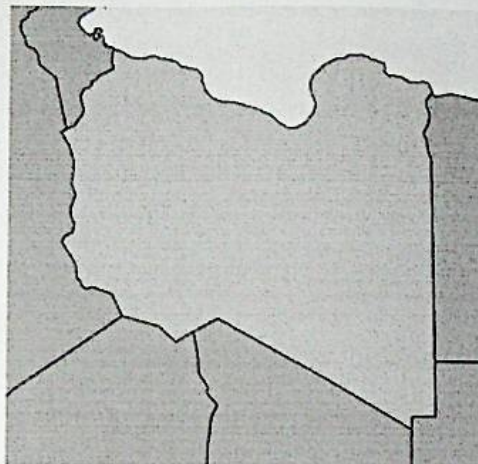


Libya

Dec 21-27

Summary

The Tobruk parliament and the Tripoli Congress signed the national reconciliation agreement this week in Morocco aimed at bringing peace back to the country.



Diplomacy

A Libyan reconciliation agreement was signed on Thursday establishing a new reconciliation government led by Prime Minister Faiz al-Siraj. Three representatives from Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan – Saleh Makhzoum, Fathi Bashara and Nuri Balabad – signed the document amid applause and pro-unity slogans from MPs and Libyan activists inside the Skhirat Congress in Morocco. The ceremony was attended by roughly 200 people including Libyan MPs, tribal leaders and politicians as well as foreign ministers from Italy, Qatar, Turkey, Tunisia and Morocco. UN Envoy to Libya Martin Kobler countersigned the agreement. Libyan media reported that the ceremony for the signing of the agreement began in Skhirat after an hour of talks on the appointments of deputy prime ministers of the future government representing the three Libyan regions. The event began late as the delegations from southern and eastern Libya left the room to protest the failure to agree on the name of the deputy prime ministers representing Fezzan and Cyrenaica. In the end, the delegates decided to replace Saleh Makhzoum as deputy PM of the south with Ahmed Hamza. The other deputy PMs are Ali al-Qatarani for Cyrenaica and Ali Qanji for Tripolitania. The agreement lays out the formation of a national unity government led by a prime minister and three deputy prime ministers representing Tripolitania, Fezzan and Cyrenaica with power of veto who will form the core of the presidency council with other ministers chosen by the future parliament. The President of the Tobruk parliament Aquila Saleh was invited to the ceremony but refused to attend, Libyan MP Abdel Muniam Bekkour told "Libya TV". The President of the Tripoli Congress Nuri Abu Sahimin was also absent. The day before, delegations from the Congress and the Parliament met in Malta, said the "Libyan Observer". The two delegations are led by the respective presidents, Nuri Abu Sahimin for Tripoli and Aquila Saleh for Tobruk, who had both decided not to go to Morocco to sign the reconciliation agreement.

Politics

Libyan General Khalifa Haftar has said he is "not satisfied" by the contents of the agreement signed in Morocco. Speaking from the military base in al-Maraj where he met with UN Envoy Martin Kobler, Haftar said that "it is necessary to include in the draft the 12 point that I presented". However, he also added that "no more time must be lost in order to reach a deal as soon as possible".

The Libyan Prime Minister appointed to lead the future national reconciliation government Faiz al-Saraj has urged all Libyans to "work together as a team to save the country from the dangers that threaten all of us". In a statement released by Libyan news agency "al-Tadhamoun", al-Saraj explained that "the danger I speak

of is that of terrorist organisations whose domain is widening, causing suffering to citizens every day". In the note, al-Saraj adds that "five years of suffering for the Libyan people is enough" and asks that "priority is given to the interests of the nation to achieve the dream of a safe state".

Security

Eight people have been wounded in clashes between rival militia in Ajdabiya, eastern Libya. The casualties were taken to the al-Jala hospital in Benghazi for treatment together with a further two from the same city who were wounded in clashes in al-Sabri between the army and Islamist militia. Fighting has been ongoing in Ajdabiya since Wednesday when a group of militia clashed with Ansar al-Sharia men in the industrial zone, killing 13 on the first day of fighting. In a statement, the Mayor of Ajdabiya Salem al-Judhram announced a ceasefire in the city after three days of fighting saying "we want to avoid a repeat of Benghazi in Ajdabiya". He added that "the situation in the city is dangerous so I call on our citizens to be responsible". The Libyan Army led by Gen. Khalifa Haftar, Minister of Defence of the internationally recognised Tobruk government, has deployed two units against the Islamic State in Ajdabiya, roughly 154 kilometres southeast of Benghazi, Lieutenant Mohamed Baseit told "al-Wasat". Ajdabiya has recently seen an increase in murders and kidnappings of tribal elders, sheikhs, soldiers and members of security forces by Islamic State jihadists. Baseit explained that there is a "calm atmosphere" in the city and the deployed units are "awaiting orders" to launch operations against the Islamic State or other terrorist groups in 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.