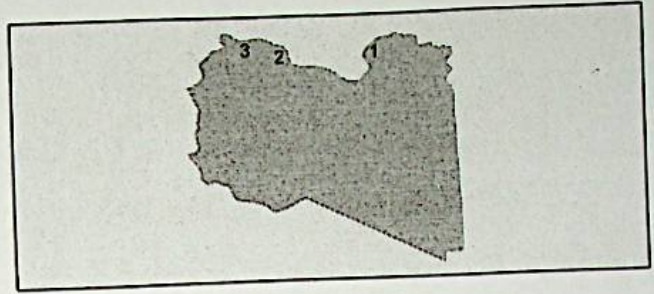


Media Analysis - Libya

Summary: Khalifa Hiftar's coalition launches ground assault against extremist Islamist militias in Benghazi; United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)-facilitated national dialogue threatened by events in Benghazi; Italian Ambassador travels to Misrata to meet with its local council; Omar al-Hassi's "salvation government" gains control of official websites belonging to Premiership and National Oil Corporation



Khalifa Hiftar's Coalition Launches Ground Assault Against Extremist Islamist Militias in Benghazi(1)

Khalifa Hiftar's coalition launched a ground assault against the extremist Islamist militias belonging to the "Revolutionaries Consultation Council of Benghazi" on 15 October. The Libyan Army's 204 Tank Battalion—which previously professed neutrality—and a sizeable contingent of Benghazi residents supportive of Hiftar's coalition joined the assault. Hiftar's coalition and its new allies managed to capture the headquarters of the 17 February Brigade militia and pushed into several neighborhoods controlled by other militias belonging to the "Revolutionaries Consultation Council of Benghazi." Warplanes of an unknown affiliation also targeted "Revolutionaries Consultation Council of Benghazi" positions in coordination with the assault by Hiftar's coalition. The *Associated Press* published an anonymously sourced report claiming that the warplanes were Egyptian, but spokesmen for the Egyptian government and Hiftar's coalition later issued a denial. Complicating the matter further, Council of Representatives member Tareq al-Jorushi went on to state that the warplanes were in fact Egyptian but piloted by Libyan Air Force personnel.

Based on media reports in: al-Manara, al-Wasat, Libya al-Mustakbal, Libya Herald, Quryna al-Jadeeda

United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)-Facilitated National Dialogue Threatened By Events in Benghazi

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)-facilitated national dialogue is being threatened by events in Benghazi. According to a leader of the boycotting Council of Representatives members participating in the national dialogue, Fathi Bashgha, he and his comrades will change their stance on the initiative if Egyptian warplanes in fact targeted "Revolutionaries Consultation Council of Benghazi" positions in coordination with the assault by Khalifa Hiftar's coalition. It remains unclear at this point if the planes were actually Egyptian, but any confirmation of such involvement by Egypt in the Benghazi conflict would likely lead to a hardening of positions as Bashgha indicated.

Based on media reports in: al-Wasat

Italian Ambassador Travels to Misrata(2) to Meet With Its Local Council

Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Buccino Grimaldi travelled to Misrata to meet with the city's local council. Boycotting Council of Representatives members, Misratan civil society leaders, and Misratan Consultation Council members also attended the meeting. Reports indicate the meeting focused on the situation in Libya and ways that Italy can support the country's democratic transition. Grimaldi's trip to Misrata came shortly after he visited the city's political opponents Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thini and Council of Representatives President Aguila Salih Issa.

Based on media reports in: al-Wasat, Libya al-Mustakbal