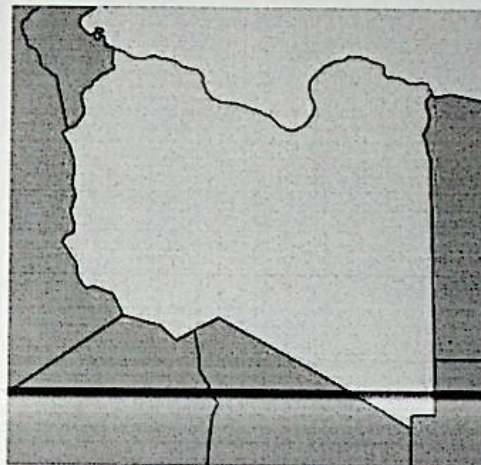


Libya

Apr 3-9

Clashes continued this week in southern Libya between Tripoli forces and Haftar's troops.



Diplomacy

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord (GNA), Ahmed Maiteeq, met with Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation (EGPC) Chief, Abed el Ezz Regal, in Tripoli this week to discuss ways to resume oil cooperation between the two countries.

Italian Ambassador to Libya Giuseppe Perrone arrived at the Labraq airport in eastern Libya this week on an official visit to the Libyan parliament based in Tobruk. In a statement, the Tobruk parliament said that Perrone met with Speaker Aguila Saleh at his residence in al Qubba, 178 kilometres west of Tobruk, to discuss bilateral relations between Italy and Libya and the latest political developments after this week's announcement from the Libyan parliament that it would resume dialogue with the GNA. This is Perrone's second visit to Tobruk. According to "al Wasat", the Italian Ambassador also met with the head of the self-proclaimed Libyan National Army (LNA) Khalifa Haftar at the General Command base in al Rajma, eastern Libya.

Politics

The prime minister of the dissolved Libyan National Salvation government that is unrecognised by the international community, Khalifa Ghweil, and representatives of the dissolved Tripoli parliament, the General National Congress, have launched an appeal to the Tobruk House of Representatives. The appeal refers to the "need to reach a Libyan-Libyan agreement in order to form a national unity government with a clear road map and that gives concrete times". Ghweil criticised the Arab League countries who, during the summit held last week in Jordan, only recognised Prime Minister Fayez al Sarraj's GNA, that is also recognised by the entire international community.

Benghazi Defence Brigades leader Mustafa al Sharaksi said that "the Tripoli Presidential Council described us as terrorists and defined those who carried out a coup against legality as the army", referring to Haftar's LNA forces. Speaking to "Nun Post", al Sharaksi said that "these are the reasons for our differences with al Sarraj. If the Presidential Council's position regarding our conflict with Haftar had been neutral, we would have adopted a different attitude towards them". The Benghazi Defence Brigades is an Islamist militia that has been stationed in al Jufra, south of Sirte, for several months after being expelled from Benghazi, located in the region of Cyrenaica and the cradle of the 2011 revolution, by Haftar's men.

Shura Council of Mujahedeen in Derna leader, Mohammed al Mansuri, has said that Tobruk Speaker Aguila Saleh has asked for a meeting with him to discuss ways to put an end to the clashes underway in the city in Cyrenaica. Islamist militants in Derna responded to this readiness to negotiate by liberating all Haftar's men taken prisoner over recent months and asked for the talks to be held in Derna. In a video released on

Facebook, al Mansuri said that "Saleh sent a delegation to Derna to stop the clashes with Haftar's forces". Over recent weeks, the LNA operations commander Omar Mokhtar sent a message asking the people "of Derna, and especially the people in the districts controlled by the group known as the Shura Council of Mujahedeen and Ansar al Sharia, to throw out these militants or to leave to avoid being hit by our forces". Libyan MPs have welcomed Tobruk's decision to resume talks with the GNA. According to "al Wasat", the decision to resume national talks was made this week during a session in which 55 MPs took part. The Libyan website added that "there was unanimity in the parliament on this position proposed by Speaker Aguila Saleh, two weeks since relations with Tripoli were suspended". On Mar. 7 2017, the Libyan parliament announced that dialogue with Tripoli has been suspended due to the attack by the Benghazi Defence Brigades on the oil crescent.

Security

The explosion that destroyed the al Lathama bridge in the eastern district of al Sabri in Benghazi was carried out by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Deash), said LNA Spokesman Ahmad al Mismari on Twitter. The destruction of the bridge was an attempt by the Benghazi Shura Council to prevent LNA forces from advancing towards the militants' last strongholds in Benghazi, added al Mismari.

There was further violence in Benghazi this week when a sniper opened fire on a car that was crossing the Giuliana bridge, killing the woman on board, who was eight months pregnant. A sailor who rushed to help was then shot dead.

Artillery shots were fired this week in Warshfana, south-east of Tripoli, in Tripolitania. According to local media, the clashes were between two rival militia, the Muammar al Dawi Brigades belonging to the Aulad Imbarak tribe and the Abdel Hamid al Hamali regiment under the Awlad Saud tribe, and caused panic and fear among the residents of the area.

Armed clashes broke out around the Tamanhirt airbase, located just a few kilometres from Sabha in central Libya, between the LNA 12 Brigade and the Third Force belonging to the Misrata militia. The clashes began when Haftar's forces launched an attack to gain control of the airbase controlled by the Misrata militia. Haftar's planes took off from the Brach al Shati airbase north of Sabha and bombed the Tamanhirt base located 30 kilometres west of the city. The GNA Defence Ministry announced the deployment of six armed formations to the area.

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.