



1. The Big Picture

LNA Combat Ops. to Protract & Polarize Factions in Tripoli

On 04 April, the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by eastern-based General Khalifa Haftar, pursued its offensive on Tripoli, ending weeks of posturing and speculation over the looming confrontation. Initially, the LNA was intent on a rapid victory by exploiting the element of surprise and utilizing its Forward Edge of Battle Areas (FEBA) of Gharyan, Tarhunah, and Surman to attack Tripoli from multiple fronts. However, five days later, tensions show no signs of abating and there is a strong possibility of protraction as Misrata's involvement becomes more pronounced. The longer and more protracted the conflict, the higher the likelihood of Tripoli militias joining the LNA.

As at 08 April, positions on the ground remain fluid. Contested areas in the southern front include Tripoli International Airport (TIP), Qasr Bin Ghashir, Aziziya, Wadi Rabei, Khallat Al-Forjan, Swani and South of Ain Zara. Conflicting reports continue to emerge over the LNA's control of positions such as Al-Yarmouk camp. There is mounting evidence to indicate combat operations will now reach a more complex phase. The Government of National Accord (GNA) announced Operation "Volcano of Anger", a counter offensive to repel LNA units in the southern front. In addition, Misrata's involvement is growing stronger with reports corroborating the involvement of the 166 Brigade, 301 "Halbous" Brigade, and other units.

There is a possibility some LNA movements are used as a "smokescreen" as part of broader tactical operations to open up multiple fronts. Separately, the LNA is yet to mobilize all of its units from the East. Consequently, while the Tripoli alliance appears to have temporarily consolidated, disintegration would significantly facilitate the LNA's entry into the capital city.

Looking ahead, some militias within Tripoli are expected to shift towards the LNA in the short to

medium term. Tripoli Protection Force (TPF), a coalition of Tripoli's main militias, remains largely driven by opportunistic gains. Separately, militias such as the Special Deterrence Force (SDF or RADA) are expected to be among the first to shift given the overall alignment in its

There are internal rifts within RADA. The first faction believed to have joined the clashes South of Tripoli comprises 20 February "Revolutionaries" who are considered young members. However, RADA's central command, which includes the more influential Madkhali Salafi elements, is yet to mobilize. In fact, members of the latter group, would nominally align with the LNA based on shared values of Madkhali Salafism, a quietist theological doctrine promoting obedience to a higher political authority.

A de-escalation in the short to medium term will depend on the LNA's goals, and whether it seeks to pressure the Tripoli-based GNA into forming a new executive government. Yet the timing of the LNA movements would indicate low confidence in the political roadmap and diminished prospects for a power-sharing arrangement between GNA PM Fayez Sarraj and Haftar.

Regardless, it remains too early to assess the LNA's likelihood of success in the operation, despite observers suggesting the LNA has already failed to capitalize on the element of surprise and that Haftar risks losing the political gains accrued in the past six months.

KEY POINTS

- Clashes are confined to the South
- Misrata involvement growing
- Tripoli militia alliances could shift



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2. National Security Map

Tunisian MoD raises security at Ras Ajdir due to recent escalation

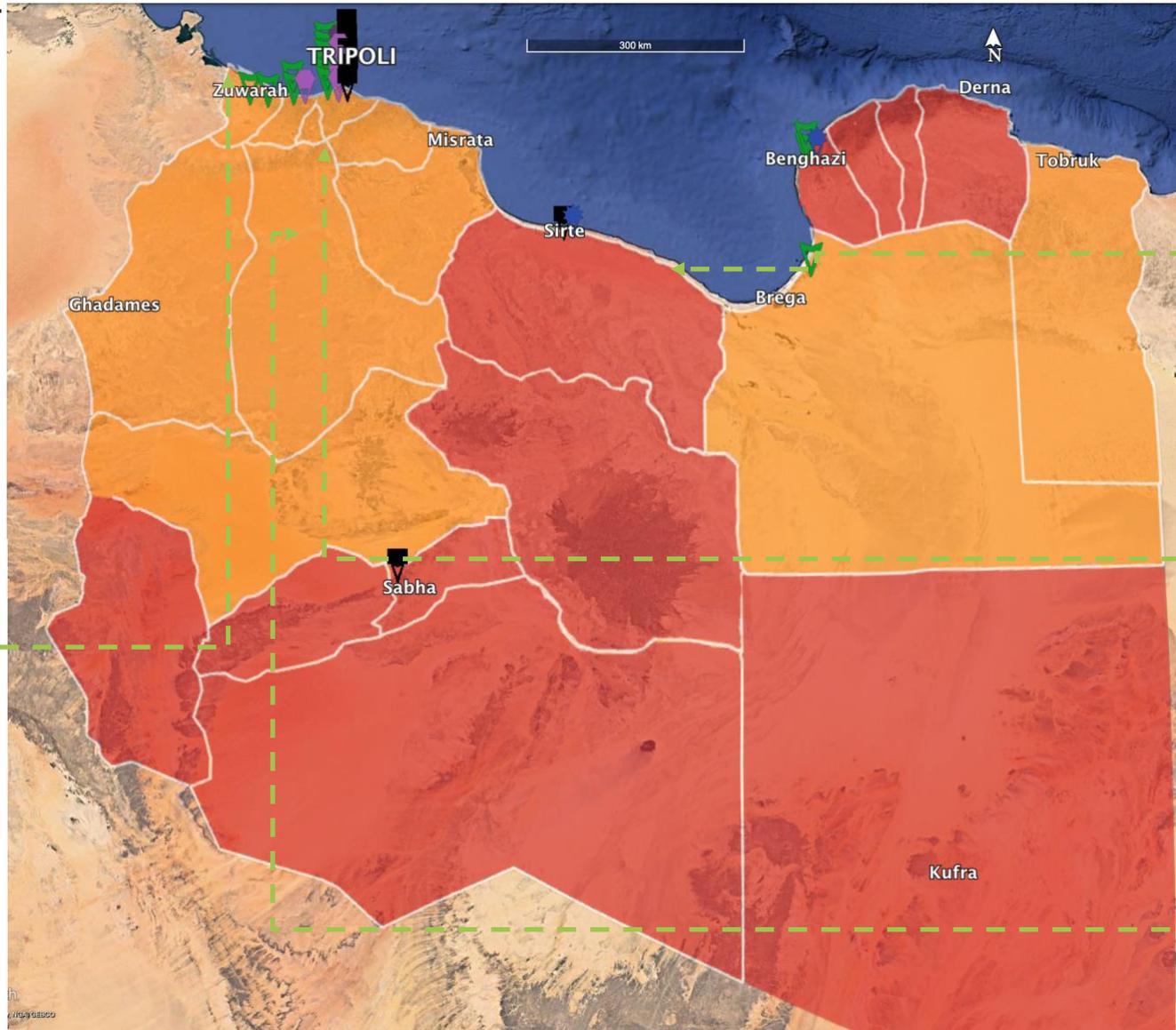
Key

THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

EVENT INDICATORS

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



WB sources reported a Libyan National Army (LNA)-affiliated military convoy of more than 50 military vehicles travelling on the Coastal Road of Bin Jawad, East of Sirte, and heading West, at approximately 1815hrs on 01 Apr. The convoy consisted of several anti-aircraft vehicles and trucks loaded with tanks. Meanwhile, reports across social media outlets suggest more than 500 military vehicles, coming from the Eastern region, arrived at the Al Jufrah airbase, in the evening on 01 Apr. Initial reports indicate the convoys headed towards the Western region.

WB sources reported a local militia in Gharyan was expecting a Libyan National Army (LNA)-affiliated convoy to enter the city on 02 Apr. Unconfirmed reports alleged that the LNA formed an alliance with a local militia who is due to secure their entry into the city. In response, Gharyan's Revolutionaries Brigade and Military Council deployed its forces on the outskirts and inside the city, and noted their full preparation to repel any potential advancement by LNA-affiliated forces.

An airstrike reportedly targeted LNA units in Mizdah in the morning on 06 Apr, whilst an additional airstrike targeted Qaryat at approximately 1730hrs on 06 Apr. The LNA spokesperson declared that the GNA carried out four airstrikes on LNA positions on 06 Apr.

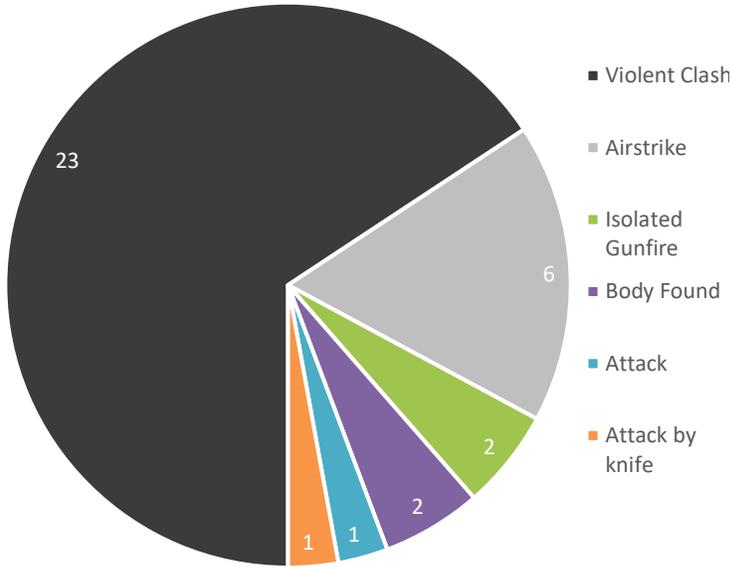
On 05 Apr. the Tunisian Ministry of Defense announced it had adopted "precautionary measures" to secure the South-Eastern Libyan-Tunisian Ras Ajdir border crossing due to the unfolding events and military escalation in Libya, which could have ramifications on the border areas. The MoD called on its military to remain vigilant and increase its security presence at the border crossing points and Ras Ajdir in anticipation of suspicious movements.

Sabratha's Municipal Council confirmed that elders and dignitaries of Al-Zawiya are seeking to release forces from Sabratha who are detained in Al-Zawiya, with no mention of their identity and/or the motive behind their detention. On 05 Mar, reports emerged over 128 men from the LNA 107 Infantry Battalion being detained. The men were reportedly LNA-affiliated but originally from the nearby town of Surman.

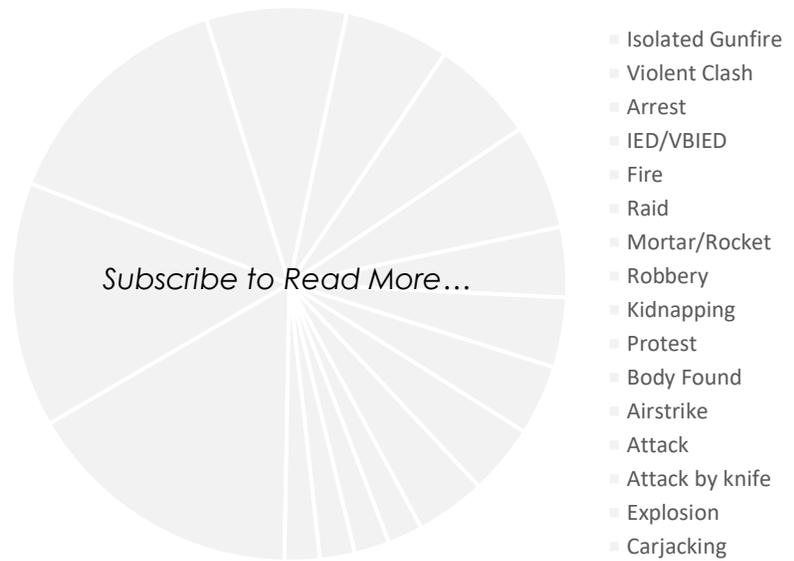
3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Increase in nationwide fatalities due to Tripoli South clashes; 21 fatalities

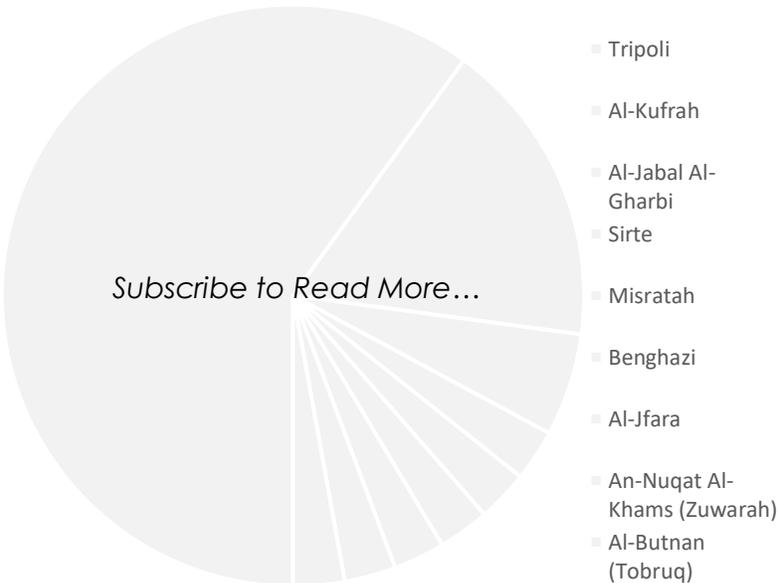
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



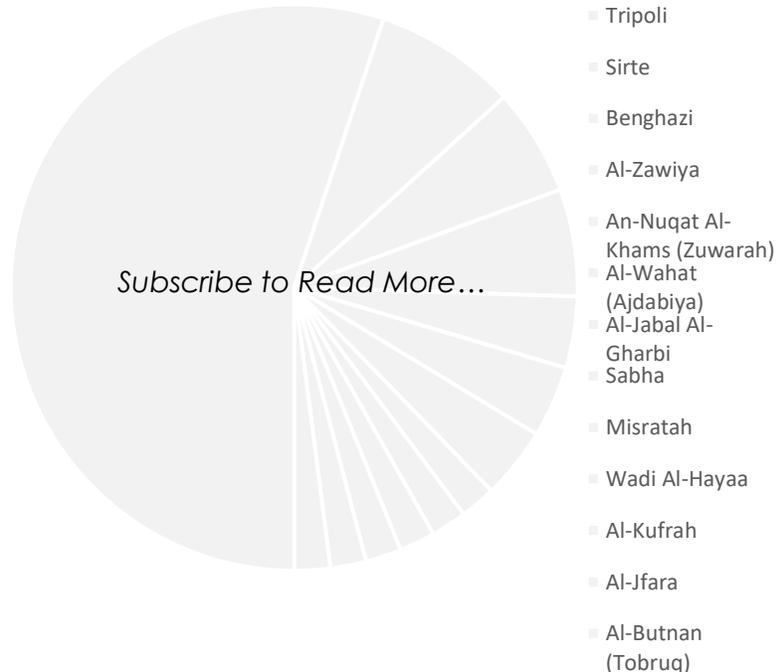
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



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

WB recorded this week a total of 35 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 09 deaths reported last week and 12 the week before. This week, the increase in nationwide fatalities was due to the outbreak of violent clashes between Libyan National Army (LNA) and Government of National Accord (GNA) forces in Tripoli's South. The majority of security incidents occurred in the Western region coinciding with the LNA's launch of a Western military campaign. WB recorded a noticeable decrease in security incidents recorded in the East. Several security incidents were reported throughout the country including, 8 cases of isolated gunfire, 7 violent clashes, 7 arrests, 4 IED/VBIEDs dismantled, 3 raids, 2 robberies, 2 kidnappings, 2 airstrikes, 2 protests, 2 bodies found, 1 attack and 1 carjacking.

In Western Libya, WB recorded a total of 36 incidents, including 27 incidents in the capital city, Tripoli, marking a sharp increase in Tripoli incidents. In Tripoli, this week was marked by heavy clashes between rival LNA & GNA forces in Tripoli's South resulting in 21 fatalities thus far. Beyond the clashes, local reports suggest a group of gunmen kidnapped a civil rights activist from his residence in Tripoli's Al-Hadba area in the early hours of 30 Apr. The civil rights activist was identified as Osama Abuderhaiba and his kidnapping was confirmed by his relatives who claim that no arrest warrant had been issued against him. According to reports, Abuderhaiba stands as a prominent civil rights activist in Tripoli. In terms of his political affiliation, reports suggest Abuderhaiba is pro-Libyan National Army (LNA) and anti-Islamist. The incident was likely politically motivated. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, WB sources reported three masked gunmen driving a white KIA Cerato carjacked a gray KIA Cerato in front of Al-Rahila Gas Station on the main road of Tripoli's Gorje area at approximately 1630hrs on 31 Mar. In the wider West, reports suggest the "Ben Zrair" family carried out an armed attack on a patrol transporting a prisoner from the Faculty of Civil Aviation of Misrata to Misrata's Public Prosecution, resulting in the prisoner's death, at approximately 110hrs on 02 Apr. The prisoner, identified as Badr Bin Salah, is reportedly accused of killing a member of the Ben Zrair family.

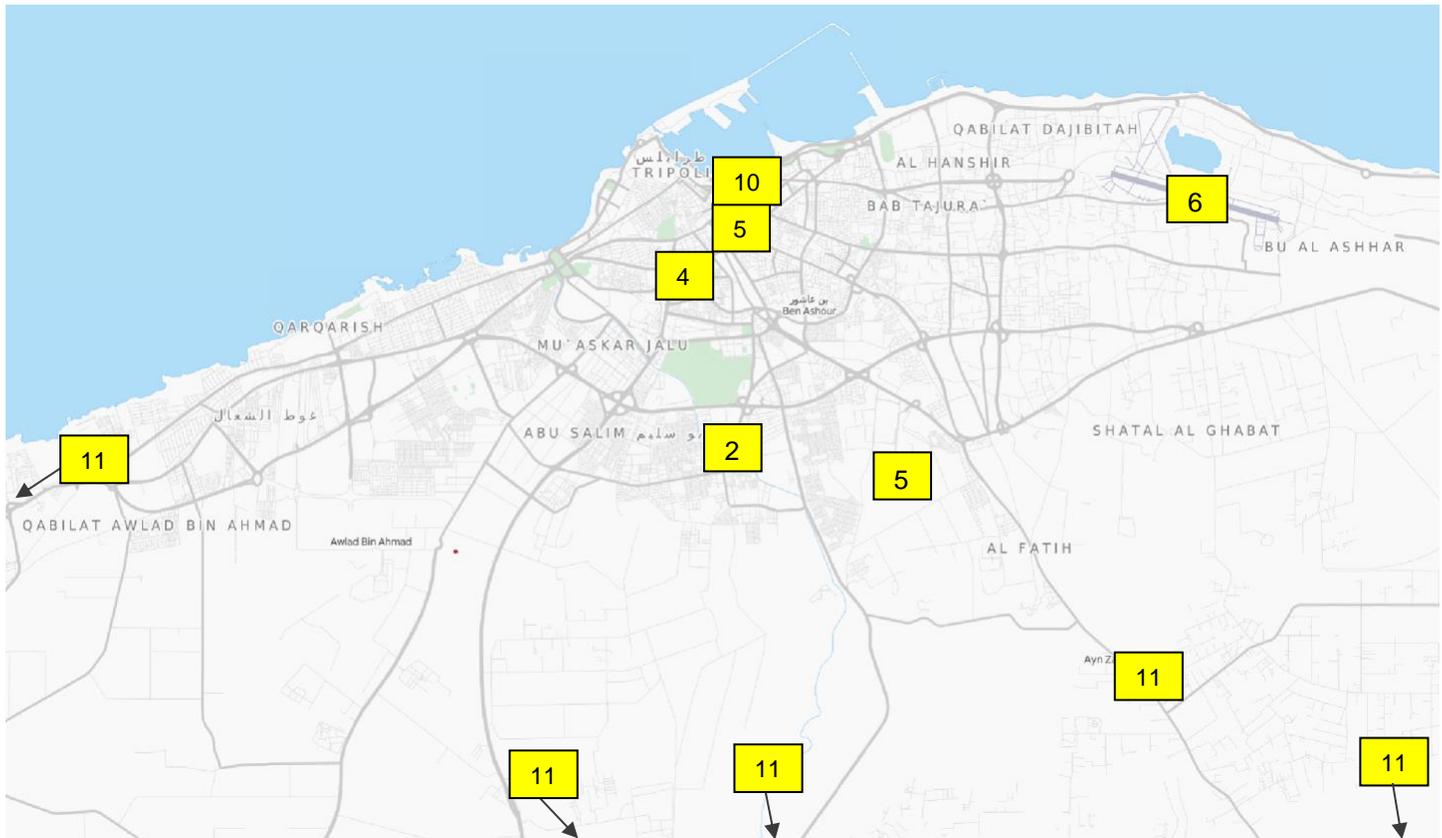
This week in Central Libya, according to a member of the Social Council of Elders of the Gdadfa tribe, the Gdadfa tribe demanded the departure of the Sirte Protection Force (SPF) from the city, following the killing of a man belonging to the tribe on 01 Apr. Reports emerged over an unidentified Misrata militia killing a 24-year-old man identified as Dao Al-Krdsy Gaddafi, in a gunfire incident, in Sirte's Qasr Abu Hadi area at approximately 2330hrs on 01 Apr. In response, the Gdadfa tribe members mobilized on the SPF force stationed in the Al-Qardabiya Airbase in an attempt to force the SPF to depart. Local reports suggest the man behind the killing was identified as Ayman Ashnibra, originally from Misrata and an affiliate of the SPF's and Al-Bunian Al-Marsous (BAM) Al-Mahjoub Brigade. Ashnibra reportedly fled to Misrata.

Turning to Southern Libya, local reports suggest an unidentified aircraft targeted a convoy in an airstrike, resulting in the death of six suspected militants in the Aweinat mountain area, near Libya's South-Eastern border, at night on 02 Apr. Reports suggest one of the militants killed in the airstrike was an Islamic State (IS) militant from Kufra and fought alongside IS during the battle of Sirte.

In Eastern Libya, a dispute escalated between two local families resulting in the use of arms and explosives and the subsequent destruction of more than three houses, in addition to the death of a man, in Tobruk on 31 Mar.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Haftar orders advance on Tripoli; heavy clashes & shifting control in South



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (30 Mar) TPF supports Salame's remarks on corruption of political class
2. (30 Mar) Gunmen kidnap prominent civil rights activist from his residence
3. (31 Mar) TPF announces formation of unified Western Region Force
4. (01 Apr) SDF raids brothel & arrests 23 individuals
5. (01 Apr) Tripoli University students & teachers protest; financial demands
6. (02 Apr) Unconfirmed reports of 4 TRB commanders fleeing via MJL to Tunis
7. (03 Apr) PC state of emergency as LNA announces Western military campaign
8. (03 Apr) Increased militia movements in Tripoli's South
9. (03 Apr) TPF denies pledging allegiance to LNA
10. (03 Apr) UNSG in Tripoli; expresses deep concern over LNA movements
11. (04 Apr– ongoing) Haftar launches Tripoli Liberation Op; heavy clashes in South & conflicting control over TIP

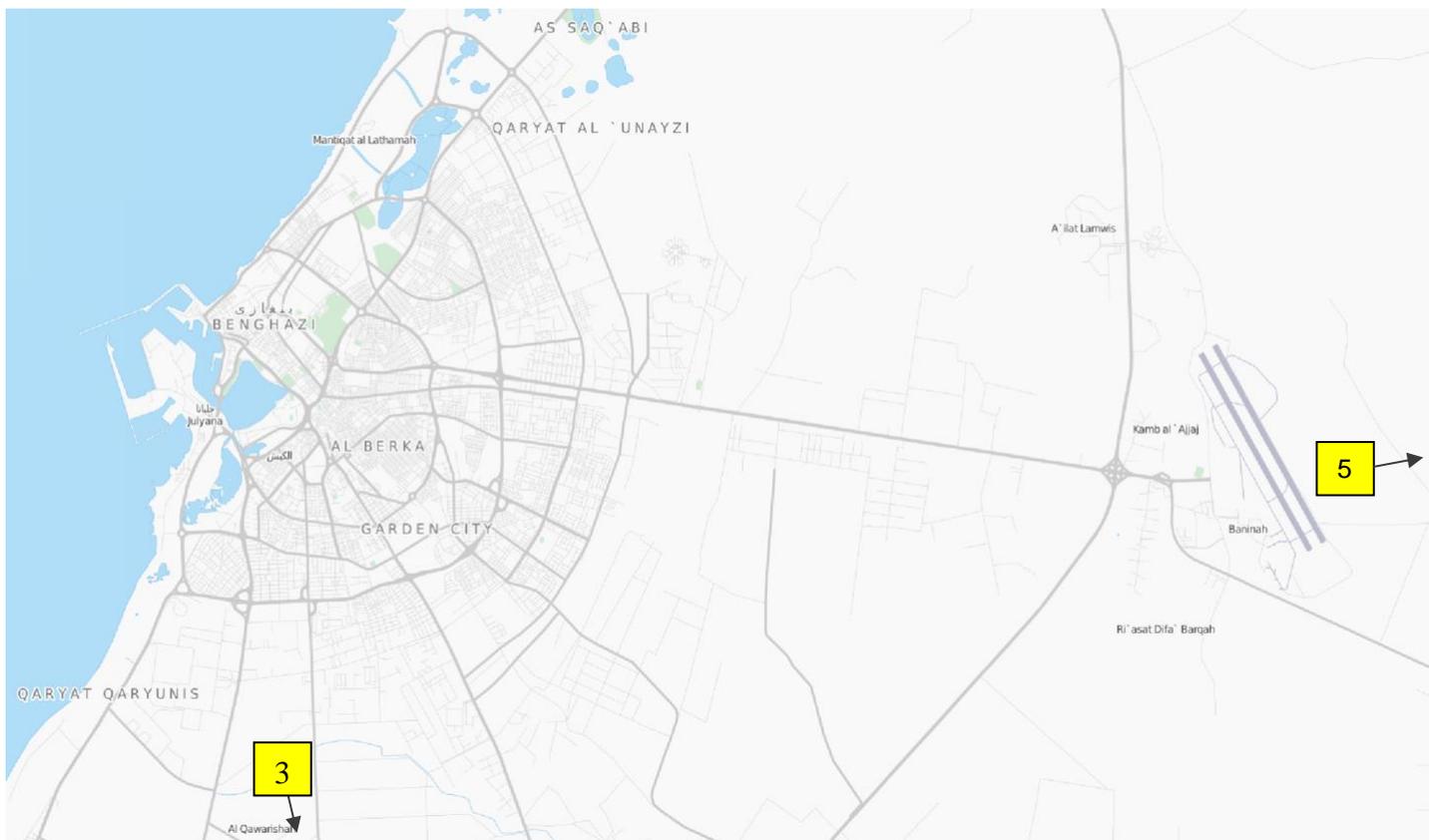
LNA advances on Tripoli; clashes in South

In a purported audio recording titled "Operation to liberate Tripoli", the Libyan National Army (LNA) head, Khalifa Haftar, announced "Zero Hour" and ordered his forces to march on the capital city to "shake the lands under the feet of the unjust bunch"; a clear reference to Tripoli's militias on 04 Apr. Haftar ordered his forces in the West and outskirts of Tripoli to advance on the capital and liberate it peacefully, whilst calling on his forces not to target those who raise the "white flag"; in a sign of surrender. Haftar's confirmation of a Tripoli liberation operation was followed by the army's "peaceful" entry into Gharian, approximately 80 kms from Tripoli on 04 Apr. Meanwhile, reports emerged suggest LNA-affiliated forces controlled the 27th Bridge along the Coastal Road on the Western outskirts of Janzour at approximately 1930hrs on 04 Apr. Reports indicated at least 128 men from the LNA 107 Infantry Battalion were detained by GNA-affiliated forces. In response to the LNA's offensive, the Tripoli Protection Force (TPF) announced operation "Wadi Doum 2.0" and the subsequent advance of forces on all axes on 04 Apr. The TPF reported it seized the 27th Bridge and Coastal Road with the help of Al-Zawiya forces and the reported involvement of Al-Zawiya's pro-Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) Ammu militia. Reports suggest TPF expanded further South towards Warshaffanah after controlling the 27th Bridge at 05 Apr. Conflicting reports continued to emerge over the control of Tripoli International Airport (TIP)

throughout the night of 05 Apr, coinciding with reports of clashes in Qasr Bin Ghashir and Wadi Al-Rabei areas. Control over TIP remains fluid. Separately, the LNA declared a no-fly zone for military aircraft taking off/ landing from/to Western region on 06 Apr. The LNA Air Force (LAF) Ops Room announced that any military aircraft in the Western Region will be considered a target, including the airport/airstrip the aircraft took off from. Following the no-fly zone announcement, unconfirmed reports emerged over a military aircraft flying out of Misrata in the afternoon on 06 Apr, thus violating the LNA-imposed no-fly zone. The LNA no-fly zone followed reports of an airstrike reportedly targeting LNA units in Mizdah in the morning on 06 Apr, whilst an additional airstrike targeted Qaryat at approximately 1730hrs on 06 Apr. The LNA spokesperson declared that the GNA carried out four airstrikes on LNA positions on 06 Apr. On 07 Apr, the reports suggest the LAF carried out an airstrike targeting Al-Naqliya Camp resulting in the destruction of several GNA military vehicles, in the first recorded LNA airstrike against the GNA. Heavy clashes continued in Tripoli's Qasr Bin Ghashir and Wadi Rabei areas, expanding to the South of Ain Zara, near Al-Kahili Mosque on 06 Apr. The GNA's Ministry of Health recorded 21 fatalities and 27 injuries as a result of the clashes. Meanwhile, the PC's army spokesperson announced "Volcano of Rage" operation to combat "illicit armed groups" on 07 Apr. Overall, clashes have been sporadic on the Southern frontline with no impact on the operating environment in downtown Tripoli. There is mounting evidence to indicate the escalation and combat operations could reach a more complex stage in the short to medium term as alliances begin to shift.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

UNSG meets Haftar following launch of LNA Tripoli Liberation Operation



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (01 Apr) Interim Govt. allocates 1.767 billion LYD to stabilize city
2. (01 Apr) Arrest of impersonating Anti-Corruption Committee head
3. (03 Apr) Four shells dismantled and disposed
4. (04 Apr) Security departments raise state of alert
5. (05 Apr) Haftar receives UNSG in LNA HQ

Haftar receives UNSG

The Libyan National Army (LNA) head, Khalifa Haftar, received the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG), Antonio Guterres, in the LNA HQ in Ar-Rajmah on 05 Apr. Guterres meeting with Haftar followed similar meetings in Tripoli and Tobruk to discuss the Libyan file. Whilst no further information was disclosed on the meetings' outcomes, upon departing Libya, Guterres stated that he "leaves Libya with a heavy heart and deeply concerned". Guterres statement would suggest that his talks with Haftar to halt the military escalation in Western Libya, including Tripoli, failed. Additionally, observers suggest Guterres meeting Haftar following his announcement of the launch of an operation to "liberate Tripoli" would highlight Haftar's key position in the political process and subsequent consolidation of power across the country.

1.767 billion LYD to stabilise Benghazi

On 01 Apr, the Interim Government allocated 1.767 billion Libyan dinars (LYD) to stabilise the city of Benghazi following years of destruction caused by armed conflict between the Libyan National Army (LNA) and militant groups. In a statement, the government noted that the Committee for Restoring Stability to Benghazi led by the PM Abdullah Al-Thinni, increased the amount allocated for service

projects in the city to 1.767 billion LYD. In Jun 2017, the LNA announced the liberation of Benghazi and the elimination of militant groups in the city. However, the three-year LNA-led military campaign caused extensive physical damage to the city's infrastructure.

Four shells dismantled

Local reports suggest the demining team affiliated with the Dignify Operations Room dismantled and subsequently disposed four shells located in Benghazi's 12 Buildings near the Tripoli Road on 03 Apr.

6. What's next

Further escalation with possibility of new fronts & shift in alliances

POLITICAL FORECAST

Active combat operations in Tripoli have significantly undermined the prospect of achieving political breakthroughs in the medium term, casting doubt on the UNSMIL National Conference and elections in general. The United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG), Antonio Guterres, arrived in Tripoli in an official visit on 03 Apr. The latest reports (approximately 0940hrs on 04 Apr) suggest the UNSG expressed deep concerns over the LNA's movements, reaffirming that the military solution will not solve the Libyan crisis. On his official twitter account, the UNSG stated that he is "totally committed to support a Libyan-Led political process leading to peace, stability, democracy and prosperity for the Libyan people". On the diplomatic front, while the US Department of State issued a strong condemnation of Haftar's military operations, reports suggest Russia blocked a UN Security Council (UNSC) statement calling on Haftar to halt military activity. Some analysts suggest Russia is more overt in its support for the LNA and Haftar, which would show confidence in the LNA's ability to seize the capital city. Separately, US President Donald Trump has nominated US diplomat Richard Norland for the Ambassador to Libya posting. Norland has held multiple roles and served as the former US Ambassador to Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Georgia. The United States does not currently have a Libya mbassador, though Peter Bodde acts as the Chargé d'Affaires from Tunis.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

In an *Atlantic Council* article, author Ashish Kumar Sen, writes "Haftar's forces control large swathes of territory in the eastern and southern parts of Libya and have steadily gained ground. In response to Haftar's orders to the LNA, militias in the western cities of Libya have rallied to defend Tripoli. Karim Mezran, a senior fellow in the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, said militias in Tripoli had, "contrary to all expectations, stuck together in favor of the legitimate government of Serraj, and have not changed sides." Militias from the western city of Misrata are also apparently on their way to prevent Haftar's forces from advancing on Tripoli, while others were heading east to threaten the oil terminals in the Gulf of Sidra that are under Haftar's control, Mezran said. Libya is a key oil-producing nation and a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Militias from the city of Zintan were also moving on the orders of former Libyan Defense Minister Osama al-Juwali to halt the advance of Haftar's forces, Mezran said. As things stood on April 5, Haftar's forces had been stopped outside Tripoli; fighting was reported in the city of Gharyan south of Tripoli. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres was to meet Haftar in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi to try and defuse a situation some worry could escalate into a civil war."

SECURITY FORECAST

Further escalation is imminent, including with the use of airpower, which is expected to intensify from both sides in Tripoli and beyond. Tensions over Wattya airbase could exacerbate tribal dynamics, specifically Zintan's relations with the GNA, following reports confirming the LNA presence at the base, which prompted the GNA to carry out an airstrike allegedly targeting an LNA cargo plane. Despite video footage purported to show Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB) commander Haithem Tajouri on the front line (which would discredit reports of a potential TRB shift towards LNA) cohesion among the Tripoli alliance is not guaranteed in the short to medium term. Misrata's involvement is growing stronger with reports corroborating the involvement of the 166 Brigade, Al-Marsa Brigade, 301 "Halbous" Brigade, and other units. A protracted conflict and escalation with Misrata, would subsequently reduce the LNA's prospects and could result in a vacuum in the Oil Crescent. New fronts could open up in the West, Sirte, and the Jufra district, which remains vital to the LNA's supply lines. Failure to secure supply lines will undermine the LNA's ability to hold its position in southern Tripoli. However, there remains a political vacuum in Tripoli. Haftar will attempt to exploit these gaps and secure key positions such as Tripoli International Airport (TIP) to gain leverage in negotiations with militias across the capital city.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

In a Bloomberg article, Brendan Scott writes "The Trump administration issued a stern warning to Libyan militia leader Khalifa Haftar to halt his forces' advance on Tripoli, sending oil prices to their highest level in more than four months amid mounting supply concerns. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo said in a statement late Sunday that the U.S. was "deeply concerned" about the warlord's threat to the internationally recognized capital. He said the military campaign was endangering civilians and undermining efforts to resolve the dispute peacefully. "We have made clear that we oppose the military offensive by Khalifa Haftar's forces and urge the immediate halt to these military operations against the Libyan capital," Pompeo said. "There is no military solution to the Libya conflict." Brent for June settlement advanced as much as 0.7 percent to \$70.86 a barrel on the London-based ICE Futures Europe exchange, the highest since Nov. 12. Crude prices have continued to climb after their strongest quarter in almost a decade as OPEC and its allies curb output while economic and political crises squeeze supplies from member nations Venezuela and Iran. An escalation of the conflict in Libya, which pumped 1.1 million barrels of crude a day last month, risks creating a supply shortfall.

About Whispering Bell



Contact Whispering Bell at: +971-4-448-6690 or at ras@whisperingbell.com

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