



# 1. The Big Picture

## Fighting continues as East/West divisions plague NOC

Fighting continues to gain momentum between Libyan National Army (LNA) and Government of National Accord (GNA) forces in Tripoli's South. This week, LNA units launched a renewed offensive dubbed "Martyr Mohsen Al-Kani" and achieved temporary advances backed by intensified airstrikes in the vicinity of Al-Yarmook Camp. GNA forces later regained control over the camp after military reinforcements from the Salah Badi-led Sumood Brigade. A day later, LNA forces secured significant advances on Espiaa-Aziziya frontline, despite GNA forces conflicting claims that the LNA's "surprise attacks" have all been repelled.

Moving to another frontline, Libya continues to edge closer to an oil & gas disruption. The Benghazi-based Brega Petroleum Marketing Company (BPMC) board of directors announced breaking away from the Tripoli-based National Oil Corporation (NOC) due to recently-documented reductions in jet fuel supply to the East. Reports suggest the Benghazi-based BPMC vowed to compensate for the dwindling supplies, in an indication of intent to independently import petroleum products.

The development is the latest to widen the rift between eastern-based NOC subsidiaries and the Tripoli-based NOC headed by Mustafa Sanalla. An internal NOC company letter circulated on social media and sent by a BPMC board of director member is purported to document the reduction in supplies of jet fuel to the East. In the letter, the BPMC member asks the Tripoli-based BPMC to regulate supplies between the southern, western, eastern, and central regions. The letter appears to be dated 26 April 2019, which if confirmed, would indicate that fuel supplies to the East were reduced by the NOC within the first weeks of the Tripoli offensive.

Moreover, the development would come after Reuters reported the NOC restricted kerosene/jet fuel supplies to areas under the LNA's control in the Eastern region in what "diplomats and oil officials" referred to as an attempt to prevent the LNA from using them in their offensive on Tripoli. After being accused of bipartisanship, Sanallah recently attempted to shore up his alliances by holding multiple meetings with US officials.

The development came amid a growing anti-Sanalla campaign from the East. Libya publication Al Marsad published a report claiming Sanalla's policies are having an impact on civilian flights. The report alleges Sanalla is restricting fuel supplies to Zintan in an effort to support the GNA in crippling the LNA's combat capabilities at Wattiyah airbase. However, the report claims the restrictions are directly impacting civilian flights from Zintan airport.

The NOC then issued a statement rejecting the establishment of a parallel BPMC. The NOC statement read "the NOC Board rejects the establishment of a parallel board of directors for the BPMC by the so-called Interim Government. The Board stresses that the unity and sole legitimacy of NOC and its subsidiaries is enshrined in Libyan law and protected by UN Security Council resolutions." The NOC added that "the person appointed by the so-called Interim Government as chairman of the parallel board of directors of BPMC is a former BPMC board member whose administrative and financial violations triggered an internal NOC investigation, and a committee was formed on March 25, 2019 to investigate him. BPMC's General Assembly suspended the employee in question from his post and referred him to the Public Prosecutor's office for criminal investigation into the charges against him."

In response, and against the backdrop of growing polarization between NOC subsidiaries, Ambassadors and Charges d'affaires of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US), expressed their full support for the Tripoli-based NOC as an exclusive, independent, legitimate, and nonpartisan oil company on 22 Sep.



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### KEY POINTS

- LNA launches renewed offensive in Tripoli
- East-based BPMC secedes from Tripoli NOC
- Joint statement in support of Tripoli NOC

## 2. National Security Map

AFRICOM airstrike kills eight IS militants in Murzuq area; 14 militants killed in Harouj Mountains

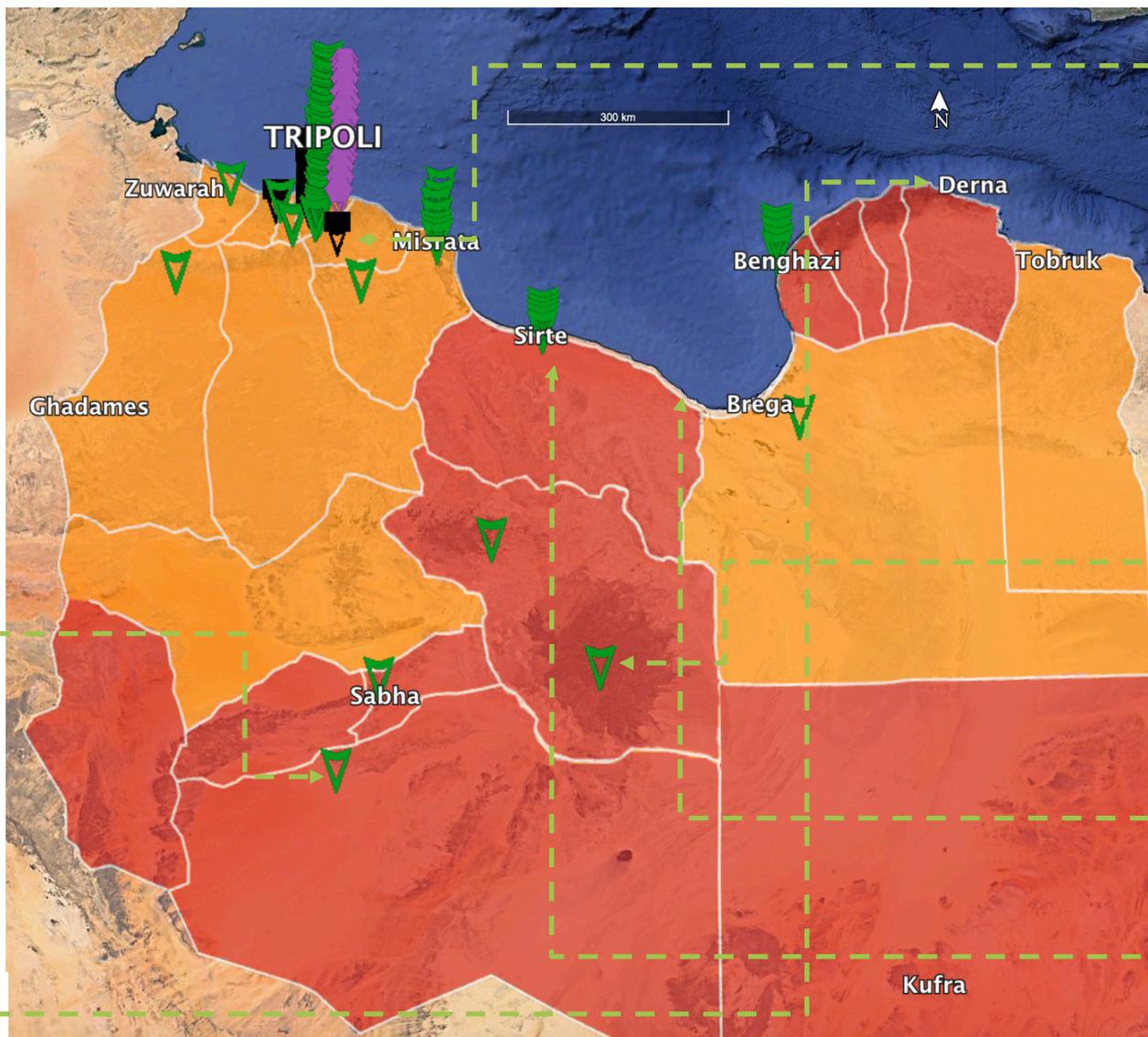
### Key

#### THREAT INDICATORS

- Severe Threat
- High Threat
- Moderate Threat

#### EVENT INDICATOR

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



The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) in coordination with the GNA, conducted an airstrike targeting Islamic State (IS) militants in the Murzuq area on 19 Sep, resulting in the death of eight militants. In a statement, the U.S. Africa Command noted that the airstrike was conducted to “eliminate terrorist leaders and fighters and to disrupt terrorist activity”. The statement added “we will not allow them to use the current conflict in Libya as protection”.

Reports indicate O&G workers held protests across a number of oilfields located in the Southern region in the morning on 19 Sep. The protestors demanded the National Oil Corporation’s (NOC) chairman, Mustafa Sanalla, to implement decree 642 of 2013 mandating a salary increase of 67% for oil and gas sector workers.

Local reports indicate Derna’s security services monitored suspicious movements across Derna’s Southern valleys on 22 Sep.

The Social Council of the Werfalla Tribe issued a statement on the recent abduction of two of their locals between the Banl Walid – Tarhuna Road, holding military, security, and social factions in Tarhuna responsible for the incident, and subsequently ceased relations with the latter on 22 Sep.

LNA spox. Ahmed Mismary declared that the zone from Sirte to Zuwarah in the West is considered a military combat zone.

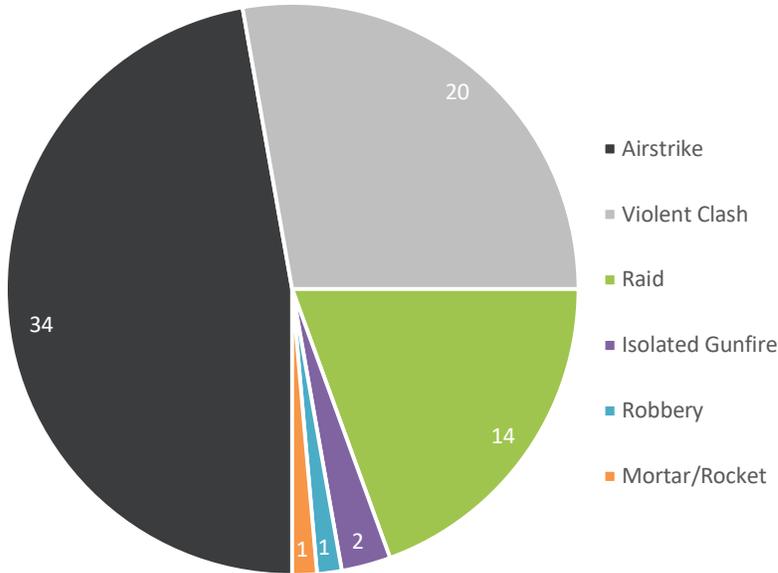
According to the LNA-affiliated Southern Military Region commander, Mohammed Younis, LNA units carried out separate raids targeting an ammunition depot belonging to armed militants in the Harouj Mountain area, resulting in 14 fatalities and the destruction of their vehicles. Younis, speaking to “Al Ain News”, reported that the LNA General Command sent large reinforcements to the South to maintain security and stability, particularly in Murzuq and its surrounding areas.

Local reports indicate military reinforcements from Misrata arrived in Sirte, including forces and vehicles loaded with heavy artillery belonging to the Hatain Battalion on 17 Sep. The development would come after the LNA conducted airstrikes targeting GNA-aligned Sirte Protection Force (SPF) positions across the city.

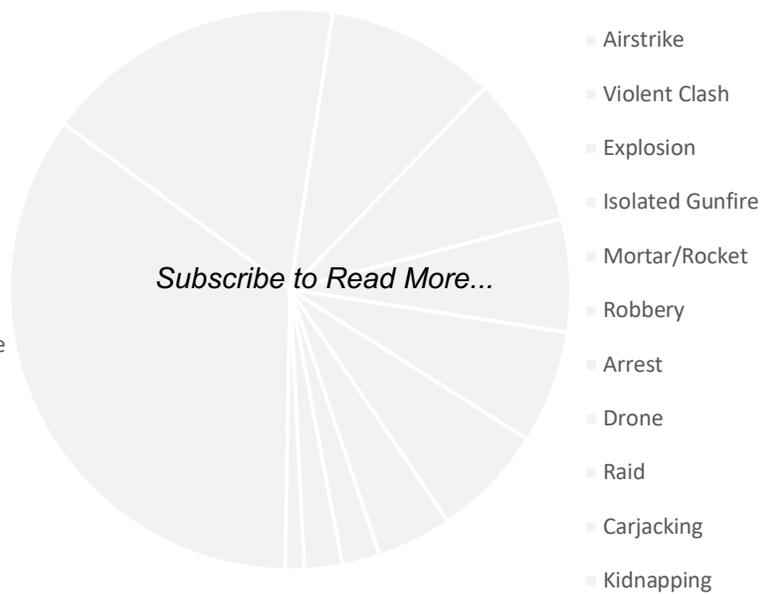
### 3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Airstrikes & violent clashes account for ¾ of nationwide fatalities

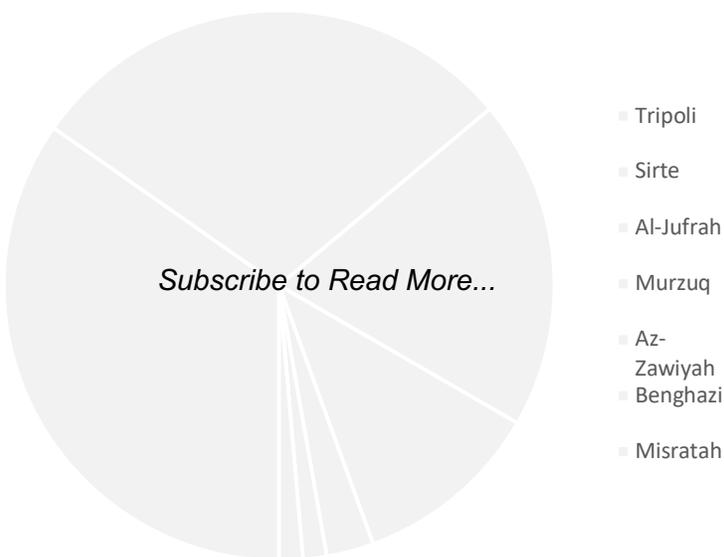
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



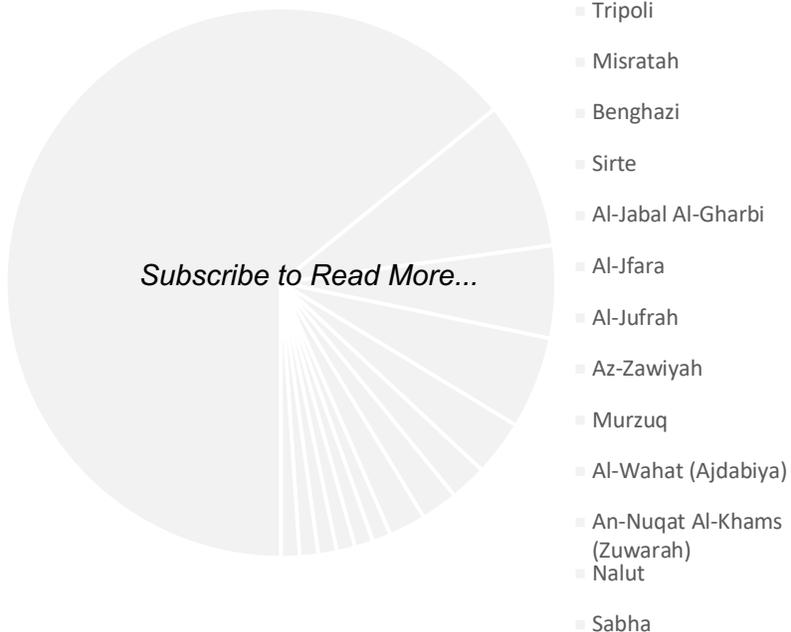
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



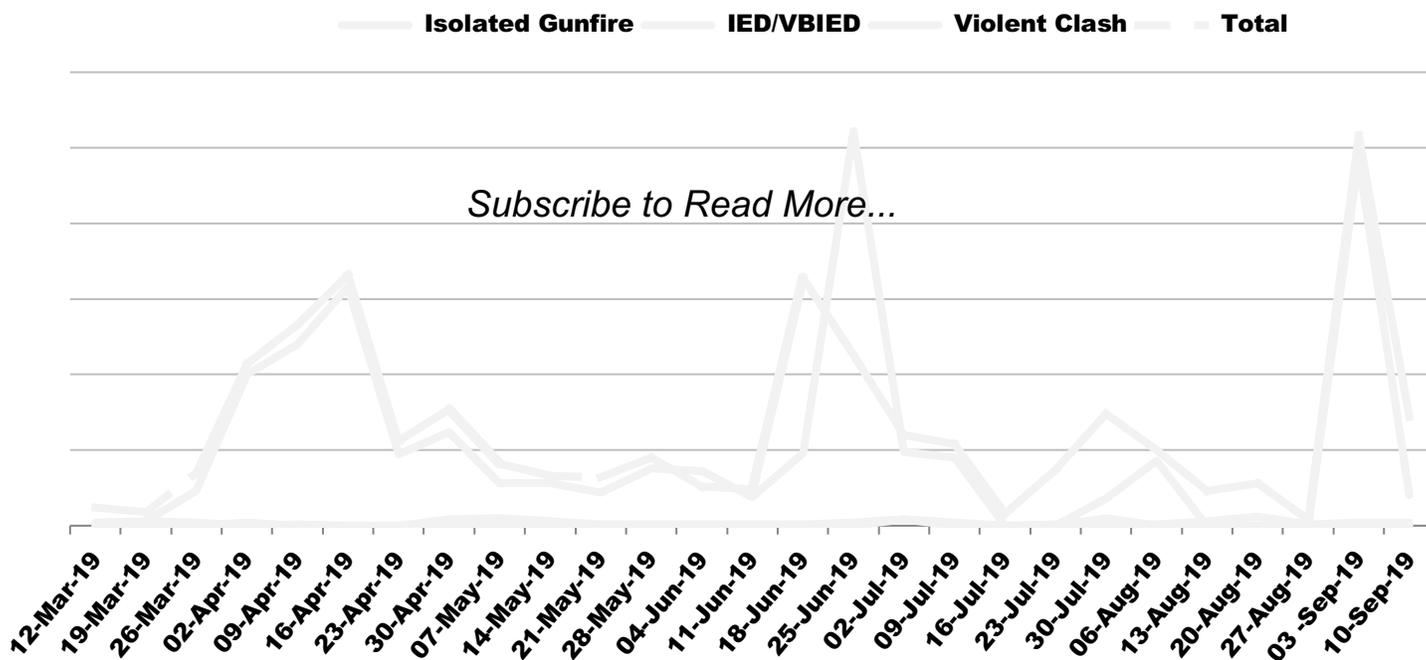
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



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 72 confirmed deaths in Libya, which compares to 258 deaths reported last week and 04 the week before, marking a sharp decrease in the number of fatalities. The latter is due to an absence of a confirmed casualty toll from the ongoing military operations in the West. This week, reports indicate at least 20 LNA/GNA forces died in an LNA-renewed offensive on Tripoli's frontlines. Violent clashes, followed by airstrikes, accounted for the highest number of fatalities, whilst 14 militants were killed during an LNA raid in the Harouj Mountain area. This week saw a decrease in airstrikes, violent clashes, and mortar/rocket incidents which have commonly dominated the overall security environment since clashes erupted in early Apr. In indication of an widened security vacuum and subsequent increased criminal activity, this week saw a surge in robberies. In addition, this week WB recorded security incidents across the Western, central, Southern and Eastern regions. Several security incidents were reported throughout the country including 32 airstrikes, 16 violent clashes, 9 explosions heard, 8 isolated gunfire cases, 6 mortar/rocket shelling incidents, 6 robberies, 6 arrests, four drones reported over Western skies, 2 raids, 2 carjackings and 1 kidnapping.

In Western Libya, WB recorded a total of 76 incidents, including 59 in Tripoli, marking a decrease in contrast to last week. In Tripoli, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that a Sudanese migrant was shot dead hours after he was returned to shore by the Libyan Coast Guard, along with 103 migrants, on 19 Sep. According to IOM staff providing aid to the migrants, armed men fired sporadic shots into the air after the migrants attempted to escape from the guards to prevent them for being returned to detention centres. Separately, reports indicate a parked green KIA Sportage was stolen near Tripoli's Ministry of Tourism on 18 Sep. Vehicle thefts remain widespread across the capital city. In the wider Western region, local reports indicate unidentified gunmen shot dead the son of the Municipality of West Zawiyah (Harsha) head, Qais Al-Labah, in Al-Harsha at approximately 1200hrs on 18 Sep. Qais was a leader of the Operation Libya Dawn led by "Abu Obaida" and was a prominent fuel smuggler. Beyond this, reports indicate four LNA airstrikes targeted sites of Misrata's Aviation College resulting in the destruction of an aircraft, allegedly loaded with Turkish weapons, inside the aviation college on 17 Sep. Meanwhile, the LNA-affiliated Ajdabiya Operations Room reported the LNA's Air Force (LAF) targeted a hanger used to house Turkish unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) at Zuwara Airport (WAX).

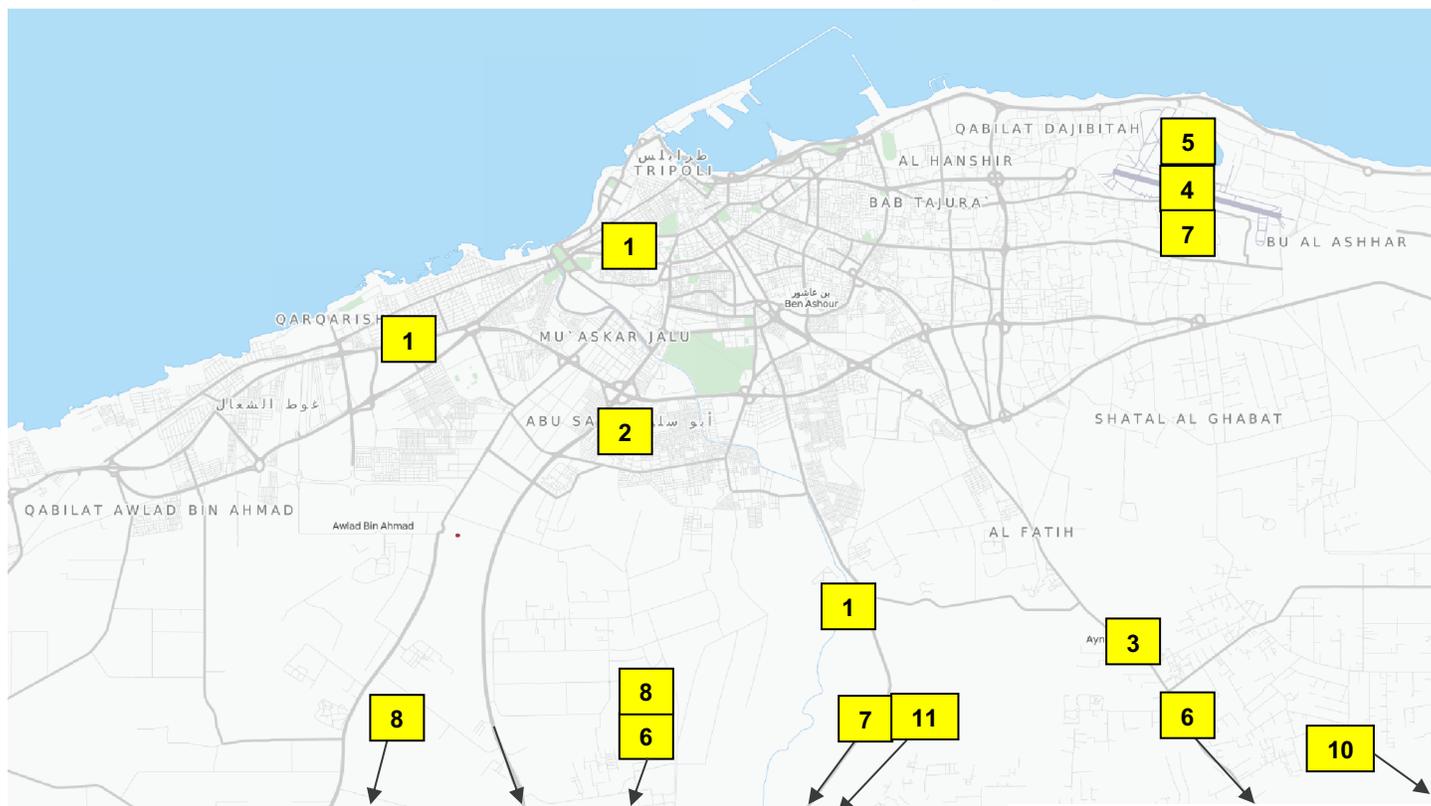
In the central region, on 16 Sep, the LNA's Air Force (LAF) targeted Sirte's Al-Ghardabiya Airbase and Feed Factory. According to an Ibn Sina Hospital source, the airstrikes resulted in 21 fatalities and 25 injuries. Meanwhile, the Sirte Protection Force (SPF) stated that the LNA airstrikes targeting its positions resulted in the death of two "martyrs". Reports indicate Misrata reinforcements arrived in Sirte following the LNA series of airstrikes.

Turning to the South, local reports indicate a failed carjacking attempt resulted in the injury of a 17-year-old male, identified as Amer Al-Hadi, in Sabha on 13 Sep. Al-Hadi left the petrol station after refueling his vehicle and was chased by the perpetrator in an attempt to steal his vehicle. After Al-Hadi refused to stop, the perpetrator opened fire on the victim subsequently resulted in his leg injury.

In Eastern Libya, WB recorded 5 security incidents in Benghazi, including 4 arrests & 1 mortar/rocket incident resulting in casualties.

## 4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

LNA: Turkish officers killed in airstrike targeting Turkish Ops Room in MJI



### KEY INCIDENTS

1. (15 Sep) Carjacking on Gorje's main rd; two parked vehicles stolen
2. (15 Sep) Motorcyclists throw hand grenade inside vehicle in Abu Slim
3. (15-16 Sep) Limited military activity on frontlines; ASL militant reportedly killed
4. (16 Sep) LNA claims multiple airstrikes targeting MJI killing 4 Turkish officers
5. (16 Sep) Unconfirmed: SDF release BRSC militant from Mitiga prison
6. (16- 17 Sep) Limited military activity; LNA spox warns over upcoming crucial stage
7. (17 Sep) LNA claims advances in Espiaa; 3 LNA airstrike on MJI's military section
8. (18-19 Sep) Ongoing clashes; pro-LNA accounts report killing of SDF commanders in MJI airstrike on 16 Sep
9. (19 Sep) Sudanese migrant shot dead by Libyan Coast Guards
10. (20-21 Sep) Increased LNA airstrikes; LNA downs Turkish UAV in Al-Ztarna
11. (22-23 Sep) LNA launches fresh offensive; GNA retaliates

### LNA claim MJI airstrike kills 4 Turkish officers

The LNA's Dignity Ops Room Media Centre claimed to have conducted multiple airstrikes targeting GNA positions, including the Turkish Operations Room located in the Mitiga International Airport (MJI)\_base, subsequently resulting in the death of four Turkish officers at approximately 0230hrs on 16 Sep. WB sources reported the LNA airstrike targeted a warehouse containing ammunition at MJI. Meanwhile, in a statement, the centre claimed the airstrike targeted a bus carrying Turkish officers as it was about to leave the Mitiga base. The statement added that the diversion of all flight operations from MJI to Misrata International Airport (MRA) is due to the presence of several operations rooms and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) dispersed across the Mitiga base, and the subsequent need to facilitate mobility. Separately, the LNA's Military Information Division claimed its Air Force (LAF) conducted three airstrikes targeting MJI's military section on 17 Sep. In a statement, the division claimed the precision airstrikes achieved their objectives.

### TPF statement in support of political efforts

The Tripoli Protection Force (TPF), a pro-GNA militia coalition formed in Dec 2018, issued a statement on 17 Sep supporting the GNA's efforts to reach a political solution and stressing the importance of dialogue, among other points. Of note, the TPF consists of the Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB), the Special Deterrence Force (SDF), Ghneiwa militia, and the Bab Tajoura Battalion. The statement's timing and content is telling; the TPF is clearly attempting to express its willingness to reach a political solution in an attempt to distance itself from

more radical pro-Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) elements opposed to any form of dialogue. The statement corroborates the assumption that cracks are beginning to emerge within the GNA camp. The TPF added that it renounces terrorism and extremism in all its forms or use of the "terrorist label". Throughout the statement, the TPF attempts to reiterate its active role in combat operations in support of the GNA, likely to avoid being accused of treason by other more "radical" elements fighting within GNA ranks.

### Hand grenade thrown inside vehicle

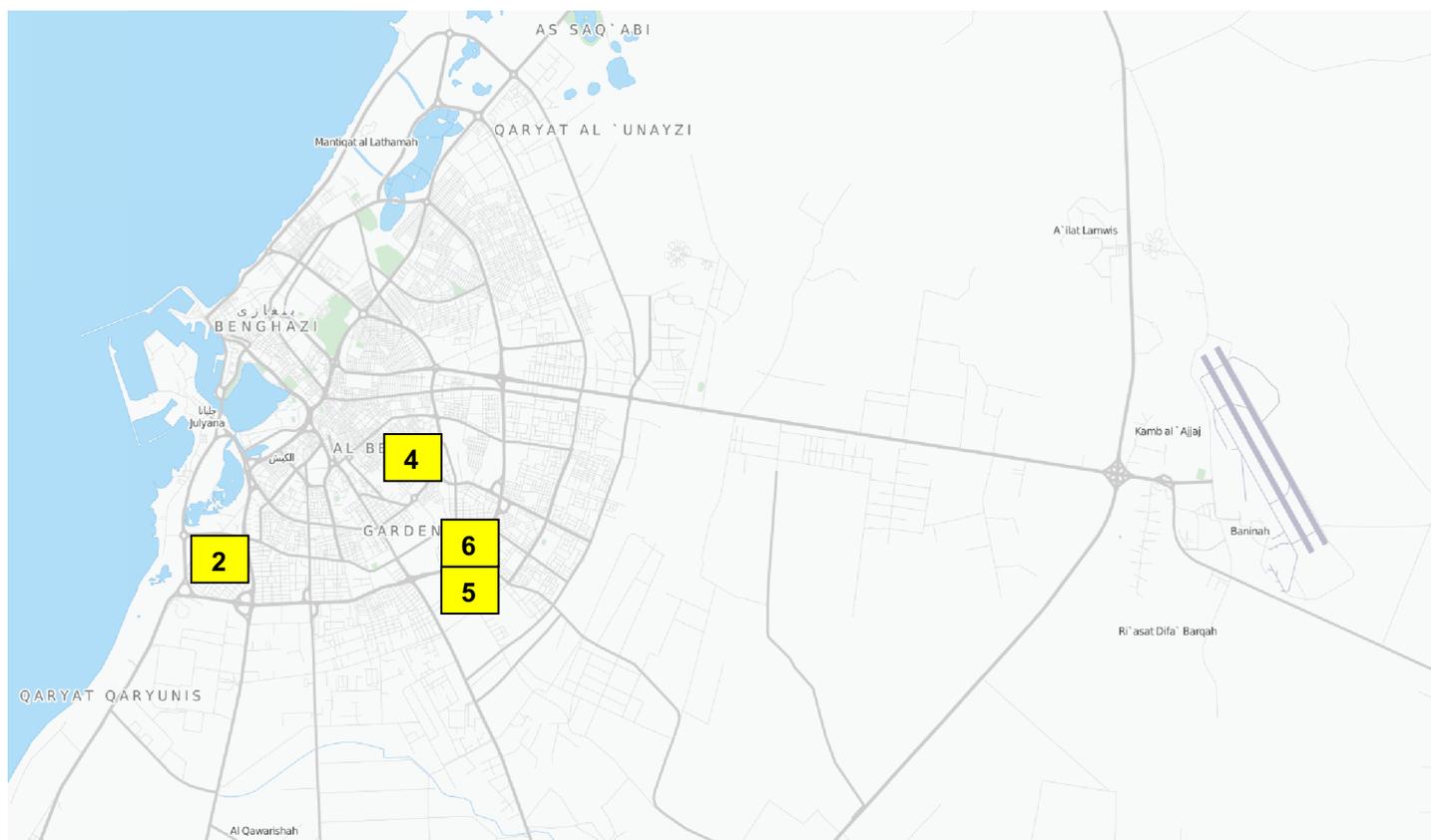
Reports indicate two unidentified individuals riding a motorcycle in the Abu Slim area, specifically at the Tripoli Zoo bridge, threw a hand grenade inside a vehicle parked on the sideroad at approximately 2100hrs on 15 Sep. Two passengers were aboard the vehicle, though they fled before the grenade exploded.

### Developments on frontlines

LNA units launched a renewed offensive dubbed "Martyr Mohsen Al-Kani" and achieved temporary advances backed by intensified airstrikes in the Al-Yarmook Camp vicinity on 21 Sep. WB sources reported an LNA advance on the Khallat Al-Forjan frontline, reaching and controlling Al-Yarmook Camp in the afternoon, though later that evening GNA forces regained control over Al-Yarmouk Camp after military reinforcements of the Salah Badi-led Sumood Brigade arrived. On 22 Sep, sources reported LNA units advanced on the Espiaa - Al-'Aziziyah frontline and were stationed near Bier Allagh, whilst GNA forces retreated towards Al-'Aziziyah.

## 5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

### CID carry out four separate arrests following crackdown on outlawed groups



#### KEY INCIDENTS

1. (15 Sep) CID seize individual responsible for forging documents
2. (16 Sep) CID arrest pharmacist trading illicit intoxicants
3. (16 Sep) CID arrest female distributing forged Libyan currency
4. (18 Sep) CID arrest four drug dealers
5. (18 Sep) Anti-aircraft shells land on funeral tent resulting in casualties
6. (22 Sep) Indiscriminate gunfire injures 13-year-old boy

#### CID carry out four separate arrests

Benghazi's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) reportedly seized an individual in possession of 5000 forged vehicle documents, including the printer used to forge the documents, on 15 Sep. The case was referred to the Public Prosecution. Separately, Benghazi's CID reported that a patrol arrested a pharmacist for trading illicit intoxicants in the Tabalino area on 16 Sep. The suspect was seized with 6 litres of alcohol in four large bottles, sold at the price of 100 Libyan dinars (LYD). Further, Benghazi's CID arrested a female for distributing large amounts of forged Libyan currency on 16 Sep. Security forces ambushed the suspect, along with another individual involved in the criminal act, and seized a printing machine used to forge the cash. Following investigations, the suspects confessed to the crime. Beyond this, Benghazi's CID captured four drug dealers in possession of large quantities of cannabis resin and cash in Majouri on 18 Sep. The arrest came after security forces raided several hideouts in the area.

#### Anti-aircraft shells land on funeral tent

Local reports indicate anti-aircraft shells landed on a funeral tent resulting in one fatality and 12 other injuries in Benghazi's Buhdima area on 18 Sep. The shells were reportedly fired from the Majouri area in commemoration of the LNA unit killed in the Tripoli clashes.

#### Indiscriminate gunfire injures boy

Local reports indicate indiscriminate gunfire resulted in the injury of a 13-year-old boy in Benghazi's Majouri area on 22 Sep. The victim was shot as he was passing by a wedding celebration in the area. Firing sporadic shots into the air as an act of celebration remains common across Libyan cities and often results in civilian casualties

## 6. What's next

### LNA to attempt to gain ground as international political efforts increase

#### POLITICAL FORECAST

A meeting held in Berlin on 17 Sep bringing together the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council (UNSC) and multiple officials, including from Turkey, Germany, Italy, Egypt, and the UAE. The head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) was also present. During the meeting, Turkey reiterated its support for a ceasefire that would be strongly enforced and monitored. The Berlin meeting comes ahead of an upcoming international Libya-focused conference organized by Germany and expected in Nov 2019. Separately, Italian PM Giuseppe Conte stated Libya will take centre stage in upcoming talks with French President Emmanuel Macron. Conte recently met GNA PM Faye Sarraj. According to reports, Conte fell short of providing concrete guarantees of support to Sarraj, reiterating instead the importance of doubling down on efforts to combat extremist elements fighting alongside the Tripoli government. On the domestic front, GNA PM Faye Sarraj issued decree 1050 of 2019, appointing Libyan Ambassadors to Germany, Russia, Austria, Morocco, Belgium, Oman, Kuwait, and Spain. Of note, Sarraj appointed Taher Mohamed Sunni, his special advisor, as permanent representative to the United Nations (UN), in a move seen by observers as an attempt to consolidate foreign policy around his persona. Multiple observers claim Sarraj appointed the ambassadors from his close circle without qualifications or experience. In response, the High Council of State (HCS) called on the Presidential Council (PC) to review the decision. Beyond, the US Embassy in Libya reported a meeting between the US Ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland, and Khalifa Haftar, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to the embassy, the meeting discussed Libya's situation and prospects for reaching a political solution.

#### WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

In an article for "Oil Price", the author, Tsvetana Paraskova, highlights the latest developments in the O&G sector, including the establishment of a parallel Brega Petroleum Marketing Company (BPMC) board of directors in the East, raising speculation over a new oil crisis in Libya. "Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) condemned on Thursday the setting up of a parallel board of directors at one of its key subsidiaries, fuel distributor Brega Petroleum Marketing Company (BPMC), saying that attempts at politicizing the oil sector puts Libya at risk of partition. BPMC, which is based in eastern Libya, has seen some board members break away and accuse parent company NOC of deliberately cutting jet fuel and kerosene supply to the eastern part of the country, controlled by eastern strongman General Khalifa Haftar. Sources in Libya told S&P Global Platts on Thursday that a break-away parallel firm could create a dangerous precedent of a company in the east trying to market fuel independently from NOC, which is the only legitimate exporter and importer of fuel and crude oil." NOC rejects any attempts to partition and politicize Libya's oil sector to serve narrow interests and foreign agendas. Fuel supply to the Eastern and Central regions is more than adequate for civilian purposes. The real motive behind this attempt is to set up a new illegitimate entity for the illegal export of oil from Libya," NOC's chairman Mustafa Sanalla said in a statement on Thursday. "Let us be clear, if NOC loses its oil export monopoly, the future integrity of Libya is at grave risk," Sanalla noted. A serious internal conflict within Libya's already fractured oil sector could, once again, result in volatile oil production levels from one of the wildest cards in the oil market in the past half-decade."

#### Libya Weekly Political and Security Update

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#### SECURITY FORECAST

In Tripoli, following the killing of LNA's top commanders in Tarhuna last week, this week marked gradual advances for the Libyan National Army (LNA) on Tripoli's frontlines including Khallat Al-Forjan, Espiaa, and Aziziya areas, indicating the LNA's military capabilities despite the loss of its key Tarhuna commanders. In contrast, GNA forces remain heavily reliant on militia and tribal leaders, and could therefore, suffer great retreats in an event where high-profile fighters were eliminated. Meanwhile, internal discord continued to emerge within GNA forces, as Tripoli Protection Force (TPF) attempts to distance itself from other GNA factions in its latest statement supporting political dialogue. Meanwhile, Mitiga International Airport remained a target this week with the LNA claiming multiple airstrikes, including the targeting of the Turkish Ops Room resulting in the death of four Turkish officers. Recurrent attacks on Mitiga cast doubt on aspirations that it will resume operations in the short term. Beyond the clashes, criminal activity including carjackings, kidnappings, and killings remain on an upward spiral in Tripoli and are likely to increase as clashes continue. Beyond Tripoli, the kidnapping of locals from Bani Walid on the road between Bani Walid and Tarhuna, resulted in a tense situation between Pro-LNA towns, with the Social Council of Werfalla Tribe in Bani Walid holding Tarhuna responsible for the incident. In the central region, tensions remain high after a series of LNA airstrikes targeted GNA-affiliated military positions in the city. In the South, this week was marked by AFRICOM reemerging on the Libyan scene and claiming responsibility for an airstrike killing eight Islamic State (IS) militants in the Murzuq area. In the East, Benghazi witnessed an ongoing crackdown on outlaws with a series of arrests, whilst local reports indicated suspicious movements in the Southern valleys of Derna.

#### LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

The "Atlantic Council's" Karim Mezran, provides an example of how a defection of Tarhuna militias in support of Haftar could eventually result in the withdrawal of his units from Tripoli and subsequently prompt his foreign backers to alter their support for him. "A meeting of the main international actors at the margins of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in late September. This would be organized by France with the purpose to create the conditions for a convergence of minds among all the actors interested in a solution to the Libyan crisis. This meeting will be followed by a high-level international conference organized by Germany for the second half of the month of October. In Berlin a real and effective consensus on a new road-map and a commitment to adhere to it will be reached, and the effects of this agreement will rapidly spill-over to the internal Libyan situation. The success of such a process is highly improbable unless a critical change occurs on the ground, in the battlefield that sees the forces of General Haftar's LNA opposing those loyal to the GNA led by Faye Serraj in Tripoli. As an example, the defection of the militias of the city of Tarhuna, which so far have sided with the attacking forces of Haftar and carry an important weight in the strategic disposition of his forces, could infer a fatal blow to the LNA and force it to withdraw from its positions in front of Tripoli. This fact, if it were actually to occur, would initiate a self-inquiring analysis by foreign supporters of Haftar that may lead them to reduce their support for him and either try to substitute him as the leader of the LNA, or force him into new negotiations to at least save face and limit the damages. Without such a change, the opposing forces—despite a stalled military situation—are still convinced that a military victory is possible and thanks to their foreign support, are more and more intent to obtain that result."

# About Whispering Bell



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