

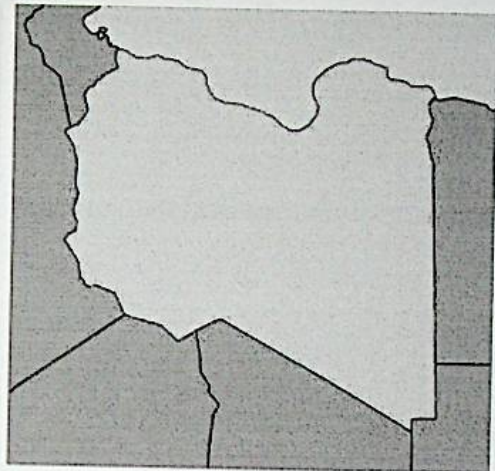
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**Libya**

Jan 2-7

**Summary**

Haftar's forces conducted airstrikes on the al Jufra airport this week while tensions continue in the south of the country.



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**Diplomacy**

Libyan Speaker Aguila Saleh visited Tunisia this week to hold meetings on the Libyan crisis. This is Saleh's second visit abroad in less than two weeks after he travelled to Egypt last month. Tunisian sources told Libyan media that during his visit to Algeria last month, Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi discussed the possibility of hosting a trilateral meeting between Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria to find a solution to the Libyan crisis. At the end of his visit to Cairo, Saleh expressed his appreciation for "Egyptian efforts to find a solution to the crisis". He also said that Russia is "ready to support and train the Libyan Army". In an interview with "al Wasat", Saleh referred to his recent visit to Moscow and said he reached an "agreement with Russian Foreign Minister Sergej Lavrov and understanding on the situation in Libya. We agreed on exchanging constant visits". Saleh added that during his recent visit to Egypt he met with the Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces Mahmoud Hegazy and said: "We exchanged points of view on the Libyan crisis".

UN Envoy to Libya Martin Kobler has expressed concern over the situation and the escalation of violence in central and southern Libya. Kobler called on all parties to "maintain self-control and have faith in the dialogue in the interests of the country", referring to the airstrikes conducted this week by General Khalifa Haftar's warplanes on al Jufra and armed clashes that occurred on Jan. 2 in Sebha between the Misrata 12th brigade and Haftar's third brigade.

**Politics**

The Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) Presidential Council has appointed Fathallah Hussein Abdel Karim Mohammed as the new head of the secret services in a decree signed over the weekend in Tripoli. Ibrahim Khalifa Boushanaf was appointed Justice Minister while Major Mahmoud Mohammed al Zein was named as the new head of anti-terrorism. Presidential Council Vice President Abdel Salam Kajman has said he is against the series of nominations from the Presidential Council as "the decrees were signed by Fathi al Majbari as President-elect and were illegitimately issued by the Presidential Council. They are therefore to be considered null and void until the next Presidential Council meeting". Libyan Deputy Prime Minister Musa al Kuni has said he has handed in his resignation as a member of the Presidential Council. During a press conference held this week in Tripoli, al Kuni said: "I announce my resignation because I have failed and I apologise to the Libyan people for my failure. The Presidential Council has failed in its task of implementing the political agreement and running the country". Al Kuni added that "all political parties failed to help the Presidential Council unite the state institutions. The Council is not unified and its decisions

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are witness to this. It has failed to help the areas where there are clashes and wars". In a message on Twitter, al Kuni said: "We have failed to meet the people's expectations and this led me to resign". GNA Spokesman Ashraf al Thulthi said "the Presidential Council will make efforts to convince al Kuni to change his mind". Prime Minister-designate and Presidential Council President Fayez al Sarraj said he has cancelled the decrees nominating five security and political figures as they failed to achieve unanimous consensus from the authority. He expressed his respect for the nominated politicians and added that "a unanimous consensus on these nominations is necessary as they directly affect the country's security and stability".

### Security

Clashes broke out between Sudanese rebel militia from the Justice and Equality movement, considered Haftar's allies, and Libyan Petroleum Guards around the al Faragh oil field located roughly 60 kilometres south of Gato in southern Libya. The head of the local Petroleum Guards, Colonel Mohammed al Banuni, denied reports on social media that the Sudanese militia took control of the field, saying they were driven off by his men.

Haftar's warplanes conducted an airstrike against the al Jufra airport this week, south of Sirte, said the spokesman of the "al Karama" operation and Haftar's troops Ahmed al Mismari. He added: "We conducted a precision airstrike on a meeting of militia leaders close to al Qaeda inside the al Jufra airbase". Another source from Haftar's military staff told "al Hadith" that the raid targeted a military aeroplane "carrying ammunition" for Islamist militia in the al Jufra base. Misrata Military Council Spokesman Colonel Birahim Beit al Mal was wounded in the strike, said "al Bunyan al Marsoos" Spokesman Mohammed al Ghasri. He also denied reports from Haftar's forces that the plane was carrying weapons and ammunition for militia in the area considered hostile to "al Karama" operation troops. "The bombing struck a civilian plane carrying a delegation travelling from Misrata to take part in the funeral of the person who died in the Dec. 26 raid on the al Houn military base near al Jafra", said al Ghasri. Khalifa Haftar's air force has announced it has closed the airspace above central Libya to civil aviation from Brega in the east to Sirte in the west and Sebha in the south after this week's airstrike.

*Based on news from the following Libyan newspaper and websites: Ean Libia, al Wasat, Libya al Mustakbal, Libya Herald, Libyan News Agency Lana, al Hayat, al Quds al Arabi, al Arabiya, Sky Arabia, al Youm.*