

MEMO

DATE: April 6, 2020

SUBJECT: Libya Weekly Update

Below is a summary of the latest top headlines of the week surrounding the news in Libya. Key highlights include:

- President Trump and Turkish President Erdogan have called for a ceasefire in Libya and Syria to help fight the spread of COVID-19. Trump and Erdogan spoke about the importance of defeating the virus to bolster the global economy. Haftar has ignored the calls.
- Libya's Interior Minister, Fathi Bashagha, reflects on his meeting with various UK parliamentarians and government officials to discuss the crisis in Libya as they relate to the GNA. IM Bashagha notes the importance for the international community to play a role in helping the GNA create a stable Libya, which will benefit the global economy through trade.
- As the GNA scrambles to protect citizens from the COVID-19 outbreak they are dealing with continued attacks from Haftar's LNA. Haftar's offensive has left critical healthcare infrastructure in shambles, which could result in dire consequences for Libyan citizens if they virus continues to spread.
- The EU has deployed a naval mission to help enforce the UN arms embargo in Libya. The embargo has raised concern as it is not set to impact Haftar's backers Russia, UAE, Egypt as they provide weapons and mercenaries via air and land, rather than sea.
- The GNA successfully defended Tripoli from Haftar's LNA, while removing a key commander in Haftar's forces in battle.

The House Policy Review (4/3): [How a Renewed Libya Strategy Can Help the UK Post-Brexit](#)

- Libya's Interior Minister, Fathi Bashagha, reflects on his recent meetings with UK parliamentarians and government officials to discuss the crisis in Libya and the UK's role in reaching a solution.
- Libya is an important trading partner to the UK in North Africa, positioning the UK to gain opportunities in a stable and prosperous Libya.
- The UK could play a vital role in solving the Libya crisis by giving the GNA support and ability to counter Russian intervention on the ground. The UK, and by extension the global community, are missing an opportunity to remove bad actors from Libya, which will facilitate stability and security in the region.

International Business Times (3/31): [Trump, Erdogan Stress Need For Syria, Libya Ceasefires: W.House](#)

- President Trump and Turkish President Erdogan have called for a ceasefire in Syria and Libya amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- Speaking over the phone, both emphasized the importance of efforts to defeat the virus to help bolster the global economy.
- Libya's healthcare system has been deteriorated in large part to the destruction to civilian infrastructure caused by Haftar's LNA forces.

Independent (4/1): ['People don't realise what is coming': How a coronavirus crisis would unfold in war-torn Syria, Yemen or Libya](#)

- The Independent has previewed the potential damage COVID-19 will have in war torn counties like Libya and Syria.
- There is fear that millions of vulnerable people are at risk of death as years of conflict have destroyed healthcare systems and supply chains in these countries.
- Libya's GNA is attempting to scramble to import critical medical supplies for Tripoli and its citizens, but have been also occupied with continued attacks from Haftar's forces.

VOA News (3/30): [If Coronavirus Hits Libyan Detention Centers It Would be a 'Massacre'](#)

- As COVID-19 begins to spread on the ground in Libya, human rights activists are gravely concerned about the potential damage the virus will have on detention centers in Libya.
- With UN estimates of 3,000 refugees and migrants in detention centers, if the virus were to spread to this population there are potentially grave consequences given the lack of infrastructure as a result of Haftar's offensive.

Reuters (3/29): [More Coronavirus Cases in Libya as Fighting Rages](#)

- As the conflict on the ground continues, Libya is seeing a growing number of cases of COVID-19. A total of eight confirmed cases of the virus were uncovered.
- The United Nations has urged for a ceasefire to the conflict, which has destroyed Libya's infrastructure.

Bloomberg (3/31): [EU Set to Deploy Warships Off Libya in Rare Hard-Power Display](#)

- The EU is deploying a new naval mission to enforce a UN arms embargo on Libya. These efforts will also track illegal oil trades in the country.
- The EU, which has previously utilized soft power, is seeking to show stronger foreign policy muscle as Libya continues to be effected by unrest.

The Brussels Times (4/1): [EU imposes partial arms embargo on Libya to stop civil war](#)

- The EU has launched a military operation to help enforce an arms embargo previously agreed upon in Libya.
- The goal of the enforced embargo will be to prevent countries like Russia, UAE, and Egypt from providing weapons and mercenaries to Haftar.
- A recent legal study by Heinrich Boll Foundation claimed that EU member states, particularly Italy, have violated international law of the sea by returning illegal migrants in distress to Libya.

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Before It's News (3/30): [Libya: Haftar commander killed in clashes with Government of National Accord \(GNA\) forces](#)

- The GNA has reported a top commander of Haftar's LNA has been killed in action while the LNA was attacking Tripoli.
- LNA commander Salem Driaq was the commander of the Sirte operations room.
- This is an example of the GNA's ability to respond to continuous attacks and successfully protect Tripoli.

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