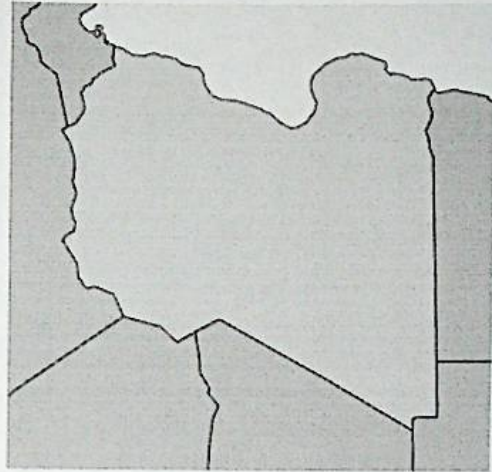

Libya**Oct 26-31****Summary**

Political negotiations for a reconciliation government stalled this week. UN Envoy Bernardino Leon travelled to Egypt. Fears are growing over a possible escalation of violence after a helicopter was shot down in Tripoli.



Diplomacy

UN Special Envoy Bernardino Leon, whose mandate came to an end last month, is continuing to hold meetings to lead the Libyan parties to an agreement. This week, he travelled to Cairo where he met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry and the Secretary General of the Arab League Nabil al Araby to discuss the issues hindering an agreement, said "Al Ahram". Libyan Speaker Aguila Saleh also visited Cairo where he offered to sign the agreement for national reconciliation proposed on Oct. 8 in Morocco in exchange for a guarantee that General Khalifa Haftar will remain Chief of the Libyan Army. According to "Libya al Akhbar", Leon has been in Cairo for several days to meet with both Libyan representatives as well as those from Arab countries. The Libyan website also reported that Leon refused Saleh's offer explaining that Haftar's continued leadership has not been accepted by Tripoli. The UN Security Council has approved the nomination of German diplomat Martin Kobler as the new Special Envoy for Libya, said "Al Arabiya".

Politics

The Tobruk Parliament has postponed its session indefinitely as Speaker Aguila Saleh travelled to Egypt. A parliament source told "Al Wasat" that the session's agenda included the nomination of the new delegation for the next round of UN talks in Morocco to discuss the reconciliation agreement and propose the new names for the future unity government. This decision will also indefinitely postpone the next round of talks. On Oct. 19, the internationally recognised Tobruk parliament rejected the agreement of national reconciliation in Libya proposed on Oct. 8 in Morocco by Leon. The decision was announced by Speaker Aguila Saleh at the end of an extraordinary session. The National Movement for the Tuaregs has announced its support of the national reconciliation government. A statement published by "Al Tadamoun" says that "the UN Envoy's proposal is the only solution that can lead the country out of this phase of lack of security, reinstate stability and put an end to armed clashes". The movement calls on Libyans "to be wise and give priority to national interests rather than personal".

Security

An Ansar al Sharia leader, Mansur al Shaalali, has been killed in Benghazi during clashes with soldiers from Khalifa Haftar's Army. A statement released by the Islamist group on social networks says that "the heroic Mujahid has died in Benghazi". Al Shaalali was wanted by Tunisian authorities over accusations of plotting numerous terrorist attacks in Tunisia. A death sentence was handed down to his brother, Adel, by Iraqi authorities after he was arrested in Baghdad for being a member of Al Qaeda. A helicopter has crashed in

western Tripoli, killing 14 people. According to "Al Wasat", the helicopter came down along the coast and it is believed to have been shot down. On board were numerous civilians and leaders of "Fajr" militia returning to the capital as well as enormous sums of money to be taken to the banks in the city. The General Staff of the Misrata air force and others controlling Tripoli have accused the tribal army of shooting down the helicopter. Mustafa Al-Sharkasi, spokesman for Tripoli's chief of staff, said that "the tribal army hit a helicopter and their men were hidden in a farm in the Kubri 27 area". The tribal army, a militia allied to General Khalifa Haftar, was repelled by the Misrata militia in clashes last week following an attempt to take control of the Sebrata area. The General Command of the Libyan Armed Forces has said in a statement that it has "no connection to the shooting down of the helicopter near Zawiya, 45 kilometres west of Tripoli". Military Spokesman Khalifa al Obeidi said that "had the armed forces carried out the action, they would have been courageous enough to claim it". On board were the chief of Western Libya's brigades, Hussein Aboudia, and the chief of Zawiya militia, Suheib al Ramah. The Zintan Military Council, a city in Tripolitania roughly 160 kilometres from Tripoli, fears an escalation of violence following the shooting down of the helicopter and has warned that this event could definitively compromise the establishment of a national reconciliation government. In a statement, the Council calls on the Zawiya and Zintan to maintain control, avoid an escalation of clashes and reject the call to war from some parties. Tripoli authorities believe the helicopter was shot down by tribal army militia who had unsuccessfully attempted to conquer Sebrata.

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.