

Sorry for the unsolicited email, but this might make for a good media/tech/politics piece. The Russian-backed side trying to overthrow Tripoli appears to be waging sophisticated social media war. Self-serving pitch, as I'm working for the UN-backed Govt of National Accord (the good guys), but these are independent sources/studies:

See here:

<https://twitter.com/MaryFitzger/status/1127475770811658241>

And here:

https://www.cesi-italia.org/contents/Analisi/Information%20warfare%20in%20Libya%20The%20online%20advance%20of%20Khalifa%20Haftar_1.pdf

There are two types of online propaganda being conducted:

- One - Arabic language news and blog websites – who in the period analysed, published over 15,000 articles citing Haftar – probably from software that automatically publishes articles online from various sources.
- Two - They have identified a series of fake bot accounts who have all posted pro-Haftar messages - many the same text and same account characteristics that suggest they are fake.

Two key takeaways - Some of the sites publishing very high numbers of articles on Haftar are monetised and earning money through Google's ads servers. According to the report, the sites also index well in Google results for Arabic/Libya news – again Google has been very vocal about clamping down on this. Google has publicly said many times they are clamping down on fake sites publishing dis/misinfo to ensure they can't earn money/rank in their search engines.

Arabic language content accounts for over 75% of all content published relating to Khalifa Haftar from the period analysed.

34.1% of all content published originated from Saudi Arabia, 7.3% the US, 6.9% Libya, 5.2% Qatar, 4.9% Italy, 4.6% Egypt, 4.3% the UAE, 4.3% the UK and 3.2% from France – remaining 25% from countries with concentration under 3%.

The fake Twitter accounts all published similar pro-Haftar content – sometimes the exact same text. Accounts were assessed to have been set up to look like UK users as their profile photos were often UK landmarks. From French accounts were also identified.

The language used in the tweets constructs the following positive messages about Haftar - man of order in Libya, struggling with Daesh, al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups in Libya.

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