

1. The Big Picture

GNA cabinet reshuffle & protests in eastern region

The week starting 07 Sep was eventful across the country. The political landscape continues to shift as the security environment remains relatively unchanged. While diplomatic efforts are attempting to build on the recent ceasefire momentum, local dynamics are gradually beginning to paint a different picture. Away from the negotiating table, dozens across the west, east, and south continue to take to the streets to denounce living conditions.

Observers warn the latest developments underline a growing divide between the reality on the ground and discussions at the table between Government of National Accord (GNA) PM Fayeze Sarraj and House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker Aguila Saleh. With this political uncertainty in mind, there is a strong possibility civil unrest will be exploited for political ends to obstruct ceasefire negotiations and delay polls in the medium term.

In Tripoli and western constituencies, the week was dominated by the GNA's high-profile appointment of Emad Trabelsi as deputy head of Libyan Intelligence Services (LIS) by Decree 595 dated 08 Sep. Trabelsi, who hails from Zintan, has so far commanded the General Security Apparatus, which maintains a presence West Tripoli, including Ghut Shaal and Hai Al-Andalus. In a related reshuffle, Lutfi Al-Harari was appointed deputy head of internal security as per Decree 596 dated 08 Sep. Al-Harari is said to be a close adviser of Abdulghani Kikli, commander of the Ghneiw militia. The appointments were not formally announced by the GNA and have so far led to some opposition from Misrata elements, including Salah Badi's Sumoud Brigade.

The developments would come amid rumours of major position changes in the GNA cabinet. An unofficial list of names has been circulated, presenting a downsized Presidential Council (PC) structure of three members each from Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Barqa. This structure would mirror recent political initiatives, including Aguila Saleh's, to reform the PC. It remains unclear if the list represents the GNA's suggested positions or conclusive appointments.

Regardless, further shifts and competition over key positions are expected in the medium term, potentially resulting in security incidents such as targeted attacks, assassination attempts, and politically-motivated arrests/kidnappings.

In the eastern region, anti-government protests gained momentum in Benghazi, Marj, Bayda, and Shahhat between 10-13 Sep, prompting the Interim government led by PM Abdullah Thinni to submit its resignation. The protests would come against the backdrop of blackouts and a worsening power crisis amid a lack of fuel to supply power stations feeding Benghazi and other cities in the eastern region, which the National Oil Corporation (NOC)

recently blamed on the continuing closure of oil terminals in the east.

It is worth pointing out that protesters directed their criticism towards the eastern government, not the Libyan National Army (LNA) under Khalifa Haftar's command. In fact, the protesters praised the LNA and called on Haftar to take charge. There is evidence to suggest the protests have relatively contributed to Haftar's position at the expense of Aguila Saleh's. Observers argue the latest protests will enable Haftar to offset his recent loss of political clout, while growing local opposition to Saleh's role in UN-led political negotiations and his ability to speak on behalf of the "silent majority".

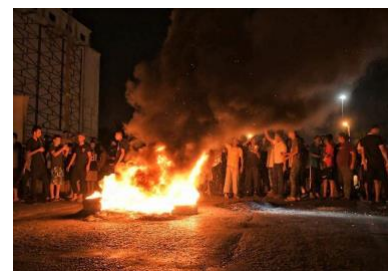
It remains to be seen how this apparent power vacuum will manifest in the eastern region and what impact, if any, it will have on current UN-led political negotiations. In a possible scenario, the federalist movement in the east will double down on efforts to grow its influence, as highlighted by the establishment of the "Supreme Council of Cyrenaica" on 12 Sep.

In the oil and gas sector, the outlook remains sporadic despite strong signals the blockade on exports will be fully lifted and production resumed in the medium term. On 09 Sep, shipping reports revealed Hess fixed the Minerva Eleonora tanker to load approximately 600k barrels of crude from Es-Sider terminal. As anticipated, the loading did not go ahead, and the NOC-sanctioned force majeure continues to hold. The political context highlighted above has a direct impact on the O&G sector. Observers agree Haftar is expected to continue to use the oil blockade as a bargaining chip to avoid being sidelined in ceasefire talks. Given Es Sider's relatively important capacity as a terminal, the LNA and eastern Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) are unlikely to allow full operations until a permanent agreement is reached.

The LNA, however, is under pressure to resume production. On 12 Sep, the US Embassy in Libya noted an "apparent sovereign Libyan agreement" and commitment by Haftar to reopen the energy sector by 12 Sep. At the time of writing, sources indicate there were no orders received at the terminals. Meanwhile, on 13 Sep, LNA spox. Ahmed Al-Mismary told local media that the LNA is engaged in negotiations but no outcome had been decided yet, cautioning against a resumption of production that would enable Turkey to take hold of oil and gas revenues. Al-Mismary added the LNA will be open to lifting the blockade if there are enough international guarantees of a fair revenue-sharing arrangement.

KEY POINTS

- GNA apparent cabinet reshuffle sparks tensions
- Anti-gov protests erupt across Benghazi & east
- Uncertainty over O&G sector resumption



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2. National Security Map

NOC backs GNA claims of LNA ceasefire violations, reports warship at Ras Lanuf Port

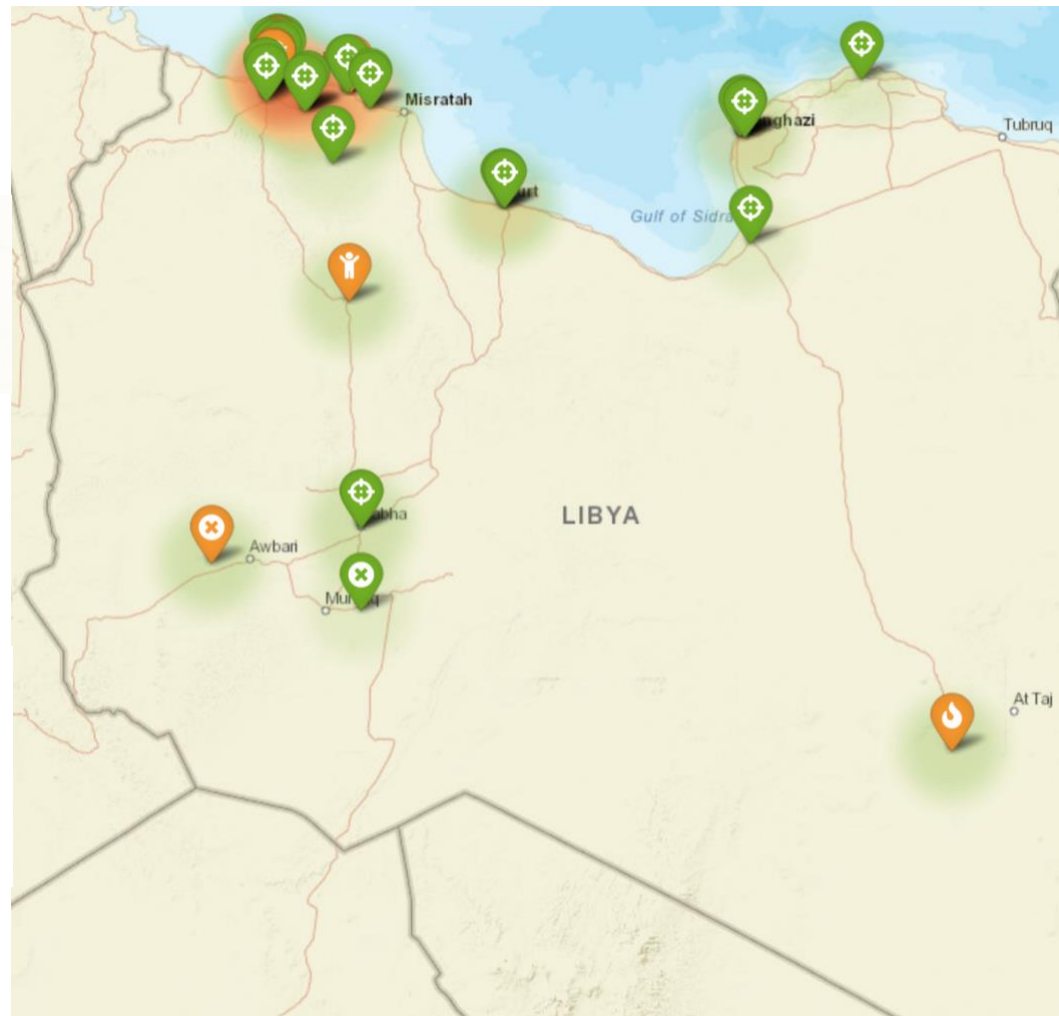
Legend

Impact Indicator

- Low Impact
- Medium Impact
- High Impact

Incident Type

- ⊕ IED/VBIED/ERW
- ✈ Airstrike / UAV
- ✕ Isolated Gunfire
- 🚒 Mortar/Rocket
- 👤 Violent Clash
- 👤 Kidnapping
- 🚗 Carjacking
- ⊕ Other



Reports of heavy gunfire in Sirte's Qasr Abu Hadi area in celebration of the release of LNA prisoners in the afternoon on 08 Sep.

Reports indicate the LNA's Subul Al-Salam Battalion Brigade seized several vehicles smuggling fuel, narcotics, and goods in Al-Kufra on 09 September. The security operation escalated into skirmishes between the Brigade and the smugglers, resulting in the death of a smuggler and arrest of others.

The National Oil Corporation (NOC) reported an unidentified armed group entered Sharara field on 06 Sep, threatening Akakus Oil Operation (AOO) staff and occupying the housing complex and private property. Further, the NOC reported gunfire exchange involving the Early Production Facility (EPF) resulted in the death of an armed individual and injury of another.

Two Russian MiG-29 aircraft crashed in Libya on 28 June and 07 September 2020, according to US Africa Command (AFRICOM) deputy intelligence director Rear Adm. Heidi Berg, quoted by the New York Times on 11 Sep. The cause of the crashes is unknown. Further, Rear Adm. Heidi Berg confirmed the fighter aircraft are flown by the Wagner Group Russian private military contractors (PMCs) on combat sorties across Libya, not just training. Rear Adm. Heidi Berg confirmed Moscow's intent to deploy S-300 and S-400 systems in Libya, but denied this had already happened.

The Wadi Al-Bawanis Youth Movement protested deteriorating living conditions in the southern region on Samnu's main road on 12 September, and subsequently threatened to cut off internet and obstruct fuel deliveries to smuggling hotspots within two days if their demands go unheard.

Reports indicate anti-government protests continued to dominate the security environment and gained momentum across the eastern region, with protests erupting in Al Marj, Bayda, and Shehhat following initial protests in Benghazi on 13 September. Local reports indicate Bayda residents called on the Interim Government to step down in the third consecutive day of protests on 12 September.

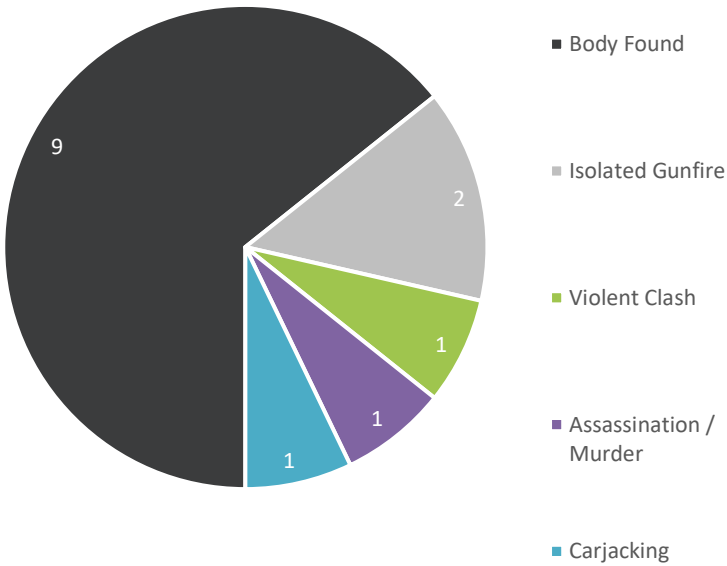
The Director of the Security Information Office in the Bani Walid Security Directorate, Abdel Hakim Al-Ghoul, reported the release of eight Egyptian workers after they were kidnapped on the main road between Qaryat and Al-Shwayrif on 10 September. Al-Ghoul noted the presence of criminal gangs selling the abductees to a human smuggler, who in turn request ransom from their families. The GNA's Interior Ministry reported the arrest of those behind the kidnapping.

The GNA military spokesman, Mohammed Gnounou, claimed the LNA breached the ceasefire for a fifth time after its forces deployed 80 military vehicles near Sirte, while a large warship dropped anchor at Ras Lanuf Port on 08 September. Gnounou reported the LNA convoy departed Jufra and headed towards Wadi Al-Lud.

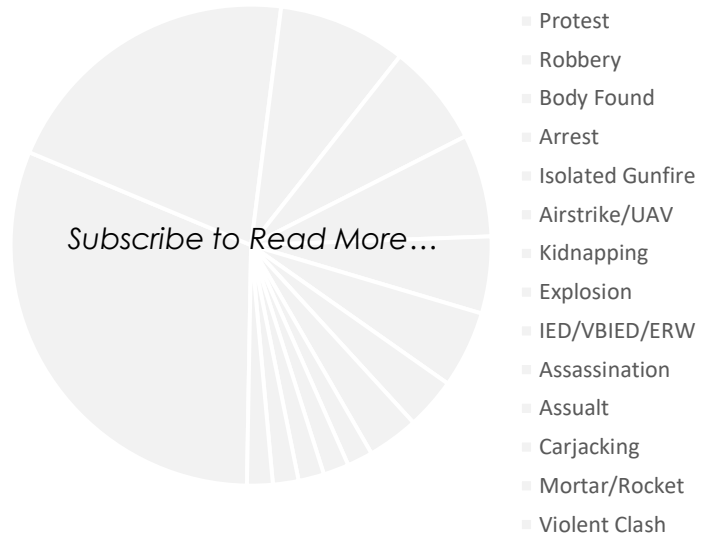
3. Nationwide Security Analysis

Wave of protests in east; robberies in west & Sirte dominate figures

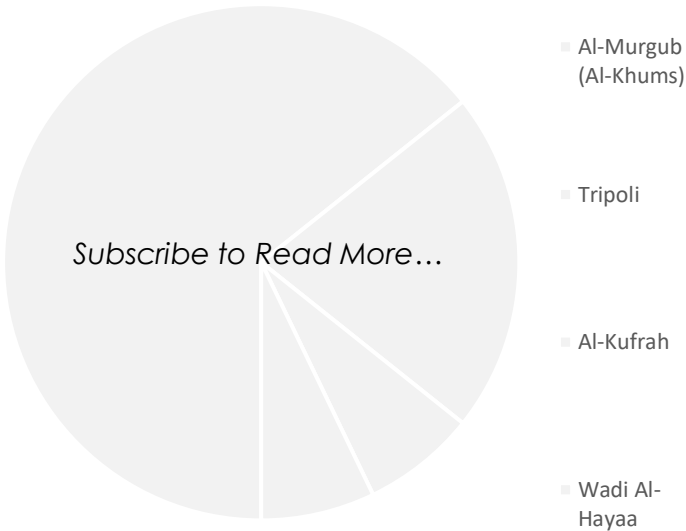
Nationwide fatalities by type of attack (Past week)



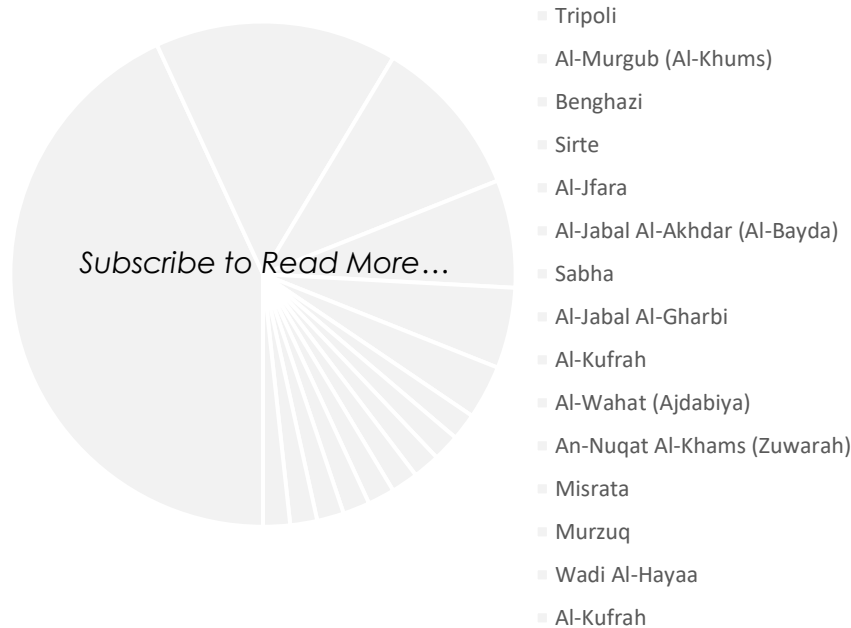
Nationwide incidents by type of attack (Past week)



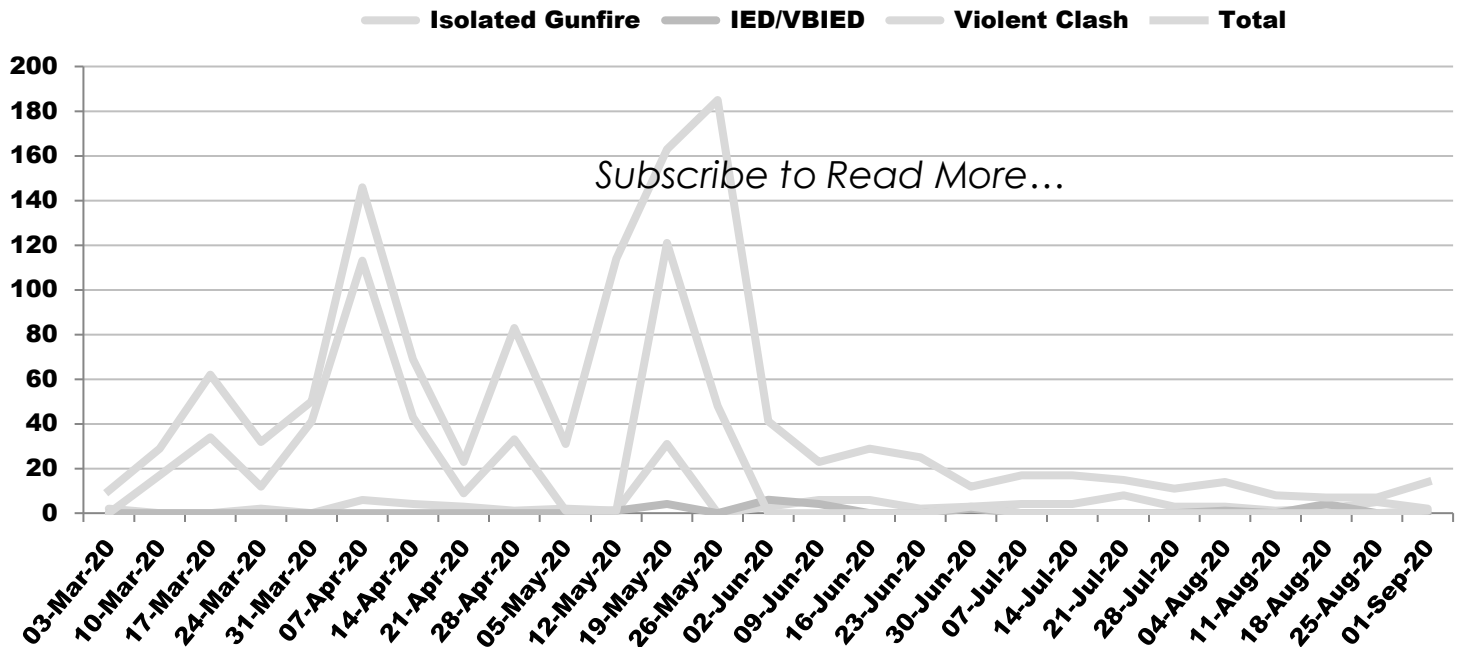
Nationwide fatalities by national district (Past week)



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 14 confirmed deaths in Libya compared with 7 deaths reported last week and 18 the week before. The fatalities recorded this week came as a result of 9 bodies found in the Tarhuna vicinity as GNA-affiliated local recovery teams continue to report the discovery of bodies found from mass graves within the city. In addition, WB recorded two fatalities as a result of isolated gunfire cases in Tripoli and the Sharara Oilfield. Further, a man was killed after resisting a carjacking attempt in Tripoli, while a violent clash between the LNA's Subul Al-Salam Brigade and Chadian smugglers resulted in one fatality in Al-Kufra.

In the wider western region, the majority of incidents were recorded in the Tripoli district with a total of 25 incidents recorded throughout the reporting period. WB recorded 8 robberies, 6 protests, 3 reports of UAV activity over Souq Al-Jum'aa, 2 kidnappings, 2 isolated gunfire cases, 1 IED/VBIED/ERW, 1 carjacking, 1 body found, and 1 arrest. In the wider western region, WB recorded 2 explosions and an IED/VBIED/ERW incident in Jfara, a kidnapping in the Jabal Al-Gharbi district, 4 cases of bodies found, 2 arrests, 1 assassination/murder, 1 protest, and 1 robbery in the Al-Murgub district, a protest in the An-Nuqat Al-Khams district, an act of assault in the Misratah district.

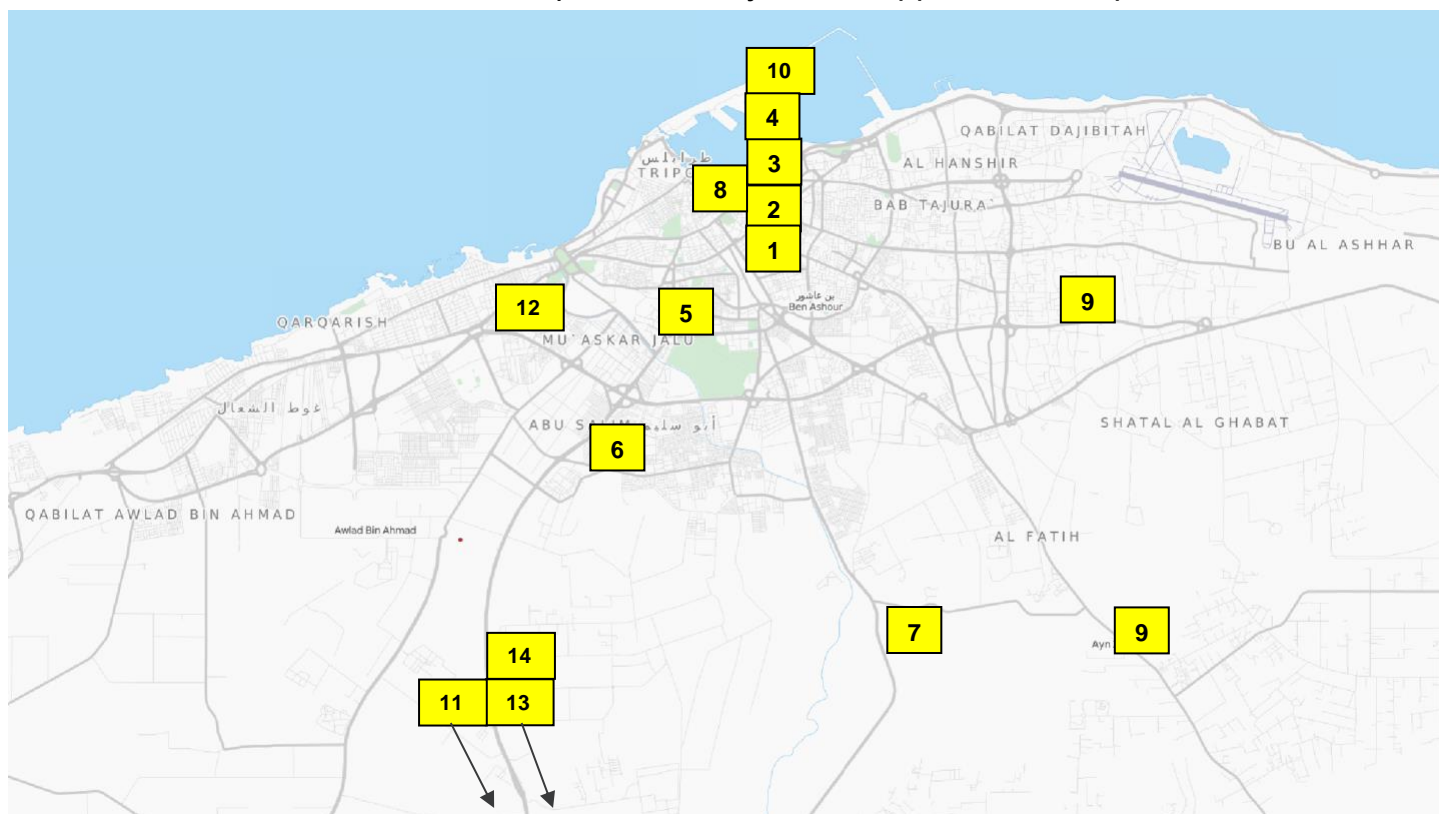
Meanwhile, in the central region and similar to GNA rhetoric over recent weeks, The GNA military spokesman, Mohammed Gnounou, claimed the LNA breached the ceasefire for a fifth time after its forces deployed 80 military vehicles near Sirte, while a large warship dropped anchor at Ras Lanuf Port on 08 September. Gnounou reported the LNA convoy departed Jufra and headed towards Wadi Al-Lud. In the same context, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) reported a warship entered the Ras Lanuf Port on 05 September and remains in port to date. The Corporation noted several security breaches in Ras Lanuf over recent days, including the live ammunition rounds reportedly fired by LNA PFG. The NOC chairman, Mustafa Sanallah, reiterated his calls for the withdrawal of all military personnel from facilities, denouncing what he described as "illegal military activity." For its part, the LNA reported its 116 Battalion conducted reconnaissance patrols in areas between Sirte and Jufra to secure the area on 08 September. Meanwhile, LNA spokesman Ahmed Al-Mesmari denied the GNA's latest accusations of ceasefire violations in the Sirte vicinity, while accusing GNA forces of advancing towards Jufra district on 08 September. Separately, local reports indicate equipment was stolen from the Wadi Tital Basic Education School in the Al-Zafaran area, consisting of over 15 classrooms and educational facilities on 06 September. In an additional act of theft, unidentified assailants reportedly stole electrical wires, school supplies, and furniture from a school on Sirte's outskirts on 06 September. Beyond, Sirte's director of Work and Rehabilitation, Mohammed Al-Daroui, reported the building was subject to acts of vandalism and theft resulting in its closure. Al-Daroui reported equipment and furniture were stolen, subsequently impacting the work of various offices within the headquarters on 06 September.

Turning to the south, WB recorded two anti-government protests in Sabha, two gunfire-related incidents in Taraghin and the Sharara Oilfield, and one violent clash in the Kufra district. In Sharara, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) reported an unidentified armed group entered Sharara field on 06 September, threatening Akakus Oil Operation (AOO) staff and occupying the housing complex and private property. Further, the NOC reported gunfire exchange involving the Early Production Facility (EPF) resulted in the death of an armed individual and injury of another. Meanwhile, reports indicate the LNA's Subul Al-Salam Battalion Brigade seized several vehicles smuggling fuel, narcotics, and goods in Al-Kufra on 09 September. The security operation escalated into skirmishes between the Brigade and the smugglers, resulting in the death of a smuggler and arrest of others. Reports indicate the smugglers were Chadian nationals and came from Umm Al Aranib, heading towards Chad. Further, reports indicate relatives of Presidential Council (PC) member Ahmed Hamza Al-Mehdi raided the house of an unidentified family, opening fire, and vandalising vehicles in Taraghin on 08 September. Reports indicate the incident was fuelled by a long-standing dispute and allegations of obstructing the electoral process in the village on 25 August.

In the eastern region, WB recorded a total of 5 protests and one arrest in Benghazi. In contrast to the pattern witnessed over the past three weeks with anti-government protests sweeping across Tripoli and the wider western, central, and southern regions, this week saw a wave of anti-government protests in the east, including three consecutive days of anti-government protests across Benghazi's Sidi Hussain, Sabri, Buhdima, and Al-Leithi areas. Meanwhile, similar protests were reported across Al-Baida, Al-Marj, Shehhat and Ajdabiya.

4. Tripoli Neighborhood Report

Locals & militiamen protest Sarraj's latest appointments; sporadic crime continues



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (13 Sep) Locals accompanied by militiamen protest Sarraj's latest appointments
2. (13 Sep) Joint Force & Zintan's General Security Apparatus establish CPs at Aldaran & Tuesday Mall roundabouts
3. (12 Sep) Medical staff/supporters of GNA deputy Health Minister call on GNA to allow Mohammed Haithem to resume his duties
4. (12 Sep) Field hospital workers protest GNA's failure to treat wounded aboard
5. (12 Sep) Body found inside vehicle
6. (11 Sep) Vehicle theft near Al-Sumood School
7. (10 Sep) Vehicle theft near Al-Sidra Cemetery
8. (10 Sep) Man's body found dumped found dumped under Al-Waddan bridge
9. (10 Sep) UAVs reported over Souq Al-Jum'aa & Ain Zara areas
10. (09 Sep) Public sector employees protest in front of PM Office demanding salary increase
11. (09 Sep) Qasr Bin Ghashir Municipal Council employee kidnapped & later released
12. (08 Sep) Vehicle theft in Gorje
13. (07 Sep) Man killed in carjacking attempt
14. (07 Sep) Vehicle theft south of Airport Road

Protest against Sarraj's latest appointments

Reports suggest the Salah Badi-led Al-Sumood Brigade from Misrata will cordon off the Prime Minister's Office in Tripoli's Ben Ashour area at 0900hrs on 13 September, in rejection of Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj's decision to appoint Emad Trabelsi as the deputy head of the Libyan Intelligence Services (LIS) and Lutfi Al-Harari as the deputy head of Internal Security. Of note, Trabelsi commands Zintan's General Security Apparatus, while Al-Harari is a high-ranking member of the Ghniwya militia and considered AbdulGhani Al-Kikli's right hand. The planned protest went ahead at approximately 1100hrs as dozens of locals and a few militiamen dressed in military uniform protested the appointment of who they described as "incompetent figures."

Libyan doctor kidnapped upon leaving house

Gunmen aboard an unidentified vehicle with tinted windows kidnapped a Libyan doctor leaving his house in the Al-Sabaa area at approximately 1700hrs on 12 September. The doctor reportedly works at the Khadra Hospital. Of note, WB recorded incidents targeting medical staff in retaliation for their coronavirus-infected relatives dying across Libyan hospitals.

Body found inside vehicle

A body with signs of torture was found inside a civilian vehicle in the Bab Akkarah area, specifically near Al-Aziziya roundabout, at approximately 2330hrs on 12 September.

Man's body found dumped under bridge

A body of a man in his forties was found dumped under Al-Waddan Bridge in the Al-Dahra area at approximately 1100hrs on 10 September. The body

was found with gunshot wounds. No further information.

Municipal Council member kidnapped, later released

An employee of the Qasr Bin Ghashir Municipal Council was kidnapped from his house on Al-Asfah Road in Tripoli's Airport Road area in the evening on 09 September. The man was kidnapped after protesting at the parking lot in front of Al-Naqliya Camp against the GNA's decision to build a temporary landfill on the site. Reports indicate the victim was released later that night.

Man killed after resisting carjacking attempt

Reports indicate a group of gunmen aboard a Toyota Camry killed a man in front of his spouse and children after he refused to handover his vehicle in a carjacking attempt south of the Airport Road near Al-Naqliya Camp in the evening on 07 September. The family were en route to their hometown of Gharyan.

Ghniwya militia raids Jalaa Maternity Hospital

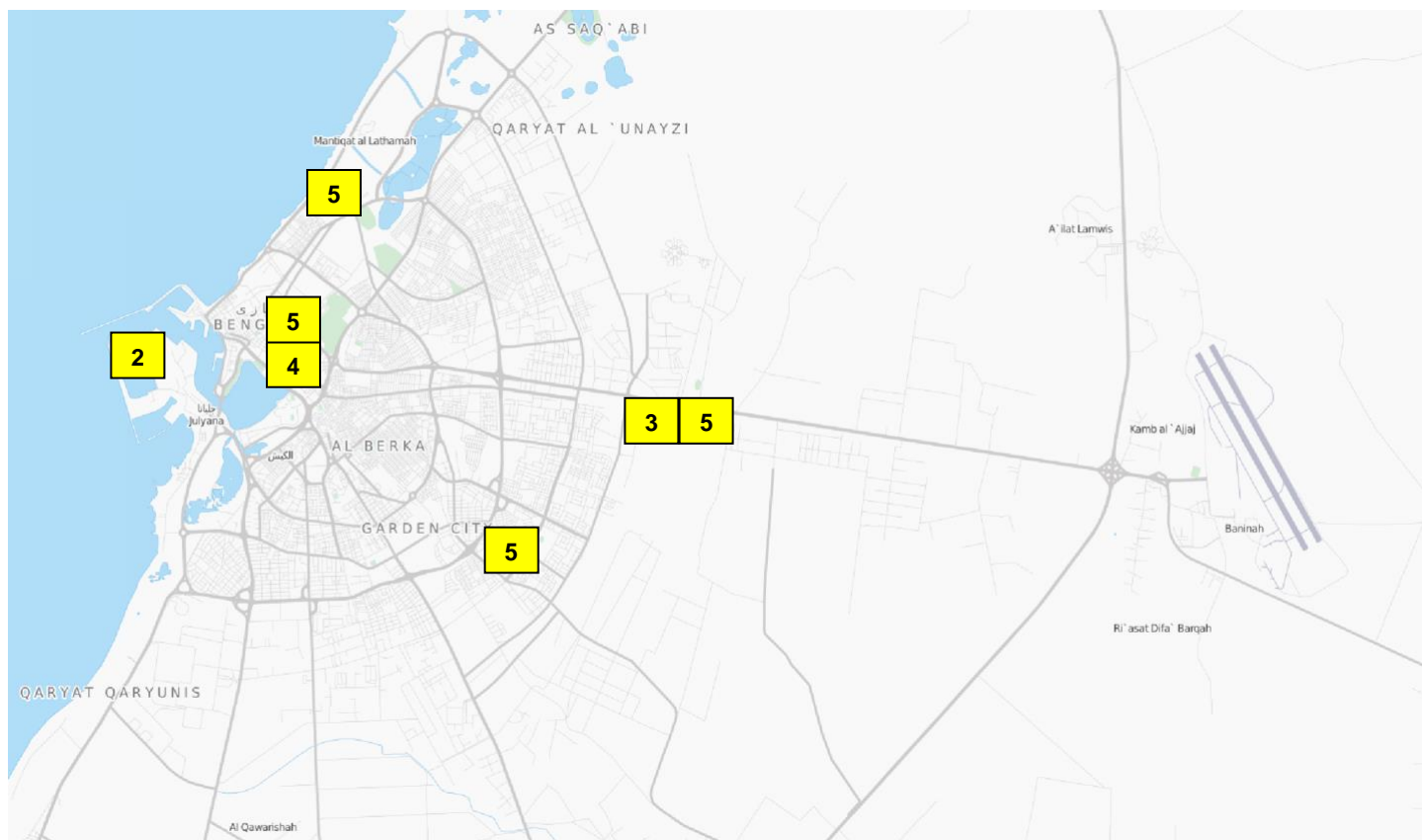
At approximately 1600hrs on 07 September, a group of gunmen affiliated with the Ghniwya militia raided Jalaa Maternity Hospital in the downtown area and arrested the hospital's director of financial and administrative affairs, as well as other employees from the same department, on charges of corruption and misconduct towards the nurses. Recent reports allege the Ghniwya militia is attempting to exert influence over healthcare sector funding.

Criminal gang arrested on kidnapping charges

Tripoli Security Directorate reported the arrest of a criminal gang aboard two civilian vehicles, a green Nissan Almera and red Hyundai Tuscani, on charges of kidnapping of a man from his grey Hyundai Verna vehicle in the Al-Furnaj area on 07 September.

5. Benghazi Neighborhood Report

Al-Thinni led Interim Govt. submits resignation after three days of anti-govt. protests



KEY INCIDENTS

1. (12 Sep) Supreme Council of Cyrenaica established
2. (12 Sep) NOC: Valle Di Cordoba tanker carrying 36 million litres of diesel fuel arrives in Benghazi
3. (12 Sep) Protesters break into PM Office & set fire to gate
4. (11 Sep) Locals burn tyres & chant anti-government slogans in Sidi Husein
5. (10 Sep) Anti-government protests commence in Sidi Hussein, Al-Leithi, Bouhdeima and Sabri areas
6. (09 Sep) Interior Minister Ibrahim Bushnaaf established office to combat fuel smuggling
7. (07 Sep) Security Information Office head denies reports of fire at HoR HQ
8. (06 Sep) CID arrest human smugglers involved in kidnapping of Egyptian nationals in Bani Walid
9. (06 Sep) Eastern CBL deposits public sector salaries for Aug. in Interim Gov't's Finance Ministry accounts

Three days of anti-government protests

For the third consecutive day, reports indicate demonstrations turned violent after protesters broke into the Prime Minister's Office of the Interim Government in Benghazi's Al-Fuwayha area, setting fire to a gate at night on 12 September. On 10 September, anti-government protesters took to the streets across Benghazi's Sidi Hussein, Al-Leithi, Bouhdeima, and Sabri districts at approximately 1900hrs on 10 Sep to denounce worsening living conditions, according to local reports. Video footage purported to show dozens of locals burning tyres and closing off Jamal Abdel-Nasser Street at approximately 2130hrs on 10 September. Another wave of similar anti-government protests was recorded across Benghazi at approximately 2300hrs on 11 September. Video footage purported to show locals burning tyres and chanting anti-government slogans in the Sidi Hussein vicinity in the evening of 11 September. While the protesters voiced their anger at the government and officials, they reportedly did not direct the accusations at the LNA and remained supportive of the army under Khalifa Haftar's command. Of note, civil unrest has so far remained a rare occurrence in Benghazi, Haftar's stronghold.

The protests would come against the backdrop of blackouts and a worsening power crisis amid a lack of fuel to supply power stations feeding Benghazi and other cities in the eastern region, which the NOC recently blamed on the continuing closure of oil terminals in the east. In response, House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker Aguila Saleh ordered an emergency

meeting with Interim government PM Abdullah Thinni, eastern-based Central Bank of Libya (CBL) governor Ali Al-Hibri, and other officials to resolve issues related to the power crisis. The latest reports indicate the Interim Government submitted its resignation to the HoR on 13 September.

Supreme Council of Cyrenaica established

On 12 September, a group of political and social leaders, experts, and academics in the eastern region, issued a statement from Benghazi announcing the establishment of a new political entity named "Supreme Council of Cyrenaica." The founding statement referred to the establishment of the Libyan state in 1951 and the formation of three historical regions; Fezzan, Tripoli, and Cyrenaica. The statement noted that Barqa first gained its independence in 1949 and represented a foundational hub in Libya's history. The Council claims it is based on several principles, including the pursuit of a political system that brings together Libya's three historical regions and ensures these are represented in dialogues and across committees. In addition, the Council seeks to build mechanisms ensuring a fair distribution of financial resources and political representation between governorates and municipalities, including granting greater powers to local constituencies in managing their financial affairs and developing service programmes. The statement also called for ensuring Barqa is represented in Libya's Constitution. While the influence of the newly-formed council and its impact on current political-track negotiations are unclear, the development comes at a critical juncture amid anti-government protests and condemnation of the eastern camp. Some observers viewed the development as a natural response of the secessionist movement in Barqa to the recent political deadlock and power vacuum in the east.

6. What's next

UNSMIL Envoy selected; skirmishes between GNA & LNA forces

POLITICAL FORECAST

SECURITY FORECAST

The appointment of a new UN Envoy is set to give momentum to political-track and military-track negotiations. The UN Security Council is scheduled to appoint a Special Envoy to Libya and add a new role of UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) coordinator. The Security Council will fill the position of Envoy, vacant since Ghassan Salame's resignation in March 2020. The Council is scheduled to fill the positions during a vote on a draft resolution to extend UNSMIL's mandate, which expires on 15 Sep. The next few weeks will be marked by diplomatic efforts to organize official UN-led political negotiations, following the consultations in Morocco and Switzerland. Of note, the Moroccan government-hosted consultations between the High Council of State (HCS) and the House of Representatives (HoR) concluded on 10 September as the initial two-day meetings were extended to five days, resulting in a comprehensive agreement on transparent mechanisms for appointing main sovereign positions in Libya. In a joint statement, the two sides agreed to resume these meetings in the last week of September in order to implement the agreement. The joint statement noted that the agreement is in accordance with Article 15 of the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), Berlin Conference outcomes supporting a political solution, and in alignment with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Meanwhile, a spokesperson for HoR Speaker Aguila Saleh denied the Bouznika talks were aimed at filling sovereign positions, confirming consultations simply focused on the nature and structure of the sovereign positions. While the talks were welcomed internationally, including by the US and UN Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the two sides faced domestic backlash from their respective blocs. Twenty-seven HoR members stated that the outcomes of the Bouznika talks did not represent them as they were uninvolved in choosing the HoR delegation sent to, claiming that they were informed of the delegation on the day they arrived in Rabat via media channels. For the HCS's part, 24 members issued a statement condemning and rejecting what they referred to as an attempt to downsize the Council to the President/Presidency's Office together with several agents and advisers. Similar to the HoR members, the HCS members stated that the selection process of the Bouznika delegation violated the Council's protocols.

WHAT OTHER EXPERTS SAY

Jeffrey Feltman, writing for *Brookings*, highlights how Libya is simultaneously experiencing a "deepening gloom" with "pinholes of light", arguing that the reaction of foreign meddlers in Libya will impact the outcome, singling out key US leadership in building on these "pinholes of light." Feltman points to the recent consultations held between Libyan stakeholders under the auspices of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and in the presence of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in Montreux Switzerland, noting that if the outcomes of this meeting were to be followed in practice, they would lead to "unified institutions, renewed political dialogue, and, eventually, elections." Feltman noted that the potential positive outcomes of the Montreux talks stem from the converging ceasefire declarations made by House of Representatives (HoR) speaker Aguila Saleh and the GNA Prime Minister Fayeze Al-Serraj on 21 August, in addition to the series of consultative meetings held between the High Council of State (HCS) and HoR hosted by Morocco. On a domestic level, the author points to the successful holding of municipal elections in Ghat and Misrata, while the long-awaited auditing of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) commenced in August. Feltman argues that while there have been countless international attempts at ending the Libyan conflict, the "Montreux and Morocco tracks can reinforce each other, with the former revolving around key individuals and the latter on two key institutions." However, Feltman warns that "the composition of the talks both in Montreux and in Morocco was designed by the Libyan participants in the talks themselves to exclude Haftar, giving him an incentive to demonstrate he cannot be sidelined." Feltman singles the US' role in building on the fragile, yet nevertheless, positive political efforts surrounding the Libyan file. "U.S. leadership could help turn these pinholes of light into something more illuminating. As a start, the U.S. should insist on adherence to the conclusions of the Berlin conference, attended by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and call out those not in compliance to what was agreed. U.S. policy toward Libya seems to rest on "not wanting ownership" — as if leadership automatically translates to ownership — and the assumption that others with a greater stake in Libyan stability (Europeans fearful of migration, neighbors worried by terrorism, etc.) will take the lead in facilitating an intra-Libyan agreement. But with the Libyans talking with each other across political and geographic lines, there is an acute risk that the differences between the outsider powers may derail these fragile processes. Forceful and sustained U.S. engagement to build unified external support for the intra-Libyan talks is, unfortunately, unlikely at this moment in our electoral history."

In Tripoli and environs, opportunistic crime is on the rise. Sources reported a surge in opportunistic crime rates in areas around downtown, Gorje, Al-Dahra Coastal Road, Al-Sabaa, Al-Furnaj area, Abu Salim, Ain Zara, Al-Dahra, Tajoura, Salah Eddien and Airport Road. It remains to be seen if Trabelsi's appointment as deputy head of LIS will have ramifications on Tripoli's security environment, particularly if the Nawasi Brigade shows resolute opposition. Of note, the Nawasi Brigade exerts influence over LIS. Meanwhile, recent reports allege the Ghneiwa militia is attempting to misappropriate healthcare sector funding. If confirmed, Ghneiwa is expected to be involved in further incidents related to healthcare facilities and officials. In the central region, the combat theatre remains dominated by LNA defensive manoeuvres, including the documented construction of defensive berms and systems. In GNA ranks, the newly-appointed GNA Chief of Staff (Co), Mohammed Al-Haddad, and the Sirte-Jufra Security Operations Room commander, Ibrahim Bait Al-Mal, discussed combat theatre developments across Sirte in a meeting held in Tripoli on 12 Sep. Al-Haddad expressed his readiness to supply local forces with "important needs and capabilities" at nearest. This appears to be a routine meeting to assess the latest environment across Sirte frontlines, although it would closely follow the LNA's deployment of air defence systems and additional resources in the area. Nationwide, as COVID-19 cases continue to surge, medical staff are more exposed to verbal insults and physical assaults by families of those infected. In the eastern region, protests are expected to lose momentum across urban environments as security forces manoeuvre to contain unrest. Arbitrary detentions are possible and political tensions will remain high. The LNA is expected to continue manoeuvring to consolidate its political posture against Aguila Saleh. In the southern region, LNA battalions, including the 116 and 128, have continued to conduct mobile patrols across remote desert areas.

LIBYANS AND THE ARAB STREET

The *United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)* issued a statement on the outcomes of the Centre for Human Dialogue (HD)-organised Libyan consultative meeting of 7-9 September 2020 in Montreux, Switzerland, bringing together Libyan stakeholders under the auspices of the HD and in the presence of the UNSMIL. The statement reads "UNSMIL commends the goodwill and national dedication of the Libyan participants who seized this opportunity to put aside their longstanding differences and disputes to recommend a Libyan-Libyan solution that can be put on the table for the early resumption of the UN-facilitated Libyan Political Dialogue Forum. These consultations were organized following the August 21 parallel ceasefire declarations of President of the Presidency Council Fayeze Sarraj and Speaker of the House of Representatives Agila Saleh and provide a basis for all responsible Libyan stakeholders to forge the way forward. We note the consensual view of the participants in the Montreux consultations that Presidential and Parliamentary elections must be held at the end of an 18-month period on the basis of an agreed constitutional framework. This period would be initiated by the reformation of the Presidency Council, the establishment of a representative unity government dedicated to providing services and creating the necessary conditions for the holding of national elections, including implementing the Parliament-approved Amnesty Law and facilitating the return of displaced persons and those in the diaspora as a necessary step for much-needed national reconciliation. We welcome the participants' proposal of moving key government functions and offices, such as the executive and the House of Representatives, on a temporary basis, to Sirte, following the implementation of the appropriate security and logistical arrangements. We encourage the House of Representatives and High State Council to continue their discussions on the issue of sovereign positions and we call on them to produce the needed electoral framework within a set timeline. Building on these and other consultations, including those underway in the Kingdom of Morocco, and following weeks of extensive talks with key Libyan and international stakeholders, UNSMIL will now launch the arrangements needed to resume the fully inclusive Libyan Political Dialogue Forum with an announcement to be forthcoming. We call upon the international community to shoulder its responsibilities to support this process and to unequivocally respect the Libyan people's sovereign right to determine their future."

About Whispering Bell



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