

Politics

Former US envoy: Libya's future still faces a deadlock

The former US envoy to Libya, Jonathan Winer, said in an article published by the Middle East Institute that the future of the country still faces an impasse despite the end of clashes in Tripoli.

"Last week's deadly clashes between two Libyan militias followed a cascade of destabilizing events, beginning with the Tobruk-based House of Representatives and the Tripoli High State Council agreeing last month to a new and deeply flawed political road map to elections," Winer said.

He added that for any roadmap to actually result in elections rather than more internal turmoil, the UN, major international actors, and Libyan political leaders would all need to decide that no alternatives were workable.

"Last week's fighting between two militias in Tripoli, killing at least 55 people over Aug. 14-15, was merely another domino to fall in a cascade of destabilizing events that began in July," Winer said. He added that in that month, the Speaker of Libya's House of Representatives (HoR) and the High Council of State (HCS) agreed to a new and deeply flawed political roadmap to elections that would begin by replacing Libyan interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah with someone more to their liking.

"In response, the United Nations' Special Envoy for Libya Abdoulaye Bathily called the road map unworkable and accurately predicted it would lead to violence," Winer explained.



Politics

UN envoy hints at priority of unified Libyan government ahead of elections

The UN envoy to Libya Abdoulaye Bathily said in a statement after his briefing at the Security Council on Tuesday that he "cannot specify the date for the start of the Libyan elections at the present time," in response to a question about the future of the political impasse in the country, or whether or not there was progress for the end of Libya's political crisis.

Bathily explained that it was not possible to set a specific date for the launching of the Libyan elections, and warned of the repercussions of the Niger crisis, pointing to "the state of division in the army in Niger, following the overthrow of the regime of President Mohamed Bazoum, which could affect the Libyan situation."

He also said that the existence of an agreed-upon, unified government "is a must to lead Libya toward elections", saying that Tripoli clashes confirmed the absence of leadership and control over the fragmented security apparatus in western Libya.

"Haftar and Aqila Saleh informed me of their demands to amend some points in the election laws", he added, saying that he would launch a negotiating track with the actors in Libya to reach a final settlement, adding that "there are reliable data on Wagner Group in Libya".

In response to a question about the presence of foreign forces - especially - the Russian Wagner group in Libya, Bathily said: "They are present, but we don't have reliable data regarding their presence or equipment, numbers, and so on, but they are in Libya without a doubt."



Politics

PM oversees deal to transfer part of military site to Khums seaport

Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah on Monday oversaw the signing of a deal allocating an area of Khums military Naval Base to expand the city's port. The agreement was inked by the Minister of Transport, Muhammad Al-Shahoubi, and the Chief of the Libyan Army, Lieutenant General Muhammad Al-Haddad.

As per the deal, 4.7 hectares of land from the naval base will be used to develop two new berths for the port.

Following the signing ceremony, PM Dbeibah refuted rumors about leasing Khums seaport to a foreign country, making it clear that his government won't give up 'one inch' of territory to a foreign state.

"The port is a Libyan military base, and part of it was previously used as a civilian port under the Ministry of Transport, the PM explained.

He went on to say that the land between the commercial and military sites is being utilized unlawfully, and as specified in the agreement, this land must be arranged and transferred to the commercial port with its proper legal and administrative controls.

"The military base belongs to the Libyan General Staff and Navy, and the people there are Libyans operating under Libyan authorities."

Politics

Security Council reiterates support for Libyan-owned political process leading to elections



The members of the Security Council reaffirmed Wednesday in a joint statement their strong commitment to an inclusive, Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process, facilitated by the United Nations, which would build on progress achieved in negotiations thus far and address the issues of who will govern the country through elections. The members of the Security Council reiterated their support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Abdoulaye Bathily, in particular his mediation and good offices role to further an inclusive political process, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions, building on the basis of the Libyan Political Agreement and the Libyan Political Dialogue Form Roadmap, and building on progress in the 6+6 negotiations aimed at producing viable electoral laws.

They expressed appreciation to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting the 6+6 Committee in Bouznika from 22 May to 6 June 2023. The members of the Security Council called upon the international community to fully support the SRSG and UNSMIL in the implementation of their mandate.

The members of the Security Council urged the Libyan political institutions and key stakeholders to redouble their efforts to finalise a pathway to deliver holding of free, fair, transparent and inclusive national presidential and parliamentary elections across Libya as soon as possible.

They called upon all stakeholders to address differences through dialogue, in a spirit of compromise, to reach agreement on politically contested issues pertaining to elections, and in this regard, to engage fully,

transparently and in good faith with the SRSG in a Libyan-led and UNSMIL facilitated negotiation.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their call on all stakeholders to uphold guarantees concerning the independence and integrity of the inclusive electoral process and election results. The Security Council further emphasises the importance of providing a safe environment for civil society organisations to work freely and to protect them from threats and reprisals.

They underlined the importance of an inclusive reconciliation process based on the principles of transitional justice and accountability and welcomed the efforts of the Presidential Council to launch the national reconciliation process, with the support of the African Union, including facilitating a meeting on national reconciliation in Libya. The members of the Security Council took note in this regard of the convening in Brazzaville on 20 July of the Preparatory Committee for national reconciliation.

The members of the Security Council recognised the efforts of the High Financial Oversight Committee on revenue management and took note of the announcement to further the unification of the Central Bank of Libya. The Security Council reaffirms its intention to ensure that assets frozen pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall at a later stage be available for the benefit of Libyan people.

They expressed serious concern about recent violent clashes in Tripoli, which underlined the fragility of the security situation in Libya and the need for progress on the political and security tracks, including by continuing the efforts of the 5+5 Joint Military Commis-

sion. They expressed their regret for the loss of lives and injuries, including amongst civilians. They urged all parties to refrain from any acts of violence and incitement to violence, to ensure the protection of civilians, to comply with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and to preserve the security gains achieved in recent years.

The members of the Security Council called on all parties to uphold the 23 October 2020 ceasefire agreement and reiterated their call on all parties to accelerate full implementation of its provisions, including the Action Plan agreed by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission in Geneva on 8 October 2021, which is to be implemented in a synchronized, phased, gradual and balanced manner.

In this regard, the members of the Security Council urged Member States to respect and support its full implementation, including through the withdrawal of all foreign forces, foreign fighters and mercenaries from the country without further delay. The members of the Security Council underscored the need for establishment of an inclusive, unified, accountable, civilian-led security architecture for Libya as a whole.

They recalled that individuals or entities who threaten the peace, stability or security of Libya, or obstruct or undermine the successful completion of its political transition, including by obstructing or undermining the elections, may be designated under Security Council sanctions.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya.

Politics

Libyan Fatwa House calls for severing ties with Denmark after burning of Quran



The Sharia Research and Studies Council of the Libyan Fatwa House has condemned the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in front of the Libyan embassy in Denmark, describing the act as ugly and saying in a statement that this is not the first time Denmark has committed aggression against the sanctities of Muslims, referring to the insulting cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed 17 years ago, and allowing the burning of a copy of the Quran months ago.

The Council reaffirmed Sunday the legal obligation on the Libyan government to sever relations with Denmark, especially since the Danish authorities did not apologize or back down from their position after the Libyan Foreign Ministry condemned the act.

It also called on to all scholars, and influencers to condemn this act, and to clarify the duty of Muslims toward such a matter, calling on all Muslims, rulers and peoples, to boycott Danish products, as the boycott was tried with them when they insulted the Prophet, and forced them to apologize for their fear for their economy.

The Libyan Foreign Ministry condemned in the strongest terms the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran by an extremist in front of the Libyan embassy in Denmark, expressing its categorical rejection of the act.

Economy



Delegation from Misrata Chamber of Commerce visits General Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce

A delegation from the Misrata Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture has paid a working visit to the headquarters of the General Federation of Egyptian Chambers in Cairo, to discuss ways to enhance joint trade and investment relations.

The delegation included Fathi Al-Amin Al-Turki, Chairman of the Management Committee, and Ihab Al-Hadi Al-Awaib, a member of the Management Committee.

The two sides reviewed investment and trade opportunities in the two countries and ways to benefit from them to enhance joint trade relations, organize joint exhibitions and visits to participate in various conferences, Al-Turki said to the Libyan News Agency. The Chairman of the Egyptian Federation agreed with the Libyan side to use modern methods of communication to discuss the needs of the two markets in various sectors and activities, in order to achieve a real progressive boom in bilateral economic relations.

In this regard, the Libyan side talked about the difficulties and problems facing Libyan businessmen in issuing visas, as well as obstacles at customs outlets, reviewing ways to improve movement of travelers at the border crossing.

The attendees emphasized that this meeting represents an important step towards developing relations between Egyptian businessmen and their Libyan counterparts, enhancing trade and investment relations, and integrating roles in order to support the economies of the two countries.

Economy



Central Bank of Libya unified as one state sovereign institution

The Governor of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, and the Deputy Governor, Marie Raheel, announced the unification of the CBL as one state sovereign institution.

Al-Kabir and Raheel vowed in a meeting Sunday to continue making efforts to address the effects that resulted from the period of division, while the CBL's media office said that the meeting in Tripoli came as an implementation of the efforts of unification following the national parties' support for the process. The CBL was split into east and west managements and headquarters after the Dignity Operating started in Benghazi and Fajr Libya operation in Tripoli and the western region in 2014. Unification of the two headquarters started in 2020 after the failure of Khalifa Haftar's aggression on Tripoli.

Deputy CBL Governor Raheel was appointed by the House of Representatives to replace Ali Al-Hibri in last November.

It's noteworthy that the announcement of the Head of the Presidential Council, Mohammed Menfi, last July of a decision to form the National Committee to determine aspects of public spending and prepare financial arrangements helped set the scene for the unification of the CBL as the Committee included in its membership representatives of the House of Representatives, the High Council of State, Haftar's forces, the CBL in Tripoli and Benghazi, the Audit Bureau, the Administrative Control Authority, and the National Oil Corporation.

Economy



Benghazi Chamber of Commerce and Industry signs agreement with its American counterpart

The Benghazi Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, and the American Chamber of Commerce, have signed a memorandum of agreement for cooperation in many fields.

The agreement stipulated holding joint meetings to increase cooperation and trade exchange, provide support and supervision for investors from both sides, facilitate communication between economic institutions in Libya and America, in addition to establishing an annual economic forum for investors.

The head of the American Chamber of Commerce said that the cooperation agreement includes manufacturing electric energy, followed by other fields that will be announced in the future.

Economy



Libya exempted from paying \$500.000 fine for Kevalay ship in Turkish waters

Libyan consul general in Istanbul, Salahedden Al-Kaseh, said Türkiye had exempted Libya from paying a fine of \$500.000 for the Turkish Environment Protection Agency after the Kevalay Queen ship that is transporting passengers between the two countries dumbered its waste tank in the port in Istanbul.

Al-Kaseh told Libyan government's Hokoometna platform that the issue was resolved and the ship was allowed to operate as usual.

Kevalay ship started transporting passengers from Misrata to Izmir in September 2021, on a two-day trip, after the cessation of sea travel between the two countries for nearly four decades.

This step came after the signing of a memorandum of maritime demarcation between the two countries in November 2019, according to which Libya and Turkey became neighboring states.

Economy



Arab League offers to give technical advice to Libyan Central Bank

The Arab League has welcomed the announcement of the reunification of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) after over eight years of division, and expressed the Secretary-General's readiness to direct the relevant joint Arab action institutions to provide advice and technical assistance to the CBL to proceed with the reunification procedures.

The spokesman for the Secretary-General of the Arab League, Jamal Rushdi, said they hoped that this important step would represent an incentive to unify the rest of the Libyan state institutions, which had suffered greatly as a result of division over the years, and that this development could put an end to the lack of transparency and fairness in the distribution of national wealth revenues that always formed a fundamental point of contention among the political actors.

Rushdi reaffirmed the importance of this reunification being an encouraging step for all actors in Libya to revitalize the political process and move it forward toward holding the expected presidential and parliamentary elections in accordance with electoral laws that would guarantee acceptance by all for the results, in a way that could produce unified Libyan national governing institutions.

The Governor of the CBL, Al-Siddiq Al-Kabir, and his Deputy Marie Raheel, announced Sunday the reunification of the CBL as a state sovereign institution after over 8 years of division and the creation of a parallel CBL headquarters in Benghazi, eastern Libya. Local and international stakeholders and parties welcomed the step, calling for handling the impact of the period of division, considering the reunification a step that could lead to reunifying other state sovereign institutions.

Economy



PM says government needs to move towards greater transparency

Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah on Monday called for greater disclosure and transparency regarding government spending during a meeting with the CBL governor at the bank's HQ in Tripoli.

He expressed his optimism that the reunification of the CBL would help achieve financial sustainability for the state and enhance the quality of services offered to citizens.

The Hakomitna platform said the meeting discussed efforts to achieve financial stability after declaring the unification of the Central Bank.

For its part, the CBL affirmed that the meeting was supportive of the bank's endeavors to attain financial stability and sustainability for the state while maintaining high levels of transparency and disclosure.



Opinions

Is it time for elections?

By Abdullah Alkabir,
a Libyan political writer and commentator



The armed clashes that took place in Tripoli last Monday and Tuesday revealed the pressing need to hold elections and end all current entities. The experience of the past years has proven that all transitional authorities have no tools with which to confront the expansion and tyranny of armed groups. Indeed, all post- GNC-election governments have found themselves forced to deal with armed groups, to maintain security and secure many sites throughout the country, because of the absence of tools that the government can use to impose security, as the state of institutional vacuum is clear, and all successive governments have been unable to deal with the issue of weapons and armed formations.

The trend towards giving the armed factions an official character was an inevitable measure in many situations, given the continuation of the state of conflict and the absence of reference institutions, to deal with emergency situations that require the use of force, or the threat of it at the very least, so many in the capital speak of the roles played by the Deterrence Force, In combating terrorism and organized crime, and raiding dens involved in drug and alcohol trafficking, but its human rights record was very poor, and the force's members did not abide by human rights charters and standards. As for Brigade 444, it contributed to combating smuggling and resolving conflicts between some armed factions, and despite its affiliation with the Chief of Staff in the western region, its clear loyalty is to its direct leadership, as is the case with most armed factions and formations.

Regardless of the apparent and hidden reasons for the recent conflict between the two largest factions in Tripoli, the state of competition for power and influence is the main driver of the conflict, as the Deterrent Force has come to see the 444th Brigade, with the combat capabilities of its members, and their steadily increasing numbers, a significant competitor, and it will eventually carve out spaces from their influence and authority, so confrontation was inevitable, no matter how long its outbreak was delayed. There is a positive point in this conflict and in previous conflicts, which is the success of the social mediations of

notables and social figures in resolving the conflict, and achieving a settlement that ends the fighting and stops bloodshed. In this crisis, and in previous crises, the role of the official authorities was secondary, while social figures played the most prominent role in reaching satisfactory or acceptable solutions and settlements, and this necessarily accumulated experiences that confirmed the ability of Libyans to negotiate and dialogue, without direct interference from the official authority, or resorting to external mediation.

Almost everyone realizes that all solutions and settlements are temporary, as long as the causes of the conflict exist, and that there is no guarantee that the clashes will not return, and that some parties are trying to exploit the crisis to overthrow the government and form a new transitional government.

The government and the Presidential Council with its three heads, showed incompetence and failure to address the crisis, and failed to appear during the first day of the fighting, preferring silence and waiting for clarity of vision, before taking a stand, but this alone is not a sufficient justification for concluding a new deal, which brings a new government that will not differ from its predecessors and will fall at the mercy of the armed forces, because they have no other way but to deal with them in a manner of appeasement.

Therefore, at the very least, any government formed from an elected parliament will possess electoral legitimacy, and this legitimacy will be the force with which it will confront any party that does not heed to its will and decision. The approach to address these emergency crises from time to time, and all other crises, begins with the renewal of legitimacy through elections, and any other way will not produce results different from what preceded it.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer

Health

NCDC: Libya is free of new Covid-19 variant

The Director of the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Haider Al-Sayeh, has refuted any reports of the new corona variant illness in the nation.

The new Corona mutant, which has been reported in various states, did not reach Libya, the NCDC head told the Hakomitna platform on Tuesday, making it clear that "if it did, it would be made public."

He said indicators for the epidemiological situation have been stable for several months and that there are enough lab instruments available to identify the virus.

EG5 is a new sub-variant of the Omicron type, the most prevalent variant of Corona in the world.

In the United States, EG5 cases have surpassed that of the Omicron type, according to The Washington Post.

The World Health Organization referred to EG.5 as one of the sub-variables under control. Currently, the variant is not a cause of concern, but it remains under surveillance to prevent further spread and for fear of its impact on public health.



Misrata Medical Center conducts corneal transplants

The Misrata Medical Center has begun performing corneal transplants, in implementation of the national program for the localization of eye treatment services, which was launched by the Ministry of Health two years ago.

The center conducted 16 corneal transplants on Sunday and Tuesday of this week, for patients from various Libyan cities and regions.

The national program for the localization of eye treatment services is concerned with preparing plans and programs for eye treatment and surgery and raising the efficiency of national personnel through the exchange of experiences between visiting doctors and medical personnel.

Health

Tumor removal surgeries seeing success at Al-Hadba Hospital in Tripoli

A surgical medical team at Al-Hadba Al-Khadra Hospital in Tripoli has successfully removed a rare tumor (myxoma) from the heart of a patient in her 30s.

The hospital's general director, Muhammad Al-Rajhi, explained that immediate surgical intervention was necessary to save the patient's life and prevent complications from the mass.

The Ministry of Health noted that this type of tumor can obstruct normal blood flow in the heart, leading to sudden death and even brain strokes if small parts of the tumor travel to the brain. This can result in permanent coma or paralysis for the patient, according to the ministry's bulletin.

The operation marks the second surgery that the hospital has performed within four days to remove a myxoma tumor from a patient's left atrium.

Dr. Ibrahim Zubaida, a consultant cardiovascular surgeon, and his team oversaw both operations.

Health



Libya's NCDC seeks cooperation with US counterpart

The Director of the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Haider Al-Sayeh, recently met with Debbie Hurst, President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Libya, to discuss potential collaboration in the health sector.

Discussions centered around the possibility of cooperation and coordination between Libya's NCDC and its US counterpart for the year 2023 in the area of Public Health Emergency Fellowship, the centre said on its Facebook account.

It indicated that the partnership is intended to improve the quality of health work and enhance national capabilities for confronting health challenges, as well as to provide a rapid and effective response during emergencies.

The NCDC emphasized that this initiative is part of its commitment to strengthening international cooperation, sharing experiences, developing national personnel, and achieving the best possible outcomes in the field of disease control.

Sports



Arab MuayThai Youth Championship kicks off in Tripoli

The 2023 Arab MuayThai Youth Championship kicked off in Tripoli Tuesday in the presence of Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah and Sports Minister Abdel Shafie Al-Juwaifi.

In his address, the PM welcomed the Arab delegations participating in the tournament, which is being held for the first time in Libya, as he wished all teams success.

Highlighting the improved security conditions in the country, Dbeibah said that "all Libyans are happy to host the event in the "country's safe capital."

More than 200 young MuayThai athletes from 15 Arab countries will compete in the week-long event.

It may be worth noting that this year's edition is being sponsored by Libya's Sports Ministry.

Sports



Al-Ahly Benghazi wins, Al-Ahly Tripoli loses at CAF tournaments

Libya's Al-Ahly Benghazi won 4-3 against Nigeria's Enyimba as part of the preliminary stage of CAF Champions League at Benina Martyrs Stadium in eastern Libya.

Hussein Taktak, and Hammadi Jadallah scored one goal each and Fadel Salama scored a brace to give the hosts a 4-3 win against Enyimba.

Also at the preliminary stage of the CAF Champions League, Al-Ahly Tripoli lost to Mauritanian Nouadhibou 0-2 at Stade de la Capitale. Nouadhibou scored the two goals in the second half of the match.

In its first continental football tournament, Libya's Abu Salim team won 1-0 against the hosts Tunisian Olympique de Beja at Stade Olympique Hammadi Agrebi on Sunday as part of the preliminary stage of CAF Confederation Cup.

All three Libyan teams are set to play the second leg matches next week.

Tech

LPTIC says cyber attack against Libyan communication companies is not over

Major communication companies operating under the Libyan Post Telecommunications & Information Technology Company (LPTIC), such as Libya Telecom and Technology, Al-Geel Al-Jadeed, and Al-Madar, have been facing cyber-attacks aimed at disrupting their services, the LPTIC said on Sunday.

In a Facebook statement, the company confirmed that the attacks caused several services and applications, including the MyLTT Subscriber Services Application, to become unstable.

"The company has acknowledged the attacks and has coordinated with the International Telecommunications Company and the cyber security team of the holding company to address the issue." However, it added that attempts to hack the systems of its companies are ongoing and have become more organized and widespread globally, noting that similar attacks have been reported in countries like the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany, France, Denmark, Finland, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Turkey.

As per reports, the attacks against Libya amounted to 114 GB, and approximately 4,400 attacks took place during the third quarter of this year.

The Telecom Holding Company had previously announced that the data centre of Libya Telecom and Technology Company (LTT) had been under continuous attacks.

Life



Libya among 25 countries in the world at risk of drought

The World Resources Institute ranked Libya among the 25 countries in the world that are currently exposed to very high-water stress annually, which means that it uses more than 80% of its renewable water supplies for irrigation, livestock, industry and domestic needs.

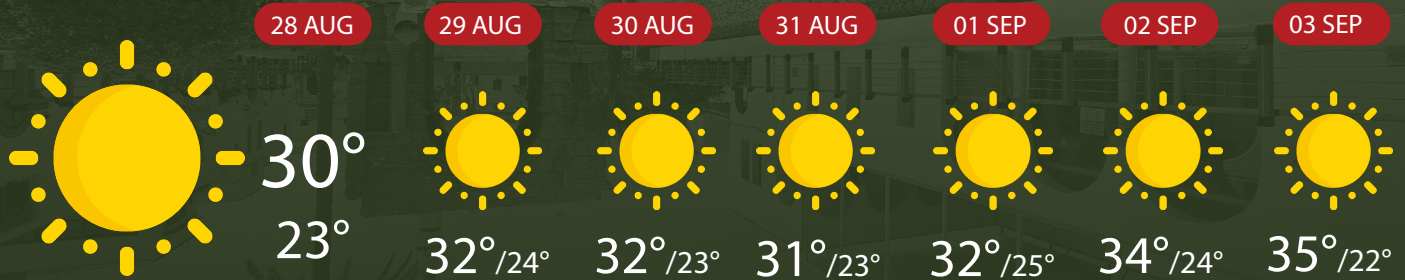
The institute, which is a global research institution, explained that water scarcity has become a global concern. A short-term drought puts places in 25 countries at risk of running out of water and sometimes prompts governments to turn off the taps.

According to the World Resources Institute, out of the 25 countries that suffer from water scarcity, 15 are Arab countries, but the 5 countries most affected are Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, and the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to Libya, the Emirates, Yemen, Iraq, Tunisia, and Egypt. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria.

Photo of the Week



Tripoli Weather Forecast



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