

Politics



## Security Working Group holds first meeting in Libya in the presence of 5+5 JMC

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya, Abdoulaye Bathily, co-chaired on Wednesday – along with Türkiye – the first plenary session of the Security Working Group of the Berlin Process International Follow-Up Committee on Libyan soil. Meeting participants included members of the Joint Military Commission (JMC 5+5); additional co-chairs, including ambassadors to Libya from the United Kingdom, and the African Union and the chargé d'affaires of the French and Italian embassies in Libya; ambassadors and representatives from Russia, Algeria, Egypt, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, and the European Union. Representatives from the United States and the League of Arab States joined via remote video conferencing technology.

Bathily said he hoped the meeting would be the first among a series of security working group meetings that could be held in different regions of Libya.

“This will certainly contribute to advancing the political process and to create a conducive environment for holding free and inclu-

sive elections in 2023, with results accepted by all parties.” Bathily said.

The UN envoy to Libya also indicated that formidable challenges “remain ahead for Libya on its path to elections, including ensuring a safe and secure environment, addressing the issue of armed formations, advancing national reconciliation and transitional justice, and protecting human rights and international humanitarian law.”

Bathily spoke about the recent work of the JMC 5+5 in bringing together security and military actors in Tripoli and Benghazi, saying: “We should not downplay the achievements secured so far – especially in advancing dialogue on the withdrawal on foreign fighters and mercenaries.

He indicated that positive momentum is building. Prisoners have been released. Families are being reunited, adding that “This gives a moral boost to Libya’s citizens – but we need more. We need a unified country with civilian and military leaders working together to preserve the territorial integrity of the country, physically and morally rebuild the country and wash the hearts and minds

of the country’s people of the sentiments of hatred and mistrust.”

Bathily also stressed that elections would not resolve all the problems in Libya, but they would be the gateway to a better future, vowing support of the UNSMIL and international partners.

The Turkish Ambassador to Libya, Kenan Yilmaz, who co-chaired the meeting alongside Bathily, expressed hope that the Solutions Working Group meeting would be “the first of many meetings that will take place in Libya, rather than just an exception.”

Yilmaz added that the very fact that the Solutions Working Group was able to convene inside Libya validated the remarkable progress made by the patriotic Libyan generals attending the meeting.

The Security Working Group emanated from the Berlin Process for Libya, a multi-track UN-facilitated process, hosted by the German government and UNSMIL in 2020, to forge a consensus among concerned member states on the Libyan crisis and provide an international umbrella to protect intra-Libyan discussions about the future of the country.

Politics



## Airstrikes by Libyan authorities hit different locations in Al-Zawiya city

The Defense Ministry of the Government of National Unity (GNU) claimed in a statement via the GUN spokesman Mohammed Hammouda on Thursday responsibility for the airstrikes that targeted a number of locations in the city of Al-Zawiya - west of the country.

The Defense Ministry’s statement said that the “precisely-directed” strikes hit dens of drug dealers, human traffickers, and fuel smugglers in Al-Zawiya - the west coast area.

It added that the strikes were part of a military operation aimed at cleansing the west coast from crimes and upon instructions from the Prime Minister and Defense Minister, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.

The Defense Ministry called on all residents to fully cooperate with the military forces of the General Staff of the

Libyan Army so they can continue to achieve the targets of the operation successfully.

Three airstrikes were carried out Thursday afternoon in Al-Zawiya, specifically on paramilitary locations affiliated with House of Representatives’ designated government.

The member of the House of Representatives, Ali Buzreiba said “Turkish drones targeted Al-Zawiya by orders of the GNU, adding that the strikes resulted in civilian casualties, which he called “a declaration of the beginning of war.”

The Ambulance and Emergency Apparatus announced that at least one person was injured as a result of the strikes, stressing that the man was taken to the nearest hospital and that his injury wasn’t very serious.

Politics

**6+6 committee calls for forming unified government to lead Libya to elections**



The joint 6+6 committee assigned by the House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) to prepare electoral laws has called for the formation of a unified government that “paves the way for electoral events in all regions and deals with them in a responsible and transparent manner.”

After meetings in Morocco, the joint committee stressed, in a statement read by the head of the delegation of the HCS, Omar Boulifa, that the holding of the legislative and presidential elections would take place simultaneously, announcing that it had achieved complete agreement regarding the points related to the election of the head of state and members of the National Assembly, in addition to how to involve political parties in the elections of the House of Representatives through party lists or individual candidacies. The statement indicated that the committee communicated with various government institutions and bodies concerned with the elections, and was guided by a set of proposals it received from political and civil bodies and Libyan experts in this regard.

It referred to the progress made in defining and distributing seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate according to constituencies, procedures for forming and approving lists of candidates, representation of women, controlling electoral crimes, procedures for electoral appeals related to the elections of the President of the State, the House of Representatives and the Senate, in addition to regulating the right of all candidates to access government and private media platforms.

The committee reaffirmed the keenness of its members and their colleagues in the HoR and the HCS to complete the preparation of various electoral draft laws in this meeting, in order to achieve a consensual and comprehensive legislative framework for the elections in Libya, in constant consultation with the judicial bodies and technical bodies represented by the High National Elections Commission and the United Nation Support Mission in Libya.

Politics

**US makes changes to visa reciprocity standards for certain Libyan visas**



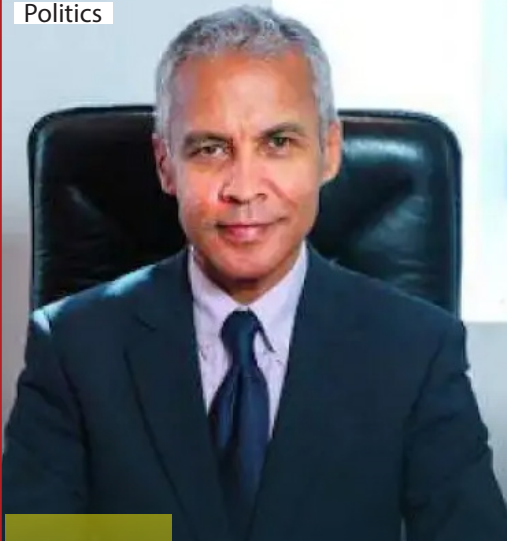
The US embassy in Libya announced on Wednesday a change in the visa reciprocity standards for certain Libyan and US visas, saying in a statement that Libyan and US nationals who meet the criteria for regular business or tourist visas will now receive a one-year multiple entry visa, a significant change from the current visa validity of three months with a singly entry.

“As part of this reciprocity update, the visa fees have now been standardized and reciprocity fees have been completely removed for Libyan citizens.” The US embassy’s statement added.

The statement indicated that students from both countries who qualify for a student visa will now receive multiple entry visas valid for one year whereas previously a single-entry visa was issued.

“These significant visa changes will help facilitate legitimate travel for diplomatic, educational, cultural, and business purposes and more importantly deepen people-to-people bonds between our two countries.” The embassy added.

Politics



**French ambassador to Libya: We’re not authorized to comment on election candidates**

The French ambassador to Libya, Mostafa Mihraje, told Asharq Al-Awsat that Libyan elections are necessary for stability in Libya, reiterated France’s support for the UN envoy Abdoulaye Bathily’s initiative to hold parliamentary and presidential elections by the end of 2023. He added that Paris doesn’t have the authority to comment on election candidates and that enabling Libyans to have a unified authority that’s elected democratically will provide security and prosperity for Libyans, expressing concerns over Sudan’s conflict and its repercussions on Libya.

Mihraje indicated that France had been working since 2017 to the present day to facilitate a comprehensive dialogue among all Libyan actors in line with the international efforts to hold elections to fulfill the aspirations of the Libyan people. He also expressed his country’s support for Bathily’s statement about the need to ensure that elections enjoy high levels of integrity and credibility across the country and guaranteeing that all candidates are equal and

that public funds are not be used for campaign purposes.

The French ambassador indicated that no one has opposed in public statements holding elections, and that concerns about this process can be addressed by ensuring that the electoral competition is fair, and that everyone respects the results of the ballots. He pointed out that the UN envoy actually called for the existence of a code of good conduct, and the need to oblige candidates to sign it.

Regarding the presence of Russia’s Wagner Group in Libya, Mihraje said that its presence is “a source of concern in light of its destabilizing actions,” referring to his recent participation in the opening of the “Mutaaalik” center to promote a culture of disarmament and the integration of fighters into the labor market, which was established in Tripoli within the framework of implementing the memorandum of understanding signed by the Libyan Ministry of Labor and Rehabilitation and the European Union, in partnership with the French embassy.



Economy

## Libya, Turkey seek to boost ties at private sector level

The Minister of Economy and Trade, Muhammad Al-Hawij, has invited Turkish business owners to participate in implementing projects approved by the Government of National Unity with the cooperation of the private sector in Libya.

Al-Hawij's remarks came on Wednesday during his reception of a Turkish delegation headed by the Chief of the Libyan-Turkish Business Owners Council, Mortada Karnfil.

"The meeting with the Turkish delegation comes in continuation of the Istanbul meetings in mid-May and within the framework of strengthening economic ties and networking between business owners and investors in both countries," the ministry's media office said.

Discussions covered the role of Turkish companies in developing the infrastructure and participating in the implementation of the exhibition city south of Tripoli under the supervision of the ministry's general authority for exhibitions.

They also exchanged notes on ways to strengthen the partnership between the private sector in Libya and Turkey to implement investment projects in the oil and gas sector, establishing refineries for oil products under the supervision of the National Oil Corporation, supporting the Ministry of Health to localize treatment at home, and establishing a joint hospital in the capital, Tripoli.

Al-Hawij urged the Turkish side to develop relations with the private sector in Libya and participate in the implementation of approved projects per the GNU's vision to develop ports, establish free zones, activate transit trade towards the African market, and contribute to the settlement of industrial and agricultural projects.



Economy

## 8 Austrian companies participate in Libya Build exhibition

The Austrian embassy in Libya has announced that eight Austrian companies are participating in the 13th Libya Build exhibition, which is held in the Tripoli International Fair.

"Libyan Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity Abdul Hamid Dbeibah expressing his delight to Austrian Ambassador Christoph Meyenburg at the current 13th Libya Build Fair in Tripoli over the participation of 8 Austrian companies - the highest number since the revolution", the Austrian embassy tweeted.



Economy

## Libya holds third oil technology conference under NOC's supervision

The third edition of the Libyan Conference on Oil and Gas Technologies kicked off on Tuesday under the auspices of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) and with the participation of ADNOC and Baker Hughes oil and energy groups.

The opening ceremony was marked by a broad turnout of experts and senior officials from local and international oil companies.

"The conference comes within the framework of the NOC and its companies' contribution to strengthening cooperation and openness with leading international companies in the oil and gas field," Ahmed Ammar, a senior official at the NOC said.

He stressed the company's desire to possess modern technologies, saying it has become necessary to integrate these technologies flexibly during the development process, in parallel with preparing and training Libyan cadres to achieve the NOC's goal to increase production to 2 million b/d.

The two-day conference featured many presentations concerned with the use of the latest technologies in the oil industry, well drilling services, production, and oil reservoirs.

The NOC seeks via these forums to transfer expertise, bring the latest technologies and equipment used in the sector, and encourage international companies to return their activity to invest in Libya, the company stated.

## Minister of Economy discusses activating trade agreements with Qatar



Economy

The Minister of Economy and Trade of the Government of National Unity, Mohammed Al-Hawij, has discussed the possibility of activating bilateral trade agreements and memorandums of understanding and Qatari investments in Libya signed during the past years.

This came during his meeting with Qatar's ambassador to Libya, Khaled Al-Dosari, to discuss economic and trade relations between the two countries.

Both sides reviewed the ongoing preparations for the convening of the Libyan-Qatari Supreme Committee as soon as possible, the mechanism for enhancing trade cooperation and facilitating the movement of business owners and the procedures of companies in the private sector in the two countries.

The meeting included consultations on the establishment of the Libyan-Qatari Business Owners Council, as Al-Hawij received an invitation from the ambassador to visit Qatar and meet with his Qatari counterpart, according to the Ministry Facebook page.

## Zueitina Oil Company resumes production at Al-Hakim field



Economy

The Zueitina Oil Company announced on Monday, the resumption of oil production at one of the wells in the Al-Hakim field, which has stopped for nearly seven years, due to sabotage acts.

The National Oil Corporation stated on its Facebook page, that the total productivity of the field is expected to reach 3,000 barrels per day before the end of the year, as a number of wells will be put into production.



Economy

## NOC chief hails support of CBL for oil production increase plans and projects

The Chairman of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) Farhat Bengdara has hailed, in a meeting with the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, the support of the CBL for the NOC's projects and plans to increase oil production in accordance with the vision of the Government of National Unity.

The CBL said that Bengdara reviewed with Al-Kabir the efforts of the NOC to increase production in accordance with its development program, without giving more details.

The NOC aims to increase Libya's oil production by about 8% by next December, a level that can increase Libyan oil production to the highest level in more than a decade. Bengdara said in an interview with Bloomberg a few days ago that Libya would be able to produce about 1.3 million barrels per day by the end of 2023, adding that stopping the closure of oil fields and steps such as improving the salaries of oil workers already helped increase production by about a quarter since January 2022. He said the oil production is



Features

# Get to know The University of Mohamed al- Senussi

The University of Mohamed al- Senussi is one of the most ancient, prestigious and popular universities in the Arab world. It's the second university established in Libya and the first of its specialization in the systematic teaching of Islamic studies.

Situated high above the Green Mountain in the city of Al-Bayda, it is known for its jihadist history and the ferocity of its resistance during colonial times. The city was also buoyant by scientific and cultural life. It was a science sat, which was to become a major centre of learning and culture at that time in the whole world that atmosphere created an internationally recognized university and a library containing hundreds of thousands of references, which was added to the historic aura of the city.

The University was founded as early as 1841 AD. It was first known as a centre of Islamic learning, originally a "Zawia", teaching students at different levels, but has since been developed into an intermediate college, thereafter, to the University of Muhammed al- Senussi with its modern curriculum of Islamic studies in 1960, with three Faculties, including Arabic, Theology and Islamic Law. It is ranked first in Libya in the Webometrics University Rankings.

The University has experienced political instability, and was renamed for several times following the military coup led by Muamar Gadhafi in 1969. The three faculties were incorporated into one as an Arabic language faculty and the university was named The Islamic Bayda university before being disbanded and students were forced to finish their course in the law faculty of Benghazi university. After 2011, the university reverted under its first name.

Students who graduated from Ahmed Bash secondary school in Tripoli are to travel to Al-Bayda city to finish their studies at this University, but it also attracted additional audiences from all over the world, including Egypt, Chad, Indonesia, Cyprus, Malaysia, Malta and others, due to the high qualified staff, in addition to the advantages it offered in different factors, as its provision of a competitive atmosphere by awarding honours and high level remuneration for best researches and top students.

The institution drew highly efficient scholars from different

countries, especially from Egypt; all who have worked there expressed their appreciation for the warmth and brotherly welcome given to them from the King, students and people of Libya, in addition to the beautiful landscape and climate of Bayda city, which made it a favoured spot to live in after the homeland.

King Senussi dedicated the university with great interest and respect to its staff and students. He offered large income and operating budget, it was under his direct supervision.

He granted the university's director, Sheikh Masour al-Mahjoub, direct contact with the royal court; the highest institution in the stat. He was a courageous and brave man who managed to impose the university's respect on all state institutions. Anyone who exposes to the university, its students, its teachers or its curricula will find himself facing the royal court. That helped to increase the university's visibility in the country.

The top students of the three colleges were sent to pilgrimage every year on the university's account, beside tickets to multiple countries were awarded to successful students in the research field.

One of the beautiful journeys was the bus trip to the Maghreb countries and Spain. It originated from Ahmed Pasha Mosque carrying 120 students, in addition to professors via Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, and then across Gibraltar to Andalusia "Spain." The trip lasted two months with luxury accommodation at the expense of the university.

Among the travellers was Sheikh Mahmoud al-Qandi, director of the Department of Preaching and Religious Guidance at the time. He had the privilege to make Azan (call for prayer) above the famous Minaret of Seville and over the Mosque of Cordoba; it was such a poignant moment for those who have witnessed the event.

Seven courses graduated from the university before being disbanded by Gadhafi's regime. The first class was in 1962 and its alumni were the ones who carried the light of knowledge in the country in the language and theology field. Its alumni list also included some key figures who had their say in the 2011 revolution and played an important role.



**Health**

## Libya tops list of childhood obese countries in 2022

Libya recorded the highest rate of childhood obesity worldwide in 2022, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) list, which included 198 countries.

According to the WHO data, 37 million children under the age of five worldwide were overweight in 2022. Of this, nearly three out of ten children, 28.7%, under the age of five were classified as overweight.

The African continent was home to highly childhood obese countries, as Tunisia and Egypt came 3rd and 4th, respectively, in the top ten list of obese countries.

The World Health Organization warned that figures are trending the wrong way, with no sign that the numbers will decrease shortly.



## Trafalgar school team champs at international competition in Jordan

**Education**

A Libyan school team recently won third place at an international competition in Jordan.

Organized by the Jordanian International examination, the competition consists of five domains, which test the participants' competence in a range of skills, including teamwork, theatrical performance, community service, OET English test, and project. The team of five from the Trafalgar International School was selected by the Education Ministry to represent Libya in the competition.

The Trafalgar team faced off against 130 teams from all over the world and came out among the top three world champions.

Lucinda Lavelle, a British teacher at Trafalgar school told The Libya Observer that they have been preparing for months, and some events were completed in Tripoli.

"For our project, the team created an App, from conception to application, I clouding, and a report on our methodology. It was this section we received the trophy for 3rd place," Lavelle, who was among the coaching staff said.

The team's delegation consisted of Nour Naser Balsous Grade 11, Saba Akram Grade 9, Ali Salem Geam Grade 9, Rawh Osama Tabtaba Grade 8, and Abdul Aziz Elmsallati Grade 7, besides five staff, including the principal of the school Dr Zakaria Aburras.

"The team really enjoyed their stay in Jordan and are keen to compete again next year with an eye on 1st prize," coach Lavelle concluded.

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Sports



## Al-Madani earns Libya first gold medal in Mediterranean Karate Championship

Libya's Salama Al-Madani has earned the first gold medal for Libya in the Mediterranean Karate Championship for women's kumite over 61kg after beating her opponent at the finals.

The three-day competition, which kicked off on Friday at the Sports Hall of Radès in Tunisia, attracted 447 athletes from 19 countries, including 19 competitors from Libya.

In 2022, Al-Madani clinched gold in women's kumite over 54kg in the African Karate Championship held in South Africa, becoming the first Libyan female to hold gold in a continental championship.

Minister of Sports Abdul Shafee Al-Juwaifi congratulated Al-Madani for her achievement, considering it a success for Libyan sports.

Muhammad Khaled Al-Fitouri of Libya has also won bronze in men's kumite over 76kg.

Life



## Rare bird spotted in Libya for third time

A bird species that hadn't been seen in Libya for nearly 15 years made a surprising return on May 14.

The Libyan Organization for Conservation of Nature confirmed this is the third time the Terek sandpiper has ever been spotted in Libya and the first in the Western region.

The previous records were both in the eastern parts of the country in 2008.

The species was spotted by the Organization's team while on a trip it conducted in coordination with the Misrata Environmental Affairs Monitor to the wetlands in Misrata.

Two Terek sandpipers were spotted looking for food in Sabkhat Qasr Ahmed of Misrata, which the organization said was of international and national importance.

The bird isn't usually observed further than eastern Egypt, as it is rarely spotted in Libya and Tunisia and goes absent in Algeria, according to the organization.

Culture



## Government follows up on development work in The Old City

Minister of State for Communication and Political Affairs Walid Al-Lafi on Monday reviewed with the Tripoli City Development Authority The Old City development plan before presenting it to the prime minister for approval.

The project kicked off in November 2022 under the supervision of Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.

Al-Lafi followed up on the formatting process between the executive agencies to complete the maintenance of The Old City as part of a comprehensive development plan the government launched in 2021 under the name (Awdat Alhaya), meaning restoring life.

The task team will work on historical buildings, the waterfront, and the infrastructure, besides paving specific roads and creating spaces for cultural and recreational activities.

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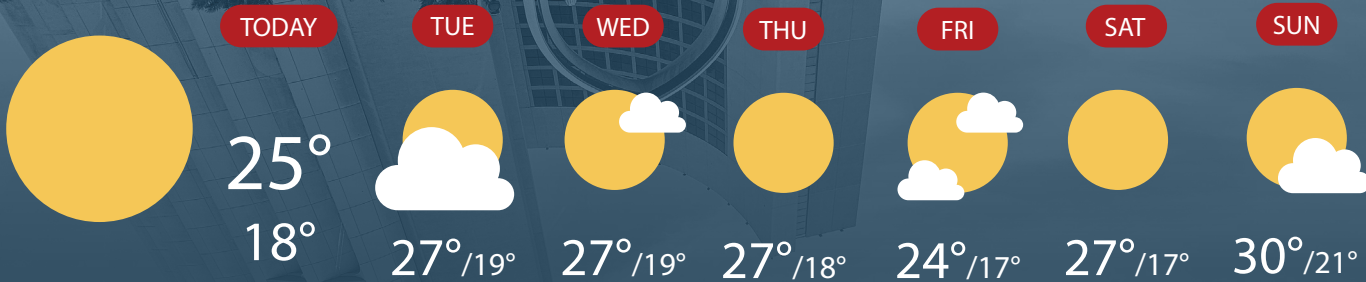


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Photo of the Week

### Tripoli Weather Forecast



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