



LIBYA CONFLICT DIAGNOSTIC

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Executive Summary

Libyan elections are tentatively set for mid-2019 and have the potential to be a major stabilizing or destabilizing factor to the current situation. Without a constitution or central government with national authority, the country's source of power and institutions remain fragmented. Despite some Libyans returning home due to a perceived stagnation in the conflict, a number remain in-transit with the potential for widespread conflict to remerge. This conflict and risk assessment for Libya synthesizes data within a nine-cluster analysis outlined by the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) for an accurate perspective of the country as it currently stands.

Historical Background

After centuries of Ottoman rule and an Italian conquest, Libya became a unified independent country in 1951 through decolonization. The country initially began as a federal monarchy comprised of three distinct regions. However, in 1963 the federal system was abolished, giving way to a unified territory and central political and sovereign institutions.ⁱ A coup in 1969 thrust Muammar Gaddafi to power in which he reigned for forty-two years, until his demise in 2011. Since his death, and despite elections in 2012 and 2014, Libya has struggled to unify under one government. Instead, the country is essentially governed by two major factions with various makeshift tribal alliances and allegiances.ⁱⁱ The reality of the current conflict is based on a scramble for power and wealth ignited by the inability to craft a new arrangement between the two sides that could determine an agreeable sharing of power.

History of Armed Conflict	Moderate Risk	Stable ↔
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Asylum Seekers: 90% of those crossing the Mediterranean Sea come from Libya; though the numbers have been steadily declining for the past three years.ⁱⁱⁱ</p> <p>Refugees Return: 278,559 Libyans have returned to their homes.^{iv}</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Lack of Authority: UN-backed government has no monopoly of coercive force and relies on militia groups and EU supplied naval forces that are utilized to stem asylum flows.^v</p> <p>Conflict: Intermediate conflict with 984 deaths in 2017 and an accumulated total of 6,790 since 2012.^{vi}</p> <p>Violence: Recent waves of violence between various militia groups fighting for positions within the main cities.^{vii}</p> <p>Refugees: Libya hosts over 43,000 refugees and asylum-seekers.^{viii}</p>	
Assessment	<p>Libya presents a difficult situation in which many citizens are returning home despite recent spikes in violence across the country. The number of refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya remain high but declining since the EU-Libya agreement to crackdown on smugglers attempting to cross the sea to enter Europe. The violence since 2011 has been relatively low and stagnant until recent clashes in Tripoli at the end of 2018, perhaps foreshadowing strategies of militias while internationally-held negotiations continue forward.^{ix}</p>	

Governance and Political Stability	High Risk	Deteriorating ↓
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Ceasefire: UN brokered ceasefire in Tripoli remains steadfast, despite minor clashes between militia groups.^x</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>No Constitution: All Libyan parties refuse to approve and pass the UN backed constitution.^{xi}</p> <p>Delayed and Overdue Elections: Despite calls by the UN for all power brokers in Libya to hold elections in December of 2018, the first since the flawed elections of 2014, the House of Representatives has deliberately delayed theirs to prevent a change in leadership.^{xii}</p> <p>No Fully Functioning Government: The most recent Polity IV score defines Libya as a failed state.^{xiii} Militia groups, and two different government administrations, have yet to cooperate and create a fully functioning government with nationwide authority.^{xiv}</p> <p>Rights, Freedoms and the Rule of Law: The ongoing civil war has prevented Libyans from effectively practicing their rights and freedoms.^{xv} Without central authority, the Rule of Law is practically non-existent.^{xvi}</p> <p>Corruption: Corruption involving oil interests, foreign governments, smuggling syndicates, and armed groups continues undeterred without functioning fiscal, judicial, and commercial institutions.^{xvii}</p>	

Assessment	While the ceasefire has been beneficial to the people of Tripoli, without a widely approved constitution and the formation of a functional government with nationwide authority, current issues in governance will persist well into the future.	
Militarization	High Risk	Stable ↔
Stabilizing Factors	<p>UN Arms Embargo: In June 2018, the UN Security Council extended their arms embargo on Libya for another year.^{xviii}</p> <p>LNA Offensives in the South: French backed LNA offensives in the south have secured oil fields and pushed back militants and foreign fighters entering the country from Chad.^{xix}</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Arms Embargo Violations: Multiple countries are violating the UN arms embargo.^{xx} The UAE, Jordan and Egypt have been supplying the LNA with attack helicopters and military aircrafts since 2015.^{xxi}</p> <p>Reliance on Militia Groups: The Government of National Accord's inability to form a military and police force causes them to rely on various militia groups in Tripoli to defend themselves and maintain security within the city.^{xxii} These militia groups tend to clash against one another, which frequently drives Tripoli into chaos.^{xxiii}</p>	
Assessment	Both the HoR and the GNA have complained that the arms embargo prevents them from creating their own military and police forces. However, it has maintained a fragile balance in the conflict and prevented further bloodshed. ^{xxiv}	
Population Heterogeneity	Low Risk	Stable ↔
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Alliances: Enduring loyalties and new alliances have been made between militias and tribal groups for strategic purposes.^{xxv}</p> <p>Ethnic Homogeneity: Over 90% of Libya is Arab with few minority groups that have traditionally been well-served by the state.^{xxvi}</p> <p>Immigrants: 12% of Libya are immigrants that offer the country diverse aspects and do not add to the tribalism that exists.^{xxvii}</p>	
Assessment	Tribal and ethnic variances are displayed through loyalties to certain militias throughout the state, tribal allegiances prior to the revolution and its aftermath seem to be a major aligning factor for many of the main players and smaller groups seeking protection within the conflict. Ethnic diversity is not a condition that adds fuel to the threat of violence within Libya though it may prevent or delay political agreements in the future.	
Demographic Stress	Moderate Risk	Deteriorating ↓
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Returns: Thousands of Libyans that had fled violence are returning home however large numbers of IDPs and the number of people fleeing remains in flux.^{xxviii}</p> <p>Population Dispersion: A large majority of the Libyan population is concentrated in the coastal cities, reducing the amount of land that needs to be defended.^{xxix}</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Asylum Seekers: Undefended areas in the south of the country make it relatively easy for asylum-seekers to make their way through the country undetected.</p> <p>Government of National Accord: Resources of the UN-backed government from outside donors have gone to stem the flow of people crossing the Mediterranean.</p> <p>Slavery: Thousands of people forced into servitude and an abusive prison-system at the hand of state-supported militias.^{xxx}</p> <p>Brain Drain: The country had been losing a lot of educated Libyans prior to the conflict in 2011, which has most likely stretched throughout the conflict as well.^{xxxi}</p> <p>Age Demographic: Large youth bulge in the coming years could add further strain.^{xxxii}</p>	
Assessment	With a relatively young median age of the country—42% of which is under 24 years of age—Libya must prepare for the youth bulge that a fragmented economic system may not be able to sustain. ^{xxxiii} Currently, 48% of youth in Libya are unemployed – the sixth highest rate in the world. ^{xxxiv} Many local citizens are also fleeing the violence within the country and across borders. However, at the same time, many more citizens are returning home from what was perceived to be the worst of the conflict. ^{xxxv} Thousands of African migrants are stuck in modern day slavery situations as the entrance to the sea in hopes to get to Europe are shut down. ^{xxxvi}	
Economic Performance	Moderate	Deteriorating ↓

Stabilizing Factors	<p>Natural Resources: Oil and natural gas dominate the economy and provide almost all exports revenues for Libya and this represents over 95% of export earnings and 60% of GDP.^{xxxvii}</p> <p>FDI: Foreign Direct Investment outflow for the country amounted to USD 110 million and the FDI stock was at USD 18.4 billion which is around 33.9% of the country's GDP.^{xxxviii}</p> <p>GDP Growth: Libya's GDP is at USD 63.14 billion in 2017 which indicates a 55.1% growth rate compared to previous years and has been fluctuating since 2014 (\$41.14) but has showed improvement due to recovery in oil production.^{xxxix}</p>
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Inflation: The inflation rate in Libya was recorded at 32.8% in May of 2017 which was the highest ever recorded indicating that prices went up due to the conflict and this may be difficult for the population to bear.^{xi}</p> <p>Stunted Growth: Despite Libya being rich in oil and natural resources, the renewed tensions in December 2018 affected oil production and damaged infrastructure hence causing the Real GDP growth to remain at an estimated 10.9%.^{xii}</p> <p>Youth Unemployment: 48% of youth are unemployed – the sixth highest rate in the world.^{xiii}</p>
Assessment	Libya is known to have the largest oil reserves in Africa, but the economy has experienced a serious decline over the past four years due to the political unrest as well as the fighting over control of the oil fields. The political impasse continues to prevent the country from realizing its economic potential. It is evident that the political strife, low oil production and declining prices have hit the country's public finances hard.

Human Development	Low Risk	Stable ↔
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Life Expectancy: Life expectancy at birth has remained stable over the years since 2010 having an average of age 71.9 years.^{xliii}</p> <p>Growth Rate: Population growth rate is at 1.51% as of 2018.^{xliv}</p> <p>Education: The literacy rate in Libya is at 91.4% of the total population hence making it the country with high education rate in North Africa.^{xlv}</p> <p>Infant Mortality: Infant mortality rate is at 11% showing a decrease over the years from 2010 which had a rate of 14.2%.^{xlvi}</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Sanitation: Access to sanitation in Libya is at 26.25% and has been deteriorating from the year 2000 due to disruption of social services and infrastructure.^{xlvii}</p> <p>Population Displacement: Internal displacement of people in Libya is causing strains on the healthcare system and social services having a healthcare expenditure of 5% of their GDP.^{xlviii}</p>	
Assessment	The HDI for Libya has placed it on the high development ranking of 0.706 which is a good indicator despite the conflict. ^{xlix} The ongoing conflict in Libya causes it to face challenges especially in human development despite some progress made. The problem of influx of internally displaced people has caused a strain on the country's healthcare and social services. Access to sanitation deteriorating indicates that the quality of the services provided has also diminished due to the ongoing conflict.	

Environmental Stress	High Risk	Deteriorating ↓
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Environmental Protections: States at the preparatory meetings for the second UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) have created a draft resolution on the protection of the environment in all areas affected by armed conflict.ⁱ</p> <p>NGOs: The Arab spring and fall of Gaddafi enabled civil society groups to form. International NGO, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) has been mobilizing local civil society.ⁱⁱ</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Conflict Induced Pollution: In six years, gases, very fine particulates, inorganic/organic chemicals and unknown toxic substances spread throughout the environment due to conflict.ⁱⁱⁱ The NATO operation to overthrow Gadhafi also left dangerous wastes.ⁱⁱⁱⁱ</p> <p>Environmental degradation: Threatens public and population health, due to the spread of diseases from environmental waste.^{liv}</p> <p>Overexploitation and Lack of Clean Water: Water has always been scarce, but conditions worsened when the Great Aqueduct project was halted. Continued misuse and pollution caused by the oil and agricultural sectors have only exacerbated issues of water supply and water safety throughout the country.^{lv}</p> <p>Land Degradation and Desertification: 95% of Libya is considered desert or semi-desert. Climate change and human activity have worsened these conditions.^{lvi}</p>	
Assessment	While civil society and international organizations are mobilizing around areas of environmental protection, chaos and conflict continue in the region. Libya is still considered a dangerous region, with repeated incidents of kidnapping of humanitarian and aid workers. ^{lvii} Additionally, current land and water practices further exacerbate a precarious environmental situation as a result of increased desertification. As conflict continues, so does overall degradation of health and the environment.	

International Linkages	High Risk	Deteriorating ↓
Stabilizing Factors	<p>Resettlement: Canada is resettling hundreds of people rescued from slavery in Libya; a reported 600 ex-slaves will be settled in Canada.^{lviii}</p> <p>Humanitarian Response Plan: The United Nations together with the GNA has launched the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP2019), seeking US\$202 million for humanitarian assistance in Libya.^{lix}</p>	
Destabilizing Factors	<p>Anti-Migrant Policies: The EU has backed Italy for two years, spending over ten million euros funding the Libyan coastguard, which intercepts boats with Libyan migrants headed to Europe.^{lx} The Italian government has closed its ports to Libyan migrants who landed on the coast of Sicily on boats sponsored by a German humanitarian aid organization.^{lxi} Migrants picked up by the coast guard under EU-backed measures are returned to detention centers run by the GNA, where many are suffering from malnutrition, hypothermia, torture and abuse.^{lxii}</p> <p>France: France is bombing Chad, from within Libyan borders, and considers its former colony vital for fighting against Islamic militants in West Africa.^{lxiii}</p>	
Assessment	<p>The problem seems to be with the increase of Libyans who want to emigrate from Libya, particularly ex-slaves, and primarily Italy refusing to provide asylum. Aside from migration, the UN and member states are contributing to humanitarian aid initiatives to provide people with basic necessities and safety. The situation is overall quite uncoordinated, and people in Libya continue to suffer. Others, like France, continue to play out their foreign policy through Libya.</p>	

Primary Stakeholders		
Government of National Accord (GNA)	Mixed Impact	The GNA was put into power through a UN-backed unity agreement that created a Presidency Council with Fayeze al-Serraj as Prime Minister. It is currently the internationally recognized government of Libya. However, it has been unable to effectively exert its control over much of the country other than the capital of Tripoli. ^{lxiv}
House of Representatives (HoR)	Mixed Impact	Despite the power-sharing agreement with the government, the House of Representatives have not fully supported and have actively worked to undermine the power that the GNA wields. The organization rules from the city of Tobruk and controls much of the Eastern part of the country. ^{lxv}
Libyan National Army (LNA)	Mixed Impact	Large militia group loyal to the House of Representatives, led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar. The LNA has effectively taken over large swaths of land for HoR control, launched successful offensives to retake the oil fields in the south, and it has also been an essential force against extremist groups including ISIS and al-Qaeda. ^{lxvi}
Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar	Mixed Impact	Provided the HoR with security, and finances by retaking the oil fields to the south. However, he is suspected of replacing local political leaders with military subordinates and undermining the HoR's attempts to pass legislation by preventing its representatives from meeting. ^{lxvii}
Western Militias	Negative Impact	The GNA has been unable to successfully create an effective national army and instead relies on a medley of marginally aligned militia groups that control different areas of Tripoli and jockey for control over vital infrastructure such as the airport, creating instability when their interests diverge. They finance themselves through criminal enterprises and make demands to the GNA with coercive threats in return for security. ^{lxviii}
Seventh Brigade	Negative Impact	Responsible for the recent spate of violence within southern Tripoli. The group is fighting against the alleged corruption that has benefited the main four militias that defend the GNA. ^{lxix}
ISIS	Negative Impact	Though largely diminished, ISIS still maintains a presence within the country attacking both the LNA and government militias. ^{lxx}

Secondary Stakeholders

United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)	Positive Impact	Ghassan Salamé heads the UNSMIL which has a Security Council resolution mandate to support the Libyan Political Agreement that instituted the GNA and seeks new elections in order to gain some degree of legitimacy for the subsequent government. ^{lxxi}
United Arab Emirates	Mixed Impact	Fund and back the LNA. ^{lxxii}
Egypt	Mixed Impact	Officially back both the LNA and GNA but have a stake in having a strong border region which means further alignment with Haftar's LNA. ^{lxxiii}
Turkey and Qatar	Mixed Impact	Back Islamist militias that oppose the LNA. ^{lxxiv}
France	Mixed Impact	Coordinates and provides military support to the LNA and seeks to push the country toward a national election. France wants a stake in the future of the Libyan oil and gas industries. ^{lxxv}
Italy	Mixed Impact	Supports and funds the GNA; Wants to see reconciliation prior to any election process. Much of Italy's interests in Libya rest on stemming the flow of refugees coming from across Africa as well as economic reasons as a pipeline from Libya provides Italy with 25% of its natural gas. ^{lxxvi}
United Nations Security Council	Positive Impact	Despite complaints made by the GNA and the HoR, the UN Security Council continues to maintain an arms embargo on Libya, which has kept the conflicting from tipping into either side's favor. ^{lxxvii}

Scenarios	
Best Case Scenario	Internationally supported mediations and negotiations have led to an agreement to hold elections at the middle of 2019. A best-case scenario would keep these elections on schedule and a peaceful transition of power emerges under a single democratic government with all sides of the conflict accepting the results. Institutions would be reconsolidated and economic production, including the export of oil, can continue. Foreign entities would coalesce around the results of election and support its continued stability.
Worst Case Scenario	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Field Marshall Haftar sees potential elections as harmful to the LNA's power and sees it more beneficial to wage an assault on Tripoli. The resulting civil conflict leads to the cancelation of the 2019 general elections as the LNA benefits from the violation of the arms embargo and uses its military cohesion to fight the multiple militias. Descending of conflict increases of IDPs and casualties and further harms economic prospects of the country. 2. Elections occur in mid-2019 but the results are not accepted by all sides; descending the country into further conflict.
Most Likely Scenario	Elections are postponed further, and a stalemate remains with both sides jockeying over institutions and territory. Foreign entities remain invested in peace but divided over the best course of action and which side will best serve their interests. Violence remains stagnant but latent.

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