



Politics

Cavusoglu: Libyan government has informed Ankara of adherence to hydrocarbons MoU

The Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that the Libyan Government of National Unity (GNU) informed Ankara of its adherence to the hydrocarbons memorandum of understanding between them, Anadolu News Agency has reported.

It said that Cavusoglu's remarks came in a statement he made in

the Rwandan capital, Kigali, on Thursday, when he touched upon the decision of the Tripoli appeals court to suspend the implementation of the memorandum of understanding in the field of hydrocarbons (oil and natural gas) signed between the two countries last October.

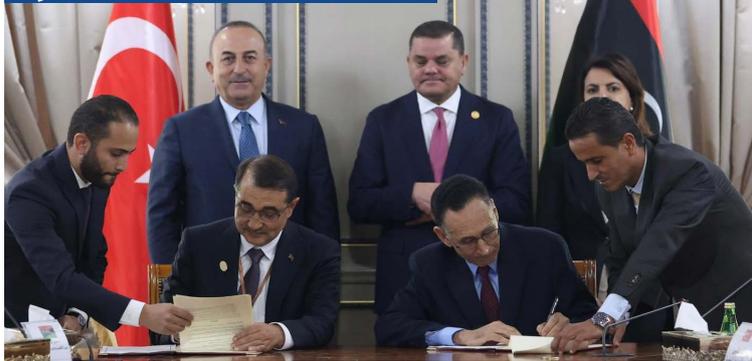
Cavusoglu indicated that Ankara immediately contacted the Libyan Prime Minister, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, following the decision issued by the Tripoli Court of Appeal last Tuesday.

According to Anadolu News Agency, Cavusoglu also said that the two sides signed the memorandum during his visit to Tripoli on October 03, 2022, explaining that, like the rest of the memoranda of understanding that Libya signed with other countries, it does not need to be passed by parliament.

"The court decided to suspend it. This is a decision, not a final ruling. The (Libyan) government informed us of its adherence to the memorandum and said it was following it up closely. As a result, this cooperation agreement is very important for Libya as well." Cavusoglu added.

Politics

Tripoli Appeals Court suspends implementation of Libya-Turkey hydrocarbons MoU



The Tripoli Court of Appeal has ruled in favor of suspending the implementation of the Libyan and Turkish Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on oil and gas (hydrocarbons) exploration.

According to the court ruling on Tuesday, the decision to suspend the MoU will be in effect until the final verdict on this case is announced.

Five lawyers appealed to the Court of Appeal in Tripoli against the MoU that was signed by the Government of National Unity (GNU) with Turkey regarding hydrocarbons exploration in the Mediterranean. They said that the Libyan political agreement "prevents the GNU from making any international agreements," noting that "the deal that was signed with Turkey had been called a memorandum of understanding, but it was a complete and extended oil agreement." The lawyers added that the agreement violated several provisions of the Libyan Oil Law, especially the lack of experience of the Turkish companies in this field. They also asked the Court of Appeal to suspend implementing the agreement because "it takes away the exclusive jurisdiction over the oil trade by the Libyan National Oil Corporation."

The Government of National Unity signed in early October 2022, new agreements with Turkey that allow Turkish companies to explore for oil and gas in Libyan waters.



Politics

Menfi informs Haftar of plan B if HoR, HCS talks fail

Egyptian diplomatic sources revealed that a meeting between the Head of Libya's Presidential Council, Muhammad Menfi, and warlord Khalifa Haftar took place in Cairo.

According to the sources, Menfi suggested that if the House of Representatives and the High Council of State fail to reach an agreement on a constitutional basis, the PC will take the reins in the country by declaring a state of emergency, dissolving the two councils, the government in Tripoli, and its rival in the east.

Menfi's initiative stipulates that he would then form a government of crisis with ten ministers to prepare for an electoral process within six months to a year, ensuring Haftar that military personnel will have the right to run in the planned elections.

The meeting comes amid preparations for a national reconciliation conference aimed at promoting dialogue and bringing peace and stability to Libya.



Politics

Greece speeds up drilling activity in south Crete disregarding Libya-Turkey maritime MoU

The Greek newspaper "Kathimerini" said that the areas where exploration and drilling operations are taking place between Greek and US companies, especially the southwestern part of Crete island, are inconsistent with Libyan claims to maritime sovereignty supported by the memorandum of understanding signed in 2019 between Ankara and the Libyan government.

The newspaper claimed that Libya and Turkey did not have a common maritime border, pointing out that the US company "Exxon-Mobil" assured the Greek government that it was not concerned with Turkey's dispute over energy rights in the Mediterranean basin.

It also said that "ExxonMobil" entered into a partnership with the "Hellenic Petroleum" company in the search for natural gas and oil south and west of Crete, with plans to increase the pace of drilling in those areas to end this activity by next February.

The Libyan-Turkish MoU was categorically rejected by several countries, including Greece and Egypt, which recently demarcated its western maritime borders with Libya unilaterally, sparking Libya's rejection; even from Egypt's allies in the House of Representatives.

In a letter last December to the UN, 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 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.



Security Council continues to support Sirte ceasefire's monitoring mechanism

The UN Security Council confirmed in a report that the ceasefire agreement remained in place in Libya during the year 2022 despite the tense security situation in the country, adding that by monitoring the general situation in the country in the last six months of 2022, it decided that the monitoring mission would continue to support Libya in establishing a Libyan mechanism to monitor the ceasefire capable of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the progress made in the withdrawal of foreign forces, mercenaries and fighters.

The report said that the Security Council's would continue to support Libyan efforts to implement the provisions of the ceasefire agreement, reduce tensions, and build mutual trust among relevant Libyan actors.

Eight UN ceasefire observers arrived in Tripoli and worked from 18 August to 26 September, 2022. The Chief and Deputy Chief of the Ceasefire Monitoring Mission also started working. They will continue to support the work of the Libyan ceasefire observers in establishing a mechanism in Sirte, if conditions were suitable.

However, the UN Security Council's report warned of the constant threat represented by the random spread of ammunition and the dangers of storing weapons in populated areas in Libya, especially after incidents that occurred in Misrata, Msallata, Zliten, Ain Zara and other locations. Shootings, violent clashes among armed groups and explosive remnants of war remained the main causes of killing and maiming, according to the Security Council.



The Director of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) William Burns arrived in Libya's capital Tripoli on Thursday and met with the Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, the Government of National Unity's media office has announced.

Burns reiterated the need for joint security and economic cooperation, hailing the stability and development that Libya had been going through recently, according to the media office, which added that Dbeibah said his goal was stability for Libya and support for holding elections.

The US chargé d'affaires attended the meeting on the US side, while on the Libyan side, the Foreign Minister Najla Al-Mangoush, Chief of Intelligence Apparatus Hussein Al-Ayeb and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Adel Jumua were present.



Economy

Al-Huwaij discusses setting up mechanism for financing micro-enterprises

The Minister of Economy and Trade in the Government of National Unity, Mohammed Al-Huwaij, has discussed setting up a mechanism for cooperation between the financing agencies and the National Program for Small and Medium Enterprises to find financing opportunities for a number of micro-enterprises. This came during his meeting with a number of bank managers concerned with financing and supporting private projects, according to a statement issued, on Tuesday, by the Ministry of Economy.

Al-Huwaij explained that the mechanism falls within the framework of the ministry's work plan for the year 2023, and contributes to providing new job opportunities, addressing unemployment and job overcrowding in the public sector, in addition to its important role in the economic development process.



Economy

French court ruling in favor of Kuwaiti Al-Kharafi Company against CBL

The Court of Appeal in Paris issued this January a new judicial ruling in favor of the Kuwaiti Al-Kharafi Company against the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), which stipulated rejecting the objection submitted by the bank regarding the powers of the arbitration decision issued in Cairo.

The court also ruled of rejecting all the claims submitted by the Libyan government, the Ministries of Economy and Finance, the General Council for Investment Promotion and the Investment Authority, in addition to obligating the CBL to pay the compensation claimed by Mohammed Abdul Mohsen Al-Kharafi and Sons Company, in addition to paying the costs of the case.



Economy

Libyan gas exports to Italy return to normal levels

Italian news agency "NOVA" said that Libyan gas exports resumed to Italy on Monday at levels of 7 to 8 million cubic meters, after a four-day interruption and decrease.

NOVA indicated that the Libyan gas supplies were cut off on the 5th and 6th of January, and decreased in the following two days. The news agency did not mention the reasons for the interruption and decrease; However, it is likely to be due to the fire that broke out at the Mellitah oil and gas company's complex in western Libya last Thursday.

The Ministry of Labor of the Government of National Unity announced on last Thursday that there was no damage caused by the fire that broke out at the Mellitah complex, while the head of the safety department at the National Oil Corporation (NOC) confirmed that there were no material or human losses. The fire broke out as a result of volatile gases during maintenance work for the complex, but it was quickly contained without affecting production.

NOVA reaffirmed that Italy had imported about 2.5 billion cubic meters of gas from Libya through the Green Stream pipeline in 2022.

Libya directs about 60% of its gas production to the domestic market, while the rest is exported to Italy, according to statistics from the Libyan Ministry of Oil and Gas.

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Economy

Libya's Oil Minister: We're ready to discuss maritime demarcation with neighboring states

The Minister of Oil and Gas in the Government of National Unity (GNU) Mohammed Oun said in an interview with Al Jazeera Mubashar TV that there are real possibilities to find friendly solutions with countries, such as Greece, Egypt and Cyprus, regarding the demarcation of maritime borders.

Oun said that the world reached an advanced stage of rationing to define maritime borders, either through friendly solutions or through the International Court of Justice, adding that some countries have resorted to unilateral solutions instead of dialogue and consensus.

He explained that maritime laws specified the territorial waters to 12 nautical miles from the first land point of the concerned coun-

try, saying that there are specific mechanisms for measuring and separating the distance between any two sea neighboring countries.

Oun indicated that there are huge oil discoveries to be made in the Mediterranean for the benefit of Libya, reiterating that they have a lot of oil reserves that have not yet been discovered on land and in the sea. He noted that geological studies prove the existence of these reserves in the Libyan economic waters, east and west of the Mediterranean.

"The National Oil Corporation (NOC) plans to increase production to two million barrels annually within 3 years, expecting a gradual increase in production between (1.3 and 1.5 million barrels) in 2023, and realizing that this increase depends on the mechanism of activity carried out by the

NO and the completion of development activities for oil wells.

The Minister of Oil and Gas added that the government is trying to encourage American companies to return to work in Libya, as the oil and gas sector is based on American technology. He explained that the responses of American officials were positive after they were briefed on the ministry's vision to lead the Libyan oil sector with high transparency and efficiency to complete future projects, so that the Libyan state's oil and gas production is increased.

On January 2, Oun visited Washington, where he met with US Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Jeffrey Pyatt, officials of the American company ConocoPhillips, whom he briefed on the ministry's vision to develop the oil and gas sector in Libya.

Economy

Libyan Finance Ministry: State expenditure exceeded 127 billion dollars in 2022



The Ministry of Finance of the Government of National Unity (GNU) said that the state's revenues for the past year amounted to more than 134.4 billion dinars, and the total expenditures for the same year exceeded 127 billion and 800 million dinars.

In its disclosure and transparency report, the Ministry of Finance clarified that the temporary financial arrangements allocated to the National Oil Corporation (NOC) amounted to more than 34 billion and 200 million dinars.

The Ministry also said that spending on salaries exceeded 47 billion and 100 million dinars, while steering expenses amounted to more than 8 billion and 900 million dinars.

It indicated that the subsidies' section amounted to more than 20 billion dinars, while the expenses of the projects and support programs amounted to more than 17.4 billion dinars.

Economy

Ministry of Oil discusses with ConocoPhillips ways to raise production



Minister of Oil and Gas of the Government of National Unity, Mohamed Aoun, discussed Friday, in Washington with Josh Corless, Vice President of International Governmental Affairs at ConocoPhillips, continuing investing in Libya.

They also discussed accelerating implementation of projects that will have an impact on oil and gas production increase, such as North Jalu Project and Plot NC 98.

The two parties emphasized the need to continue contacts and consultations to overcome the challenges facing ConocoPhillips in order to carry out its obligations in Libya.

It is to be noted that the Government of National Unity agreed, November last year, to sell the share of the American company 'Hess' in the Waha (Oasis) wells concession amounting to 8.16%, equally between the French Total and the American ConocoPhillips.

Opinions

Is it election or extension of sabotage?

By Abdullah Alkabir, a Libyan political writer and commentator



The High Council of State (HCS) has rebuffed the Presidential Council's initiative for a tripartite meeting in Ghadames, without explaining the reasons behind such rejection. While the House of Representatives (HoR) and its speaker completely ignored the initiative. In order to avoid local and international indignation over such rejection, presidents of both HoR and HCS rushed to meet in Cairo, to communicate a swift message that might alleviate the pressure on them, purporting that they are pressing ahead with their quest for a way out of the crisis, by approving a constitutional basis for the elections, thereby absorbing some of the anger resulting from the rebuff of the Presidential Council's initiative. Then, they came out with a statement and a press conference, in which they repeated the same rhetoric that has become familiar to every observer of the Libyan affair, and therefore they continue pursuing the same goal, which has become more or less a mirage.

The outcomes of their meeting and their statements did not win any support from any party or country relevant to the conflict. UNSMIL's belated comment, and the American ambassador did not reflect on Aqila-Al-Mishri meeting outcome, except the part related to finalizing the constitutional rule and conduct of elections.

The room for maneuver for Aqila and Al-Mishri is now narrowing with the continued American and European pressure, and if the failure of the two houses continues and their procrastination persist, then resorting to alternative solution will be the only available option to end the political stalemate, and achieve the change through elections.

These alternatives are confined to the move of the Presidential Council with clear UN and international support, and since this step will involve the removal of the HoR as well as the HCS, there must be a US pressure on Haftar not to oppose the step, to deprive the HoR of Haftar's support for its rejection, as well as pressure on the Egyptian government, being the regional supporter of Tobruk's Parliament, or else to prepare for a political forum similar to the Tunis-Geneva ones. However, the main dilemma for this latter option will be the criteria for selecting the participating figures. As all parties to the conflict will be keen for the participation of their representatives, and even other parties outside the circles of power will seek to gain a foothold in the political forum that will bring them closer to winning a suitable position in the next stage.

In view of the angry reactions in the western part of Libya, the Head of the High Council of State, Khaled Al-Mishri, appeared on Libya Alahrar TV, to clarify some details of his recent position. His opinions were acceptable on several points, such as resorting to a popular referendum on candidacy of people with dual nationalities, but his justifications for rejecting the Presidential Council's initiative were not convincing. He also revealed that he does not insist on the

option of overcoming the state of two governments, and forming a third unified government that would supervise the elections. He insisted that he had only discussed with Aqila the file of the constitutional rule. Al-Mishri also challenged the head of the Government of National Unity, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, to face him on televised debate, accusing the latter of speaking out on all occasions, accusing him and Aqila of obstructing elections. Al-Mishri for his part accused Dbeibah of being ready to pay billions to abort elections.

If Dbeibah accepts the challenge and confronts Al-Mishri, there is no doubt this will be a major event, and it will disclose many hidden matters, but it will be more important when it takes place between two rival candidates, both of whom seek to win voters!

However, at the current state of affairs what is rather required from Al-Mishri is his speedy consensus with his rival and partner, Aqila Saleh, to finalize the constitutional document as he called it, and put the ball in Dbeibah's court, to see if he could obstruct the path towards elections, after overcoming the most difficult dilemma, which is the constitutional rule or 'document'.

What are the expected scenarios in the coming days and weeks?

The UN envoy moves to hold separate meetings with all actors, to build on the recent understandings in order to finalize the constitutional basis, and to set dates for the electoral process, with international parties set to follow up and evaluate the outcome of this move.

Continued meetings between Aqila and Al-Mishri, and the preparations for the popular referendum on the candidacy of people with dual nationalities, without guarantees that Haftar will not obstruct this step, if he feels that the result will exclude him from participation. In such case, the state of affairs will remain in square one.

The closer Aqila and Al-Mishri are to the finalization of the constitutional document, the rapprochement will occur between the Presidential Council and the Government of National Unity on the one hand and Haftar's camp on the other. This emergency alliance may result in the exclusion of the HoR and the HCS through presidential decrees, and the imposition of a new status quo backed by the dominant force on the ground, east and west.

The state of despair would reach its climax with UNSMIL and the international parties supporting the elections, prompting the former to prepare for a new political forum.

These scenarios, and others are not expected, to lead the country to elections, which mean a prolonged stalemate, and any scenario that allows the current entities and personalities to persist in the scene means nothing but a prolonged sabotage.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Libya Observer



Health

Libya's NCDC and Anti-Blindness Committee sign cooperation deal

The National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) signed a joint cooperation agreement with the Anti-Blindness Committee, in response to the disturbing results of the survey that was conducted earlier in the Libyan southern region regarding glaucoma.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Director of the NCDC, Haider Al-Sayah, while on the side of the Committee, the Chairman Abu Bakr Tarina signed in a ceremony attended by the Director of the Office of Research and Scientific Committees, the Director of the Technical Support Office, and the Director of the Noncommunicable Diseases Department.

The two sides agreed to provide necessary tools and to develop an urgent strategy for the prevention, control and treatment of eye diseases in general and glaucoma in particular in southern Libya and the rest of the region.



Health

Health Ministry plans to run medical convoys as part of national program

The Health Ministry is reviewing a plan for launching a national program to conduct medical convoys in remote areas and attract visiting doctors.

A statement by the Health Ministry said the program is part of the ministry's efforts to support medical services to achieve an efficient performance.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Hospital Affairs, Saad El-Din Abdel-Wakeel has convened a meeting with the Director of the Apparatus for Support and Development of Clinical Services, Ahmed Mleitan to discuss the issue.

The two sides agreed to form a joint technical team, in order to implement the program and provide medical equipment for hospitals, besides supporting the medical committees across the country.



Health

Authorities deny importing counterfeit medicine

The head of the quality department at the Drug and Food Control Authority, Abdel Moneim Qabbasa, has refuted claims about importing counterfeit and substandard medicines.

In a video statement, the official said that all medications under the Control Center for Pharmaceutical Products are subject to laboratory analyzes, as they are only released after obtaining validity certificates.

The quality department confirmed that the center did not register the entry of any adulterated or non-conforming item through the legal channels of the state, according to Qabbasa.



Health

Hospital in Kufra recruits medical staff from North Korea

A North Korean medical team arrived at the Martyr Attia Al-Kaseh Teaching Hospital in Kufra city, southeastern Libya, the hospital has announced.

The medical group arrived on a private plane at Kufra Airport on Tuesday evening.

The hospital disclosed that the Korean staff consists of 38 medical personnel, among them specialists and nurses.

Residents will have access to medical checkups in several specialties, such as general surgery, anesthesia, gynecology and obstetrics, otolaryngology, pediatrics, cardiovascular disease, orthopedics, internal medicine, dentistry, and physical therapy.



Education

University of Misrata ranked first locally according to UNIRANKS classification

The University of Misrata ranked first locally according to the American international classification "UNIRANKS" among 61 registered Libyan universities and institutions of higher education.

This classification is one of the largest modern international rankings with a database that includes more than 400 million records for more than 30,000 universities worldwide.

It depends on criteria, the most important of which are student services by 15%, quality of education and diversity of study programs by 15%, scientific research by 15%, and others such as electronic services.

According to the classification, the university of Tripoli came second, Benghazi university third, and the Libyan International University fourth, while Omar Al-Mukhtar university came fifth, Al-Zawiya sixth, Sabha seventh, Al-Asmariya University eighth, and Sirte ninth, while Al-Marqab university came in the last tenth place.



Culture

Libya participates in Nouakchott, Capital of Islamic Culture

The Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development, Mabrouka Toughi, arrived in Mauritania on Friday to participate in a ceremony celebrating Nouakchott as the Capital of Culture in the Islamic World for the year 2023).

The event, attended by the Mauritanian President, Mohamed Ould El Ghazouani, comes within the framework of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) program to celebrate the capitals of culture in the Islamic world.

After the ceremony, the Mauritanian President, accompanied by the Director General of ISESCO and senior officials, including the Libyan Minister of Culture, visited an exhibition highlighting the Mauritanian heritage and culture.



Sports

Libyan youth handball team qualifies for World Championship 2023

Libyan Handball Federation said the national of youth qualified for 2023 World Handball Championship for the youth, to be held in Germany and Greece next June.

The national handball team for the youth had participated in the African World Cup qualifying tournament that was held in mid-August in Rwanda, which led to its qualification with the teams that ranked in the first six positions to the World Championship.

The Chairman and members of the Board of Directors of the Libyan Handball Federation expressed their appreciation to the President of the African Union and the Chairman of the Development Committee of the Federation for their support for the Libyan national team's participation in this global sports event.

The Libyan Handball Federation also called on the government, the Ministry of Sports and the Olympic Committee to support the youth team by setting up camps and conducting preparatory matches so that it can actively participate in this global event, which will have a positive and significant impact on Libyan handball.

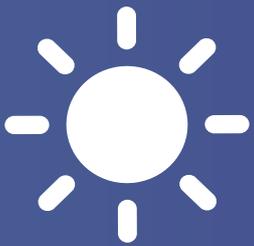
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Photo of the Week

Tripoli Weather Forecast



TODAY

20°
12°

TUE



22°/15°

WED



24°/13°

THU



17°/09°

FRI



16°/09°

SAT



16°/09°

SUN



14°/09°

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