



**Weekly Libya .Xplored preview**

April 12, 2019

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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**LIBYA ACTIVITY MAP**



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## OUTLOOK

### Short term outlook

- The LNA announced on April 03 that it had launched its long-expected operation into western Libya. LNA chief Khalifa Haftar will need to demonstrate a credible military defeat of the forces ranged against him to trigger wholesale defections or draw opponents to negotiate. Anti-Haftar forces will have to fight hard to prevent the encirclement of Tripoli.
- Terrorist groups remain active across Libya and will continue to mount attacks against security forces, governmental and state institutions. Sirte and Fezzan have seen recent reassertions of presence. They also pose a threat to more symbolic targets as well as the international community. These groups may experience short term disruption due to LNA operations in the south of the country, but the threat remains extant.

### Medium to long term outlook

- Work continues to reach a consensus on the holding of the National Gathering and the constitution referendum in preparation for elections now mooted to take place in October 2019. There remain a number of spoilers as well as those supporting the parallel Libyan roadmap which is focused initially on restructuring the Presidential Council. Domestic and international competition and opposing agendas will continue to fuel division and hamper positive progress.
- Moves to combat the security vacuum in the south, and to halt and reverse deteriorating living conditions have the potential to create areas of national unity, as well as competition. The power vacuum that had helped incubate terrorist organizations, criminal gangs, and foreign rebels is now being challenged by the LNA which has exerted its influence over key areas of Fezzan. This could have ripple effects across the Sahel.

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

### Governance

- PM Sarraj said in a televised statement on April 06 that there would be no military solution to Libya's crisis and (echoing similar remarks by Ghassan Salamé) that the National Conference offered a 'gateway' to stability. He highlighted Haftar's role as the belligerent, in spite of his inclusion and apparent acquiescence in ongoing efforts to unify Libya politically.
- The UN Security Council (UNSC) and the G7 powers (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States) urged Khalifa Haftar to halt his advance.
- Libya's Arab neighbors are also monitoring Libya's situation closely. Algeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on April 06 that it is following developments with 'extreme preoccupation.' Tunisia increased its presence at the Ras Adjir and Dhehiba border crossings. The Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Abdul Gheit has also called on all parties to 'refrain from any acts that could increase dissension among the Libyan people.' The Speaker of the Egyptian parliament Ali Abdul Aal said that Egypt 'fully supports the LNA's current battle against armed groups and militias.'
- UNSMIL SRSG Ghassan Salamé announced on April 09 that the National Gathering had been postponed indefinitely but would be held 'as soon as possible' when conditions were 'appropriate.' The National Gathering was planned for 14-16 April in the border town of Ghadames. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also said in an April 10 statement that he still believed it was possible for 'cessation of hostilities to take place' to avoid 'a dramatic, bloody battle for Tripoli.'
- Municipal elections planned for 06 April were affected by the Tripolitania conflict. Elections in Asbiah, Kikla, and south Zawiya were postponed, though others went ahead as planned, with a 38 percent turnout.

### Security

- The LNA targeted GNA airpower based out of the military facility at the Mitiga International Airport complex. However, they appear mindful of damaging Tripoli's sole remaining airport. An airstrike on April 08 reportedly struck a Rada Special Deterrence Force (SDF) facility within the airport complex. The runway was not hit but the airport was immediately closed until April 09. A second attack in the vicinity on April 12 hit an air defense radar station in Tajoura but did not affect the airport.

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- Fighting has progressed since April 05 from Tripoli International Airport (TIP, disused since 2014) to Ain Zara in the southern suburbs. Tripoli militias and LNA are also understood to be clashing around Swani northwest of the airport.
- LNA spokesman Brigadier Ahmed Al-Mismari has said that the LNA's Tripoli operation 'is going to plan.' Other reports indicate that GNA-aligned forces have presented stiffer resistance than anticipated by the LNA, with former or part-time militiamen from past conflicts swelling the ranks of the local militia.
- The GNA has reportedly taken action to arrest LNA 'sleeper cells' operating in and around Tripoli. On April 09, Rada Special Deterrence Force (SDF) arrested several apparent members of the LNA in an 'operations room' near central Tripoli's Dahmani bus station. The group appears to have been conducting reconnaissance.
- West of the city, military activity has seen possible GNA-aligned troop movements towards LNA-held Watiyah Airbase (south of Zuwara, 90km west of Tripoli) and spoiling attacks around Watiyah and Zuwara using air assets. Ground force dispositions on both sides have remained effectively static since April 04 when LNA-aligned forces made an unopposed move from Sabratah to Surman, west of Zawiyah
- To the east, the Sirte Protection Force on April 09 was reported to be on 'high alert,' mounting increased patrols to monitor and resist attempts to 'breach the city.' This followed three LNA airstrikes reported approximately 60km west on the morning of April 09, and the April 08 announcement of the LNA's 'Misrata Liberation Operations Room.'
- Two people were killed and a third wounded in a possible VBIED attack outside Benghazi on April 10. Two expert sources said that, from available information, the official account of a UXO incident appeared 'doubtful' but could not be entirely ruled out. The LNA had earlier increased the alert state in the east following reports of IS intent to exploit bulk troop movements to western Libya.
- The Fezzan has seen reports of armed violence. An armed group, possibly IS, are reported to have carried out an attack on al-Fuqaha in Jufra province on April 08. Five of the assailants were later killed by LNA and local security forces. Citizens in Ghadduwah town, 60km south of Sabha, were reported to have fought off an 'IS' attack. A security force member was shot and killed by gunmen in Murzuq.
- Syria-based Jihadist Abdallah al-Muhaysini has urged people in Libya to join Jihad to defend Tripoli against the LNA's offensive. He cited Libyan Grand Mufti Sadeq Al-Ghariani who also called for Jihad following the start of the LNA advance. IS supporters have reportedly 'gloated' that the forces that ousted it from strongholds across Libya are now at war with themselves.

### Humanitarian

- The UN OCHA reported on April 10 that fighting in Tripoli's southern suburbs since April 04 had driven a total of 6,000 people from their homes. The total number of displaced people doubled over April 08 to 10. Most IDPs are resettling with family and acquaintances. Shelters in Ain Zara and Tajoura may soon have to be relocated as the conflict advances north. Nearly 2,500 people from 580 families were said to remain trapped, with dwindling supplies of food and fuel.
- As of April 11, 47 people have been killed, including five civilians, and 181 wounded since the LNA entered southern Tripoli on April 04. UN OCHA also said on April 10 that three doctors had been killed and four first responders seriously injured. An ambulance driver was also reported to have been kidnapped.
- The General Electric Company of Libya (GECOL) said that conflict in Tripoli had disrupted power supplies to several areas.

### Travel

- Tripoli Mitiga International Airport is open for departures from approximately 1700hrs until 0800hrs and is expected to continue these hours for the foreseeable future. The terminal closed temporarily following the LNA airstrike on the afternoon of April 08. Misrata and Zuwara International Airports are reported to be open and operational.
- The Ras Adjir border crossing to Tunisia has been mostly unaffected by military developments this week. Tunisian border security officials said on April 08 that they noted no increase in Libyan families moving across the border via Libya's western coastal town of Ras Adjir. The Tunisian Defense ministry reported on April 05 that it had increased security levels at the crossing. Local sources since April 10
- have reported unimpeded travel along the coastal road from Tripoli for local national and diplomatic traffic.

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**Oil and Gas**

- NOC chair Mustafa Sanalla has called for all parties in Libya to ensure continued production from the country’s oil facilities. Sanalla’s comments follow reports of increasing defensive preparations in Zawiyah, home to one of two oil terminals on the northwest coast. His remarks also follow reports of heightened alert in the oil crescent, linked to expectations that IS may exploit bulk movements of LNA forces to Jufra and western Libya.

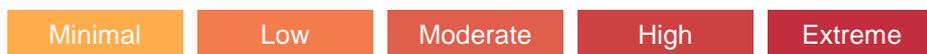
**KEY DATES**

Date	Occasion	Comment
April 14-16	National Gathering, Ghadames	Postponed indefinitely
March – June	UNSMIL proposed timelines for elections	Highly unlikely
May 01	Labour Day	
June 05 – 06	Eid ul-Fitr	End of Ramadan
July	AU/ UN International Conference on Libya	
August 11	Arafat Day	
August 12-14	Eid al-Adha	
September 01	Islamic New Year	
October	AU proposed elections	Highly unlikely

**THREAT MATRIX**

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

Threat Scale



**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**LNA Tripolitania Operation**

**Tripoli Suburbs**

Fighting between the LNA and GNA-aligned forces has progressed since April 05 into the southern suburbs, with the LNA steadily opening a central corridor to within 10km of Tripoli’s urban fringe. Local opinion and international commentary have suggested that the LNA offensive has lost momentum after meeting firmer resistance than anticipated. However, the trend since April 04 indicates a steady advance to secure defensible staging areas on multiple southern approaches towards urban Tripoli.



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**Central Tripoli**

The GNA has reportedly taken action to arrest LNA 'sleeper cells' operating in and around Tripoli. On April 09, Rada Special Deterrence Force (SDF) arrested several apparent members of the LNA in an 'operations room' near central Tripoli's Dahmani bus station. The group appears to have been conducting reconnaissance.

**North West Coast**

West of the city, military activity has seen possible (GNA-aligned) troop movements towards LNA-held Watiyah Airbase (south of Zuwara, 100km west of Tripoli) and spoiling attacks around Watiyah and Zuwara using air assets from both sides. Ground force dispositions on both sides have remained effectively static since April 04.

**Central Libya**

To the east, the Sirte Protection Force on April 09 was reported to be on 'high alert,' mounting increased patrols to monitor and resist attempts to 'breach the city.' LNA spokesman Ahmed Al-Mismari alluded to a possible eastern front on April 10, stating that 'a very large meeting of terrorist[s] ... took place in Sirte' and that they planned 'to attack the Oil Crescent.' Though there is a credible IS threat to the Oil Crescent, this appeared part of LNA information operations ahead of possible moves on Sirte or even Misrata.

**Humanitarian Impact**

The Tripoli conflict is increasingly affecting Tripoli's civilians. Around 10,000 people have already been displaced and thousands more remain in place with dwindling food and fuel. IDP figures have almost doubled in the 48-hrs prior April 12. Fatality figures now include seven civilians, including three medics. The aid sector reported on April 10 that IDP shelters in Ain Zara and Tajoura might have to relocate. Humanitarian agencies continue to call for a humanitarian truce to allow civilians to leave affected areas.

**WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT****Tripolitania****Significant activity**

- Security Announcement - Apr 07, Tripoli Province, Yarmouk Camp: UNSMIL facilitated a 2-hour truce from 1600hrs to 1800hrs to allow casualties to be evacuated from Salahdin and Qaser Bin Ghaser.
- Demonstration - Apr 08, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Overnight demonstrations, with youths burning tires, were reported in northwest Tripoli's Ghut al Shaal. They were said to be voicing support for Khalifa Haftar.
- Prisoner Escape - Apr 09, Tripoli Province, Abu Saleem: Unconfirmed reporting has stated that gunfire and a possible prison break has been reported near Abu Salim prison
- Other - Apr 09, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Ras Ajdir: UNSMIL are understood to have drawn down staff from 200 to 70.
- Arrest - Apr 09, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Radaa SDF are reported to have arrested several apparent members of the LNA, in what has been described as a newly established 'operations room' near central Tripoli's Dahmani bus station.
- Troop Movements - Apr 09, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Watiyah Air Base: GNA-aligned units from Zintan and Alrujban are reportedly moving towards LNA held Al-Watiyah Airbase
- Airstrike - Apr 08, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Watiyah Air Base: GNA conducted an airstrike against LNA-held Watiyah Airbase.
- Health - Apr 09, Tripoli Province, Ain Zara: The UN has stated that Tripoli's medical facilities have reported 47 deaths and 181 injuries as a result of clashes in southern Tripoli between April 03 and April 09, higher figures than those provided by either side so far.
- Other - Apr 09, Tripoli Province, Mitiga Airport: Tripoli Mitiga Airport closed following the LNA airstrike on the afternoon of April 08.
- Arrest - Apr 09, Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi Province, Ash Shwayrif: The GNA are reported to have targeted an LNA fuel convoy near Ash Shwayrif on April 09.
- Kidnap - Apr 09, Tripoli Province, Ain Zara: One ambulance driver was reportedly 'kidnapped' while assisting with casualty evacuations in southern Tripoli.

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- Airstrike - Apr 12, Tripoli Province, Tajura: Initial reporting has stated that an LNA jet conducted an airstrike on an air defense radar station to the southeast of Mitiga Airport. The exact location has not been identified. Airport sources confirmed that Mitiga Airport was not affected.
- Airstrike - Apr 12, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Zuwara: LNA on the morning of April 12 targeted a GNA-controlled radar station in Zuwara (approximately 100km west of Tripoli) with attack helicopters.
- Demonstration - Apr 12, Tripoli Province, Martyr's Square Tripoli: Demonstrations protesting the ongoing conflict in Tripoli in the evening.

**Cyrenaica**

**Significant activity**

- Troop Movements - Apr 07, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A Special Forces battalion was reportedly mobilized towards the western region from Benghazi
- IED Found/Cleared - Apr 09, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Security forces in Benghazi reported clearing an IED inside a parked vehicle near a market in Benghazi's Susah area.
- VBIED - Apr 10, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: A possible VBIED at a military checkpoint outside Benghazi killed two people and seriously injured another. Expert sources cast doubt on the official account of a UXO incident.

**Fezzan**

**Significant activity**

- Kidnap - Mar 29, Murzuq Province, Murzuq: Three young men from the same family were kidnapped near Murzuq's health center. They were named as brothers Omar Mohamed Rajab and Zakaria Mohammed Rajab, as well as their nephew Salah Musa Laga.
- Assault - Apr 03, Sabha Province, Sabha: Two GECOL employees were attacked in Sabha's al-Qardah area while attempting to disconnect an illegal electrical hook-up. One man was shot while the other was hit by a car. Local security forces arrested one suspect shortly afterward.
- Arrest - Apr 02, Sabha Province, Sabha: Sabha security forces reported the detention of 30 illegal migrants of varying nationalities at CPs around Sabha. They were transferred to the Illegal Immigration Branch in Sabha for deportation.



**ACRONYM LIST**

- AQ - Al-Qaeda
- AIOR – Anti-IS Operations Room (Sabratah)
- BAM – Al Bunyan Al Marsous (Misrata aligned)
- BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade / Saraya Defend Benghazi (SDB) (Al Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
- CBL – Central Bank of Libya
- CNI – Critical National Infrastructure
- DACOCT - Deterrence Apparatus for Combating Organized Crime and Terrorism
- DPF – Derna Protection Force (an amalgamation of all militias in Derna, including the MSCD)
- GATMJB -
- GECOL – General Electricity Company of Libya
- GMMR – Great Man-made River
- GNA – Government of National Accord (UN-backed)
- GNC – General National Congress
- HNEC – High National Elections Commission
- 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
- LNG – Libyan National Guard
- LPA – Libyan Political Agreement
- LROR - Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
- MoD - Ministry of Defense
- MoF - Ministry of Finance
- MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- MoHE - Ministry of Higher Education
- Mol - Ministry of Interior
- MoJ - Ministry of Justice
- MoO - Ministry of Oil
- MoT - Ministry of Transportation
- MSCD – Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna (AQ aligned)
- NFDK - No Further Details Known
- NGO - Non-Governmental Organization (aid/charity)
- NOC – National Oil Company
- NSG – National Salvation Government (GNC)
- NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
- 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)
- SDF – Rada Deterrence Force/ Special Deterrence Force/ Rada
- Technical - An improvised weapon-mounted pick-up truck
- TPF – Tripoli Protection Force (TRB, Nawasi, Bab Tajoura Brigade and Ghneiwa umbrella group)
- UXO - Unexploded Ordnance



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For more information on how our services can support your business in Libya contact:

Nicholas Bennett  
Regional Director, Libya:  
[Nicholas.Bennett@garda.com](mailto:Nicholas.Bennett@garda.com)

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**Middle East**

International Protective Services Headquarters  
Office 2502, Tower 2, Currency House  
DIFC, PO Box 482069  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**United States**

1101 Wilson Boulevard  
Suite 1725  
Arlington, VA, 22209  
United States

**UK**

Two London Bridge  
London  
SE1 9RA

**Europe**

37-39 rue des Deux Eglises  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

[garda.com](http://garda.com)