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## In Libya, Renegade Militias Serve Interests of Emirates and Russia

GNA Lobbyist Brad Gerstman Says, Renegade Militias Serve Interests of Emirates and Russia

TRIPOLI, Libya, February 19, 2020 (Newswire.com) - "While Khalifa Haftar aspires to overrun Libya's internationally recognized Government of National Accord and rule Libya with an iron fist, his foreign backers are far more concerned with their own economic and strategic interests," observed Brad Gerstman, a lobbyist representing the GNA.

Gerstman is a founding partner of Gotham Government Relations & Communications, which has previously represented the Trump Organization and currently represents the UN-recognized GNA in the United States.

On Tuesday, the day after news that Dubai Ports World (DP World) is [returning to full state ownership](#) by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the UAE's proxy in Libya [attacked the Tripoli port](#). The warlord Khalifa Haftar, who receives funding and advanced drone systems (and operators) from the UAE, has already blockaded other Libyan ports and oil facilities for weeks, costing Libya tens of millions of dollars in lost production.

Russian mercenaries make up the elite core of Haftar's ground forces, and Moscow has opened its own diplomatic track rivaling the one mandated by the United Nations Security Council. Haftar's latest attack occurred just as Libyan government officials were in Geneva to resume ceasefire negotiations with Haftar's representatives.

Gerstman asked: "What interest do outside powers like Russia and UAE have in preventing Libya from stabilizing and developing as a sovereign, independent state? While DP World seeks to [dominate ports and boost its investment across Africa](#), Russia wants control over Libya's oil reserves resources -- the largest in Africa -- and naval access along the southern Mediterranean. The fact that Moscow has potential replacements for Haftar waiting in the wings, [including Qaddafi's son Saif al-Islam](#), reflects Vladimir Putin's lack of concern for Libya's future, as long as Russia gets what it needs."

"The GNA has made clear that, while it is open to doing business with Russia and the Emirates, it

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remains engaged with other Gulf states as well as European and American companies," Gerstman noted. "The Libyan people did not overthrow Muammar Qaddafi only to become a beachhead for the Kremlin or the property of a new overlord who rules through blood and force."

This material is distributed by Gotham Government Relations & Communications on behalf of the Government of National Accord Libya. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

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