Country Policy and Information Note
Libya: Security and humanitarian situation

Version 4.0

September 2020

Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in the Introduction section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) analysis and assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note – i.e. the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw – by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment of, in general, whether one or more of the following applies:

- A person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm

- The general humanitarian situation is so severe as to breach Article 15(b) of European Council Directive 2004/83/EC (the Qualification Directive) / Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights as transposed in paragraph 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules

- The security situation presents a real risk to a civilian's life or person such that it would breach Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive as transposed in paragraph 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules

- A person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)

- A person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory

- A claim is likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and

- If a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the Common EU [European Union] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information (COI), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a terms of reference which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available, and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source

- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used

- the currency and detail of information, and

- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email the Country Policy and Information Team.

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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> Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the gov.uk website.

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Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

1.1.1 That the general humanitarian situation in Libya is so severe as to make removal to this country a breach of Article 15(b) (torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of an applicant in the country of origin) of European Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 (the Qualification Directive) / Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as transposed in paragraph 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules.

and/or

1.1.2 A fear of serious harm because the security situation presents a real risk to a civilian's life or person such that removal would be in breach of Article 15(c) (serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict) of the Qualification Directive as transposed in paragraph 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules.

2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants).

2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis).

2.2 Exclusion

2.2.1 Various groups involved in the conflict in Libya have been responsible for serious human rights abuses. If it is accepted that the person has been involved with such a group, then decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.

2.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection.

2.2.3 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instructions on Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33(2) of the Refugee Convention, Humanitarian Protection and Restricted Leave.

2.3 Convention reason(s)

2.3.1 A state of civil instability and/or where law and order has broken down, which might exist in some places outside of government control, does not of itself give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution for a Convention reason.

2.3.2 Before considering whether a person requires protection because of the general humanitarian and/or security situation, decision makers must consider if the person is at a real risk of persecution and/or serious harm for a Convention reason (see also the Country Policy and Information Notes on Libya).

2.3.3 Where the person qualifies under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to make an assessment of the need for protection under Article 15(b) of the Qualification Directive/Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR or under Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive.

2.3.4 In the absence of a link to one of the Refugee Convention grounds necessary for a grant of refugee status, the question is whether the person will face a real risk of serious harm sufficient to qualify for Humanitarian Protection (HP).

2.3.5 For further guidance on Convention reasons see the instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.4 Risk

a) Overview

2.4.1 Since 2014 Libya has been divided and beset by instability and conflict between two rival governments in Tripoli, in the western part of the country, and in Tobruk in the east. The Government of the National Accord (GNA), which was created in 2015, is the present internationally recognised governing body, headed by Fayez al-Serraj and based in Tripoli. The main (armed) opposition, the Libyan National Army / Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LNA / LAAF), is a coalition of armed groups headed by General Khalifa Haftar, and based in Tobruk. The LNA and affiliated groups control considerable areas of Libya's east coast and central zones including areas of key oil production and export infrastructure. The GNA and associated anti-LNA groups control Tripoli and the western coast. Southern Libya is controlled by a mix of local forces. The GNA and LNA and affiliated groups are engaged in armed conflict (see Political situation, Actors in conflict and Overview of conflict)

b) Humanitarian situation

2.4.2 Humanitarian conditions in Libya have continued to deteriorate since the fall of former President Gaddafi in 2011. The ongoing conflict between the GNA and LNA has led to extensive damage to civilian homes and public infrastructure, including health, education, roads and administrative facilities, severely disrupting basic services including the provision of safe drinking water, gas and electricity (see Humanitarian need and aid and Overview of conflict).

2.4.3   More than 893,000 people (approximately 15% of the estimated total population of around 6.8 million) are in need of humanitarian assistance – a 9% increase compared to 2018 - over half of those are concentrated in the coastal cities and towns of Tripoli, Ejdabia, Misrata and Benghazi. Tripoli, Misrata and Benghazi are major urban areas with populations of 1.7 million, 881,000 and 824,000 respectively (see Demography).

2.4.4   Conflict has impacted all the major towns and cities, with most of the population affected to some degree by lack of essential resources, including water, electricity and medical care. Around 17.5% of hospitals are closed and 20% of primary health-care facilities are non-functional; those that continue to be open lack medicines, supplies and equipment, and are overburdened or not maintained. The UN estimated in 2019 that almost 4 million (around 60 to 70 % of the population) lacked consistent access to healthcare and 1,663,000 people were in extreme need of access to primary and secondary health care services (approximately between 15 to 25% of total population). Ongoing conflict has disrupted schooling of thousands of children and many schools remain closed due to lack of material, damage, occupation by IDPs, or security concerns. The conflict has also resulted in severe damage to housing and civilian infrastructure resulting in inadequate shelter options, forced evictions, and increases in rental costs (see Political situation, Humanitarian need and aid and Overview of conflict).

2.4.5   The ongoing conflict continues to affect the economy which has remained in recession since 2017. Oil and gas are the main source of economic growth and while oil production rose by 18% in 2018, it remains below pre-conflict levels. Since January 2020 oil production has declined further due to the LNA imposed blockage of oil exports. It is estimated that the Libyan population lost about 80% of their purchasing power between 2015 and 2019. The likely impact of covid-19 is that the economy will continue to slow or shrink in 2020 (see Socio-economic situation).

2.4.6   The armed conflict and insecurity in Libya continues to be the principal reason for displacement, alongside deteriorating economic conditions and availability of basic services. As of June 2020 there were estimated to be 425,714 internally displaced people (IDPs) – approximately 5-10% of the overall population), an increase from 221,000 in 2018, 197,000 in 2017 and 304,000 in 2016. The majority of displaced people were located in Tripoli, Sebha, Ghat, Benghazi and Murzuq in 2018. Living conditions, for many IDP families remain poor and often unsafe (see Socio-economic situation and Internally displaced persons).

2.4.7   IDP's and in particular refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are vulnerable to abuses. Vulnerable, high risk groups that face particularly acute challenges in accessing basic services, food, and shelter include women, children, people with disabilities, the elderly, people with chronic illnesses living in harsh conditions as a result of being displaced and minority ethnic groups and tribes that have been forcibly displaced. Migrant detention facilities are reported to be poor with severe overcrowding with reports of ill treatment, rape and torture (See Humanitarian need and aid, Internally displaced persons and Conflict's impact on infrastructure, governance and human rights).

2.4.8   While the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions remain poor and may have been exacerbated by the restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the economy continues to function and some basic services such as healthcare, education and water – although significantly damaged or restricted – remain available. In general, conditions in Libya do not reach the threshold that would make removal a breach of Article 3 ECHR / Articles 15 (b) of the Qualification Directive. However, the humanitarian situation is variable across the country and members of vulnerable groups, such as women, children or IDPs in areas where humanitarian conditions are poor and humanitarian aid is less accessible, may face a risk of serious harm.

2.4.9   Decision makers must consider on the facts of the case whether a returnee, by reason of their individual circumstances or vulnerability, may face a real risk of harm contrary to Article 15(b) of the Qualification Directive/Article 3 of the ECHR as a result of the humanitarian situation.

2.4.10   For guidance on Article 15(b)/Article 3 ECHR, including consideration of enhanced risk factors, see the Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection.

2.4.11   For further guidance on assessing risk, see the instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

c) Security situation

2.4.12   Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive applies only to civilians, who must be genuine non-combatants and not those who are party to the conflict. This could include former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.

2.4.13   In the country guidance case of ZMM (Article 15(c)) Libya CG [2017] UKUT 00263, heard 3 May 2017, promulgated 28 June 2017, the Upper Tribunal (UT) issued guidance on the issue of Article 15(c) replacing the previous country guidance of FA (Libya: art 15(c)) Libya CG [2016] UKUT 00413 (IAC) in regard to the security situation only.

2.4.14   In ZMM, the UT held that '… we are satisfied that there are today two or more armed groups confronting one another within Libyan territory and that there is therefore an "internal armed conflict" within the meaning of Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive.' (para 70) In paragraphs 70 to 95, the UT set out its assessment of the situation in Libya in 2016/17, the factors relevant to determining whether 15c of the Qualification Directive was met. It concluded that '[t]he violence in Libya has reached such a high level that substantial grounds are shown for believing that a returning civilian would, solely on account of his presence on the territory of that country or region, face a real risk of being subject to a threat to his life or person.' (Headnote).

2.4.15   The UT in ZMM also held that:

'In light of our findings we have not considered it necessary to conduct a region by region review. We do not doubt that there are in Libya today towns and villages which are relatively calm where, notwithstanding the absence of effective government, people are going about their 'normal' lives. We cannot however be satisfied that the peace in these oases is stable or durable, or that the notional returnee to Libya would be able to safely access such

locations… The evidence before us indicates that the situation throughout Libya is extremely unstable, that lawlessness and violence are widespread, and that there is not a sufficiency of protection for the ordinary civilian. We are satisfied that the Article 15(c) risk is made out.' (paras 92-93)

2.4.16 Libya continues to experience political dysfunction and division, insecurity and conflict between multiple armed state, non-state and international actors (see Security situation and Actors in conflict).

2.4.17 High levels of insecurity and conflict, a breakdown in law and order and, as a consequence of both, frequent human rights violations, continue across the country, particularly in the west. According to UNSMIL, between April and June 2020, there were 358 civilian casualties (106 deaths and 252 injured) compared to the previous quarter of 131 casualties (64 deaths and 67 injured). By comparison there were 122 civilian casualties (53 deaths and 69 injuries) between April and June 2017 and 166 civilian casualties (75 deaths and 91 injuries) between April and June 2016. Ground fighting was the lead cause of civilian casualties during the second quarter of 2020. Almost 90% of civilian casualties according to UNSMIL have occurred in western Libya with the rest in the central areas (see Civilian casualties and Geographical scope of conflict).

2.4.18 According to ACLED the number of security incidents between August 2019 and August 2020 totalled 1,679, resulting in 2,240 fatalities, an increase from 735 security incidents and 1,698 fatalities for the preceding 12 month time period. Between 1 August 2017 – 1 August 2018 - ACLED reported 723 security related events and 1,285 fatalities and between 1 August 2016 – 1 August 2017 - 854 ACLED reported security related events and 2,566 fatalities. Most attacks occurred in Tripoli, Alijfara and Misrata (Western Libya), and more than 50% of security incidents over the same period of August 2019 and August 2020 were from explosions / remote violence. People in areas such Tripoli, Benghazi and Sirt remain at continued risk from explosive remnants of war (see Security incidents).

2.4.19 Conflict-related civilian casualties (deaths and injuries) in Libya are likely to be under-reported, though sources such as UNSMIL and ACLED drawing on a range of publicly available data provide an indicative picture with regard the actual number of casualties. During the first half of 2020 the LNA was believed to have been responsible for around 80% of civilian casualties (see Civilian casualties and Actors in conflict).

2.4.20 Libya continues to be politically divided. Tensions remain high and the situation continues to be volatile and changeable. Fighting in populated urban areas and an increase in direct fire has put civilians at high risk of harm. Multiple armed conflicts involving different armed groups and militias contributed to a breakdown of law and order, exacerbated by the interference of regional powers supporting the main protagonists. All parties to the conflicts have reportedly continued to commit violations of international humanitarian law, and abuses of human rights. Warring factions have caused multiple civilian deaths and injuries, and civilians comprised a high proportion of casualties from the use of explosive weapons in some populated areas (see Humanitarian need and aid, Overview of conflict, Conflict's impact on infrastructure, governance and human rights).

2.4.21   There has not been a substantive change to the security situation since
ZMM was heard in May 2017. There are not, therefore, 'very strong grounds
supported by cogent evidence to justify a departure from ZMM as per para
47 of the Court of Appeal's determination in SG (Iraq) v Secretary of State
for the Home Department [2012] EWCA Civ 940 (13 July 2012).

2.4.22   Consequently, a person returning to Libya is likely, solely because of their
presence in the country, to face a real risk of being subject to a threat to their
life or person and a breach of Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive.

2.4.23   If a person does not qualify for a grant of asylum, or a grant of humanitarian
protection under articles 15(a) or 15(b) of the Qualification Directive, and is
not excluded from protection, they will qualify for humanitarian protection on
the basis of a breach of Article 15(c) owing to the general security situation.

2.4.24   For further guidance on assessing risk, see the instruction on Assessing
Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.5   Protection

2.5.1   A person returning to Libya faces a real risk of a breach of Article 15c of the
Qualification Directive, as transposed into paragraph 339C and 339CA(iv) of
the Immigration Rules. Therefore, sufficiency of protection is not available.

2.5.2   For further information relating to particular groups, for example, actual or
perceived supporters of former President Gaddafi, women and ethnic
minorities, see the relevant Country Policy and Information Note.

2.5.3   For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the
instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.6   Internal relocation

2.6.1   In ZMM the UT held that there is a risk of a breach of Article15(c) of the
Qualification Directive throughout Libya (Headnote; para 93). Therefore,
internal relocation is not possible.

2.6.2   For further guidance on internal relocation see the instruction on Assessing
Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.7   Certification

2.7.1   Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded'
under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

2.7.2   For further guidance on certification, see Certification of Protection and
Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and
Asylum Act 2002 (clearly unfounded claims).

Country information

3.   Demography

3.1.1   The CIA World Fact-book estimated the population of Libya to be 6,890,535 in July 2020[1]. The major urban areas are Tripoli, the capital, with 1.17 million people, Misrata with 881,000 people and Benghazi with 824,000 people in 2020[2].

3.1.2   UN Habitat in their City profile of Benghazi report from October 2018 estimated that within its present administrative boundaries Benghazi has a population of between 715,000 and 812,000 inhabitants[3].

3.1.3   A United Nations data booklet on world cities in 2018 gave the population of Tripoli as 1.16 million[4].

3.1.4   Libya is divided into four administrative subdivisions. REACH, a programme of ACTED, an independent private non-profit international NGO, in their 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report, citing in part OCHA dataset from 2017, set out the geographical classifications as follows:

- 'Region - The highest administrative subdivision of Libya below the national level. There are three regions in Libya: the West ("Tripolitania"), the East ("Cyrenaica") and the South ("Fezzan").

- 'Mantika - The second administrative subdivision of Libya, or the equivalent of a district. Libya currently has 22 mantikas, which are regionally divided as follows […] :

      '1. West: Al Jabal Al Gharbi, Al Jfara, Al Margeb, Azzawya, Misrata, Nalut, Sirt, Tripoli and Zwara

      '2. East: Al Jabal Al Akhdar, Al Kufra, Almarj, Benghazi, Derna, Ejdabia and Tobruk

      '3. South: Al Jufra, Ghat, Murzuq, Sebha, Ubari and Wadi Ashshati

- 'Baladiya - The third administrative subdivision of Libya, or the equivalent of a municipality. Libya currently has 100 baladiyas.

- 'Mahalla - The fourth administrative subdivision of Libya, roughly equivalent to a neighbourhood. Libya currently has 667 mahallas.' [5]

3.1.5   The map below, produced by REACH, shows the 22 mantikas (districts) of Libya.

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[1] CIA Factbook, 'Libya – People and society', last updated 30 June 2020
[2] CIA Factbook, 'Libya – People and society', last updated 30 June 2020
[3] UN Habitat, 'City profile of Benghazi' (p3), October 2018
[4] UN, 'World cities in 2018' (p11), 1 July 2018
[5] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p11), April 2020

Azzawya
Al Jfara
Tripoli
Zwara
Al-Margeb
Misrata
Al Jabal
Al Akhdar
Almarj Derna
Benghazi
Nalut
Al Jabal Al Gharbi
Sirt
Tobruk
Ejdabia
Wadi Ashshati
Al Jufra
Sebha
Ghat
Ubari
Al Kufra
Murzuq

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3.1.6   Over 90% of the country's population live in the coastal cities and towns between Tripoli and Al Bayda [located east of Benghazi in the Al Jabal Al Akhdar district / mantika][7].

3.1.7   REACH in their 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report stated:

'Covering an area of more than 1,700,000 square kilometres and a Mediterranean coastline of 1,770 kilometres, Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa by land mass. As of 2018, Libya had an estimated total population of 6.6 million, indicating a density of about 4 people per square kilometre. However, this belies the fact that most Libyans live in a concentrated area along the Mediterranean coastline. In fact, out of Libya's total population, about 80% live in urban areas. The Libyan population is around 90% Arab or mixed Arab-Amazigh (Berber). The largest minority are the Amazigh, who comprise between 4% and 10% of the population. Remaining minorities total about 3% of the population and include the Tawergha, Tuareg, Tebu and Mashashiya. Religious identity in Libya is also relatively uniform, as over 95% of the population are Muslim (virtually all Sunni). Both Libya's social structure and its politics are heavily influenced by tribal affiliations. There are over 100 tribes in Libya, and over 90% of the population claim tribal links. The official language of Libya is Arabic.'[8]

3.1.8   See the following links for useful maps:

[6] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p11), April 2020
[7] CIA Factbook, 'Libya – People and society', last updated 30 June 2020
[8] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p11), April 2020

- UN Map of Libya: https://unsmil.unmissions.org/map-libya
- Map of population and population density: http://reliefweb.int/map/libya/libya-population-and-population-density-5-jun-2015
- Reliefweb – maps and infographics: http://reliefweb.int/country/lby/thumb#content
- Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, 'Libya'

Section 4 updated: 2 September 2020

4.   Political situation

4.1.1   A BBC Libya country profile stated:

'Libya, a mostly desert and oil-rich country with an ancient history, has more recently been known for the 42-year rule of the mercurial Colonel Muammar Gaddafi - and the chaos that has followed his departure.

'Libya was under foreign rule for centuries until it gained independence in 1951. Soon after oil was discovered and earned the country immense wealth…

'The toppling of long-term leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 led to a power vacuum and instability, with no authority in full control.

'The country has splintered, and since 2014 has been divided into competing political and military factions based in Tripoli and the east.

'Among the key leaders are

- 'Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj, head of the internationally-recognised government in Tripoli;

- 'Khalifa Haftar, leader of the Libyan National Army, which controls much of eastern Libya;

- 'Aghela Saleh, speaker of the House of Representatives based in the eastern city of Tobruk;

- 'Khaled Mishri, the elected head of the High State Council in Tripoli.

'Islamic State group briefly took advantage of the conflict to seize control of several coastal cities including Sirte, which it held until mid-2017. It retains a presence in the desert interior.

'Colonel Gaddafi seized power in 1969 and ruled for four decades until he was toppled in 2011 following an armed rebellion assisted by Western military intervention.

'In recent years the country has been a key springboard for migrants heading for Europe, and a source of international tension as rival governments in the west and east seek to establish nationwide control.'[9]

4.1.2   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

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[9] BBC, 'Libya: Country profile', 8 June 2020

'Libya's Government of National Accord (GNA) is a transitional government, created by the 2015 Libyan Political Agreement. The 2011 Constitutional Declaration envisions a parliamentary democracy that allows for the exercise of political, civil, and judicial rights. Citizens elected an interim legislature, the Libyan House of Representatives (HoR), in free and fair elections in 2014. The country is in a state of civil conflict. The GNA, headed by Libyan prime minister Fayez al-Sarraj, governed only a limited portion of the country. Parallel, unrecognized institutions in eastern Libya, especially those aligned with the self-styled "Libyan National Army" (LNA) led by General Khalifa Haftar, continued to challenge the authority of the GNA.' [10]

4.1.3   Europol, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, in their report; Assessing the Islamic State in Libya, of August 2019, stated:

'As of April 2019, the Government of National Accord (GNA) based in Tripoli in western Libya and headed by Fayez al-Serraj is the only internationally recognised governing body. Despite low levels of legitimacy in the country, limited geographical reach, the lack of a loyal military and competing institutions like the parliament in the east of Libya (situated in Tobruk), the GNA has, up to this current period, been able to act as a Libyan government, particularly on the international stage.

'The main defector and competing power player that has emerged is the self-declared General Khalifa Haftar, who is linked to the parliament in Tobruk. He was appointed Head of the Libyan National Army (LNA) or, in the more precise Arabic translation, the Libyan Arab Armed Forces...'[11]

4.1.4   The Congressional Research Service (CRS) in their report In Focus, Libya and US policy of August 2020 stated:

'Major conflict erupted in Libya in April 2019, when the "Libyan National Army"/"Libyan Arab Armed Forces" (LNA/LAAF) movement—a coalition of armed groups led by Khalifa Haftar—launched a bid to seize the capital, Tripoli, from militias and the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA).

'Fighters in western Libya rallied with Turkish military support to blunt the LNA's advance, and Haftar's forces withdrew from northwestern Libya in June 2020. The LNA and its local partners control much of Libya's territory and key oil production and export infrastructure […]. The GNA and anti-LNA groups control Tripoli and the western coast and seek to assert control over the entire country. Southern Libya is marginalized and faces threats from criminals, rival ethnic militias, and terrorists. The U.S. government supports a ceasefire, but the rival coalitions […] are preparing for more fighting in central Libya.[…]

'In 2020, multilateral diplomatic initiatives have sought to achieve and sustain a ceasefire as a precursor to renewed political reconciliation efforts. Meeting in Berlin, Germany in January, the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and other key foreign actors jointly committed to new arrangements aimed at permanently ending the conflict. GNA and LNA figures attended, but did not commit to a ceasefire. The Security Council

[10] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section Executive summary)', 11 March 2020
[11] Europol (Author Inga Kristina Trauthig), 'Assessing the Islamic State in Libya', 13 August 2019.

endorsed the Berlin arrangements in Resolution 2510. The U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) then supported security, political, and economic discussions, but pandemic concerns and renewed fighting undermined progress.' [12]

4.1.5   The map below, produced by CRS, shows areas of influence held by LNA forces and local partners, GNA and LNA opposing forces, and local forces as of 16th June 2020, with no major changes reported as of 3rd August 2020.[13]

[14]
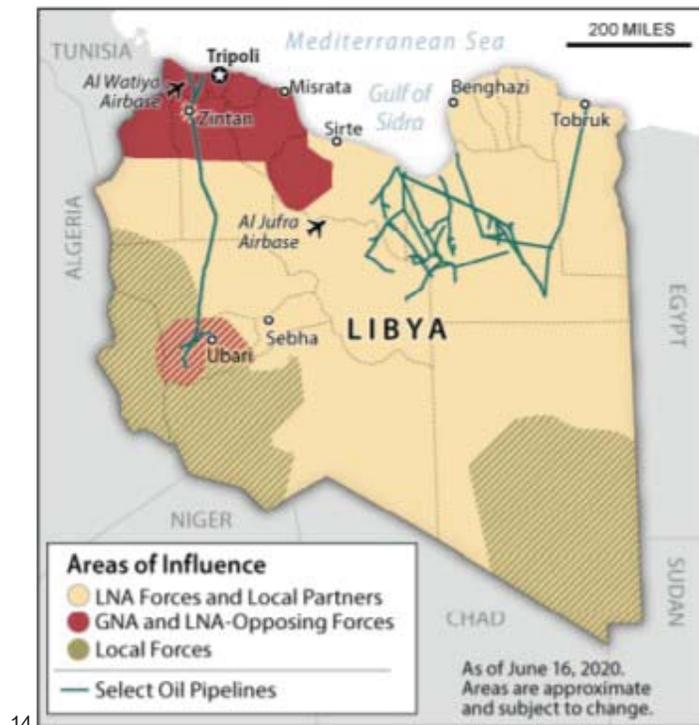
4.1.6   See Actors in conflict - Overview for map illustrating territorial control in conflict zones and disputed territories.

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5.   Humanitarian conditions

5.1   Humanitarian need and aid

5.1.1   The website of the European Commission (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations), last updated on 20 March 2020, stated:

'Ten years into the Libyan revolution, the situation in the country continues to deteriorate. Weak governance and political instability have fuelled outbreaks of violence and clashes between armed groups. While Libya has the largest oil reserves in Africa, competition for these natural resources has only exacerbated the violence. Parties to the conflict are violating International

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[12] CRS, 'In Focus, Libya and US policy', updated 3 August 2020
[13] CRS, 'In Focus, Libya and US policy', updated 3 August 2020
[14] CRS, 'In Focus, Libya and US policy', updated 3 August 2020

Humanitarian Law. The EU is the biggest donor of humanitarian aid to the Libyan people in need of protection, education, basic services and health care…

'Due to the recurrent clashes between opposing armed groups, forcibly displaced people require emergency life-saving assistance. People most hit by the conflict have limited access to primary healthcare, clean water and sanitation, but also other frequent medicine shortages and inadequate health service providers. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 20% of public hospitals and health facilities are closed due to destruction, damage or occupation. Crime and human trafficking are rampant, with reports of abduction, abuse and smuggling.

'Access for aid organisations to many affected areas is irregular and difficult. It is a priority to provide people affected by the conflict with protection and healthcare. The most vulnerable displaced people also need food, shelter, basic hygiene, and essential items. Humanitarian organisations call for the protection of civilians, unimpeded access to those in need, and the respect of International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian principles, which should extend to healthcare staff and infrastructure.' [15]

5.1.2   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, covering events in 2019:

'Around 39 per cent of all people in need – 893,000 people – have acute humanitarian needs as a result of exposure to physical and mental harm, a partial or total collapse of living standards and basic services, and increased reliance on the use of negative coping strategies…

'Out of the 1.8 million people who have been affected by the crisis, more than 893,000 people are in need of some form of humanitarian assistance – a nine per cent increase on 2018. This includes 212,000 women and 268,000 boys and girls under 18 years of age (176,000 boys and 91,000 girls). Around 30 per cent of people in need are children, 34 per cent of whom are girls. While the number of people in need is 66 per cent boys and men, this is largely due to the majority of the migrants (93 per cent) being male. Of those people in need, an estimated 134,000 are people living with a disability (66 per cent male and 34 per cent female).

'Of the total number of people in need, nearly 50 per cent are concentrated in four mantikas—Tripoli, Ejdabia, Misrata and Benghazi. Migrants and refugees remain among the most vulnerable and at-risk groups in Libya and constitute the largest portion of people in need, at 36 per cent. Nearly two thirds of the total IDP [Internally displaced persons] population are in need and, unable to afford rent, live in sub-standard shelters, and cannot afford or access basic services. An estimated 74,000 people who have returned to their place of origin, are in need of humanitarian assistance, with the largest number in Ejdabia, Tripoli and Zwara. Many people who have not been displaced but live in areas of insecurity or with limited services remain in need. Around 278,000 non-displaced Libyans face unmet humanitarian needs, particularly in Ejdabia and Sebha.'[16]

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[15] European Commission, 'European Civil Protection…', last updated 20 March 2020
[16] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p6), 31 January 2020

5.1.3   The same OCHA report continued: 'Overall, the most severe and compounded needs are found in mantikas [districts] that are experiencing direct conflict, such as Tripoli, or have received the highest numbers of IDPs, such as Azzawya, Benghazi, Ejdabia, Misrata and Sebha. […] Among returnees and non-displaced Libyans, 353,000 people face significant challenges meeting their basic needs, due to limited cash and/or access to services.'[17]

5.1.4   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020, issued in February 2020, added:

'In 2020, the humanitarian community will aim to reach around 345,000 people, 39 per cent of the 893,000 people identified to be in need of humanitarian assistance. These are people that have met the "extreme" and "catastrophic" categories under the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) severity scaling (indicating acute severity) as a result of a partial or total collapse of living standards and basic services, increased reliance on negative coping strategies, and widespread physical and mental harm. The response will target five groups identified as particularly vulnerable — internally displaced persons (IDPs), non-displaced conflict-affected Libyans, highly vulnerable returnees, and migrants and refugees impacted by the crisis – across the 22 mantikas of the country.' [18]

5.1.5   A 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report authored by REACH Initiative, a programme of ACTED, an independent private non-profit international NGO stated:

'Overall, 61% of all households in the mantikas [districts] covered by this assessment [household survey covering 5,058 households in 17 mantikas] were found to have a living standard[19] and/or a capacity gap[20]. In other words, 61% of all households are unable to meet their basic needs in one or more sectors and/or are relying on negative, unsustainable coping mechanisms to meet these needs. This comes to an estimated 490,000 households, or 2.5 million individuals, across the 17 mantikas covered by this assessment. By far, the greatest factor driving this figure was the capacity gap score. More than half (53%) of all Libyan households in the targeted mantikas have a capacity gap. The next most common gap was in the health sector: 21% of all Libyan households in the targeted mantikas had a health living standard gap…

'The proportion of the population with a living standard and/or capacity gap varied widely by mantika, ranging from only 34% in Misrata to 100% in Al Jufra and Murzuq. Among the five mantikas with the highest proportion of their overall population who have living standard and/or capacity gaps, three are in located the South (i.e., Al Jufra, Murzuq and Ghat), and the other two are in the West (i.e., Al Jabal Al Gharbi and Azzawya). This geographic concentration may reflect the combination of instability and challenges around infrastructure and service provision in the South, and the effects of

[17] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p6), 31 January 2020
[18] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p5), February 2020
[19] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p24), April 2020
[20] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p24), April 2020

the ongoing fighting in the West. The greatest factor driving the proportion of households with a living standard and/or capacity gap also varied by mantika. However, in four of the five mantikas with the highest proportion of their population having a living standard and/or capacity gap, capacity gaps were either the main driver or one of the main drivers.' [21]

5.1.6   For more current information on humanitarian need and aid, see ReliefWeb.

5.2   Socio-economic situation

5.2.1   The CIA Factbook stated:

'Libya's economy, almost entirely dependent on oil and gas exports, has struggled since 2014 given security and political instability, disruptions in oil production, and decline in global oil prices. The Libyan dinar has lost much of its value since 2014 and the resulting gap between official and black market exchange rates has spurred the growth of a shadow economy and contributed to inflation. The country suffers from widespread power outages, caused by shortages of fuel for power generation. Living conditions, including access to clean drinking water, medical services, and safe housing have all declined since 2011. Oil production in 2017 reached a five-year high, driving GDP growth, with daily average production rising to 879,000 barrels per day. However, oil production levels remain below the average pre-Revolution highs of 1.6 million barrels per day.

'The Central Bank of Libya continued to pay government salaries to a majority of the Libyan workforce and to fund subsidies for fuel and food, resulting in an estimated budget deficit of about 17% of GDP in 2017. Low consumer confidence in the banking sector and the economy as a whole has driven a severe liquidity shortage.'[22]

5.2.2   The UN Special Rapporteur, Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, on the human rights of internally displaced persons, noted in her report following her mission to Libya between 25 to 31 January 2018 (UN SR report 2018):

'While the country is perceived as an upper middle-income country with vast oil resources, the cost of the conflict has taken a severe toll on the Libyan economy, which remained in recession for the fifth consecutive year in 2017. Political strife, poor security conditions and blockaded oil infrastructure continue to constrain the supply side of the economy, which is now near collapse. Several of those that the Special Rapporteur met with expressed frustration at how this current economic "liquidity" crisis is exacerbating — in particular — the difficulties faced by vulnerable internally displaced persons, as well as the capacity and ability of the Government of Libya to respond comprehensively to the internal displacement challenges.'[23]

5.2.3   A 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report authored by REACH Initiative, a programme of ACTED, an independent private non-profit international NGO, stated:

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[21] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p4), April 2020
[22] CIA Factbook, 'Libya – Economy', last updated 30 June 2020
[23] UNHRC, 'UNSR report 2018' (para 14), 10 May 2018

'… the conflict's effects have extended far beyond the geographic areas that have originated and received displaced persons. The past nine years' instability have also left in their wake a trail of governance challenges that have been felt across the entire country, including through ineffective public administration and poor service provision, as public institutions struggle to provide basic services. For example, 24% of Libyans reported in 2019 that they faced challenges accessing health care when they needed it, and the most common problems cited were a lack of medicines and medical supplies, lack of medical staff and a lack of resources to pay for care. Additionally, the conflict and resulting governance challenges have contributed to widespread insecurity and instability across Libya, in some cases leading to an escalation of pre-existing tensions between local groups.'

'… the protracted instability in Libya has also had a profound and negative effect on the country's economy, and in turn on the Libyan population's ability to meet its basic needs. The Libyan economy is highly dependent on oil production and international oil prices, and oil price fluctuations combined with erratic production due to insecurity have led to inconsistent government revenues. This is a particular point of concern since, as of February 2019, at least 30% of the Libyan population have been covered by the Libyan public payroll, which functions as a "stabilizing instrument across society."

'These pressures on Libyan government revenues and outlays have created liquidity problems, negatively impacting the ability of Libyan employees to withdraw their public wages, which are often direct-deposited into their bank accounts. Libyans' limited ability to access cash has in turn led to a general distrust of the banking system, which has occurred simultaneously with pressures on fuel and food subsidies, disruptions to supply chains and the inflation of the Libyan dinar. As a result of these concurring factors, it is estimated that Libyan households lost about 80% of their purchasing power between 2015 and 2019.' [24]

5.2.4   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020:

'While the UN Development Programme's 2019 Human Development Index categorizes Libya as a "high" human development country, its ranking has fallen 43 places from 67th in 2010 to 110th in 2019, making it the largest drop in HDI rankings globally. This drop in performance is felt by Libya's people mainly through the collapse of public services, especially education and health, higher prices through cuts to food and fuel subsidies, conflict-related loss of shelter and livelihoods and major setbacks in ensuring the safety of citizens and the rule of law.

'Once a high middle-income country with socio-economic indicators among the highest on the African continent, years of war and instability have sent the economy into a downward spiral. Oil and gas remain the main source of economic growth in the country. Although oil production rose by 18 per cent in 2018 and according to the Libyan National Oil Corporation has averaged 1.2 million barrels per day in 2019, production is below pre-conflict levels of

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[24] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p14-15), April 2020

1.6 million barrels per day. Furthermore, oil production remains susceptible to disruptions due to conflict, with many facilities temporarily stopping production, which negatively impacts the economy…

'While Local Administrative Law 59 (2012) provides for greater municipal autonomy, many municipalities are left to provide basic services with limited resources due to weaknesses in financial distribution and management systems[1]. This has resulted in a severe deterioration in the provision of basic public services in many parts of the country. For example, at least 22 per cent of primary health care facilities are closed and many that are open are unable to provide essential services and medicines, lack staff or are damaged. Additionally, at least 219 schools have been destroyed or damaged and those that remain open are overcrowded and lack sufficient training capacity.'[25]

5.2.5 The United Nations Secretary General report on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSML) of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'The sustainability of the economic situation in Libya is becoming increasingly tenuous, and the situation will be further exacerbated by COVID-19. Since the blockage of oil exports imposed by the Libyan National Army on 17 January, the primary export of Libya was reduced from 1.2 million to 72,000 barrels per day, resulting in accumulated losses amounting to more than $4 billion. To offset the diminished revenues, the Central Bank of Libya and the Government of National Accord attempted to impose long-overdue austerity measures, including cuts to the public service payroll and a reduction in fuel subsidies.

'The blockage of oil exports also resulted in the shutdown of the country's domestic oil refinery capacity, thereby requiring the National Oil Corporation to purchase refined petroleum products. Although the Corporation had been providing sufficient refined fuel for commercial purposes, on 13 March, authorities in eastern Libya imported fuel from the United Arab Emirates to Benghazi, thus undermining the authority of the Corporation and marking the first time that fuel was imported outside normal Corporation channels. The blockage of oil exports and the lack of agreement on a national budget caused delays in salary payments and a reduction in access to foreign exchange, leading to shortages and higher prices for goods. The branch of the Central Bank of Libya in Bayda' stated on 9 March that it was unable to finance the parallel government beyond salaries, evidence of the growing reluctance of Libyan commercial banks to continue to finance questionable government bonds issued by the parallel Ministry of Finance in eastern Libya. If left unaddressed, the prices of staple goods are likely to increase further, and tensions within the banking sector could lead to its collapse.'[26]

5.2.6 REACH in a joint market monitoring initiative report from 4-11 May 2020 reported key findings with regard to the cost of essential food and goods (minimum expenditure basket - MEB):

[25] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p9-10) 31 January 2020
[26] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 35-36), 5 May 2020

'The cost of MEB overall in Libya remained high this month, with a minor decrease of 5.6% recorded. This marks a 23% increase since pre-COVID levels. The MEB varied significantly between regions, with some areas found to be experiencing price decreases that brought the MEB closer to March 2020. For example, Nalut (-30%), Albayda (-28.8%) and Tobruk (-27.9%). Price reductions may be attributed to seasonal harvest cost reductions for domestically produced vegetables, such as tomatoes (-37.5%), potatoes, peppers and onions (-28.6%).'[27]

5.2.7 REACH also reported:

'Fuel prices continued to increase in the west. Consequently, unofficial liquified petroleum gas (LPG) prices are 400% more expensive in May 2020 than in March 2019. Since June 2019, Bani Walid and Tarhuna have experienced fuel shortages for both official and parallel markets. Inhabitants living in these cities are sometimes required to travel over 100km to acquire LPG. The change in administrative power in February 2019 stopped the region from receiving fuel from Misrata. Furthermore, large amounts of military activity in early 2020 prevented fuel shipments arriving from other supply routes.' [28]

5.2.8 See also COVID-19 section.

5.3 Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

5.3.1 OCHA stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2019 covering events in 2018: 'The majority of people displaced and living in informal settlements and other precarious situations are located Tripoli, Sebha, Ghat, Benghazi and Murzuq. There are particularly acute challenges and high risks for women, children, people with disabilities, the elderly, and people with chronic illnesses living in harsh conditions as a result of being displaced.'[29]

5.3.2 The Internal displacement monitoring centre on their website provide a yearly comparison of new displacements up until 2019. Since 2017 new displacements have increased by over 7 fold from 29,000 (197,000 IDP's) in 2017 to 70,000 (221,000 IDP's) in 2018 and 215,000 in 2019 (451,000 IDP's)[30].

5.3.3 A 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report authored by REACH Initiative, a programme of ACTED, an independent private non-profit international NGO, stated:

'Largely due to the year's escalation of conflict in Tripoli and the surrounding areas, 2019 saw the reversal of the declining displacement trend that Libya had seen in 2017 and 2018. According to the International Organisation for Migration's Displacement Tracking Matrix (IOM-DTM), there were 355,672 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 447,707 returnees in Libya as of

[27] REACH, 'Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)' 4 – 11 May 2020, 11 June 2020
[28] REACH, 'Libya Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI)' 4 – 11 May 2020, 11 June 2020
[29] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan 2019' (p30), October 2018
[30] IDMC, 'Libya: Annual conflict and disaster displacement figures', undated

December 2019. This IDP total represents more than double the number of IDPs reported by IOM-DTM for the same period in 2018.' [31]

5.3.4   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, covering events in 2019: 'The majority of IDPs in Libya have been displaced since 2014, demonstrating the protracted nature of this crisis. IDPs are more likely to face challenges in accessing basic services, like health and education, compared with other affected Libyans.[…].'[32]

5.3.5   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 added::

'Conflict and insecurity remain the main drivers of displacement, with 170,000 newly displaced in 2019, mainly from the conflict in Tripoli and clashes in Murzuq. In 2020, more than 343,000 people across Libya are internally displaced. An estimated 216,000 IDPs are in need of assistance, 93 per cent of whom face problems related to physical and mental well-being. IDPs with severe needs include those living in public buildings or schools (16 per cent); in informal settlements (3 per cent); and in abandoned buildings (2 per cent)13. In addition to shelter needs, IDPs face challenges accessing basic services and livelihoods and face significant protection risks.' [33]

5.3.6   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

'Limited access for local and international assistance organizations into areas affected by fighting between rival armed groups and to official and unofficial detention centers within the country hampered efforts to account for and assist the displaced.

'As of November [2019], UNHCR estimated there were 301,407 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country–approximately a 50 percent increase over 2018. Some 128,000 of these were displaced from the greater Tripoli area alone during the year.

'In July [2019] the International Organization for Migration (IOM) assessed that most new displacements were due to the continued conflict in Tripoli, the escalation of violence in the southern city of Murzuq, and flooding in Ghat. More than two-thirds of IDPs sought shelter in western Libya, including safer neighborhoods in Tripoli, the Nafusa Mountains, and along the western coast. IDPs were reportedly living in rented accommodation, with host families, in schools or other public buildings, in informal camps, in other shelter facilities, or in abandoned buildings.

'In October [2019] the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimated that 100,000 persons were displaced from Tripoli during a two-month period of intensive bombing and shelling in the summer.

'In January [2020] HRW observed that most of the 48,000 former residents of the town of Tawergha, who were forcibly displaced after the 2011 revolution, remained displaced.

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[31] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p14), April 2020
[32] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p24), 31 January 2020
[33] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p14), February 2020

'IDPs were vulnerable to abuses. The government struggled to facilitate the safe, voluntary return of IDPs to their place of origin. Due to the lack of adequate laws, policies, or government programs, international organizations and NGOs assisted IDPs to the extent possible in the form of cash payments and provision of health services, including to those with disabilities.' [34]

5.3.7　The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) gave the following data in an August 2020 report:

- '425,714 Libyans currently internally displaced (IDPs) (as of June 2020)

- '456,728 returned IDPs

- '46,823 registered refugees and asylum seekers

- '183 monitoring visits to detention centres in 2020

- '231 refugees and asylum seekers released from detention in 2020

- '5709 vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers departed since November 2017 (297 individuals departed in 2020).' [35]

5.3.8　Congressional Research Service (CRS), 'In Focus' June 2020 stated: 'Near Tripoli, conflict has displaced more than 200,000 people, and put more than 300,000 in frontline areas, some of which were mined by retreating LNA [Libyan National Army] forces. More than 650,000 foreign migrants (largely from sub-Saharan Africa) also are in Libya and remain especially vulnerable.' [36]

5.3.9　A CRS update from August 2020 added: 'More than 400,000 Libyans are internally displaced, and mines left by retreating LNA forces are complicating the return of displaced civilians in western Libya.' [37]

5.3.10　OCHA in a Libya June 2020 situation report noted:

'Following an intensification of conflict in southern Tripoli, Tarhuna and Sirt in June 2020, nearly 28,000 people were forced to flee their homes. The majority of those displaced moved to the east of the country, particularly to Benghazi (6,550 people) and Ejdabia (6,050 people), while others moved to the West, notably to Bani Waleed (4,750 people). Most internally displaced people (IDPs) are staying with relatives, friends, host families or in privately rented accommodation, while a smaller percentage (around 13 per cent) are staying in collective shelters that have been established by the local authorities…

'There are around 430,000 people that remain displaced in Libya, compared to 269,000 people at the same time last year. Those municipalities hosting the highest number of IDPs are Tajoura and Suq Aljumaa in Tripoli, Bengahzi and Sebha. The number of people that have returned to their places of origin have remained limited (8,750 people since last reported).

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[34] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 2E), 11 March 2020
[35] UNHCR, 'Update – Libya', 28 August 2020
[36] CRS, 'In Focus – Libya and US policy' updated 16 June 2020
[37] CRS, 'In Focus – Libya and US policy' updated 3 August 2020

Insecurity remained the more significant factor that drove people's displacement, with worsening economic conditions and availability of basic services being contributing factors.'[38]

5.3.11　The same June 2020 situation report also noted with regard to returnees: 'With the recent shift in conflict dynamics, many people who were displaced since the beginning of the Libyan National Army's (LNA) Tripoli offensive in April 2019, have started to return to many areas of southern Tripoli. However, there is a significant risk to returning residents and responders from explosive hazards that have been left behind by forces as they withdrew from Tripoli's southern suburbs.' [39]

5.3.12　For more information see OCHA – Situation reports, maps and infographics and for up to date IDP numbers see Reliefweb - Libya and UNHCR - dashboard

5.4　Education

5.4.1　Encyclopædia Britannica stated:

'Public education is free, although insecurity since the fall of the Qaddafi regime in 2011 has caused disruptions to schools and universities in many areas of the country. Arabic is the language of instruction at all levels. The school system is composed of a six-year primary level, a three-year intermediate and vocational level, and a three-year secondary and advanced vocational level. There are also Qurʾānic schools, financed by the government…

'Higher education is offered by the state institutions of the University of Libya, subdivided in 1973 into Al-Fāteḥ University, located at Tripoli, and Garyounis (Qāryūnis) University, located at Benghazi. Advanced religious training is obtained at a branch of the university at Al-Bayḍāʾ. Libyan students also study abroad.'[40]

5.4.2　Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Libya report covering events in 2019 reported: 'According to the United Nations Children' Fund, as of June [2019], 21 schools were being used as shelters for displaced persons in and around Tripoli. The violence had led to the suspension of school for 122,088 children.' [41]

5.4.3　REACH in their 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment (MSNA report):

'Like the public health sector, the public education sector in Libya has also been affected by the extended conflict. Although the findings from this MSNA do not indicate a breakdown in public education, they do suggest that the crisis has placed a considerable strain on the sector. The 2019 MSNA household survey found that nearly 100% of school-aged children are enrolled in school. However, the relatively high enrolment and attendance rates bely the challenges facing this sector, especially in areas that have received displaced persons. One stark example of the effects of the crisis on

[38] OCHA, 'June situation report', last updated, 6 July 2020
[39] OCHA, 'June situation report', last updated, 6 July 2020
[40] Encyclopædia Britannica, 'Libya – Education', 25 June 2020
[41] HRW, 'Libya: Events of 2019', 14 January 2020

education is cited in the 2020 HNO, which notes that since 2011 "at least 219 schools have been destroyed or damaged."

'First, on the positive side, MSNA FGD participants consistently reported that IDP children have not faced issues accessing education in their areas of displacement. Libyan educational institutions have made efforts to ensure that IDP children are included, for example by showing flexibility towards families who may have lost their identity documents and allowing their children to enrol regardless.

'However, key informants in Al Jfara, Tripoli, Misrata, Sirt, Murzuq, Ubari, Derna, Al Jufra and Sebha all reported overcrowding in their schools. Key informants in Al Jabal Al Gharbi, Al Jfara and Sebha mentioned that, as a result of this overcrowding, households that can afford it have turned to more expensive private schools.

'Additionally, MSNA qualitative data indicated that many public schools are in need of maintenance to their infrastructure. Key informants in Azzawya, Al Jabal Al Gharbi, Al Jfara, Sebha, Zwara, Ghat, Ubari, Wadi Ashshati and Al Kufra all reported that there has been little or no funding budgeted for education in general, or for facilities maintenance in particular, and that this lack is reportedly due to the conflict.

'Finally, some educational facilities have been re-purposed or destroyed by armed actors. A key informant in Al Jfara noted that some schools have been converted into military barracks and field hospitals and are therefore no longer functional. Similarly, according to a Derna key informant, some schools have served as military barracks, while other schools have been damaged or destroyed by military operations.

'As with the public health sector, the public education sector has suffered from a lack of investment during the years of the conflict. As with the public health sector, there is a risk that – if such conditions continue – Libyan education outcomes may suffer serious long-term, negative effects.'[42]

5.4.4   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

'The continuing conflict disrupted the school year for thousands of students across the country; many schools remained unopened due to lack of materials, damage, or security concerns. In May[2019] Al-Jazeera estimated that 120,000 students in Tripoli alone had missed school due to conflict. In July [2019] the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted it had received reports of shelling on school buildings. Forced disappearances and internal displacement further disrupted school attendance. As of November [2019], UNSMIL [UN Support Mission in Libya] estimated dozens of schools had been destroyed in continuing conflict and nearly 30 other schools had been repurposed as shelters for displaced persons.'[43]

5.4.5   The United Nations Human Rights Council (OHCHR), Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review stated in their May 2020 Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

[42] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment', April 2020
[43] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019 (section 6)', 11 March 2020

'UNESCO stated that schools in Libya had been largely affected by the conflict and the situation of families and children remained precarious. In 2019, the academic year had been suspended in all schools in conflict-affected areas and seven schools had been used to shelter displaced families. In addition, 5 million schoolbooks and national school exam results had been destroyed during an attack on an education warehouse.

'The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict reported that attacks on schools and hospitals were a main and growing concern. It was noted that there had been a spike in the number of incidents, with 34 verified attacks in the first six months of 2019, compared with 42 such attacks for all of 2018.

'UNESCO recommended that the Government take all necessary measures to protect the educational environment from conflict, including by providing public transport to school. It also recommended that Libya take appropriate measures to ensure that children had access to education everywhere in the country, including in the south; provide human rights training to teachers, especially on non-discrimination; and rehabilitate schools and classrooms that had been destroyed or damaged.

'The Committee on Migrant Workers recommended that the State party adopt concrete and effective measures to make it possible for children of migrant workers, irrespective of the migration status of their parents, to enter and remain in the education system, and that undocumented migrant children were not reported to the immigration authorities by those working in the education system.' [44]

5.4.6   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 stated:

'Around 127,000 school aged children (including 38,500 IDPs, 12,500 returnees, 17,500 migrants and refugees, and 58,500 non-displaced students) are in need of support to access safe and quality formal and non-formal education in Libya. Access to education has been disrupted by displacement, closure or damage of facilities and a lack of teaching and learning materials. Furthermore, security concerns linked to the commute to and from school present protection risks for many school aged children, and conflict-induced trauma and stress have impacted on children's ability to learn.' [45]

5.4.7   UNESCO on an undated webpage provided the following data on school age population by education level:

- Pre-primary – 264,706

- Primary – 766,337

- Secondary – 681,192

- Tertiary – 573,230

- Compulsory education lasts 9 years from age 6 to age 14[46].

[44] OHCHR, 'Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review' (para 37-40), 12 March 2020
[45] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p34), February 2020
[46] UNESCO, 'Libya – Education and literacy', undated

5.4.8   UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 January - 31 March 2020 documented:

'… nine incidents that impacted education, one of which was attributed to forces affiliated to the LNA and eight others could not be attributed to one specific party to the conflict, as they occurred during cross-fire between forces affiliated to the LNA and GNA. One improvised explosive device detonated in al-Zawiyah, western Libya, injuring three schoolboys. While no casualties were recorded from the indiscriminate shelling (rocket/artillery) that impacted eight schools in western Libya, the attacks spread fear among the students and their families and led to the closure of some schools.' [47]

5.4.9   UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 April – 30 June 2020 (second quarter) documented: '… nine incidents impacting schools which could not be attributed to one specific party.'[48]

5.4.10   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated: '[…] On 4 March 2020, 10 schools in Ayn Zarah and all schools in Misratah that had been closed for more than a month reopened, allowing 127,000 students to return. However, on 8 March, eight schools near Mitiga Airport were closed owing to the risks posed by shelling. As at 16 March, at least 930 families (approximately 4,650 persons) were reported to have fled to neighbouring areas.'[49]

5.5   Housing

5.5.1   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020:

'Conflict has resulted in severe damage to housing and civilian infrastructures across the country, impacting living conditions. The destruction and damage of housing, coupled with increased demand due to IDP arrivals, has led to shortages in adequate shelter options in many locations, and associated increases in rental costs. Vulnerable families face difficulties in securing affordable housing as a result; many are at risk of eviction. IDPs are most likely to live in substandard shelter and have informal rental contracts. Around 4,000 IDPs in informal settings are assessed as being among the most vulnerable and in need of shelter. Existing pressure on shelter options could increase even further should the conflict re-escalate. An estimated 749,000 people remain in frontline areas or in areas affected by conflict in Tripoli and may come under pressure to leave their homes and seek shelter in safer locations.'[50]

5.5.2   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Situation Report April 2020: 'For many people, the conflict has destroyed or damaged their homes and many have fled due to the proximity

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[47] UNSMIL ' Civilian Casualties report 1 January – 31 March 2020', 30 April 2020
[48] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020
[49] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 58-59), 5 May 2020
[50] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' 31 January 2020

of fighting, impacting living conditions. Coupled with increased demand due to IDP arrivals this has led to shortages in adequate shelter options and associated increases in rental costs. Vulnerable families face difficulties in securing affordable housing, along with those who have lost important legal documents, being at risk of eviction.'[51]

5.5.3 OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 stated: 'Waves of conflict have caused population displacement and severe damage to housing and infrastructure across Libya. As the need for housing continues to be stretched, especially in urban areas and around major cities, and rental prices increase, this has exacerbated the difficulties of households in securing affordable housing and putting an increasing number of vulnerable families at risk of eviction. As a result, around 342,000 people [5% of the population] are in need of shelter assistance.' [52]

5.6 Health and healthcare

5.6.1 The United Nations Human Rights Council, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review stated in their May 2020 Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

'The World Health Organization (WHO) observed that ongoing civil conflict and armed fighting had interrupted many of health programmes and were impacting negatively on all aspects of health and the health sector, resulting in: large-scale displacements; damage to vital infrastructure, including health facilities; and thousands of people dead or injured. Security constraints, damage or closure of health facilities and some main warehouses, the departure of foreign health professionals and reduced budgetary provision for medicines and supplies were among the main reasons for the situation with regard to health services. An estimated 1,056,000 people remained in need of humanitarian assistance in the health sector; 760,000 were targeted in 2018 by health partners.

'The Service Availability and Readiness Assessment survey carried out by WHO in 2016–2017 covered all 1,656 public health facilities in Libya. The survey revealed that 17.5 per cent of hospitals were closed, and 20 per cent of primary health-care facilities were non- functional. While the general readiness score for the provision of basic services by functioning hospitals was 69 per cent, the score for primary health-care facilities was only 45 per cent, indicating that their capacity was severely constrained. The greatest limitation was found in the availability of basic medicines across the country, with a score of only 16 per cent.

'WHO stated that the health profile in Libya had changed in the last decade, with an increasing burden of non-communicable diseases, owing to demographic and life style changes. In 2012, the leading causes of death were cardiovascular diseases (37 per cent) and cancer (13 per cent), followed by traffic accidents. Similarly, obesity rates had increased in the last decade. HIV infection rates had been rising, especially among intravenous drug users, but only eight facilities in Libya offered counselling and testing

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[51] OCHA, 'Libya - Situation Report', last updated 29 April 2020
[52] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p53), February 2020

for HIV. The availability of preventive and curative services for children in Libya was limited. Over one third of municipalities could not provide paediatric health care for their constituents. Where primary health-care facilities did offer such care, the service package was generally limited, focusing primarily on diagnosis and treatment of malnutrition, and treatment of pneumonia. Trauma and obstetric care were difficult to access in security-compromised areas, and the current provision of mental health-care services, psychosocial counselling and care for disabilities was inadequate to meet the needs of the conflict-affected population.

'WHO observed that immunization coverage rates in Libya had been consistently high, with coverage for all antigens estimated and measured to be 97 per cent or higher. The country had maintained its polio-free status since 1991, and no cases of tetanus had been recorded since 1993. In May 2018, Libya had been in the early stage of measles eradication, although some transmission still occurred, with eight confirmed cases of measles having been reported by the national centre for disease control in 2017, together with seven cases of rubella.'[53]

5.6.2   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020:

'Around 24 per cent of Libyans and 80 per cent of migrants and refugees, reported facing challenges accessing health services. Many public health care facilities are closed and those that are open lack medicines, supplies and equipment. Many facilities have been directly attacked or damaged due to fighting and those that remain functional are overburdened or not maintained. Access to health, education and other public services are further restricted for people who have lost legal documents, or for those who do not have them, such as migrants and refugees.'[54]

5.6.3   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 stated:

'The destruction of and damage to health care facilities as a result of direct attacks, and severe shortages of health staff, medicines, supplies and equipment, all compound the failings of a health system marked by years of under-investment. More than 3,970,000 people are in need of health assistance, lacking consistent access to primary and secondary health care services. This number includes nearly 1,663,000 people in extreme need and more than 203,000 people in need categorized as "catastrophic" according to the health sector severity scale. The Health Sector-wide approach will target 1,785,072 people in 58 municipalities, identified as having the most severe needs. Of these, 864,000 are women and 381,000 are under 15 years of age. Around 203,000 individuals categorized as "catastrophic" will be targeted under the HRP, including 56,000 IDPs, 39,000 returnees, 50,000 migrants and 29,000 refugees. Additionally, vulnerable groups, including people with mental disorders and physical disabilities, chronic disease patients, as well as women and children will be prioritized.' [55]

5.6.4   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

[53] OHCHR, 'Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review' (para 32-36), 12 March 2020
[54] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p5), 31 January 2020
[55] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p42), February 2020

'As of November [2019], UNSMIL [UN Support Mission in Libya] reported there had been 60 registered attacks on health facilities and workers, including attacks on hospitals, field clinics, and ambulances. The attacks led to 11 confirmed health-care worker deaths and 33 injuries, although the actual number could be higher. An estimated 20 percent of health-care infrastructure in the country was inoperable due to damages from conflict, disrepair, or other factors.

'For example, in late July [2019] airstrikes by LNA-affiliated groups targeted two field hospitals and two ambulances, killing four health-care workers and injuring eight others.' [56]

5.6.5 REACH in their 2019 Multi-sector needs assessment report stated:

'The health sector offers perhaps the best example of a Libyan public system that has suffered from the prolonged conflict. According to the 2020 HNO, since 2011 "at least 22 per cent of primary health care facilities are closed." This statistic is supported by the results of the MSNA household survey, in which 24% of households said that they faced challenges in accessing health care when needed. The most common reasons cited for these challenges were: lack of medicines and medical supplies, lack of medical staff and lack of means to pay for care. These household survey findings were elaborated further by the MSNA's qualitative data. In Tripoli, Benghazi, and Al Jabal Al Gharbi, key informants reported that a combination of scarcity, demand and limited effective price control has driven up the cost of medicines. Key informants in Tripoli and Benghazi also reported that public health facilities regularly suffer from shortages of medicines and medical supplies, and key informants in Azzawya and Al Jabal Al Gharbi mentioned cases of people stealing and selling health supplies intended for these public facilities. Similarly, key informants in Sebha, Wadi Ashshati, Zwara and Ghat reported that the equipment in public health facilities has been damaged due to a lack of public maintenance. Key informants in Azzawya, Sirt and Sebha reported that a lack of capacity at public health facilities has pushed residents to use private hospitals, which charge relatively high prices.' [57]

5.6.6 A WHO Health sector bulletin from June 2020 stated: 'Following years of neglect and under-investment in the health sector, Libya is ill equipped to tackle COVID-19. A recent health sector assessment found that only just over half of communities had emergency health services or health care services for children, and just under half had any kind of general clinical services. The situation is even worse when it comes to reproductive health care. Mental health services are basically non-existent.' [58]

5.6.7 The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated: 'Thus far in 2020, 12 reported attacks have impacted 7 health facilities in Libya, while in 2019, 62 attacks impacted 19 health facilities throughout the country.' [59]

[56] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 1)', 11 March 2020
[57] REACH Initiative, '2019 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment' (p32), April 2020
[58] WHO, 'Libya: Health Sector Bulletin' (p3), 30 July 2020
[59] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 58-59), 5 May 2020

5.6.8   UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 January - 31 March 2020 documented '… two incidents targeting healthcare personnel during the first three months of 2020. One incident was the arbitrary arrest of a medical official by the LNA in Derna in eastern Libya, while the other incident was the abduction and killing of a doctor in the Ain Zara neighborhood of Tripoli. Although the perpetrator of the second incident remains unknown, the reported location of the incident is under control of forces affiliated to the GNA.' [60]

5.6.9   UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 April – 30 June 2020 (second quarter) documented: '… nine attacks on six different healthcare facilities, as well as one attack on an ambulance during the second three months of 2020. Seven of these attacks were attributed to the LNA and it was not possible to attribute two of the attacks. For example the al Khadra hospital in Tripoli, which was assigned to receive COVID-19 patients, was struck on four different occasions by rockets during the reporting period.' [61]

5.6.10   WHO in a Health response to COVID-19 in Libya, update # 9 (Reporting period: 11 to 24 June 2020) stated: 'Attacks on health care are continuing. Thus far, there have been more confirmed attacks on health care in Libya than in any other country worldwide.'[62]

5.6.11   A WHO Health sector bulletin from June 2020 noted that of the 131 civilian casualties reported by UNSMIL between 1 January and 31 March 2020 that 'In 2020, WHO documented at least 21 attacks on medical facilities, ambulances and medical personnel, in one of the most shocking ongoing manifestations of this conflict.'[63]

5.6.12   For more information and updates see WHO health sector bulletins as well as the COVID section further below for impact of COVID on current access to health services.

5.7   Nutrition and food security

5.7.1   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 stated: 'Food security remains a priority for vulnerable populations in Libya as conflict continues to generate displacement. An estimated 336,000 people are identified as in need of food security assistance. Of those, an estimated 65 per cent are Libyans – whether displaced, returnees, or host communities – while 35 per cent are migrants and refugees.' [64]

5.7.2   The Global Nutrition report 2020 stated in its Libya nutrition profile:

'Libya is off course to meet the global targets for anaemia in women of reproductive age, male diabetes, female diabetes, male obesity, and female obesity. There is insufficient target data to assess Libya's progress for under-five overweight, under-five stunting, under-five wasting, infant exclusive breastfeeding, and low birth weight.

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[60] UNSMIL ' Civilian Casualties report 1 January – 31 March 2020', 30 April 2020
[61] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020
[62] WHO, 'Health response to COVID-19 in Libya, update # 9…', 25 June 2020
[63] WHO, 'Libya: Health Sector Bulletin', 30 June 2020
[64] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p39), February 2020

'Although it performs relatively well against other developing countries, Libya still experiences a malnutrition burden among its under-five population. […]

'There is insufficient data on exclusive breastfeeding among infants, and on low birth weight.

'Libya's adult population also face a malnutrition burden. 32.5% of women of reproductive age have anaemia, and 16.6% of adult women have diabetes, compared to 15.2% of men. Meanwhile, 39.6% of women and 25% of men have obesity.'[65]

5.7.3 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Situation Report June 2020:

'At the start of 2020, food insecurity in Libya was relatively low (at 5 per cent). Food security exists when all people have regular physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

'Despite this, approximately 69 per cent of Libyans are still considered "marginally food secure". This means they have low levels of resilience in case of a shock and thus could easily become food insecure.

'Around 64 per cent of Libyan households and 78 per cent of migrant and refugee households currently employ negative coping strategies in order to afford food. This includes relying on less expensive food, reducing the number or size of meals per day, withdrawing children from schools, or selling assets. On average, 47 per cent of Libyan and 31 per cent of migrant and refugee household expenses go towards food.

'Libya, as an "upper middle-income economy" with substantial oil revenues and a relatively small population, has been able to provide extensive social security support through subsidies for fuel, food, housing and education. However, increasing low consumer confidence in the banking sector and the economy as a whole has driven a severe liquidity shortage, impacting many people's well-being and livelihoods.

'Furthermore, as Libya is a country that almost exclusively relies on food imports to meet the needs of its domestic market, it has been significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic.'[66]

5.8 Water, sanitation, hygiene and basic services

5.8.1 OCHA in their 'Humanitarian needs overview' report in January 2020 stated:

'The protracted conflict has also caused a severe decline in water and sanitation services and facilities. Water in Libya is supplied through the Man-Made River Project (60 per cent), municipal well fields (30 per cent), and desalination plants (10 per cent). However, armed group attacks, vandalism and the lack of maintenance have disabled nearly one third of aquifer pumps that supply 60 per cent of Libya's fresh water, placing additional pressure on the aging and energy-intensive desalination plants in the north. This has

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[65] Global Nutrition Report, 'Libya nutrition profile', 2019
[66] OCHA, 'Libya - Situation Report', last updated 8 June 2020

resulted in limited access to safe water, as well as electricity blackouts. As a result, 36 per cent of households report limited access to sufficient water. Many households use water filters to improve the water quality; a 27 per cent increase since 2018.

'Access to basic hygiene and sanitation services also remains a challenge, particularly for displaced and conflict-affected communities. The deterioration of public administration has meant garbage and solid waste collection is limited, with 49 per cent of garbage being buried or left on the street, raising the risks of contamination and disease.'[67]

5.8.2   OCHA continued:

'Critical infrastructure and vital installations that provide water, electricity and other essential services to the population have been damaged by the conflict. Deficits in water and electricity supplies have been aggravated by the fighting and attacks targeting the Man-Made River facilities, which provides around 60 per cent of Libya's annual water supply. This places additional pressure on the aging and energy intensive desalination plants in the north, resulting in longer blackouts nationally. September [2019] clashes in Tripoli disabled the main power plant that supplies the south with electricity, resulting in a five-day blackout. While Libya's oil continues to flow, the risks to its continued production are as grave as those that imperil the supply of water and electricity. An assessment conducted by Internews, UNHCR and Mercy Corps showed that the lack of a stable source of electricity is a major challenge for affected people in accessing critical information about the response, access to assistance, and security.' [68]

5.8.3   OCHA's response plan stated:

'Water and sanitation needs have increased in Libya due to the escalating security situation, lack of maintenance of facilities and continued deterioration in service delivery. Displaced populations seeking refuge in collective centres and/or hosting communities, migrants and refugees are in dire needs of life-saving critical WASH services. Access to safe drinking water is a key challenge, with regular power cuts affecting the continuous supply of water. Toilets in the most affected areas are inadequate and solid waste management is reaching alarming levels, with piles of garbage creating an environment for vector breeding.

'The WASH [Water, sanitation and hygiene] Sector has identified 242,000 people in need of WASH assistance in Libya. This includes people in areas ranked as either extreme or catastrophic on the severity scale. This includes 117,000 IDPs, 58,000 conflict-affected non-displaced Libyans, 13,000 returnees and 55,000 migrants and refugees.' [69]

5.8.4   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated: 'Vital services and civilian infrastructure continued to be impacted by the hostilities.' [70]

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[67] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p13), 31 January 2020
[68] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p17), 31 January 2020
[69] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p55), February 2020
[70] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 58-59), 5 May 2020

6.   COVID-19

6.1.1   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'To prevent the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the national authorities and the unrecognized "interim government" based in eastern Libya introduced preventive measures, including the closure of all air, land and sea borders; restrictions on movement between municipalities and regions; curfews; lockdowns; the suspension of Friday prayers and gatherings; the closure of schools and non-essential shops; and restrictions on public transportation. On 14 March, the Prime Minister, Faiez Mustafa Serraj, announced a state of emergency in Libya and allocated 575 million Libyan dinars (about $406 million) to COVID-19 preparedness and response. Separate committees were established in the east and the west to address the impact of the disease.

'Although prevention and preparedness measures taken with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic were introduced by authorities with the support of the United Nations, Libya remained at an extremely high risk. The situation was compounded by increasing levels of fighting and insecurity, political fragmentation and a weak and overstretched health system. The pandemic led to a loss of income for segments of society, food shortages and an increase in the price of basic commodities. In addition, measures to restrict the spread of COVID-19 hampered access to humanitarian aid and the movement of medical and humanitarian personnel.' [71]

6.1.2   A REACH Initiative report on protection monitoring during COVID-19 and covering 31 May - 2nd June 2020 stated:

'Schools remain closed across Libya. As in the previous round, all Community Representative KIs [key informants] representing all population groups reported that members of their community are no longer receiving education in any form.

'As seen in the previous round, some service provider KIs reported that children were receiving an education at home. They elaborated to say that due to an expectation that the schools would re-open after the Eid holiday, some parents and caregivers were reviewing certain modules with their children in order to prepare them for re-starting school. However, due to the recent spike in COVID-19 cases seen in the country, the decision was reportedly made not to re-open schools until at least mid-July.

'Alongside this, KIs were asked whether households had access to remote means of education. Similarly to the previous round, KIs reported that education was more commonly accessible through television and telephone than via the internet. Community representatives from all population groups (including all KIs representing East African communities) noted that only

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[71] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 4-5), 5 May 2020

some members of their community were able to access the internet. This included all KIs representing East African communities.'[72]

6.1.3   The same report also provided information regarding healthcare:

'In this round, Service Provider KIs continued to report that communities were facing barriers to accessing public healthcare facilities. This is reportedly due to travel restrictions designed to limit the spread of the virus and the fact that facilities are not often open.

'Two healthcare workers elaborated to say that there is a shortage of staff, equipment and medicines, and that this is the case in the majority of public healthcare facilities in the city.

'Shortages of medical staff resulting in reduced capacity of public services has been reported by healthcare worker KIs for the past two rounds.

'These reported concerns are reflected in recent news reports from Libya, which have highlighted that, due to concerns over COVID-19 and a lack of PPE, many public healthcare workers do not go to work to protect themselves and their families. This trend is likely compounded by fears related to a spate of targeted attacks on healthcare facilities that took place during the last year and the fact that many staff are not receiving their salaries on a regular basis.' [73]

6.1.4   WHO in a Health response to COVID-19 in Libya, update # 9 (Reporting period: 11 to 24 June 2020) stated:

'In the past two weeks, the number of COVID-19 cases in Libya has more than doubled, while the escalating conflict has forced approximately 24 000 people from their homes. Attacks on health care are continuing. Thus far, there have been more confirmed attacks on health care in Libya than in any other country worldwide.

'Of the cumulative total of 639 confirmed COVID-19 patients, 44 new people have contracted the disease in the last 24 hours (between 23 and 24 June 2020).

'The southwestern region has been disproportionately hit by COVID-19, with 46% of the overall number of cases. The region has a positivity rate of 19% (293 positive cases out of just 1550 samples tested) compared with a 2% positivity rate in the northwest (301 positive cases out of 15 100 samples tested). Sebha municipality accounts for 96% of cases in the southwest, followed by Wadi Al Shaati (Braq) and Al Mahroqa municipalities. Laboratory testing capacity in the southwest needs to be scaled up immediately to improve the detection rate of positive cases that are being missed.'[74]

6.1.5   The Libya Herald on 19 July 2020 reported:

'Libya's government in Tripoli yesterday extended the current curfew for 15 days – until 2 August, as the Coronavirus cases continued to increase across the country. The 24-hour Friday and Saturday curfew has been lifted.

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[72] REACH Initiative, 'Libya: Protection Monitoring During COVID-19…' (p5), 27 June 2020
[73] REACH Initiative, 'Libya: Protection Monitoring During COVID-19…' (p4), 27 June 2020
[74] WHO, 'Health response to COVID-19 in Libya, update # 9…', 25 June 2020

'Yesterday, Libya's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) reported 87 new cases, taking the total to 1,791 out of which there are 1,358 active cases with 385 recoveries and 48 deaths.

'The cases are spread across the country but with the largest numbers now concentrated in Libya's south.

'The curfew extension means Libya's land borders and airports will continue to be shut to the outside world. Travel between cities is still barred.'[75]

6.1.6   A WHO Health sector bulletin from July 2020 stated: '

'The national preparedness and response plan for COVID-19 has not been endorsed by the Libyan authorities. Limited COVID-19 testing capacity throughout the country. Global shortage of cartridges for GeneXpert machines affecting Libya; the ceiling is considered too low and deliveries of ordered supplies have not been timely. In Sabha, COVID-19 cases are still increasing (744 confirmed cases), and the city continues to register the highest numbers of active cases (523) in the country. 194 people in Sabha have recovered and 27 have died. All the municipalities in the south have recorded positive cases, with the highest percentages in Sabha and Ashshatti. Poor living conditions are exacerbating the situation and hampering the response to the pandemic. Fuel shortages and daily electricity cuts of more than 18 hours are affecting the functioning of health facilities. Liquidity is another serious concern: many people have not been paid for several months. Armed robberies and tribal clashes are increasing, and there is poor coordination between the security and military forces and the health authorities in Sabha.'[76]

6.1.7   The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in an infographic published 17 August 2020 stated:

'During the reporting period, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Libya more than quadrupled in July, increasing from 824 to 3,621 confirmed cases (+2,797). The majority of new COVID-19 cases were identified in Tripoli, Sebha and Misrata.

'In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Libyan authorities initiated public health measures in March 2020 aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. These measures include travel and mobility restrictions due to partial closure of airports, points of entry (POE) along land borders. On 05 May 2020, Libyan authorities started the repatriation of Libyans stranded abroad through Misrata, Benghazi Benina and Al Abraq airports, as well as Emsaed and Ras Ajdir land border crossing points.

'During the reporting period, around 3,481 Libyans reportedly returned from Egypt through Emsaed, while almost 215 Libyans returned from Tunisia through Ras Ajdir land border crossing point.

'On 26 July, Misrata airport* was re-opened for commercial flights to Istanbul and for repatriation flights to Libya, with an average of two flights taking place per day. Benina Airport in Benghazi was reportedly only open for

[75] Libya Herald, 'Libya extends curfew for 15 days as Coronavirus cases…', 19 July 2020
[76] WHO, 'Libya: Health Sector Bulletin' (p3)', 1 August 2020

stranded Libyans returning from abroad with more than 1,000 stranded Libyans returning to Libya through Benina Airport in July.'[77]

6.1.8 The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in a news and press release posted 20 August 2020 stated:

'War-torn Libya's COVID-19 cases have increased more than 15-fold in less than two months, spiking from 571 in June to more than 9,000 today [20 August 2020]. More than half a million people need health care assistance as conflict, COVID-19 and economic collapse threaten to plunge hundreds of thousands of civilians deeper into chaos.

'The economic impact of conflict and COVID-19 is also hard-felt. Most people surveyed by the ICRC said that their livelihoods have suffered because of COVID-19. Daily wage earners and migrants are the hardest-hit as income opportunities have evaporated as prices of staple foods have increased by about 20% on average but doubled in some areas. Prices are expected to climb further since Libya imports most of its food and oil production has ground to a halt. Milk, vegetables, bread, and fuel are already in short supply.'[78]

6.1.9 As of 13 September 2020 the African Union dashboard recorded 22,781 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Libya with 362 deaths[79].

6.1.10 For further information and updates see

- OCHA – Libya: Covid-19 situation reports
- WHO health sector bulletins
- Africa Union CDC dashboard

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Section 7 updated: 2 September 2020

7. Actors in conflict

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 The Rule of Law in armed conflict projects (RULAC) on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

The GNA led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Serraj is recognized by the UN as 'the sole legitimate government of Libya' and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has called upon the Member States 'to cease support to and official contact with parallel institutions that claim to be the legitimate authority but are outside the Agreement…

… both the government of Libya [GNA] and the LNA [Libyan National Army] are also each engaged in a non-international armed conflict with the Islamic State (IS) and other armed groups notably the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (BRSC). In 2015 the Islamic State group took advantage of the security situation in Libya and gained control over several cities, including Benghazi and Sirte. Since its establishment, BRSC is engaged in

[77] IOM, 'COVID-19 movement restrictions: Libya mobility restriction dashboard #6…', 17 August 2020
[78] ICRC, 'Libya: COVID-19 and conflict collide in Libya, deepening the…', 20 August 2020
[79] African Union, 'Africa CDC dashboard - Libya', last updated 6 July 2020

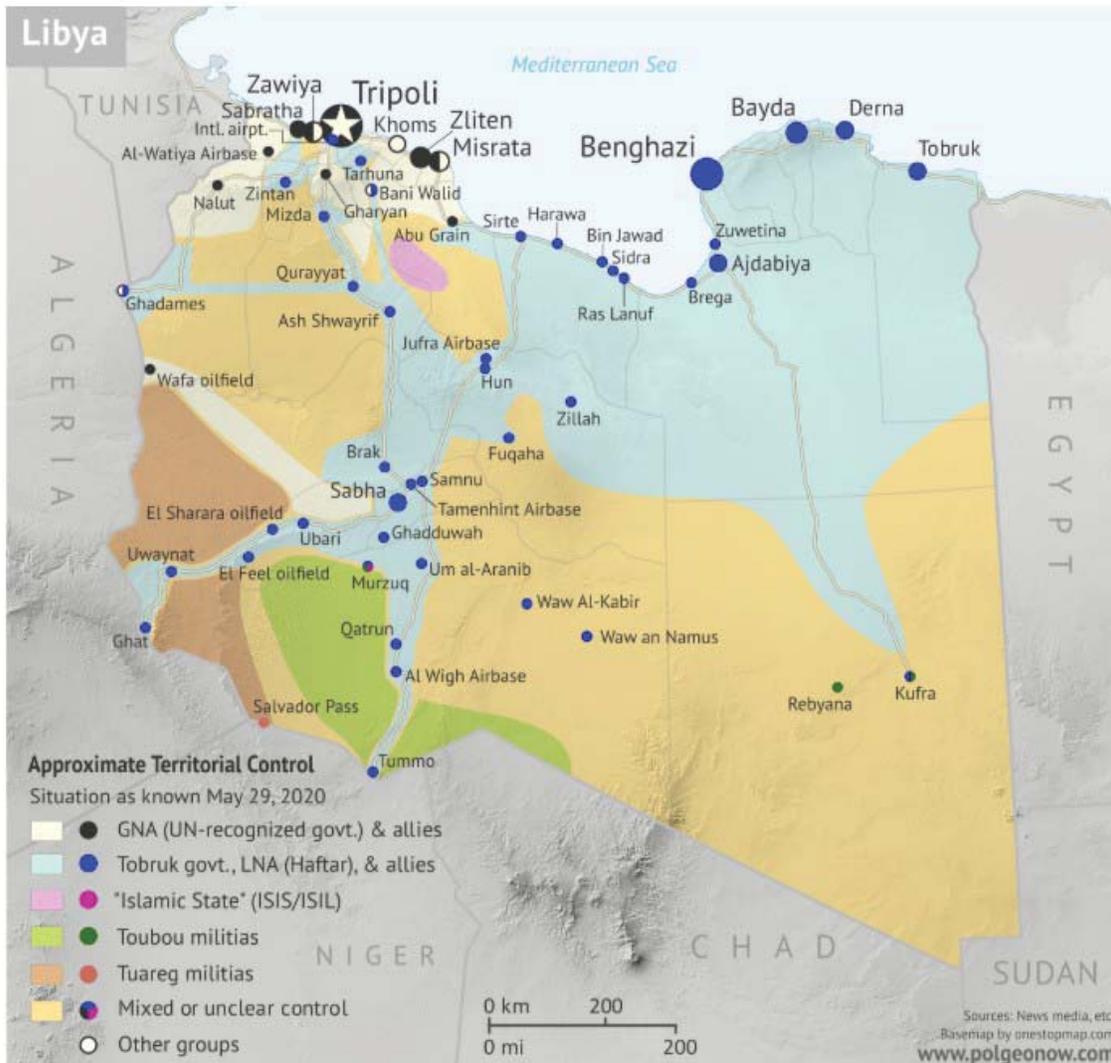fierce clashes with the LNA over territorial control in the Oil Crescent region, as well as southern Libya…

'The UN-backed government in Tripoli – the GNA [Government of National Accord] – much like other preceding governments- is unable to assert much real influence outside Tripoli and its immediate environs, and various non-state actors control most of Eastern and Southern Libya. The GNA has had to rely on the support of local and tribal militia including militias from Misrata (such as the Misratan Third Force/13th Brigade), Tripoli-based Special Deterrence Force, Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade, and, Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG). From 3 June 2017, the Zintan Military Council also appeared to have switched allegiance to the Government of Libya; prior to this date, especially during 2014 and 2015, the Zintanis had been an important constituent part of the Forces of the HoR [House of Representatives].'[80]

7.1.2   Political Geography Now (PGN), describe themselves as 'politically neutral' and an information site that 'chronicles changes to the world's countries, borders, and capitals, as well as territorial control in conflict zones and disputed territories.'[81] The map below produced by PGN[82] provides details of territorial control in Libya as of May 2020.

[80] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[81] Political Geography Now, 'Libyan civil war map and timeline May 2020', 29 May 2020
[82] Political Geography Now, 'Libyan civil war map and timeline May 2020', 29 May 2020

Libya — Approximate Territorial Control. Situation as known May 29, 2020.

Legend:
- GNA (UN-recognized govt.) & allies
- Tobruk govt., LNA (Haftar), & allies
- "Islamic State" (ISIS/ISIL)
- Toubou militias
- Tuareg militias
- Mixed or unclear control
- Other groups

Sources: News media, etc. Basemap by onestopmap.com. www.polgeonow.com

7.1.3   For further information on Libyan armed groups see Chatham House, The Development of Libyan Armed Groups Since 2014, Community Dynamics and Economic Interests.

7.2   Libyan Armed Forces (LNA / LAAF (Eastern Libya)

7.2.1   RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

'The LNA is an armed group active in Libya and represents the most potent military force which incorporates certain officers from the previous regular Libyan army. The LNA is also comprised of various tribal and regional-based armed groups. Led by General Khalifa Haftar, a former official of Muammar Gadhafi's regime, the LNA emerged in 2014 after the launch of Operation Dignity against Islamist factions in Benghazi. On 2 March 2015 Haftar was appointed by the HoR [House of Representatives] as chief of Staff of the Libyan Army. Armed groups and political actors across much of western Libya (and some parts of eastern Libya) do not recognise the LNA. The LNA includes the Saiqa Special Forces, led by Wanis Bukhamada; the Omar al-Mukhtar Operations Room, which is fighting in Derna; and affiliated military

units in the western and southern part of the country. Madkhalist and Salafist armed groups like the Tariq Ibn Ziyad Brigade and the al-Tawhid Brigade are also operating under its control. The LNA was closely allied to the Zintan Military Council, which commanded a collection of militias from the town Zintan. Most recent estimates indicate that the LNA is composed of about 12,000 fighters. The LNA and its affiliates remain aligned to the HoR and resist the new unity government (the GNA.) Since 2017 it extended its territorial control in southern and eastern Libya, notably by seizing Benghazi in July 2017. Reportedly in March 2019, the Kani Brigade, which previously backed the GNA, joined the LNA, becoming the 9th Infantry Brigade.' [83]

7.2.2   Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 Foreign and Commonwealth Office report of 16 July 2020 stated: 'LNA-aligned militia commander, Mahmoud al-Werfalli, was promoted, despite remaining subject to a war crimes indictment by the International Criminal Court.' [84]

7.2.3   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

'The LNA exercised varying levels of control over the majority of Libyan territory at various points during the year…

'Civil society and media reports documented abuses by …LNA-aligned groups… Human rights abuses committed by armed groups reportedly included indiscriminate attacks on civilians, kidnapping, torture, appropriation of property, burning of houses and vehicles, and forced expulsions based on political belief or tribal affiliation.

The largest internal conflict during the year occurred near Tripoli, where LNA-aligned forces fought to take control of the city from GNA-aligned forces. The war in Tripoli significantly worsened humanitarian conditions for more than 400,000 individuals in the area.' [85]

7.3   Tripoli armed groups (western Libya)

7.3.1   A research paper available on Chatham House website stated:

'In 2012, as many as 30 armed groups could be described as militarily significant in Tripoli. By mid-2017, a so-called "quartet" of only four main groups dominated the city: the Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (TRB); the Nawasi Brigade; the Special Deterrence Forces (SDF); and the Abu Slim Central Security Unit. A tacit coexistence agreement between these four actors and Libya's internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) – which arrived in Tripoli in March 2016 – has allowed the capital's principal armed groups to consolidate their control.' [86]

[83] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[84] FCO, 'Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 FCO report', 16 July 2020
[85] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 1)', 11 March 2020
[86] Chatham House, 'Development of Libyan Armed Groups Since 2014' (p15), 17 March 2020

7.4 Derna Protection Force – DPF (Eastern Libya)

7.4.1 RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

'DPF was created in December 2014, following the merger of Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade (ASMB), Jaysh al-Islami al-Libi (Islamic Army of Libya), and the Derna-branch of Ansar al-Sharia in Libya (ASL). The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council (DMSC) includes several Islamist armed groups in the eastern city of Derna; the most prominent being the Abu Salim Brigade, an Islamist group founded by former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). Following the rise of the Islamic State Group in Derna in 2015, the DMSC clashed with and ousted ISIS militants from the eastern city, imposing its rule on Derna. In 2016, the LNA launched 'Operation Volcano' to take control of Derna. After the launch of the LNA's final offensive to take control of the city in May 2018, the leader of the DMSC Atey al-Shaari announced the dissolution of the group and the establishment of the Derna Protection Force (DPF); 'essentially a rebranding exercise aimed at sanitizing the DMSC and severing ties with Islamist groups'. The group has different training camps in Derna and the surrounding areas. Some of these camps have been targeted by Egyptian airstrikes in May 2017, as retaliation for the terrorist attack in Minya. In May 2018, DPF leader Al-Shaari announced that the group was willing to submit itself to the command of "Libyan army officers", an apparent attempt to attract support from the Government of Libya in Tripoli; there was no indication that the Tripoli government acknowledged or accepted this offer. Though in 2019 the LNA announced that Derna is under its full control, there are still some pockets of resistance in the city.' [87]

7.4.2 For further information on the treatment of civilians in the city of Derna and the implication of LNA-aligned groups including the DPF in 2019 see: USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 1)', 11 March 2020.

7.5 The Benghazi revolutionaires Shura Council - BRSC (Eastern Libya)

7.5.1 RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

'The BRSC is an umbrella group established in 2014 to defend Benghazi against the "Operation Dignity" launched by General Khalifa Haftar against Islamist factions in the city. It includes several groups, ranging from the revolutionary brigades – such as the February 17th Martyrs Brigade, the Rafallah al-Sahati Brigade and Libya Shield No.1, led by the prominent Islamist commander Wissam Ben-Hamid – to more extremist groups like Ansar al-Sharia Libya (ASL) or those with links to the Islamic State group. Recruitment by the BRSC from Misratah continued until at least January 2017. In December 2017, Haftar announced that the eastern city was under the total control of his forces. Since then, the group has been inactive, although sporadic terrorist attacks might indicate the continued presence of BRSC sleeper cells in Benghazi. Most of the BRSC militants

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[87] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated

ousted from the eastern city swelled the ranks of other Islamist-leaning groups, such as the Benghazi Defence Brigades (BDB) and the DPF.' [88]

7.6 Armed groups in Southern Libya

7.6.1 A research paper available on Chatham House website noted:

'Libya's south continues to suffer the consequences of local power struggles and clashes that followed the retrenchment of the state after 2011. The region's problems have been exacerbated by ongoing battles between actors on the western and eastern coasts. Beyond military tensions, southern preoccupations are clearly dominated by livelihood issues and public services. Due to stagnation in the public and private sectors, the formal economy in this region has little to offer in terms of employment and sources of revenue. Public infrastructure has been deteriorating for years, public service provision is poor, and state institutions are barely functioning. Public sector salaries are often delayed as cash deliveries are interrupted. Politics is thus in some respects of secondary concern while 'the citizen is busy thinking about his next trip to the gas station, how he will get bread and whether there will be power at home'. As reflected in our interviews, many southerners share a sense of indignation about what they see as the 'monopolization' of state institutions and resources by northern Libyans.' [89]

7.7 Islamic state

7.7.1 RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

'Some armed groups have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group in Derna and Sirte. The first signs of ISIS' presence emerged in 2014 when the organisation gained a foothold in the eastern city of Derna. Then, ISIS found more fertile ground in Sirte, which it had taken over by early 2015. Following clashes on the outskirts of Misrata in May 2016, the GNA launched an offensive to oust ISIS from Sirte. Misrata militias composed the backbone of 'Operation Solid Structure (Bunyan Marsous)', enabling to retake control, in December 2016, of the ISIS stronghold with the crucial support of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), which launched at least 495 airstrikes in Sirte. The end of the battle of Sirte meant the end of the territorial dimension of ISIS in Libya. However, many ISIS militants managed to flee the city, heading towards the valleys nearby and regrouping. ISIS maintains a presence in the areas south of Sirte, between Bani Walid, Waddan and Jufra. Despite conflicting reports about the number of ISIS militants in Libya, it is thought that the jihadist group maintains a considerable presence. According to a 2018 UN report on ISIS, al-Qaeda and associated individuals and entities, there are between 3,000 and 4,000 ISIS members across Libya.' [90]

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[88] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[89] Chatham House, 'Development of Libyan Armed Groups Since 2014' (p35), 17 March 2020
[90] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated

7.7.2   For further information on the treatment of civilians by ISIS-Libya during 2019 see: USSD, 'Human rights report 2019' (section 1)', 11 March 2020.

7.8   Foreign forces

7.8.1   Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 Foreign and Commonwealth Office report of 16 July 2020 stated: 'It was clear that Libya was enduring a proxy war, with a range of countries providing external military support to different sides.'[91]

7.8.2   RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated:

'In relation to the intervention of foreign forces into the conflict in Libya, the UN's envoy to Libya Ghassan Salame has recently stated that Libya has become "a textbook example of foreign interference today in local conflicts." In 2019 a military adviser in General Khalifa Haftar's forces revealed that Egyptian, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and French military forces, as well as security advisers, are currently present in eastern Libya, to support Haftar's campaign against Tripoli and protect oil fields from attack by government forces.' [92]

7.8.3   A research paper available on Chatham House website stated:

'The GNA is believed to have funnelled money to unregistered Libyan and foreign fighters via senior military commanders such as Osama al-Juwaili and Ali Kanna, and via intermediaries such as Hassan Musa Keley, a Tebu military figure from Kufra now based in western Libya. Chadian mercenaries are said to be embedded with pro-GNA groups from Zintan and groups from the Fezzan – such as the South Protection Force, which formed in February 2019 as a Tebu-led coalition of anti-LAAF elements. At the start of the Tripoli war in April 2019, the GNA supposedly received a group of Chadian mercenaries through the South Protection Force and other intermediaries in Sebha. Overall, mercenaries played only a minor part on the GNA side during the first months of the war. This has begun to change: since December 2019, Turkey has sent approximately 2,000 Syrian fighters to back the GNA in Tripoli, a number which continues to increase.

'Of the six Darfur rebel factions that are present in Libya, all but one are currently allied with the LAAF. Hosted by pro-LAAF armed groups in central and southern Libya, they take part in military operations and guard oil and military facilities on behalf of the LAAF. The Darfur rebels were initially reluctant to join the Tripoli war, but the LAAF has been able to deploy some elements to the front since November 2019. In September [2019], reports began to circulate regarding the deployment of mercenaries employed by the Kremlin-linked Wagner Group in support of the LAAF. The numbers of operational Wagner mercenaries has been hotly contested, with estimates ranging from a few hundred to 2,000 by the close of 2019'. [93]

7.8.4   See also International involvement

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[91] FCO, 'Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 FCO report, 16 July 2020
[92] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[93] Chatham House, 'Development of Libyan Armed Groups Since 2014' (p22), 17 March 2020

8.   Security situation

8.1   Overview of conflict

8.1.1   The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Global Peace Index (GPI) ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness. Libya ranked the seventh least peaceful country in the world in 2018[94], the eighth least peaceful country in the GPI 2019[95] and again the seventh least peaceful country in 2020[96].

8.1.2   The Congressional Research Service (CRS) in their report Conflict, transition and US policy of June 2020 stated:

'Libya's political transition has been disrupted by armed non-state groups and threatened by the indecision and infighting of interim leaders. After an uprising ended the 40-plus-year rule of Muammar al Qadhafi in 2011, interim authorities proved unable to form a stable government, address security issues, reshape the country's finances, or create a viable framework for post conflict justice and reconciliation. Insecurity spread as local armed groups competed for influence and resources. Qadhafi compounded stabilization challenges by depriving Libyans of experience in self-government, stifling civil society, and leaving state institutions weak. Militias, local leaders, and coalitions of national figures with competing foreign patrons remain the most powerful arbiters of public affairs. An atmosphere of persistent lawlessness has enabled militias, criminals, and Islamist terrorist groups to operate with impunity, while recurrent conflict has endangered civilians' rights and safety. Issues of dispute have included governance, military command, national finances, and control of oil infrastructure.'[97]

8.1.3   The same CRS report stated: 'Libyans have avoided full mobilization into civil war, but since April 2019 conflict has raged between rival coalitions of armed groups with thousands of personnel […]. Foreign powers arm parties to the conflict in violation of a U.N. arms embargo, providing weapons, advice, funding, and other support […].' [98]

8.1.4   The US State Department (USSD) human rights report for 2019, noted:

'Conflict heightened during the year [2019] among GNA-aligned armed nonstate armed groups and other nonstate actors. The LNA exercised varying levels of control over the majority of Libyan territory at various points during the year. Informal nonstate armed groups filled security vacuums across the country, although several in the west aligned with the GNA as a means of accessing state resources. ISIS-Libya attempted to maintain a presence, although limited, primarily in the southwestern desert region. The UN and international partners were leading efforts to broker a cessation of

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[94] IEP, '[Global Peace Index 2018'](#), (page 9), June 2018
[95] IEP, '[Global Peace Index 2019',](#) (page 2), June 2019
[96] IEP, '[Global Peace Index 2020',](#) (page 9), June 2020
[97] CRS, '[Libya: Conflict, transition and US policy'](#) (Summary), updated 26 June 2020
[98] CRS, '[Libya: Conflict, transition and US policy'](#) (p3), updated 26 June 2020

hostilities in Tripoli and urged stakeholders to return to a UN-mediated political process.' [99]

8.1.5   Freedom House in Freedom in the World report 2020, covering events in 2019, stated:

'Libya has been racked by internal divisions and intermittent civil conflict since a popular armed uprising in 2011 deposed long time dictator Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi. International efforts to bring rival administrations together in a unity government have failed, and interference from regional powers has exacerbated the latest fighting. A proliferation of weapons and autonomous militias, flourishing criminal networks, and the presence of extremist groups have all contributed to the country's lack of physical security. The ongoing violence has displaced hundreds of thousands of people, and human rights conditions have steadily deteriorated.' [100]

8.1.6   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, covering events in 2019:

'Libya is in its ninth year of instability and conflict following the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011. In 2019, escalations in conflict, in both the south and in the country's capital, Tripoli, saw fighting move into more populated urban areas. The use of explosive weapons in this environment has put civilians at high risk of indiscriminate harm. Civilian casualties, displacement and damage to civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, have increased. Protracted political and economic instability, which has severely impacted governance structures, has resulted in a significant deterioration in basic services provision. With each passing year, people's well-being and living standards have been eroded, with the most vulnerable increasingly relying on negative coping strategies.' [101]

8.1.7   OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan 2020 stated:

'In July 2019, a three-point peace plan, including provisions for a truce between the parties, an international conference, and a Libyan-owned consultative process, was presented to the UN Security Council in an effort to deescalate fighting, resolve the conflict and return all parties to the political process. Amidst increasing international involvement in the conflict and growing risk of regional escalation, an international conference was convened in Berlin on 19 January 2020. The conference aimed to solidify a fragile mid-January truce and create an enabling international environment for a Libyan solution to the conflict.' [102]

8.1.8   The Congressional Research Service in their report Conflict, transition and US policy of June 2020 stated:

'After a previous round of conflict in 2014, the country's transitional institutions fragmented. A Government of National Accord (GNA) based in the capital, Tripoli, took power under the 2015 U.N.- brokered Libyan Political Agreement. Leaders of the House of Representatives (HOR) that

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[99] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 1)', 11 March 2020
[100] Freedom House: 'Freedom in the World 2020 – Libya', 4 March 2020
[101] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p4), 31 January 2020
[102] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan' (p42), February 2020

were elected in 2014 declined to endorse the GNA, and they and a rival interim government based in eastern Libya have challenged the GNA's authority with support from the Libyan National Army/Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LNA/LAAF) movement. The LNA/LAAF is a coalition of armed groups led by Qadhafi-era military officer Khalifa Haftar: it conducted military operations against Islamist groups in eastern Libya from 2014 to 2019 and upended U.N. mediation efforts by launching a surprise offensive in April 2019, seeking to wrest control of Tripoli from the GNA and local militias…' [103]

8.1.9   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'Following a relative reduction in fighting in the immediate aftermath of the truce of 12 January [2020] called for by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Turkey and accepted by the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army, fighting gradually resumed. Both parties redeployed forces along the front lines in the Tripoli area. As at 21 April [2020], more than 850 reported breaches of the ceasefire had been recorded by UNSMIL, including an unprecedented increase in indirect fire observed in urban areas, resulting in civilian casualties, damage to civilian infrastructure and disruption of commercial air operations. At other flashpoints in western Libya, tensions also remained high. On 26 January [2020], the Libyan National Army launched an offensive against the forces of the Government of National Accord in the Abu Qurayn area, south of Misratah, prompting heavy clashes and casualties on both sides. At the end of March [2020], heavy artillery fire and rocket attacks were continued by both sides in parts of southern Tripoli and in the central and western regions. Locations along the western coastal road towards the border with Tunisia were seized by the forces of the Government of National Accord in mid-April. On 18 April [2020], those forces launched a coordinated attack against the city of Tarhunah.

'Reports continued of foreign mercenaries providing the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army with enhanced combat capabilities, amid persistent reports of military equipment and arms being supplied to both sides in violation of the United Nations-imposed arms embargo. Those developments undermined United Nations-led dialogue initiatives and added to more human suffering.'[104]

8.1.10 The Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts project (RULAC) of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, an organisation that identifies and classifies situations of armed conflict funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs[105] stated in their online portal page on Non-international armed conflicts in Libya updated in January 2020.

- 'There are multiple and overlapping non-international armed conflicts in Libya involving the Government and a myriad of armed groups. The non-international armed conflicts emerged in Libya along the following lines:

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[103] CRS, 'Libya: Conflict, transition and US policy' (Summary), updated 26 June 2020
[104] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 24-26), 5 May 2020
[105] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated

- 'The UN-Backed GNA is engaged in armed conflict with the self-declared LNA and affiliated groups loyal to General Haftar;

- 'The GNA is also fighting against groups pledging allegiance to the Islamic State that gaining control over Derna and Sirte in 2015;

- 'The self-declared LNA and affiliated groups loyal to General Haftar which supports the House of Representatives (HoR) fights against Islamic State and also engaged in separate conflicts against other armed groups including Derna Protection Force (DPF) and The Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (BRSC).

- 'Upon request of the UN-backed Government of Libya, the United States launched a sustained air campaign against the Islamic State group in August 2016 and continues to support the GNA.

- 'With regard to other foreign interventions; while Turkey is involved in the conflict in support of the GNA, France and United Arab Emirates are involved in NIAC in support of the LNA.'[106]

8.1.11 For more detail regarding the history of conflict in Libya, through Colonel Muammar Gadhafi's rule and 2011 uprising onwards, see Origins of the Libyan conflict and options for its resolution and BBC's timeline of events.

8.2 International involvement

8.2.1 The Congressional Research Service in their report Conflict, transition and US policy stated:

'Fighters in western Libya rallied to blunt the LNA's advance and leveraged Turkish military support to force LNA fighters and foreign mercenaries to withdraw from northwestern Libya in May and June 2020. Inconclusive fighting has continued since then near the coastal city of Sirte and the Al Jufra air base in central Libya, despite multilateral demands for a ceasefire. Turkey has indicated its support for further GNA advances, and Egypt has warned that it would intervene if its leaders conclude Egyptian interests are threatened […]. LNA forces and local partners control eastern Libya and key oil production and export infrastructure directly or through allies. They and GNA supporters continue to compete for influence and control in the southwestern parts of the country. Foreign actors, including U.S. partners in Europe and the Middle East, have long found themselves at odds over Libya's conflict, and several countries have provided increased military assistance to warring Libyan parties since April 2019 in violation of a longstanding U.N. arms embargo. According to U.S. officials, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates arm the LNA. Conflict dynamics have shifted over time because of weapons shipments to both sides, the presence of Russian national private contractors and Syrian and other foreign fighters among LNA forces, Turkey-GNA maritime and security agreements, and Turkish deployments of soldiers, equipment, and Syrian mercenaries on behalf of the GNA.' [107]

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[106] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[107] CRS, 'Libya: Conflict, transition and US policy' (Summary), updated 26 June 2020, url.

8.2.2   The Congressional Research Service (CRS) in their report In Focus, Libya and US policy of August 2020 stated:

'Conflict dynamics shifted in 2019 and early 2020 as Russian-national Wagner Group contractors intervened on behalf of the LNA, Turkey and the GNA concluded maritime and security cooperation agreements, Turkey deployed fighters and arms on behalf of the GNA, and outsiders shipped weapons to both sides. According to U.S. officials, Russia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates arm the LNA and aid its operations. Turkey provides overt military support to anti-LNA forces. Both sides have recruited and deployed Syrian militias. Egypt has prepared to intervene militarily if GNA and Turkish forces advance further east; GNA and Turkish forces seek to control all of Libya and demand that LNA forces and foreign mercenaries withdraw beyond the "oil crescent" east of Sirte.'[108]

8.2.3   For further information on international involvement see

- RULAC – Non-international armed conflicts in Libya.

- Jamestown Foundation: Wagner Group in Libya: Weapon of War or Geopolitical Tool?

8.2.4   See also Foreign forces

8.3   Civilian casualties

8.3.1   UNSMIL publishes monthly figures providing numbers of civilian deaths and casualties for the country as a whole. It records only verifiable incidents; therefore the numbers are not necessarily indicative of the total number. Further information and statistics on civilian deaths and casualties may be accessed on the UNSMIL website.

8.3.2   The UN high Commissioner for Human Rights reported that between 1 January and 30 November 2019 'UNSMIL documented 582 civilian casualties (236 deaths and 346 injured), including 430 men, 54 boys, and 58 other males whose age could not be determined, 23 women and seven girls. Its ability to monitor and verify alleged violations was however limited by insecurity and access constraints to locations and institutions where human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law had reportedly been committed.'[109]

8.3.3   The same report also noted that 'Airstrikes were the leading cause of civilian casualties during the period under review, accounting for 394 victims (182 deaths and 212 injured), including 302 men, seven women, 24 boys, and 53 males whose age could not be determined, followed by ground fighting, improvised explosive devices, abductions and killings. UNSMIL/OHCHR documented the highest number of civilian casualties in the western part of the country (171 deaths and 182 injured), followed by the southern part (97 deaths and 96 injured) and eastern areas (16 deaths and 85 injured). Most of the casualties were attributed to the Libyan National Army.'[110]

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[108] CRS, 'In Focus, Libya and US policy', updated 3 August 2020, url.
[109] UN Human Rights Council, 'Situation of human rights in Libya, and the…', 23 January 2020
[110] UN Human Rights Council, 'Situation of human rights in Libya, and the…', 23 January 2020

8.3.4   The report also found that 'The incidents documented by UNSMIL/OHCHR included attacks against civilians, including internally displaced persons, migrants and refugees, health-care workers, community and religious leaders, journalists, human rights defenders and government officials, and attacks on civilian objects, such as detention centres, schools, residential homes, factories, health-care facilities, water and electricity supplies and airports.'[111]

8.3.5   UN OCHA stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, covering events in 2019: 'Ongoing conflict has increased the exposure of individuals to risks to life and safety due to violence, indiscriminate attacks and exposure to explosive remnants of war. […] Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, particularly health infrastructure which doubled in 2019, are increasing. This year, at least 647 civilians have been killed or injured, the majority in Tripoli.' [112]

8.3.6   From 1 January to 31 March 2019 UNSMIL documented civilian casualties during the conduct of hostilities across Libya; 28 deaths and 82 injuries. Victims included 18 men, six women, and four children killed, and 69 men, five women, and eight children injured[113] [114].

8.3.7   In comparison the United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'From 1 January to 25 March [2020], UNSMIL[115] [UN Support Mission in Libya] documented at least

- '131 civilian casualties (64 deaths and 67 injuries).

- 'The victims included 82 men (43 deaths and 39 injuries), 22 women (9 deaths and 13 injuries), 19 boys (7 deaths and 12 injuries) and 8 girls (5 deaths and 3 injuries).

- 'During the first three months of 2020, ground fighting was the leading cause of civilian casualties (73 per cent of the total).

- 'UNSMIL documented 78 civilian casualties (32 deaths and 46 injuries) resulting from the use of heavy weapons and;

- '18 civilian casualties (12 deaths and 6 injuries) resulting from the use of small arms fire.

- 'Targeted killings were the second leading recorded cause of civilian casualties, with 20 victims (14 deaths and 6 injuries), representing 15 per cent of total civilian casualties.

- 'Air strikes were the third leading cause thereof, with 9 victims (6 deaths and 3 injuries), followed by;

- 'improvised explosive devices, with 6 injuries.'[116]

[111] UN Human Rights Council, 'Situation of human rights in Libya, and the…', 23 January 2020
[112] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p5), 31 January 2020
[113] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 Jan - 31 January 2019', 6 March 2019
[114] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 Feb - 31 March 2019', 22 May 2019
[115] UNSMIL ' Civilian Casualties report 1 January – 31 March 2020', 30 April 2020
[116] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 69), 5 May 2020

8.3.8 A WHO Health sector bulletin from June 2020 noted that of the 131 civilian casualties reported by UNSMIL between 1 January and 31 March 2020 that: '81% of casualties [were] attributed to the LAAF [Libya Arab Armed Forces], representing an increase in civilian casualties of 45 per cent compared to the last quarter of 2019. Between 1 April and 11 June, civilian casualties further increased dramatically, with UNSMIL documenting 250 civilian casualties, including 82 civilians killed and 168 civilians injured.'[117]

8.3.9 UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 April – 30 June 2020 (second quarter) showing an increase in civilian casualties from the previous quarter, documented:

- 358 civilian casualties (106 deaths and 252 injuries).
- 173% increase in civilian casualties compared to the first quarter of 2020
- 65% increase in deaths
- 276% increase in injuries
- 261 men were victims of death and injuries
- 45 women were victims of death and injuries
- 44 boys and eight girls were victims of death and injuries[118]

8.3.10 OCHA in a Libya June situation report noted:

'With the recent shift in conflict dynamics, many people who were displaced since the beginning of the Libyan National Army's (LNA) Tripoli offensive in April 2019, have started to return to many areas of southern Tripoli. However, there is a significant risk to returning residents and responders from explosive hazards that have been left behind by forces as they withdrew from Tripoli's southern suburbs. According to the Libyan Mine Action Centre, there has been 138 casualties to date, with 81 civilians, including children, and 57 non-civilians, including clearance operators, are among the casualties in areas of southern Tripoli.' [119]

8.3.11 The chart below, produced by UNSMIL[120], indicates the number of civilian deaths and injuries between July 2019 and June 2020.
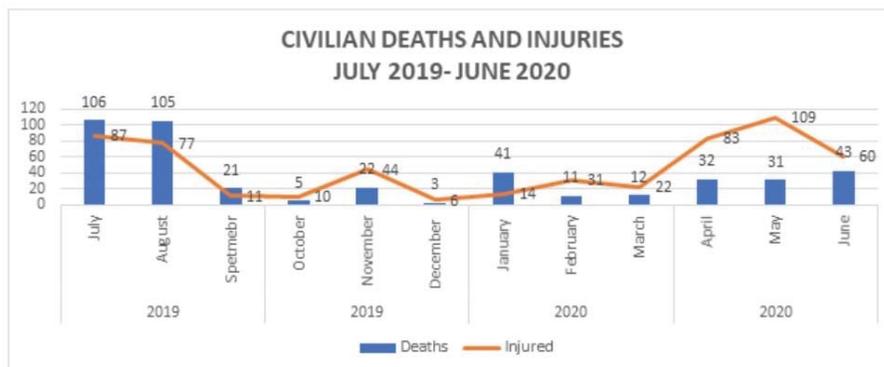
[117] WHO, 'Libya: Health Sector Bulletin', 30 June 2020
[118] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020
[119] OCHA, 'June situation report', last updated, 6 July 2020
[120] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020

8.3.12   UNSMIL also noted: 'The overall increase in civilian casualties was driven by a major escalation of hostilities, despite the calls for a cessation of hostilities by the United Nations and many UN Member States. UNSMIL remains very concerned by the indiscriminate attacks and targeting of civilians in civilian populated areas and the increase in civilian casualties particularly from the use of rockets and artillery, explosive remnants of war and airstrikes.'[121]

8.3.13   UNSMIL noted in civilian casualty reports for 2016 and 2017 shows that between April and June 2016 there were 166 civilian casualties (75 deaths and 91 injuries)[122] and between April and June 2017 there were 122 civilian casualties (53 deaths and 69 injuries)[123].

8.3.14   By comparison and using data collated by ACLED, ACCORD[124] reported that 163 incidents involving violence which resulted in 404 fatalities in Libya occurred between April and June 2017. ACCORD created the following table[125] based on ACLED data covering the period June 2015 to June 2017:
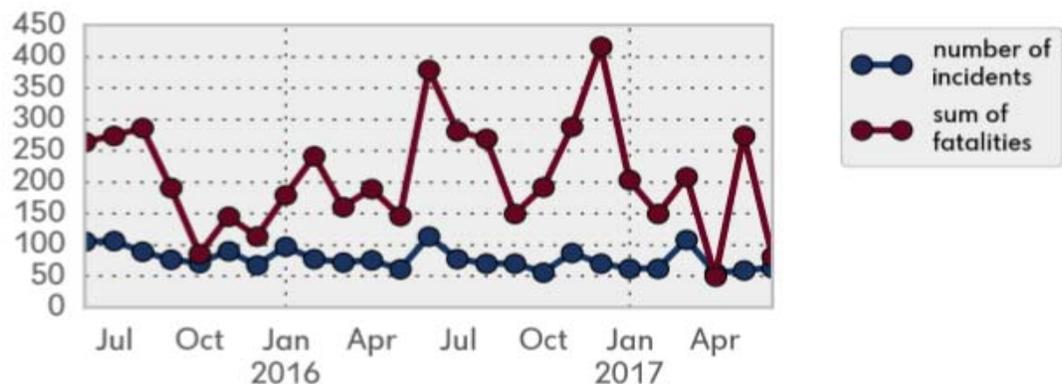
This graph is based on data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (datasets used: ACLED, January 2017, and ACLED, 9 September 2017).

8.3.15   ACLED provides a 'dashboard' of the number of 'events' and a summary of the security situation. Additionally, UNSMIL collates data on the number of casualties which are released in monthly reports.

8.3.16   Further, the UN OHCHR and UNSMIL provide reports and briefings on the human rights situation, including security, while the UNHCR's Refworld database collates source information on a range of human rights issues:

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[121] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020
[122] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties reports', April – June 2016
[123] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties reports', April – June 2017
[124] ACCORD, 'Libya, 2nd Quarter 2017: Update on incidents…', 14 September 2017
[125] ACCORD, 'Libya, 2nd Quarter 2017: Update on incidents…', 14 September 2017

- [UN OHCHR - Libya](#)

- [UNSMIL: United Nations Support Mission in Libya](#)

- [Refworld: Libya](#)

- [UNOCHA - Libya](#)

8.4 Nature of violence

8.4.1 OCHA stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020, covering events in 2019: 'Much of the conflict is characterized by its indiscriminate nature, with regular violations of international humanitarian and international human rights laws.' [126]

8.4.2 The same OCHA report stated: '… many areas, in particular all major frontline areas in the greater Tripoli area, as well as some areas with the highest returns, like Benghazi and Sirt, remain contaminated by explosive remnants of war (ERW), posing grave risks to people's wellbeing, living standard and livelihoods.' [127]

8.4.3 UNSMIL noted that, in the first three months of 2020:

'… ground fighting was the leading cause of civilian casualties, causing 73 per cent of the total. UNSMIL documented 78 civilian casualties (32 deaths and 46 injuries) from the use of heavy weapons (rockets/artillery/mortars), and 18 civilian casualties (12 deaths and six injuries) from the use of small arms fire. Targeted killings were the second leading recorded cause of civilian casualties with 20 victims (14 deaths and six injuries), representing 15 per cent of the total civilian casualties. Airstrikes were the third leading cause of civilian casualties with nine victims (six deaths and three injuries), followed by improvised explosive device (IEDs) with six injuries.'[128]

8.4.4 The pie chart below, produced by UNSMIL, indicates the number of civilian casualties by incident type from January to March 2020. Deaths and injuries were caused by heavy weapons (59%); targeted killings (15%); small arms fire (14%); airstrikes (7%); improvised explosive devices (5%).

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[126] OCHA, '[Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020'](#) (p5), 31 January 2020
[127] OCHA, '[Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020'](#) (p5), 31 January 2020
[128] UNSMIL, '[Civilian Casualties report 1 Jan - 31 March 2020',](#) 30 April 2020

Civilian Casualties By Incident Type

IED
5%

Airstrike
7%

Targeted Killings
15%

Small arms fire
14%

Heavy weapons
59%
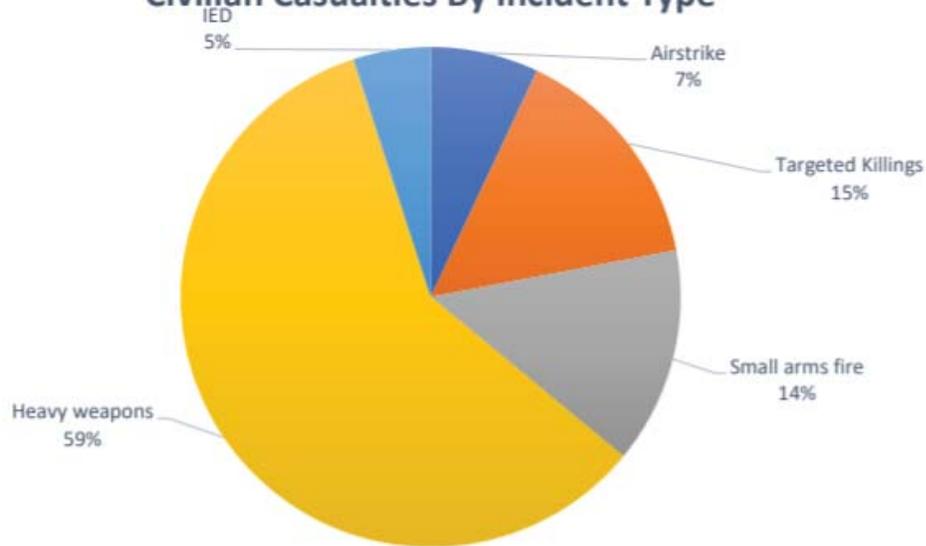
129

8.4.5　The majority of civilian casualties during the period 1 January 2019 – 31 March 2019 were caused by shelling (17 killed and 58 injured – 68%), gunfire (11 killed and 18 injured – 26%) and explosive remnants of war (ERW, six injured – 6%)[130] [131].

8.4.6　UNSMIL in their civilian casualty report 1 April – 30 June 2020 (second quarter) documented:

'During the second quarter of 2020, ground fighting was the leading cause of civilian casualties, causing 74 per cent of the total. This includes 264 civilian casualties (69 deaths and 195 injuries) from the use of heavy weapons (rockets/artillery/mortars), and civilian casualties (one death and four injuries) from the use of small arms fire.

'Explosive remnants of war were the second leading recorded cause of civilian casualties with 43 victims (two deaths and 41 injuries), representing 12 per cent of the total civilian casualties. As it withdrew from Tripoli's southern suburbs last month, the Libyan National Army (LNA) left behind mines and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) and booby traps, imperilling the safety and security of returning residents and resulting in civilian casualties, including children, as well as security personnel tasked with clearing these deadly devices.

'Airstrikes were the third leading cause of civilian casualties with 40 victims (26 killed and 14 injured) representing 11 per cent of the injuries, followed by IEDs, two deaths and two deliberate killings.' [132]

8.4.7　The pie chart below, produced by UNSMIL, indicates the percentage of civilian casualties by incident type from April to June 2020 based on the

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[129] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 Jan - 31 March 2020', 30 April 2020
[130] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 Jan - 31 January 2019', 6 March 2019
[131] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 Feb - 31 March 2019', 22 May 2019
[132] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020

figures cited in the previous paragraph. Deaths and injuries were caused by ground fighting (75%); explosive remnants of war - ERW (12%), airstrikes (11%); deliberate killings (1%); improvised explosive devices (1%).

Civilian Casualties By Incident Types

133
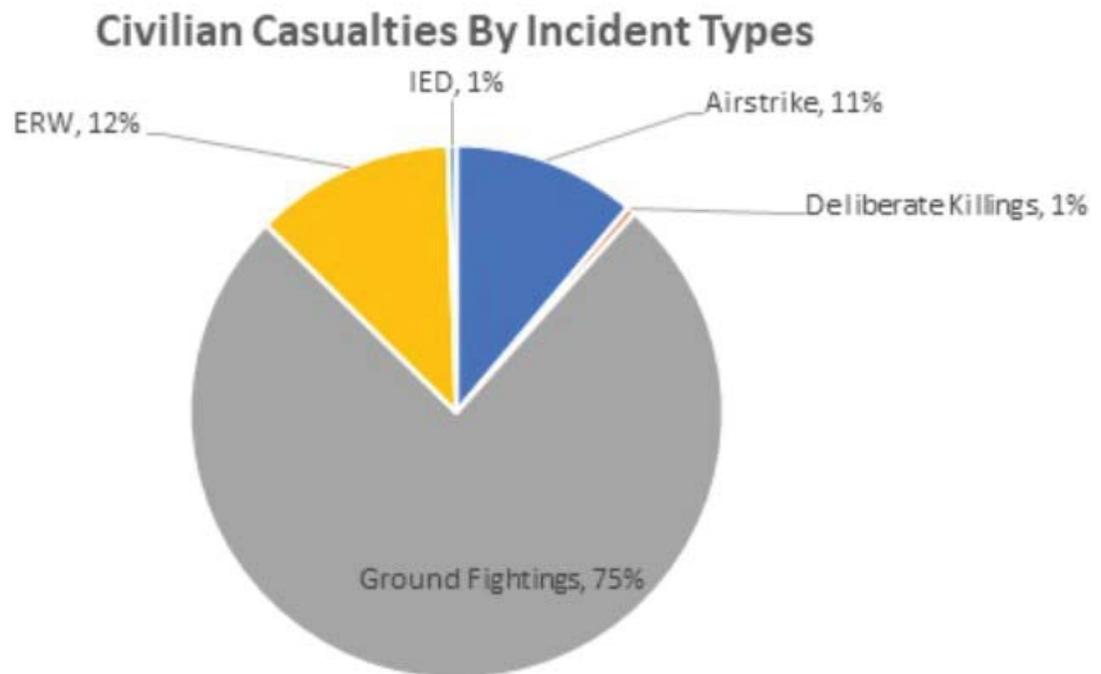
8.5   Conflict-induced displacement

8.5.1   See Internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Section 9 updated: 2 September 2020

9.   Geographical scope of conflict

9.1   Overview

9.1.1   OCHA stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2019, covering events in 2018:

'Many people, particularly in urban centres, have been exposed to conflict and violence over the past years, most notably in Tripoli, Sirt, Derna, and Benghazi…

'In May 2018, conflict broke out in Derna as rival groups fought for control following a lengthy encirclement of the city by forces allied to the LNA, leading to civilian casualties…

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[133] UNSMIL, 'Civilian Casualties report 1 April – 30 June 2020', 29 July 2020

On 26 August 2018, conflict broke out between rival armed groups in southern Tripoli, particularly in the Salaheddin, Ain Zara, Mashroua, Al Hadhba and southern mahalas…' [134]

9.1.2 Europol, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, in their report; Assessing the Islamic State in Libya stated:

'Over the course of early 2019 and culminating in advances towards Tripoli in early April 2019, Khalifa Haftar and the LNA have begun to "take control" of Libya's southern region, breaching out from the group's eastern nucleus that it captured after violent fighting in the cities of Benghazi and Derna. On 4 April 2019, the LNA forces took the town of Gharyan, 100 km south of Tripoli before advancing to the city's outskirts. Shortly after, the LNA declared operation "Flood of dignity", which deployed thousands of men and heavy artillery to the West with the stated aim of capturing the capital and "eradicating terrorism". The GNA proclaimed the counteroffensive "Volcano of anger", spearheaded by a group of loosely-aligned militias. Whilst to some extent caught by surprise, the military groups in Tripoli were relatively swift in arranging defensive mechanisms, and even fraternising following the countermobilisation of western Libyan forces.'[135]

9.1.3 OCHA stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020 covering events in 2019:

'On 4 April 2019 the Libyan National Army (LNA) launched an offensive to seize control of Tripoli, triggering a mobilization of counterforces operating under the command of the Government of National Accord (GNA). The launch of the military offensive came days before the planned date of the National Conference and followed months of armed confrontation between LNA and GNA-aligned forces over control of strategic locations in the south of the country. The conflict has become protracted, focused mostly in southern parts of Tripoli. However, fighting, particularly in the last few months of 2019, has increasingly moved into populated areas, causing further civilian casualties and displacement. As of January 2020, around 149,000 people have fled their homes.' [136]

9.1.4 The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany) in briefing notes dated 20 July 2020 stated: 'According to media reports the troops of the Government of National Unity (GNA) have moved further east near the city of Sirte, preparing for a battle with the Libyan Arab Army (formerly the Libyan National Army) (LNA) for the city and the surrounding oil fields. Sirte is the home-town of Libya's ex-leader Muammar Gaddafi and was conquered by General Haftar's troops in January 2020.'[137]

9.1.5 The Independent in an article dated 5 June 2020 and referring to GNA forces taking control of Tarhuna stated: 'The loss of the city of Tarhuna, 40 miles southeast of the capital Tripoli, marks an end to Haftar's ill-fated 14-month campaign to conquer the country's densely populated northwest.

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[134] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Response Plan 2019' (p11 & 13), October 2018
[135] Europol (Inga Kristina Trauthig), 'Assessing the Islamic State in Libya', 13 August 2019
[136] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p5), 31 January 2020
[137] BAMF, 'Briefing Notes 20 July 2020', 20 July 2020

'The infamous Kaniyat militia, Mr Haftar's local affiliate in Tarhuna, fled with minimal fight, allowing forces loyal to the internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) to take control.' '[138]

9.1.6   See also Internally displaced persons (IDPs).

9.2   Security incidents

9.2.1   Data presented by ACLED and based on media reports recorded events and fatalities including both civilians and combatants:

- 1 August 2019 – 1 August 2020 - 1,679 security related events and 2,240 fatalities

- 1 August 2018 – 1 August 2019 - 735 security related events and 1,698 fatalities

- 1 August 2017 – 1 August 2018 - 723 security related events and 1,285 fatalities

- Between 1 August 2016 – 1 August 2017 - 854 security related events and 2,566 fatalities

- The 3 mantikas with the most security incidents during the same 12 month period July 2019 – July 2020 were Tripoli, Alijfara and Misrata.

- The events occurring in these three mantikas accounted for 75% of events between 18 July 2019 and 18 July 2020.

- Over half (1,007) the security incidents during the same 12 month period July 2019 – July 2020 were from explosions / remote violence, 599 were battles, 65 were violence against civilians and 8 were riots[139].

a.   Western regions (Tripolitania)

9.2.2   Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Libya report covering events in 2019 reported:

'General Hiftar launched his attack to conquer Tripoli on April 4, supported by LNA units and armed groups, including the al-Kani militia from Tarhouna, his main ally in the west, against the GNA and affiliated armed groups from western Libya. As of November [2019], the fighting, which is concentrated in the southern suburbs of Tripoli, had killed over 200 civilians, injured over 300, and displaced over 120,000. .[…]

'In July [2019], an airstrike by the LNA on Tajoura Migrant Detention Centre east of Tripoli, resulted in the deaths of at least 44 migrants and more than 130 injured after two missiles landed in a hangar filled with detainees. The LNA initially claimed it had been targeting a weapons depot belonging to a Tripoli-based militia within the same compound as the migrant prison, but later denied involvement. Since the start of the fighting, the GNA failed to evacuate detention centers under its authority that are in proximity to the

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[138] The Independent, 'Fears of revenge attacks as rebel general's forces flee last…', 5 June 2020
[139] ACLED, 'Dashboard – Libya', undated

front lines and allegedly in proximity to where weapons were stocked, including Tajoura.

'In August [2019], the Red Crescent Society of Tarhouna transferred to Tripoli and Misrata the bodies of 12 detainees, including civilians and fighters, who had been held by the LNA-affiliated Kani militia from Tarhouna for an undisclosed period of time. According to the GNA Health Ministry, the bodies bore signs of torture and possible execution, and as of September, not all had been identified.

'The LNA, or forces that support them, conducted air strikes in October that resulted in civilian casualties that appeared to be unlawful. On October 6, the LNA struck an equestrian club in Tripoli, injuring six children and killing several horses. The UN's investigation found there were no military assets or military infrastructure at the site. On October 14, an LNA airstrike apparently targeting a military compound killed three girls and wounded their mother and another sister in their home. According to the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the fighting killed seven children within a span of two weeks in October.

'As of July, the World Health Organization reported a total of 37 attacks on medical facilities during the Tripoli clashes, which killed 11 health workers and injured 33 health workers and patients.

'The LNA struck Mitiga airport, currently the only functioning airport in Tripoli, on multiple occasions since the beginning of the war, claiming the airport was being used by the GNA-linked groups to import weapons. On September 1, an LNA aerial attack on Mitiga resulted in the injury of two crew members of a commercial airline. As of November, Mitiga was still shut and all flights were diverted to Misrata airport, 200 kilometers to the east.'[140]

9.2.3   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'During the reporting period [since January 2020], armed clashes, shelling and air strikes continued along the front lines of southern Tripoli. The intensity of the attacks became acute during the political and military talks held in Geneva. Intense fighting also occurred in other cities in western Libya, including Abu Qurayn, Gharyan, Misratah, Qarabulli, Sabratah, Surman and Zuwarah. I

'In Tripoli, the Libyan National Army reinforced its positions in the Abu Salim, Salah al-Din and Ayn Zarah districts with personnel, armoured vehicles and weaponry, including heavy artillery batteries, ammunition shipments and additional infantry elements. The Libyan National Army also targeted alleged Government of National Accord reinforcements, including from foreign sources. On 18 February, the Libyan National Army targeted the Tripoli port with a barrage of heavy artillery and Grad rockets aimed at destroying a cargo vessel allegedly delivering military equipment to the Government of National Accord. Later that day and on 29 February, uncrewed aerial vehicles operated in support of the Government of National Accord attempted to target Libyan National Army positions south of the Ayn Zarah

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[140] HRW, 'Libya: Events of 2019', 14 January 2020

district, but were shot down by Libyan National Army air defence systems. The concentration of forces by both parties was confirmed in the Zatarnah area and Qarabulli, where clashes had been reported, with the Libyan National Army unsuccessfully attempting to reach the eastern coastal road to disrupt the connection between Misratah and Tripoli. In addition, major Libyan National Army reinforcements reportedly arrived in Aziziyah and the Hayrah area north of Gharyan, which the Libyan National Army lost to the Government of National Accord in June 2019 and has been trying to reclaim.

'On 22 January, the Libyan National Army further extended its previously declared no-fly zone southwards, towards Gharyan and Tarhunah, and threatened to shoot down any military or civilian aircraft approaching Mitiga Airport, in Tripoli. The airport was targeted with indirect fire in a string of Libyan National Army attacks with indirect fire by forces, with a peak of 50 shells on 28 February. The attacks disrupted the airport's operation and resulted in civilian casualties and damage to nearby civilian homes.'[141]

9.2.4   For further information on security incidents in Western regions see also UNSMIL report 'The airstrikes on the Daman building complex, including the Tajoura Detention Centre, 2 July 2019'

b.   Eastern region (Cyrenaica)

9.2.5   Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Libya report covering events in 2019 reported:

'In eastern Libya, the LNA in February [2019] took control of Derna, a city it had besieged for three years purportedly to drive out militants who were controlling the city. Residents reported that LNA-linked groups arbitrary detained and ill-treated residents and deliberately damaged homes, including by arson. According to local authorities who fled Derna after the LNA takeover, hundreds of Derna residents remained displaced, fearing reprisals if they returned.[…]

'Three UN staff members were killed and two more injured on August 10, after a car exploded next to their convoy in Benghazi. As of November, the perpetrators remained unidentified.'[142]

9.2.6   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'In the eastern region, there were continued reports of criminal activity and incidents related to explosive remnants of war. On 23 February [2020], the police in Benghazi reportedly arrested a prominent drug dealer. Demonstrations in support of the Libyan National Army and against Turkish intervention were held in several cities, including at the United Nations hub in Benghazi, with one demonstration turning violent.

'On 18 January, the National Oil Corporation declared a force majeure on oil exports from ports in eastern Libya following demonstrations that day

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[141] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 24-26), 5 May 2020
[142] HRW, 'Libya: Events of 2019', 14 January 2020

accompanied by calls from the Libyan National Army for ports to be shut down. Oil exports from the eastern ports of Burayqah, Ra's Lanuf, Hariqah Zuwaytinah and Sidr were halted.'[143]

c.   Southern regions (Fezzan)

9.2.7   Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Libya report covering events in 2019 reported:

'In the south, clashes between LNA and a GNA-affiliated armed group known as the South Protection Force centered in Murzuq escalated in August, killing more than 100 people. On August 4 alone, more than 40 people were killed, including civilians, and more than 50 injured after the LNA reportedly conducted several airstrikes on a residential area in Murzuq. The LNA is trying to expel GNA-affiliates to expand its control in the south.

'While the extremist group Islamic State (ISIS) no longer controls territory in Libya, its fighters carried out attacks in the eastern city of Derna and the southern city of Sebha, mostly against LNA fighters.

'In September [2019], the United States military said it conducted airstrikes on four different days within 10 days against ISIS targets in southern Libya, killing a total of 43 alleged militants. These strikes, the first conducted by the US military in 2019, were carried out by drones. The US said no civilians were killed in the strikes; this information could not be independently verified.'[144]

9.3   Conflict's impact on infrastructure, governance and human rights

9.3.1   RULAC on its information portal last updated 22 January 2020 stated: '[…] in its 2015 report, the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights reported that 'fighters have received little training and do not operate with the appropriate discipline, command and control systems. Those factors have contributed to the indiscriminate nature of the many attacks.' [145]

9.3.2   Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 Foreign and Commonwealth Office report of 16 July 2020 stated: 'Human rights groups reported violations or abuses of human rights or of international humanitarian law (IHL) across the conflict. Alleged abuses by forces aligned with the Libya National Army (LNA) included destruction of civilian property, and indiscriminate killings and executions.' [146]

9.3.3   Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their Libya report covering events in 2019 reported:

'On July 17 [2019], a member of the House of Representatives, Seham Sergewa, was abducted from her home in the eastern city of Benghazi and disappeared. Relatives and Benghazi residents with knowledge of the

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[143] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 30-31), 5 May 2020
[144] HRW, 'Libya: Events of 2019', 14 January 2020
[145] RULAC, 'Non-international armed conflicts in Libya', undated
[146] FCO, 'Human Rights and democracy: the 2019 FCO report', 16 July 2020

incident blamed an armed group with links to the LNA. Her husband was shot and injured during the incident and the family home looted and torched, according to relatives. Sergewa had publicly opposed the military assault by the LNA on the capital. At time of writing, there was no information on her whereabouts.' [147]

9.3.4   UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) stated in their Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020 issued in January 2020:

'Protection risks are most significant for refugee and migrants, compared to other groups of concern. Risks include unlawful killings, torture, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), arbitrary detention, forced labour and extortion. Refugee and migrant children are far more likely to report no access to education, particularly in the south. Women and girls are more likely to have poorer nutrition, access to shelter and less opportunities for work than male refugees and migrants.'[148]

9.3.5   The USSD human rights report for 2019, noted:

'Significant human rights issues included arbitrary and unlawful killings, including of politicians and members of civil society, by armed groups including some aligned with the GNA and the LNA, criminal gangs, and ISIS-Libya; forced disappearances; torture perpetrated by armed groups on all sides; arbitrary arrest and detention; harsh and life-threatening conditions in prison and detention facilities, some of which were outside government control; political prisoners held by nonstate actors; unlawful interference with privacy, often by nonstate actors…

'Impunity from prosecution was a severe and pervasive problem. Divisions between political and security apparatuses in the west and east, a security vacuum in the south, and the presence of terrorist groups in some areas of the country severely inhibited the government's ability to investigate or prosecute abuses. The government took limited steps to investigate abuses; however, constraints on the government's reach and resources, as well as political considerations, reduced its ability or willingness to prosecute and punish those who committed such abuses. Although bodies such as the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Attorney General issued arrest warrants and opened prosecutions of abuses, limited policing capacity and fears of retribution prevented orders from being carried out.

'According to UNHCR, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants were subjected to unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, torture, sexual exploitation, and other abuses by GNA-aligned groups, LNA-aligned and other nonstate groups, and criminal organizations […]

'Conditions in government and extralegal migrant detention facilities included severe overcrowding, insufficient access to toilets and washing facilities, malnourishment, lack of potable water, and spread of communicable diseases […]. Many press reports indicated refugees and migrants were summarily tortured in official and unofficial detention centers. According to

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[147] HRW, 'Libya: Events of 2019', 14 January 2020
[148] OCHA, 'Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020' (p6), 31 January 2020

numerous press reports, nonstate actors routinely held migrants for ransom payments.

'UNSMIL reported migrant deaths in GNA detention centers at Tariq al-Sikkah, Qasr Bin Ghashir, Zawiyah, and Sebha.

'On September 19 [2019], a Sudanese migrant who had been intercepted on a boat off the coast of Libya was shot and killed by Libyan Coast Guard personnel when he resisted being taken to a detention center, according to the IOM.

'Armed groups, criminal gangs, and terrorist organizations involved in human smuggling activities targeted migrants. Numerous reports during the year suggested that various human smugglers and traffickers had caused the death of migrants. Hundreds of rescued migrants who were reported to have been sent to detention centers were later determined to be missing. In June OHCHR called on the GNA to launch an investigation to locate these missing persons. On July 25, up to 150 migrants who set sail from the Libyan coast, including women and children, drowned when a wooden boat piloted by smugglers capsized in the Mediterranean. There were no known arrests or prosecutions by the GNA during the year of Libyan nationals engaged in trafficking or human smuggling.

'Women refugees and migrants faced especially difficult conditions, and international organizations received many reports of rape and other sexual violence. The OHCHR concluded in a December 2018 report on interviews with 1,300 migrant women and girls that a majority of female migrants in the country were subject to systematic rape by their traffickers and prison guards or witnessed the rape of others. An al-Jazeera investigation concluded in September 2019 similarly documented systematic female and male rape in migrant detention facilities.

'Migrants were exploited for forced labor at the hands of smugglers, traffickers, and GNA-aligned armed groups.' [149]

9.3.6   The United Nations Security Council, report of the Secretary General of May 2020, covering the period January – May 2020 stated:

'The military operations of the Libyan National Army in western Libya continued to exacerbate the security vacuum in the southern region, with criminality and suspected terrorist-related activity continuing. In Sabha, Tebu-affiliated armed elements established checkpoints and imposed illegal taxation on the movement of people and goods. On 30 January [2020], one civilian was reportedly killed in clashes between two unidentified armed groups on Mahdiah Road. Other reported criminal incidents included assassinations, carjacking, abductions and smuggling.

'In a move coordinated between the Libyan National Army and local tribal actors, oil fields in the south-western portion of Libya were shut down. On 20 January, the National Oil Corporation extended the force majeure to all onshore ports following instructions from the Libyan National Army to shut down production at oil fields in Shararah, Hamada and Fil.' [150]

[149] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 2F)', 11 March 2020
[150] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General' (para 32-33), 5 May 2020

9.3.7 The Independent in an article dated 5 June 2020 and referring to GNA forces taking control of Tarhuna stated: 'Renegade Libyan commander Khalifa Haftar abandoned his last remaining stronghold in the country's west in the early hours of Friday [5 June 2020], raising fears of reprisal attacks against civilians deemed to be his supporters.'[151]

9.3.8 A WHO Health sector bulletin from June 2020 noted that of the 131 civilian casualties reported by UNSMIL between 1 January and 31 March 2020 that: 'There are additionally some 10,000 people detained in detention centers under the authority of armed groups. UNSMIL continues to receive credible reports of arbitrary or unlawful detention, torture, enforced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, denial of visits from families and lawyers, and deprivation of access to justice.'[152]

9.3.9 OCHA in a Libya June 2020 situation report noted:

'In Tarhuna and in Sirt, there have been reports of acts of retribution [GNA supporters against LNA / LAAF supporters], looting and other serious violations. This included reports of looting of the Tarhuna General Hospital. The recapture of Tarhuna by the Government of National Accord (GNA) brought the discovery of multiple mass graves. The United National Support Mission to Libya (UNSMIL) received an official request from the GNA to provide technical assistance to support investigations and collection of evidence in conformity with international standards.'[153]

9.3.10 OCHA in a July 2020 situation report noted: 'On 22 June, the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution to establish a fact-finding mission to investigate violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by all parties to the Libya conflict since the beginning of 2016. The resolution also included preserving evidence with a view to ensuring that those responsible for abuses are held accountable.'[154]

9.3.11 See also Health and healthcare and Water, sanitation, hygiene and basic services.

9.3.12 For further information on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees see:

- OHCHR / UNSMIL, 'Desperate and dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya', 20 December 2018

Section 10 updated: 2 September 2020

10. Freedom of movement

10.1.1 The USSD human rights report for 2019, noted:

'The Constitutional Declaration recognizes freedom of movement, including foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, although the government has the ability to restrict freedom of movement. The law provides the government with the power to restrict a person's movement if it views that person as a "threat to public security or stability," based on the person's "previous actions

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[151] The Independent, 'Fears of revenge attacks as rebel general's forces flee last…', 5 June 2020
[152] WHO, 'Libya: Health Sector Bulletin', 30 June 2020
[153] OCHA, 'June situation report', last updated, 6 July 2020
[154] OCHA, 'July situation report', last updated, 8 July 2020

or affiliation with an official or unofficial apparatus or tool of the former regime."

'In-country Movement: The GNA did not exercise control over internal movement in the west, although GNA-aligned armed groups set up some checkpoints. The LNA established checkpoints in the east and south. These checkpoints were occasional targets of attacks by terrorist organizations, including a May 18 [2019] attack on an LNA checkpoint at the entrance to an oilfield in Zillah, which was claimed by ISIS-Libya.

'There were reports that armed groups controlling airports within the country conducted random checks on departing domestic and international travelers, since the country lacked a unified customs and immigration system.' [155]

10.1.2   For information on how COVID-related measures may impact on freedom of movement see section COVID-19.

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[155] USSD, 'Libya: Human rights report 2019' (section 2D)', 11 March 2020

Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the country information section. The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- **Humanitarian conditions**
  - general well-being of the population described by age, gender, particular groups, prevalence of disease, levels of nutrition, literacy
  - socio-economic situation, including access and availability to:
    - food
    - water for drinking and washing
    - accommodation and shelter
    - employment
    - healthcare – physical and mental
    - education
    - support providers, including government and international and domestic non-government organisations
    - Whether conditions (and treatment of groups) varies by location or group
    - Whether the government is purposely withholding or not delivering support services
  - Internally displaced persons (IDPs) – numbers, trends and location of IDPs

- **Security situation**
  - Actors in conflict – number, size, intent and capacity
  - Geographical scope of conflict
  - Nature of violence - methods and tactics, including targeting of groups (age, sex, ethnicity, religion, disability, etc)
  - Number of security incidents
    - frequency and density in relation to local population
    - variation by place, time and groups affected
  - Number of civilian casualties, including
    - fatalities and injuries (also as a proportion of total population)
    - variation by place, time and group
  - Conflict-induced displacement
  - Indirect impact of violence on

- law and order

- prevalence of crime

- human rights

- socio-economic situation and basic services including health, education and essential infrastructure

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **4.0**
- valid from **14 September 2020**

Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information

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