

Politics

Libya Broadens Military Offensive, Dismissing Talks With Haftar

By [Samer Al-Atrush](#)

April 14, 2020, 5:02 AM EDT

-
- ▶ Fathi Bashagha rules out political settlement with Haftar
 - ▶ Government forces had recaptured key towns on Monday
-

Libya's United Nations-backed government is accelerating its campaign to reclaim territory lost to Khalifa Haftar after it seized key towns on Monday, the interior minister said, dismissing negotiations with the rival commander to end the civil war amid fears the coronavirus was taking hold in the country.

"We plan to take back all the areas that were under the Government of National Accord," Fathi Bashagha, security chief for the government in Tripoli, said in an interview hours after his forces announced the capture of areas west of the capital that Haftar had taken a year ago.

Bashagha called on foreign backers to reconsider their support for the eastern-based strongman, who in April last year launched an offensive to capture the capital, setting off a regional proxy war that now pits Turkey against the United Arab Emirates and Egypt.

From his stronghold, Haftar had extended his grip over territory in the country's south before moving on Tripoli. His forces control the OPEC member's oil fields, and the commander allowed loyalists to shut down production in January as he came under pressure to agree to a diplomatic deal to end the war.

"There can be no complete military victory in Libya, but there's no political solution with Haftar," Bashagha said. "We call on all countries supporting this failed dictatorial policy to reconsider."

Virus Fears

The UN envoy to Libya, Stephanie Williams, warned over the weekend that the escalation in fighting was imposing further strains on the country's already decimated health infrastructure,

after one of Tripoli's largest hospitals shut following three days of shelling. The country has seen successive conflicts since the 2011 NATO-backed ouster of Muammar Qaddafi in 2011. The rival sides agreed a provisional truce in February after world leaders met in Berlin to pledge an end to foreign intervention in the North African state. Instead there's been further fighting in a war that over recent months has become increasingly complex.

Turkey dispatched drones, naval frigates and Syrian fighters in support of the Tripoli-based government of Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj to counter U.A.E military aid for Haftar, who is allied with the eastern-based parliament and backed by Russian and Sudanese mercenaries. The fighting has mostly centered around the southern suburbs of Tripoli, a city of two million people that's seen regular shelling.

Bashagha accused Haftar's Libyan National Army of exploiting the pandemic, which has preoccupied world powers and placed a peace deal in Libya even further down on their list of priorities. Libya has reported 26 coronavirus infections so far.

In this article

CL1

WTI Crude**18.27** USD/bbl. ▼ -1.60 -8.05%

[Terms of Service](#) [Do Not Sell My Info \(California\)](#) [Trademarks](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

©2020 Bloomberg L.P. All Rights Reserved

[Careers](#) [Made in NYC](#) [Advertise](#) [Ad Choices](#) [Contact Us](#) [Help](#)

Politics

Libya's Haftar Dealt Setback in Fighting West of Tripoli

By Mohammed Abdusamee

April 13, 2020, 9:52 AM EDT



Khalifa Haftar *Photographer: Aris Messinis/AFP via Getty Images*

Forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government said Monday they'd seized control of a western town that served as a key military base for rival military commander Khalifa Haftar.

The capture of Sabrata was announced by Col. Mohamed Konunu, spokesman for the forces that back Prime Minister Fayeaz al-Sarraj's government. The statement was carried on the military's official Facebook page. Konunu also said they took the town of Sorman.

The securing of the cities, which respectively sit 75 kilometers and 60 kilometers west of Tripoli, the capital, marks a key advance by government forces. Al-Sarraj has been mired in a crippling

war with Haftar's Libyan National Army after the eastern-based commander launched an offensive on the capital a year ago.

Arabs Flex Muscles and Talk as Erdogan Ups Ante in Libya's War

Haftar, who is backed by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Russian mercenaries, already controls most of the country. Al-Sarraj is receiving military and logistical support from Turkey. The fighting had debilitating consequences for the North African OPEC nation, battering its oil output and stunting any efforts to revive the economy.

In this article

FB

FACEBOOK INC-A

179.24 USD ▲ +2.99 +1.70%

[Terms of Service](#) [Do Not Sell My Info \(California\)](#) [Trademarks](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

©2020 Bloomberg L.P. All Rights Reserved

[Careers](#) [Made in NYC](#) [Advertise](#) [Ad Choices](#) [Contact Us](#) [Help](#)