastern region are being detained and asked authorities to allow visits and requested their release.
- Mine Strike - Nov 13, Sirte Province, Sirte: Three people were killed in a mine strike on the outskirts of Sirte.

**Cyrenaica**

**Significant activity**

- Armed Clashes - Nov 08, Derna Province, Daher Al-Hamer: The MSCD has stated that they have repelled an LNA advance in Daher Al-Hamer, south of Derna. They claim to have killed an unknown number of LNA soldiers including a commander.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 08, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: The LNA advanced on RSCB positions near the Municipal Hotel. Two RSCB members were killed in the clashes.
- Kidnap - Nov 08, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Province, Bayda: Police commander Ayman al-Hassi was kidnapped from outside his wife's family home in Bayda during the evening by armed men. He was shot in the shoulder and leg as he tried to resist. His mother in law and pregnant wife were also both assaulted. The gunmen also tried to kidnap his young son, but he managed to get away. Hassi was released on the night of November 09. He is reported to be a member of the 'Special Task Force for Capture,' a unit established by Haftar.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 09, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: 17 Battalion (LNA) fought with RSCB in Sidi Akribesh. Four soldiers and two militants were wounded, and three soldiers were killed.
- Security Announcement - Nov 09, Kufra Province, Kufra: Subul as-Silm Brigade has announced the activation of security patrols 24 hours a day in the Kufra military region. The brigade stated that three armed forces were working on a shift basis to ensure security in the region.



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- IDF - Nov 10, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Four mortars were fired at the Mol building in the Budzira district of Benghazi. At least three guards were killed, and seven others were wounded.
- Shooting - Nov 10, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A brother and sister were shot with stray bullets as they left their primary school in Salmani. The young boy was hit in the head and was in a serious condition in hospital while his sister sustained minor injuries. The boy subsequently died of his injuries on November 13.
- Armed Attack - Nov 11, Benghazi Province, Budzira: The LNA and supporting forces stormed the Ministry of Interior building in Benghazi and took control. Two LNA soldiers were reported to have been wounded, and all vehicles present were confiscated.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 11, Benghazi Province, Barsis: LNA units surrounded Barsis, where Gaem had called a meeting 'of all army officers' to declare Wanis Bukhamada commander of security in Benghazi. Gaem was at the meeting along with his armed supporters. Lieutenant Mtuaz Madi with 106 Brigade (LNA) was killed in the subsequent clashes. The location was described as Gaem's 'second headquarters.'
- Security Announcement - Nov 11, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: The LNA has claimed total control over Sidi Akribesh after a four-month siege. An airplane conducted an overflight of the district in 'salute to the triumphant soldiers.' The initial plan had been to starve out the defenders. A number of RSCB elements were killed or captured trying to escape the siege, however, RSCB snipers inflicted ongoing casualties amongst the LNA. Airstrikes were rolled back due to the small area of operations and lack of precision munitions. Tanks were brought in by Special Forces.
- Arrest - Nov 14, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A wave of arrests targeting supporters of GNA deputy minister Faraj al-Gaem is being reported in Benghazi. Omar Sinki, a former minister of the interior who was fired two years ago from the HoR is believed to be still in custody. Bader al-Rahbi, a journalist from the Libya Channel, has been released following his arrest.

**Fezzan**

**Significant activity**

- CP/ Road Block - Nov 08, Al-Jufra Province, Waddan: IS established a temporary checkpoint 70km south of Sirte on the road to Waddan. IS fighters stopped a lorry transporting food and beverages and seized the cargo before allowing the driver and vehicle to go.
- Armed Clashes - Nov 10, Al-Jufra Province, Wadi Qatifah: A land dispute between two families escalated into a firefight in Nasema. One person was killed.
- Arrest - Nov 11, Ghat Province, Ghat: Four men have been arrested by 456 Infantry Regiment for involvement in the kidnap of four expatriates on November 03. The arrests were made after an hour of fighting in Kaaf Aljunun near Ghat. Six other people were also arrested. Investigations are still ongoing into the location of the kidnap victims.
- Sabotage - Nov 14, Fezzan, Fezzan: A power transmission station in southern Libya was vandalised and looted. All the air conditioning units were stolen as well as some 'devices.'



## ACRONYM LIST

AIOR – Anti-IS Operations Room (Sabratah)  
 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  
 MoI - 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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