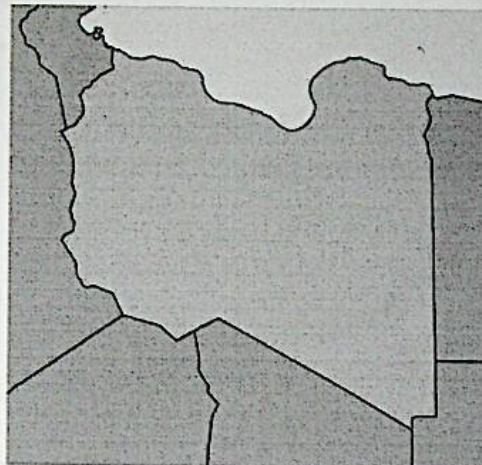


Libya

June 12-17

Zintan militia have released Saif al Islam Gaddafi.



Diplomacy

The UN Security Council has voted to extend its arms embargo on Libya for a further year until Jun. 12 2018. The embargo on the supply of weapons to the Libyan Navy also remains in effect. Resolution 2357, based on Article 7 of the UN Charter, states that "terrorism in all its forms represents one of the most dangerous threats to peace and security". Government of National Accord (GNA) Prime Minister Fayez al Sarraj has called for the embargo to be lifted in order to support Libyan police and military institutions.

Several Arab countries, including Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt, have denied political asylum to Saif al Islam, the son of former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, who was released on Jun. 9 in Zintan. According to "Le 360", these states have refused to allow Saif al Islam access as the International Criminal Court (ICC) could order his extradition at any moment.

General Abdel Razzq al Nadori, the military governor in eastern Libya of the self-proclaimed Libyan National Army (LNA), has accused Qatar of being involved in the assassination of former Commander of Special Forces, General Abdel Fattah Youned, in July 2011, when he protested over the presence of the Qatari army chief in Libya at the time. Speaking to "Sky News Arabia", al Nadori said that "Qatar is involved because the murder is part of its plan to control the country through terrorist groups. Younes had protested against the presence of Qatar's Chief of Staff, Hamed Bin Ali al Attiya, in Libya with Muslim Brotherhood leaders. I remember that Youned asked how such an interference was possible without authorisation".

Politics

According to "al Khaleej", celebrations were held in seven Libyan cities this week (Ghat, Sabha, Obari, Brak al Shati, al Jufra, al Kufra and Bani Walid) over the release of Saif al Islam Gaddafi by the Abu Bakr al Siddiq Brigade, with Libyans waving the green flag of the former regime. "Al Arab" did not exclude the possibility of Saif al Islam playing a political role in the future. "Despite the fact he has been absent from the political scene for six years, Saif al Islam still holds great popularity", said the article. Not only supporters of the former regime, but "today he is also supported by those who ousted his father or were in disagreement with him. At the moment, however, it is unclear what role he could play in Libya with its various clashing armed groups and two opposing governments", the article continued. Just a few hours after Saif al Islam Gaddafi's release, the Tripoli Revolutionaries' Brigade led by Haitham Tajouri announced on Facebook that it had liberated a group of 30 men, including officers and doctors, held captive in the Libyan capital for six years. The group of men, considered to have been members of Muammar Gaddafi's former regime, include two army generals, Naji Masoud Hariri and Sharif Mohamad Benniran, three colonels Mohamed Abdulrahim Abdullah, Fathi Ibrahim

Mabrouk and Salem Awaidat, and a doctor Tahir Ahmed al Marghani. According to "Libya Herald", the announcement came immediately after the GNA announced the transfer of the prisoners from the al Hadba prison to a secure location. Abdullah al Senussi, the former Libyan head of intelligence who was sentenced to death last year, and Saadi Gaddafi who is still on trial, were also in the same prison. Tajouri's brigade took control of the prison last month. Local sources spoke of Senussi and Saadi being transferred to the Fornaj and Ain Zara prisons. Libyan tribes in Jabal al Akhdar, especially the al Barasi, al Abidat and al Awaqir clans, have "interests in hosting Saif al Islam Gaddafi to increase their political strength in light of differences that have emerged with Khalifa Haftar", said "al Hayat" in an article. The paper said it was unclear who gave the order to release Saif al Islam Gaddafi, an order that did not come from the Zintan Military Council, "whose men attacked the Abu Bakr al Siddiq Brigade's barracks after reports on his liberation were released". The former justice minister for the unrecognised interim Libyan government based in al Bayda, Isa al Saghir, said that "at the moment, there is no precise or official information on his release". Speaking to Libyan media, al Saghir, who recently visited Saif al Islam in prison in Zintan, said he "had not spoken to anyone about his release. I had to ascertain that he was well, but I learnt everything else from the media". A meeting was held in Tripoli to discuss the possible release of two important members of Muammar Gaddafi's former regime. According to "Sirte al Akhbar", al Maqariha tribal chiefs are in talks with Tripoli GNA security heads in the Radisson Blu al Mahary Hotel in Tripoli to discuss the release of the regime's internal and external secret services chiefs: Abdullah al Senussi and Abu Zaid Durda. Tripoli security heads present include Hashme Bashar, the former head of Tripoli's High Security Commission and advisor for the security of Prime Minister Fayez al Sarraj, and Haytham al Tajorui, Tripoli Revolutionaries' Brigade leader, the most important brigade in the capital that controls the al Hadba prison.

Security

According to "al Hayat", Saif al Islam Gaddafi, the second son of Muammar Gaddafi, is located in the eastern city of al Bayda, the seat of the unrecognised Libyan transitional government, under the protection of the al Barasi clan. The Abu Bakr al Siddiq Brigade who released Saif al Islam, announced that he left Zintan on Jun. 9 without specifying where he was headed. Several sources in al Bayda have spoken of Saif al Islam's arrival in the city, although this has not yet been officially confirmed. Gaddafi supporters said that Saif al Islam stopped in Obari, east of Sabha, during his journey where celebrations were held in his honour. The same sources said there were celebrations in various parts of southern Libya, while a video was released on YouTube of celebrations in Bani Walid, some 150 kilometres south-east of Tripoli. The command of the western Libyan military area has ordered the dissolution of the Abu Bakr al Siddiq Brigade, said Major Idris Madi, head of the western military command that is part of the LNA led by Khalifa Haftar. Speaking to "al Wasat", Madi said that "this is a measure adopted as part of a series of organisational decisions regarding all army units". On Jun. 9, the brigade announced Saif al Islam's release based on an amnesty law approved by the parliament in Tobruk.

Based on news from the following newspapers or websites: Asharq al Awsat; al Arabiya, al Aan News, al Jazeera, All4Syria, Ana Radio, Facebook, Orient News, Smart News, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Zaman al Wasl, Elaph, al Quds al Arabi, Souria Net.