

Weekly^{wire}



The MENA Region: Shared Insecurity in the Era of Multipolarity Taskforce

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THE LIBYAN CRISIS

Haftar's forces intercept a Turkish ship, and Ankara warns of targeting its interests in Libya

The Libyan National Army led by Khalifa Haftar, the opponent of the Government of National Accord in Tripoli, which is backed by Ankara, announced on Monday evening that it had intercepted a Turkish ship flying the Jamaican flag. While Turkey strongly condemned this action, warning against targeting its interests in Libya.

The “Libyan National Army” said that the merchant ship called Mabrouka had entered a “military operations area” at Ras Al-Hilal. From there, it was withdrawn to the port, and an investigation began. Its crew includes 17 people, including nine Turkish sailors.

On Tuesday, Turkey denounced the interception of its ships by Khalifa Haftar in eastern Libya and called for its crew members’ release, warning of “serious consequences” if its interests there were targeted.

Libya: Our agreement with Turkey cannot be equated with the support of Haftar's mercenaries

The Libyan Foreign Ministry affirmed that the security and military cooperation agreement with Turkey is “legitimate and in compliance with international laws” and cannot be equated with the support that the coup general, Khalifa Haftar, receives.

This came in a statement to Anadolu Agency, made by the Libyan Foreign Ministry spokesman, Muhammad al-Qiblawi, on Friday, in response to the statements of the UN envoy to Libya, Stephanie Williams, two days ago, regarding the foreign presence, without naming a specific party.

In the third virtual meeting of the second round of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, Williams pointed to the presence of “20,000 foreign forces and/or mercenaries in your country (Libya), and this is a terrible violation of sovereignty. Now they occupy your home.”

In response, Al-Qiblawi expressed the Foreign Ministry’s rejection of “delusion and not stating the facts as they are,” referring to Williams’s vague statements that did not name a specific party.

Libya: Discussions between Al-Sarraj and representatives of Al-Wefaq, the “5 + 5” military committee

The head of the Libyan Presidency Council, the supreme commander of the army, Fayez al-Sarraj, discussed on Wednesday the security arrangements related to the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the path of the “5 + 5” military committee.

This came during a meeting held by Al-Sarraj, in the capital, Tripoli, with the representatives of the Government of National Accord in the “5 + 5” military committee, namely Major General Ahmed Abu Shahma, Brigadier General Mukhtar Al-Nqasa, Brigadier General Al-Fitouri Agribel, Colonel Mustafa Yahya and Colonel Radwan Al-Gharari.

According to the media office of the President of the Presidential Council, “Al-Sarraj was briefed on the developments of the 5 + 5 military committee’s track and discussed the details of the security arrangements related to the ceasefire, the process of securing the area and the operational mechanisms on the ground.”

The Joint Military Committee includes five members from the internationally recognized legitimate government of reconciliation, and five from the militia of the coup general, Khalifa Haftar.

Libya ... postponement of the session of representatives in Ghadames

The deputies of the Libyan Parliament located in the city of Ghadames decided to postpone the session, which was dedicated to ending the division of Parliament, and to assume the tasks of the next transitional period that will continue until the legislative and presidential elections are held in December of next year.

It was decided that the deputies in the session would address issues related to choosing the presidency of the parliament, agreeing on the city in which the permanent headquarters will be, and amending the internal regulations to allow the deputies to approve laws, especially those related to organizing elections and the mechanism for ratifying the new executive authority that members of the Forum for Political Dialogue are selecting. Under the auspices of the UN mission.

One of the most important laws that MPs will undertake until the legislative and presidential elections are held in December of next year is to define the mechanism for ratifying the new executive authority, which the members of the Forum for Political Dialogue are selecting under the auspices of the UN mission.

Haftar's forces consider their storming of Ubari a misunderstanding

Ahmed Al-Mesmari, a spokesman for Haftar's forces, said at a press conference that the tension that occurred in the vicinity of Ubari is a misunderstanding.

He added that his forces were on a reconnaissance mission and had no orders to storm the camp, and they only wanted to rest inside after carrying out reconnaissance missions on the borderline with Algeria.

He continued, "This problem was solved by the notables, and those in charge and the commander of that region intervened to solve this problem."

Haftar's forces, reinforced with 50 cars, had tried to enter the joint operations room camp in Ubari, demanding that the Accord forces surrender their personnel and weapons before they withdrew from the city after the intervention of their dignitaries.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

Pro-Sistani militias decide to leave the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU)

Four factions close to the supreme Shiite authority Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Liwa Ansar al-Marjaiya, Liwa Ali al-Akbar, Firqat al-Abbas al-Qitaliyah, and Firqat al-Imam Ali al-Qitaliyah, stated that they would separate from the PMU to support the federal Iraqi government. The factions criticized pro-Iranian armed groups within the PMU for their arbitrary treatments, sectarianism, and corruption. The contradiction between pro-Iraqi and pro-Iranian groups has been known for a while that pro-Iraqi groups accuse Iran backed militias of destabilizing Iraq. Additionally, previously Sistani had issued a fatwa calling on all armed factions to join the state's security forces. The recent developments may trigger a new tension among the PMU, an umbrella organization consisting of various armed groups mostly dominated by Iran-backed Shiite armed factions.

Iraqi President calls to ease the tension in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Demonstrations emerged in Sulaymaniyah in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq due to the worsening economic conditions. The demonstrations turned into violent clashes that resulted in the death of civilians and security forces. The Iraqi President Barham Salih demanded all parties to ease the increasing tension by stating that violence is not the solution. Protesters took to the streets last week in Sulaymaniyah to ask for their unpaid salaries and an end to the corruption. The senior officials of the Kurdistan Democratic Party called for patience and blamed the Iraqi federal government for unpaid wages.

and budget problems. Moreover, some names criticize PKK affiliates and Iran-backed groups for increasing the tension and turning demonstrations showed up for justifiable reasons into violent clashes between security forces and local people.

REGIMES IN TRANSITION

Lebanon

Israel-Lebanon Maritime Border Negotiations Postponed

The fourth round of negotiations on the maritime borders between Israel and Lebanon, scheduled on December 2, has been postponed until further notice for the first time since the talks began between the two states. Charbel Wehbe, Lebanese caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated Lebanon's decisiveness to protect its rights on its exclusive economic zone even if the talks last for ten or twenty years. Yuval Steinitz, Israeli Energy Minister, also sent a letter to Lebanese President Michel Aoun inviting him to hold a direct meeting in a European state to continue the demarcation talks. Aoun in his turn expressed his belief to solve disagreements based on international law. Previously, negotiations were stuck around the conflictual 860 square kilometers of the Mediterranean Sea.

Outgoing Prime Minister Diab and Four Ministers Indicted for Beirut Blast

Judge Fadi Sawan filed charges against Prime Minister Hassan Diab and Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil in caretaker government, along with the previous Public Works Ministers Ghazi Zaeiter and Youssef Fenianos, with the criminal negligence causing the Beirut Port explosion killed 200 people. For the first time during the investigation, senior officials will be interrogated as "defendants."

In a statement issued after the charge, the PM office announced that Diab will not recognize the investigation by claiming it as a violation of the constitution. The statement also claimed that this charge "goes beyond the person to the position per se and targets the premiership," by highlighting the responsibility and transparency of the Diab's handling of the blast. Former PM Najib Mikati said that there is a double standard in charging Diab's negligence over the blast while President Aoun saw the same report that Diab received about explosive material at the port but has not been charged. Hezbollah also issued a statement declaring that "the decision is partial and politically motivated."

Tunisia

A Brawl between Rival MPs Broke Out in Tunisian Parliament

On Monday morning, during a session overseeing issues related to peasant women workers, MPs from the Islamist Dignity (Al Karama) Coalition attacked the deputies from the left-leaning Democratic Bloc whose members called for an investigation into misogynistic remarks made by a deputy from Al Karama regarding women in Tunisian society. Later on, representatives of five parliamentary blocs called to cancel the parliamentary immunity of Al Karama Coalition and to initiate legal proceedings over the violence in the parliament. Democratic Bloc MPs staged an open-ended sit-in in the parliament on Tuesday protesting the failure to pass their statement to punish violent acts. Parliament Speaker Rached Ghannouchi considered the brawl as an anarchist activity trying to dissolve the parliament.

Sudan

Civil-Military Relations Strained due to Military's New Council

General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of Sovereignty Council and de facto ruler of the state, issued a decree to create a new body called "Council of Transition Partners (CTP)" for leading the transitional period, reducing the differences in administration, and assuming the power to exercise its authority.

However, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) alliance, a wide political coalition of civilian and rebel coalitions of Sudanese groups, strongly criticized the new body for violating the interim constitution. Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok's transitional government refused this initiative and expressed his concerns over the interference of CTP in the executive and legislative bodies. Government spokesman Faisal Mohammed Saleh stated that Burhan's order contradicts the constitutional declaration between democratic groups and military generals signed in August.



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ABOUT AL SHARQ STRATEGIC RESEARCH

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