

Politics

Libya, Turkey tell Greece it has no rights in their joint demarcated maritime zone

In a letter to the UN on Tuesday, Libya and Turkey decried Greek criticisms of their agreements on the delimitation of hydrocarbon and maritime jurisdiction areas, and urged Greece to end its baseless accusations, hostile rhetoric, and escalatory actions and instead respect the sovereign decisions of the two countries.

"The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on 3 Oct. 2022 between the Governments of National Unity of Libya and the Republic of Türkiye on Cooperation in the Field of Hydrocarbons is a legal instrument based on the principle of sovereign equality. The MOU envisages the development of bilateral cooperation in the field of hydrocarbons, both on land and at sea in the Eastern Mediterranean and therefore is in full observance of the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation among states." Libya's Permanent Representative to the UN Taher El-Sonni and his Turkish counterpart Feridun Sinirlioglu said in a joint letter.

The letter noted that, contrary to Greece's allegations, the Libyan Government of National Unity has the capacity to enter and

terminate international accords, and that its laws authorize the government to negotiate agreements with other states. It also said that contrary to Greece's claims, there is no legal basis for claims that the hydrocarbons agreement signed by Libya and Turkey contradicts the political process under UN supervision, as the roadmap that will lead to a political solution in Libya gives the government full authority in the election preparation process.

The letter stated that the agreement between Turkey and Libya on the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas, signed on Nov. 27, 2019, was recorded in line with Article 102 of the UN Convention and that a fair solution based on international law was reached, and rejected Greece's claims that the agreement violates its sovereign rights.

The letter said Greece's objections to the said MOU on the ground that it allegedly violates Greek sovereign rights are unacceptable to Libya and Turkey.

"So is the purported maritime boundary delimitation agreement signed between Egypt and Greece. We regard them (as) null and void; they are in no way opposable to

us. In accordance with international law, Greece is not entitled to sovereign rights in the maritime areas delimited between Libya and Turkey." It said.

The letter indicated that Greece continues to interpret the law of the sea and general international law selectively, saying it ignores the principle of equity in maritime boundary delimitation. The letter also said Greece poses illegally as an archipelagic state, claiming that all islands, islets, and rocks should be given full weight in maritime boundary delimitation regardless of their location, size, or ability to sustain human habitation or economic life on their own.

"The agreements signed between Turkey and Libya on the delimitation of hydrocarbon and maritime jurisdictions violate neither international law nor Greece's sovereign rights, said the letter, adding that Greece is attempting to discredit Libya and Turkey's efforts to promote dialogue in the Mediterranean at the UN. Turkey and Libya urged Greece to stop its unfounded charges, hostile rhetoric, and measures that aggravate tensions, and to respect the two neighboring nations' sovereign decisions."

Politics

Two minors abducted for tearing up an image of Haftar in Benghazi

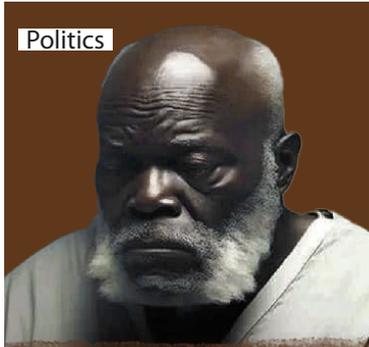
Gunmen from the so-called Tariq bin Ziyad brigade affiliated with Khalifa Haftar have abducted two minors for tearing up a poster bearing a portrait of Haftar in the street in Benghazi, according to the Libyan Crimes Watch Organization (LCW).

"Gunmen belonging to the Tariq bin Ziyad Brigade, riding a white Toyota with tinted windows, kidnapped Abu Bakr Abu Zaid Najm, 15, and Muhammad Bilal Al-Hashemi, 16, in the area of Al-Baraka in Benghazi and took them to an unknown location," the organization said in a Facebook post on Tuesday.

The LCW learnt from eyewitnesses that the teenagers were caught on surveillance cameras tearing up images of Haftar.

It condemned the abduction of minor children and held the so-called General Command of the Armed Forces of Haftar accountable for their safety.

The organization demanded the force to disclose the fate of those kidnapped and release them immediately without conditions.



Politics

Libyan Abu Agila Masud tells US court he "won't talk without his lawyer"

Libyan national, Abu Agila Masud Al-Maryami, appeared before a federal court in Washington, DC, on Tuesday for his alleged involvement in the Lockerbie case, and he refused to speak before the American Magistrate Judge, Robin Meriweather, before meeting with his lawyer.

Prosecutor Erik Kenerson told the court the government will not be seeking the death penalty because it was not a legally available penalty at the time the crimes were committed, so the maximum sentence available will be life in prison, Reuters reported.

On Monday, the US Homeland Security Advisor Liz Sherwood-Randall said Washington lawfully took custody of Masud and brought him to the US where he would face charges for his alleged involvement in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

"This action underscores the Biden Administration's unwavering commitment to enforcing the rule of law and holding accountable those who inflict harm on Americans in acts of terrorism. Through the unrelenting efforts of the Department of Justice, Department of State, and their partners, Abu Agila Mas'ud will now face justice." She added in a statement published by the White House.



91 members of Libya's HoR call for convening urgently over Abu Agila Masud's case

91 members of the House of Representatives (HoR) urged the Presidency of the HoR to convene an emergency session to discuss "the disappearance of the Libyan citizen Abu Agila Masoud Al-Maryami, and the news about him being in US custody for investigation in the Lockerbie case."

A statement issued by the HoR members described the extradition of any Libyan citizen to a foreign country outside the framework of the law as "a heinous crime and a violation of all local and international norms." It added that the Lockerbie case has been closed completely, indicating that its reopening is a abandonment of international treaties and a blatant violation by the US government as well as a bad exploitation of the conditions that Libya is going through. Earlier, the Presidency of the HoR asked the Attorney General to file a criminal case against those involved in the "kidnapping" of Masoud and handing him over to foreign entities. This came one day after the US announced his detention, according to a letter from the legal advisor to the Presidency's Office of the House of Representatives to the Attorney General. On Sunday, a spokesman for the US Department of Justice said in a statement that Masud was under arrest and would appear before a judge in Washington DC without specifying a date.



General Assembly of Supreme Court rules that Tripoli constitutional circuit shall remain on duty



The General Assembly of the Libyan Supreme Court in Tripoli has unanimously ruled in favor of the continuation of work of the Constitutional Circuit Court in terms of looking into all appeals and the rest of its relevant competences.

The House of Representatives (HoR) approved last week with majority a Constitutional Court bill, with its permanent headquarters being in Benghazi, eastern Libya.

HoR Speaker Aqila Saleh proposed the bill in last October for the Constitutional Court to function as constitutional circuit court of the Supreme Court amid accusations by political parties to Saleh of trying to control the judicial institution in Libya.

As a reaction to this decision, the Head of the High Council of State (HCS), Khalid Al-Mishri, sent an official letter to the Speaker of the HoR Aqila Saleh calling for the necessity of annulling the law establishing a Supreme Constitutional Court in Benghazi, which it said was issued in violation of the constitutional provisions and points of agreement between the HCS and the HoR. He later severed communication between the two chambers.



Human Rights Watch: EU complicit in abuse in Libya

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Human Rights Watch and Border Forensics said in a multimedia research feature released Monday that the use by the EU's border agency, Frontex, of aerial surveillance to enable the Libyan Coast Guard to intercept migrant boats, knowing that migrants and asylum seekers will face systematic and widespread abuse when forcibly returned to Libya, makes Frontex complicit in the abuse. The report said using data analysis and research testimony, the interactive web feature "Airborne Complicity: Frontex Aerial Surveillance Enables Abuse" documents the role that Frontex-chartered aircraft – several planes and a drone – play in detecting migrants' boats in the central Mediterranean and their subsequent interception by Libyan forces. The two bodies said that the analysis of the available data supports the conclusion that the approach of Frontex is not designed to rescue people in distress, but rather to prevent them from reaching European Union territory.

"However, there is a moderate and statistically significant relationship between drone flights and the number of interceptions carried out by the Libyan Coast Guard," said Human Rights Watch and Border Forensics.

Politics



Economy

Algeria exports 120 tons of building materials to Libya

A private Algerian company has announced the export of 120 tons of building materials to Libya, after the country's authorities announced achieving self-sufficiency in these materials.

The director of the Rital Building Materials Company in the state of Constantine, Islam Theeb, said that this shipment consists of 85 tons of adhesive cement and 35 tons of joint paste (anti-leakage), noting that this operation aims to enter new international markets.

This commercial deal was concluded with the Libyan partner at a value of 21,000 euros, according to the official, in statements to Algerian media, stressing that another order of the same quantity will be supplied to the same Libyan partner in the coming days.



Economy

Ministry of Economy follows up on Made in Algeria Exhibition preparations

Minister of Economy and Trade, Mohamed Al-Hawij, met on Wednesday with the Algerian Ambassador to Libya, Suleiman Chenine, to follow up on the preparations for the (Made in Algeria) Exhibition, scheduled to be held in Tripoli.

Al-Hawij vowed to facilitate procedures for the companies and factories participating in the exhibition as well as enhance communication between the Libyan and Algerian private sectors and promote trade exchange between the two countries.

For his part, the Algerian ambassador invited Al-Hawij to attend the Sahel and Desert Exhibition, which will be held in Algeria on the 23-24 of this month.

It is noteworthy that the Made in Algeria Exhibition will kick off on the grounds of the Tripoli International Fair between 28-31 December 2022, with the participation of 132 Algerian companies in various fields, including oil, energy, construction, and food industries.



Economy

Spain's Repsol to resume its activities in Libya

The National Oil Corporation (NOC) has discussed with the Spanish company Repsol the resumption of the company's exploration activity in Libya, especially after the corporation announced the lifting of force majeure.

The two sides reviewed the completed technical projects and programs for 2022, and the proposed programs to be implemented for 2023 with regard to seismic survey programs, exploratory drilling, and geological and geophysical studies.



Economy

OPEC cancels Libya's LYD 20 million debt

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has agreed to write off Libya's accumulated debts, estimated at 20 million Libyan dinars, Libya's Ministry of Oil and Gas announced on Monday.

OPEC's Ministerial Council decided on the issue during its 109th meeting hosted by Kuwait, in the presence of Libya's Minister, Mohamed Aoun, and representative of Libya to the Executive Council of the Organization, Counselor Adel Jibril.

A statement by the Oil Ministry on Facebook said the Libyan delegation explained the circumstances of the accumulated debts, and a decision was taken to drop them.

The group looked into other issues, including approving OPEC's budget for the next year and reviewing its charter, besides developing the organization to cover renewable energies.



Economy

Austrian OMV mulls expanding oil exploration in Libya

Austrian oil company "OMV" said it wanted to expand exploration in Libya and train the sector's cadres, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) said.

According to the statement on Sunday, a member of the Board of Directors for Exploration at the NOC, Khalifa Abdul-Sadiq, discussed with the General Manager of OMV and his accompanying delegation, the company's activity in Libya, as they welcomed the resumption of exploration and development activity.

OMV is an integrated international oil and gas company, headquartered in Vienna, whose main line of work is oil and gas exploration and production, natural gas distribution and power generation, refining and marketing petroleum products.

Last Monday, the Government of National Unity lifted the state of force majeure on exploration operations, calling on international oil companies that signed contracts with the NOC to resume their work in Libya, and pledged to provide the necessary support in this regard, while the vice president of the French company Total welcomed the decision in a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.



Economy

Al-Huweij reiterates importance of devising plan to diversify national

The Minister of Economy and Trade of the Government of National Unity, Mohammed Al-Huweij, stressed the importance of developing a plan to diversify Libya's national economy, with special attention to transit trade and free zones. These remarks came during Al-Huweij's presidency of the final meeting of the Steering Committee of the European Program to Support the Private Sector in Libya, which is funded by the European Union and implemented by France's Expertise Foundation.

Al-Huweij hailed the support of the European Union to reach the desired results of strengthening the capabilities of the ministry, developing the private sector, supporting the economic empowerment of youth and women, and improving access to financing for micro, small and medium enterprises. He reiterated the seriousness of the partners in the program, whether the European Union, French experts, or Libyan parties, while representatives of the European Union and the France's Experts Foundation also expressed their commitment to supporting the private sector and improving the business environment in Libya.

Opinions

Democracy in Libya and the three missing mechanisms

By *Mohammed Belrawin*, a political science professor



The experience of the past ten years has taught us that Libyan politicians have no covenant, do not respect their covenants, and do not believe in the principles they advocate unless they serve their own personal interests.

It taught us that the legal terminology does not mean anything to them and they consider it as bearing multiple connotations for example: the term "the nearest time" does not mean to them "as soon as possible", and the term "consensus" does not mean to them "that no one objects." It also taught us that whoever practices politics today (save few) do not believe in the rule of "political appeal." Rather, s/he believes that the higher one ascends, the more adores power and clings to it, refusing to descend or handover.

It taught us that many of the necessary electoral mechanisms to participate in decision-making are missing. It taught us that "trust" alone is not enough, and that its harm is more than its reward, and the principle that must be adopted is: "Trust but test".

It also taught us that the participation of citizens - in the next stage - should not be limited to just casting a vote to choose their representatives in parliament, but rather it should include other mechanisms for decision-making. In other words, there should be (in addition to the election mechanism) other mechanisms, perhaps the most important of which are the following:

1. The initiative.
2. Referendum.
3. Recall

First: the initiative.

A tool of direct democracy (also known as popular initiative or citizens' initiative), a means by which signatures can be collected from a number of voters (specified by law) to force parliament to pass, amend or repeal legislation. In other words, it is a means of participating in the process of making decisions and laws or objecting to them, for this to happen, it must:

1. The proponents of the proposal collect sufficient signatures,
2. Hold a referendum on the proposal,
3. Make the result of the vote binding on all.

Second: Referendum

It is a voting process in which voters in a country are asked to express their opinion or make a decision on a specific issue. It is a similar tool for elections, except that citizens go on polling day to cast their votes on the ballot paper with "yes" or "no."

The referendum is considered successful if it is approved by the prescribed majority as stipulated by law. There are many types of referendum, perhaps the most important of which are:

1. A popular referendum - in which voters are allowed to cancel existing legislation or refer an act of parliament to vote on it before it becomes law.
2. A legislative referendum - allowing Parliament to refer a legislative proposal to voters for approval or rejection.

Third: Recall

A procedure by which voters remove an elected official from office before the expiration of his term of office. This is done by the following:

1. The voters recall their elected official (in their constituencies) by collecting a certain number of signatures (determined by law) within a certain period, provided that they were among the votes that participated in the last elections for this position
2. If the voters succeed in gathering the required number, the referendum will be held.

3. If the voters agree to recall the official, the constituency has three options for appointing a replacement for him:

- a. Refer to the list of candidates in the previous elections and choose the candidate who got the second rank,
- b. Call for special elections to choose the replacement, or
- c. The officials in the constituency appoint the replacement. In this case the following must be emphasized:

1. All positions that are popularly elected can be removed.
2. The withdrawal of confidence shall not take place before half the term for which the official was elected has passed.
3. Once a motion of no confidence has been submitted, the official has the right to resign and run in the special elections.
4. No more than one motion of no confidence can be made during the period for which the official was elected.

Conclusion In short, the participation of voters, in the next stage, should not be limited to merely voting to choose their representatives in Parliament, but rather other tools should be available to them to participate in the political process. Perhaps the most important of these tools: initiative, referendum and recall. These are tools that give voters direct power over their own laws and officials. The initiative is a legislative procedure proposed by a number of citizens to put an issue before the people in order to vote and take a decision on it. A referendum is a popular electoral mechanism used by voters to approve or reject a proposal. The recall is a mechanism that makes every official aware that the voters who elected him/her have legal tools that enable them to have a vote of no confidence whenever they want and, in the manner, specified by the law. Therefore, it is a process through which an elected official can be removed from office. It is a mechanism that guarantees the official's connection with his/her constituency and requires them to work for the benefit of their constituents and not for the benefit of their party or their personal interests.

Finally, it can be concluded that one of the most important reasons for the failure of the democratic process in Libya - during the past ten years - is the absence of popular electoral mechanisms that enable the citizens to monitor who represent them in the state, and reducing the democratic process to mere legislative elections, without defining the tasks of officials and setting controls for their actions.

The people should be aware that there are many electoral mechanisms to participate in decision-making, and they are important and necessary mechanisms for the practice of true democracy. Perhaps the most important of these are the three mechanisms that are mentioned above, because they are among the three most important powers reserved to enable voters to propose or cancel legislation or remove an elected official from office.

In my humble opinion, if politicians refuse to adopt these mechanisms, the inevitable result will be a continuation of what we might call "the spiral of democratic futility," which will result - God forbid - in more failure, chaos and corruption. Did the people realize the degree of this danger? Has it become necessary to include these electoral mechanisms in the next constitutional rule? I pray to Almighty Allah that this will be achieved.

Finally, my beloved ones, do not forget that this is just an opinion, I think it is sound. However, whoever comes with a better opinion than this one, we accept, and whoever comes with a different opinion, we respect.



Health

Study suspended in Tobruk and Gharyan over spread of seasonal flu

Tobruk municipality announced the suspension of study in public and private primary and preparatory schools, starting next Saturday: December 17, for one week due to the breakout of seasonal influenza.

Last Tuesday, Gharyan municipality decided to suspend study in all public and private schools for general education of (kindergarten, primary and preparatory schools) on Wednesday and Thursday, as a result of the widespread spread of the respiratory syncytial virus in educational institutions.

The decision to suspend study was taken after the emergency meeting of officials of the public sectors in the municipality to assess the health situation within the city, which saw the assigning of relevant authorities to assess the health situation, take the necessary measures and issue a report on the situation within two days of the date of the meeting.



Health

Medical Supply receives vaccine shipment for school children

The cold ring stores of the Medical Supply Authority received a shipment of the triple and quadruple vaccine for schoolchildren.

The shipment includes 238,000 shots of the quadruple vaccine and 238,000 doses of the triple vaccine for schoolchildren.

The Medical Supply said the shipment is being preserved according to the applicable methods in preparation for its distribution after obtaining permission from the Food and Drug Control Center.



Health

Murtaza Karanfil hails opportunities in Libya's health sector

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Turkish Karanfil Group, Murtaza Karanfil, hailed the massive opportunities presented by the health sector in Libya, adding in an interview with Turkish Anadolu Agency on opening Turkish hospital in Misrata last November that it was purposefully opened in Libya not in any other African country as gratitude for joint relations.

The Turkish businessman pointed out that Libyans are suffering from lack of the necessary health services, and that the opening of the Turkish-Libyan Hospital in Misrata was to alleviate the suffering. He said that the health sector in Libya includes great opportunities, indicating that Libya can be a health

center for the African continent. Regarding the Turkish experience in the health sector, Karanfil said that his country has been effective, citing the performance of the sector during the Coronavirus pandemic. He stressed that the Turkish health sector has reached a high level that cannot be compared to its counterpart in Europe. The Turkish-Libyan hospital is built on an area of 7000 square meters. It is scheduled to include, later, a college of medicine and a hospital specializing in oncology, Karanfil said, adding that the hospital includes 13 departments and 4 operating rooms, with a total capacity of 120 beds.



Health

RSV closes schools in Gharyan

Gharyan Municipality has ordered the closure of schools on Wednesday and Thursday due to the volume of illness among students and staff in the city's education facilities.

The municipality said it will suspend kindergarten, junior, and intermediate classes to help reduce the spread of the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Local officials met on Tuesday to assess the health situation in the city in the wake of the RSV outbreak.

Gharyan Central Teaching Hospital declared a state of emergency after the pediatric de-

partment received more than 200 cases within 24 hours following the spread of the virus in schools.

The hospital said its pediatric department is at full capacity amid the lack of medical and paramedical personnel, expressing readiness to double the clinical capacity if it finds more staff. It urged the Health Ministry and the competent authorities to take swift action as flu cases continue to rise, saying it is open to cooperation contracts with doctors in the pediatric department to fill the shortage.



Health

Flu vaccine will be in the country soon says the NCDC, as flu cases make rounds this winter

The Director of Libya's National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Haider Al-Sayeh, has promised to have the influenza vaccine in the country very soon as flu cases spike in Libya.

In a Facebook post, Al-Sayeh said that respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) has been circulating in the country for nine months.

According to Al-Sayeh, the RSV cases ranged between 5-10%, while Influenza infection was detected in 75-88% of the total samples, hitting mostly teenagers at 16 and 18 years old.

Coronavirus infection has gone down to 3-7% of the total samples, affecting mostly middle-aged people in their forties.

The NCDC head ensured the public that many of the cases were diagnosed as regular flu and not a respiratory syncytial disease.



Travel

Minister of Transport, Tunisian Ambassador discuss resumption of Tunisair flights from Sabha

The Minister of Transport, Mohammed Al-Shahoubi, has called on the Tunisian ambassador to Libya, Al-Asaad Al-Ajili, to send a technical team from Tunisair company to Sabha city, in order to resume flights to the city's airport.

Regarding maritime line between the two countries, Al-Shahoubi demanded to open new line to the port of La Goulette in the Tunisian capital, instead of the port of Gerges, due to the desire of travelers to head towards the capital directly.

The two sides agreed to form a joint committee to solve the problems facing Libyan citizens in entering Tunisian territory.

On the other hand, the Tunisian ambassador to Libya, Al-Asaad Al-Ajili, confirmed that nearly 80% of cases of similar names have been removed from the Tunisian system.



Health

About 7 thousand people infected with RSV in Kufra

The Health Emergency Room in the municipality of Kufra has announced the registration of 6,870 patients, between the ages of one to 18 years, with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), in November.

The Emergency Room explained that it published the statistics after communicating with hospitals, centers and clinics within the municipality, as a result of the circulating news and inaccurate statistics in social media websites as well as the media in general.

The statistics published by the Room show the registration of 5,530 infected patients who attended hospitals from the age category of 1 to 12 years, while the admissions cases from the same category amounted to 190 patients, and the number of infected patients from the ages of 13 to 18 years reached 1150 patients.



Sports

Libya's Al-Akhdar football club drawn in tough CAF Confederation Cup group

The draw for the group stage of the CAF Confederation Cup saw Libya's only participant Al-Akhdar club falling into a relatively difficult group, Group A, with Angolan San Eloi Lupopo clubs and South African Marumo Gallants, which eliminated Al-Ahly Tripoli from the tournament, and the Algerian USM Alger, one of the most prominent teams in the continent, which won the title in previous years.

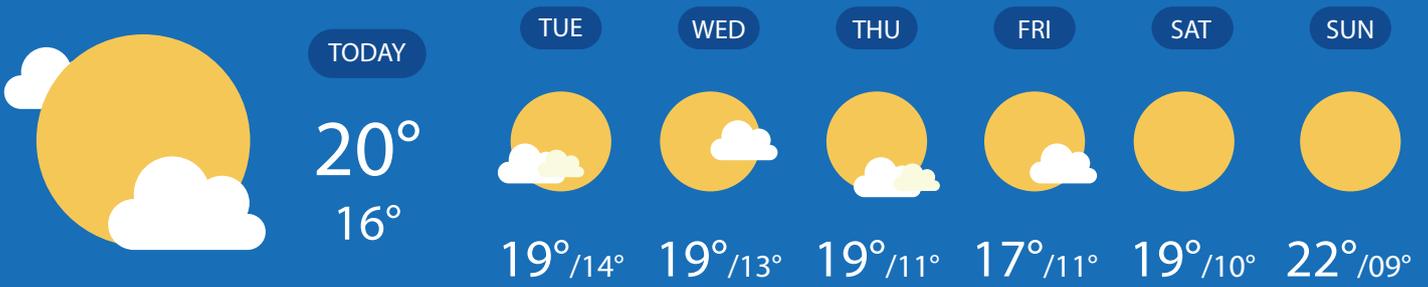
16 teams qualified for the group stage of the Confederation Cup, and they were divided into 4 levels, each of which includes 4 clubs. A team from each level was placed in each of the four groups.

Al-Akhdar will play its first match in the tournament on February 12, when it hosts Saint-Éloi Lupopo at Benina Martyrs Stadium in Benghazi.

Photo of the Week



Tripoli Weather Forecast



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