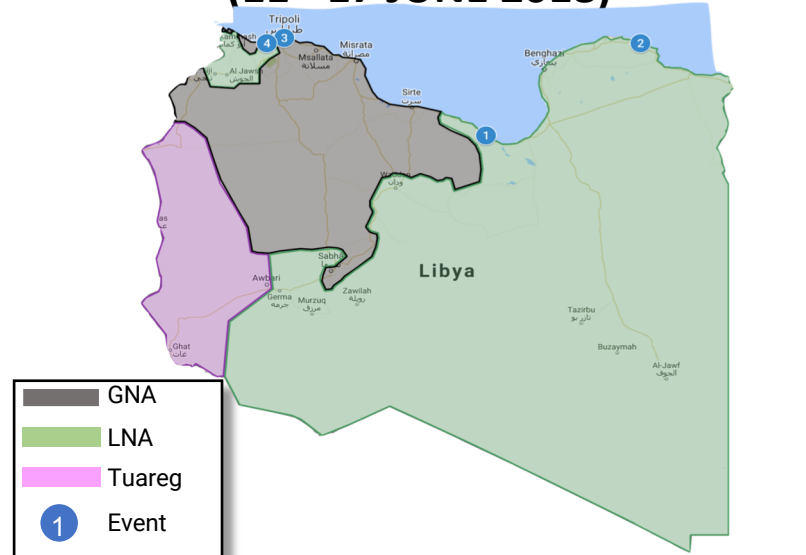


LIBYA CRISIS WATCH

(11 - 17 JUNE 2018)



Assessment:

- Control over Libya oil crescent region, which has 8% of oil reserves, has a decisive role in the crisis. Haftar has the power in the area since 2016. Haftar and his foreign supporters including France, UAE, Egypt, and Russia want that not changed. However, current attacks in the region might have been backed by other internal and external actors who don't want to go to elections with the current status. Thus, the struggle for dominance in this region might be the central conflict area on the way to polls.
- Aquarius decision of new Italian Government was a definite shift of focus in refugee policy: from humanitarian perspective to Italy-first perspective. This is the result of unsuccessful EU policy that left the problems of Italians unsolved, and likely to increase humanitarian crisis inside Libya. Still, rational EU leaders have a chance to come up with a more humane and sustainable solution at the EU Summit during 28-29 June.

1. Heavy clashes erupt to control Libya Oil Crescent

14 June 2018. The major Libyan oil ports of Ras Lanuf and Es Sider were closed and evacuated after the attack of armed groups opposed to Haftar. Armed groups headed by Ibrahim Jathran who blockaded the terminals in Libya's oil crescent for three years before being forced out by Haftar. LNA has been sending reinforcements to the oil crescent ahead of a push to recapture the ports and has launched air strikes against its rivals. Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) called for the "unconditional and immediate" withdrawal of militia loyal to Jathran from Ras Lanuf and Es Sider terminals, warning of environmental disaster and further damage to key infrastructure. The NOC declared force majeure in both ports announcing an initial production loss of 240,000 barrels per day (bpd), which it said was expected to rise to 400,000 bpd if the ports stayed shut. ([Reuters](#)) Clashes caused an oil storage tank to catch fire in the Ras Lanuf terminal, and Es Sider terminal has been shut down. ([BBC](#)) The Libyan House of Representatives and The PM Serraj condemned the attacks, and UNSMIL warned about economic and political impacts. ([Xinhua](#)) Also France condemned the offensive in the strongest possible terms and stressed its dedication to agreed timetable for the elections. ([France Diplomatie](#))

2. LNA claims capture of Derna

14 June 2018. Haftar declared that they face just a few dozen "remnant" Derna fighters who have deployed snipers and planted explosives to stave off inevitable defeat. ([Reuters](#)) Meanwhile, LNA accused with summary killings in Derna. A video posted on social media shows the graphic moment when LNA fighters were torturing two people before opening a barrage of gunfire on them. ([Libyan Express](#)) A spokesman of LNA said that their forces will continue military actions throughout all of Libya and will liberate Sirte, Misrata and then Tripoli so the military can control the entire country. ([Libyan Express](#))

3. Anti-immigrant policies rise in Italy

16 June 2018. Interior Minister Salvini has announced that Italy won't allow two NGO rescue ships with illegal migrants from Africa onboard, which was abandoned by human traffickers, to dock in their ports. According to him, the boats Lifeline and Seefuchs under the Dutch flag are waiting off the Libyan coast, ready to take people. "These people should know that Italy doesn't want to be complicit in the business of illegal immigration no more" added Salvini. ([Sputnik](#)) On 13 June, Leader of the Italian "Brothers of Italy" party has urged for a naval blockade on Libya to stop immigration boats. On 12 June, the Italian ambassador to Libya met with Libyan foreign minister and reiterated the commitment of Italy to helping Libya in the illegal migration issue through deals and agreements. ([Libya Observer](#)) Meanwhile, Libyan coastguards, supported with £160 million by the EU, is caught on camera beating desperate migrants as they set out to sea on a floating death-trap. ([Mail Online](#))

4. Aquarius arrives Valencia port

17 June 2018. The Aquarius charity-run rescue ship arrived in the Spanish port of Valencia, a week after Italy refused to let it dock with 629 migrants on board. Spain offered to take the boat in, meaning it had to travel an extra 700 miles after plucking the migrants from unstable ships off the coast of Libya. ([Reuters](#)) Macron of France promised to have some of these refugees. However, Spain may soon need to welcome more migrants, as rescue ships picked up more than 1,000 people on 15-16 June. ([ThinkProgress](#)) Malta and Italy's refusal to take in the migrants and refugees rescued off the coast of Libya widely criticized. The head IFRC accused Europe of betraying its fundamental values by ignoring the plight of the rescue ship Aquarius. Macron, named Rome's action as "cynicism and irresponsibility." ([The Guardian](#)) On 16 June, Macron and Italian PM Conte met and agreed that the EU should set up asylum processing centers in Africa to prevent "voyages of death." At their meeting in Paris, Macron and Conte also demanded "profound" changes to the EU's asylum rules which put the migrant burden on their port of entry to Europe—mainly Italy and Greece. ([AFP](#))