

Politics



Mufti: Forming Advisory Committee is absurd, UNSMIL is deepening Libya's crisis

The Mufti of Libya, Sheikh Al-Sadiq Al-Ghariani, described the announcement of the UN mission to form an advisory committee without clarifying the criteria for selecting its members as absurd. The Mufti said in his weekly program on Tanasuh TV that the words issued by the UN mission were nothing but a vicious circle of its previous words, and an increase in deepening the crisis in Libya.

He has said that the mission has no control over its affairs, and that the international community, through Western countries, is the one dominating it, adding that they equate the victim with the executioner. "The international community knows what Haftar is doing in Libya, but in order for the chaos to continue, they equate the victim with the executioner. If they truly want stability in Libya, they know what Haftar is doing, rather than saying that this is a fait

accompli." The Mufti said, attributing the reason for the international community's control over Libya through the UN mission to the negligence of those carrying weapons in Libya and their abandonment of their duty.

He denounced the UN mission's efforts to form a government instead of the Government of National Unity, without talking about the parliament and the Hamad government. He reiterated that Libya's stability can only be achieved by holding elections and a referendum on the constitution, calling on the mission to oblige all parties to hold the referendum if they truly want to help Libyans.

He also warned against responding to what he described as the absurdity imposed by the UN mission, calling on everyone with principles not to side with it as it "only brings evil".

Politics

Libya rejects attempts to displace Palestinians



Libya announced its absolute rejection of any practices aimed at the forced displacement or arbitrary expulsion of Palestinians, or changing the demographic composition of the occupied territories, or imposing racist policies that perpetuate the occupation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of National Unity renewed in a statement published on Thursday Libya's firm position in support of the rights of the Palestinian people, which are guaranteed by international legitimacy through successive UN resolutions, most notably the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The Ministry expressed the Libya's strong condemnation of any form of po-

litical violence or hate crimes targeting Palestinians. It stressed that such practices constitute a flagrant violation of international law, international criminal law, and relevant Security Council resolutions, and represent a serious threat to regional and international peace and security, as well as undermine efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive solution.

The statement also reiterated Libya's affirmation that a comprehensive political solution is the only way to achieve lasting peace, through activating the Arab Peace Initiative and implementing relevant international legitimacy resolutions, ensuring the end of the Israeli occupation, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and guar-

anteeing the right of Palestinian refugees to return.

The statement also urged the international community to assume its responsibilities more seriously, and not to allow the use of force as a means to impose a new reality on the ground.

US President Donald Trump said in a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Israel would hand over the Gaza Strip to the United States after the end of the fighting, and Palestinians who live there would be resettled in "safer and more beautiful communities with new and modern homes in the region," noting that he would impose on neighboring countries to receive the Palestinians after being displaced from Gaza.

Politics

AFRICOM reviews in Tripoli and Benghazi efforts to unify Libya's military institution



The Libyan Army Chief of General Staff, General Mohamed Al-Haddad, reaffirmed on Wednesday his support for steps toward unifying the military institution to achieve a secure future marked by economic prosperity and regional stability. This statement came during his meeting with US Africa Command's (AFRICOM) Deputy Commander, Lieutenant General John Brennan.

The meeting focused on implementing joint training programs to enhance the efficiency of Libyan army personnel and discussed various topics of mutual interest aimed at strengthening security and stability across the country, according to a statement from the General Staff in Tripoli. General Brennan and US Chargé d'Affaires

Jeremy Berndt met with Libyan Deputy Minister of Defense Abdul Salam Zubi and the Director of Military Intelligence in Tripoli. The discussions centered on enhancing security cooperation between the US and Libya, supporting regional stability, and backing Libyan efforts to unify the country's military and security institutions. The meeting underscored the importance of bilateral partnership in addressing shared challenges, with an emphasis on supporting unified Libyan-led solutions to ensure the sovereignty and development of security institutions, contributing to comprehensive stability at both the local and regional levels.

On the same day, Saddam Haftar, Chief of Staff of the Ground Forces in Khalifa

Haftar's forces, also met with the US military official to discuss expanding security cooperation between the US and Libya and supporting Libya-led efforts to reunify military and security institutions.

These talks between Brennan and both Al-Haddad and Saddam Haftar came after Khalifa Haftar's meeting with him on Tuesday, during which Haftar emphasized the pivotal role of the US in resolving the Libyan crisis.

Earlier this week, British Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Affairs and Military Operations, Air Marshal Harvey Smyth, held several meetings in Tripoli and Benghazi to discuss military cooperation between the two countries and long-term efforts to achieve security and stability in Libya.

Politics



Egypt, Turkey reiterate commitment to Libyan-led, UN-sponsored political process

Egypt and Turkey stressed on Tuesday their "commitment to supporting a political process led and owned by Libyans under the auspices of the United Nations, with the aim of preserving Libya's political unity, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity."

This came in a joint statement following consultations between Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdel Aty and his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan in Ankara, according to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Egyptian-Turkish statement coincided with the announcement by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) earlier on Tuesday regarding the formation of an advisory committee as part of its multi-track political initiative presented to the UN Security Council in its December 16 session. UNSMIL said that this committee would hold its first meeting next week in Tripoli.

Politics



After several meetings in Tripoli, British defense delegation meets with Haftar in Benghazi

Khalifa Haftar discussed with the British Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff Air Marshal Harvey Smyth ways to enhance cooperation and coordination between his forces and the British General Staff.

Haftar received Smyth in his office in Al-Rajma area of Benghazi on Monday evening in the presence of the British ambassador to Libya, Martin Longden, and their accompanying delegation.

Haftar forces' media office said that during the meeting, the two sides discussed "ways to enhance cooperation and coordination in a way that serves the common interests of the two countries. The two sides also discussed the United Kingdom's support for Libyan efforts in combating terrorism and extremism."

On Sunday, Smyth met in Tripoli with the Head of the Presidential Council, Mohammed Menfi, the Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, and the Chief of the General Staff, Mohammed Al-Haddad. The discussions in Tripoli focused on cooperation in the military and defence fields, in addition to border security and combating organised crime and terrorism.

Economy



UNSMIL urges for agreement on unified budget without delay

UNSMIL called on all relevant authorities in Libya to work toward an agreement on a unified budget without delay, saying it had taken note of the statement issued by the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) Board of Directors following its first meeting in 2025 and underscored the urgent need for consensus on a balanced, unified budget.

"A transparent and equitable budget is crucial for strengthening fiscal responsibility, optimising resource allocation, and ensuring economic stability in Libya. A unified budget would also enhance the CBL's ability to implement effective monetary policies, stabilise the exchange rate, and manage public spending sustainably," UNSMIL said.

The Central Bank said in a statement following the first meeting of its Board of Directors that there was a need to expedite the approval of a unified balanced budget for the year 2025, as well as the periodic transfer of oil revenues.

The statement also urged for coordination between economic policies, including financial and commercial ones, and activating the tools that enable it to achieve its goals, in addition to enhancing the principles of transparency and disclosure and the independence of the Central Bank.

It called for the importance of the professionalism of its decisions in everything related to the path of exchange rate policy and monetary policy to ensure the achievement of monetary stability and financial sustainability of the state.

Economy

Chairman: NOC committed to neutrality and professionalism despite hurdles



The Acting Chairman of the National Oil Corporation (NOC), Masoud Suleiman, said that the NOC "remains committed to neutrality and professionalism despite the challenges it faces, particularly the delayed disbursement of funding and the necessary budget required to sustain and increase production."

Suleiman made this statement during a meeting that reviewed completed projects for 2024, targeted plans for 2025, and the budget needed for implementation for Al-Waha, Mellitah, and the National Catering companies. Suleiman stressed the urgent priority of implementing all measurement system projects and maintenance projects that contribute to increasing production. He also stressed the need to develop discovered and undeveloped fields and to bring them into production.

He highlighted the importance of carrying out annual and partial overhauls, prioritizing environmental protection programs, reducing gas flaring, and ensuring timely inspections of oil and gas pipelines without delays.

Meanwhile, the NOC Board of Directors commended the efforts of workers in companies across all oil fields and ports, acknowledging their success in maintaining and increasing production levels. The board reaffirmed the importance of investing in employees, providing training and development opportunities, as well as empowering young professionals to take on their roles effectively.

Economy

CBL resumes foreign currency POS transactions

The Central Bank of Libya (CBL) has announced the resumption of international card transactions at local point-of-sale (POS) terminals operated by Libyan banks, effective Wednesday. In its statement, the Central Bank stressed that transaction fees must not exceed 2.5%, adhering to existing regulations.

This move is part of broader efforts to streamline financial transactions and promote electronic banking services across the country.

CBL noted that the initiative aims to offer more flexible payment options to customers, simplifying purchases and reducing dependence on cash.



Economy

Libyan Iron and Steel Company partners with Italy's Danieli for major upgrades



The Libyan Iron and Steel Company has entered discussions with Italian engineering giant Danieli to modernize its operations, focusing on upgrading its slab casting machine and constructing a new ladle furnace at Steel Plant 2.

In a meeting held this week, both parties explored the latest global technologies in slab casting and strategies to enhance production efficiency and product quality, align-

ing with contemporary industrial standards.

The talks also detailed the implementation phases of the new ladle furnace, expected to significantly improve smelting processes while reducing energy consumption.

The Libyan company emphasized that this partnership with Danieli, a world leader in steel equipment manufacturing, is part of its continuous development plan to strength-

en its market competitiveness and meet the highest standards of performance and quality.

Officials underscored the importance of adopting cutting-edge technological innovations and ensuring that all projects adhere to rigorous safety and quality standards, positioning the company as a leading industrial player both regionally and globally.

Economy



CBL, HoR discuss 2025 budget, spending controls

Libya's Central Bank (CBL) Governor, Nagy Issa, met with the House of Representatives (HoR) finance committee to discuss government spending plans for 2025, with a focus on budget unification and fiscal discipline.

During the meeting, officials stressed the importance of ensuring timely salary payments while broader fiscal reforms are finalized. A comprehensive spending framework is expected to be in place by April 2025.

Discussions also covered economic stability, including the impact of public spending on foreign currency demand, exchange rate pressures, and foreign reserves. The finance committee chair expressed support for the Central Bank's financial oversight efforts, particularly in oil revenue management and trade regulations.

HoR members backed measures requiring imports to be processed exclusively through official banking channels to enhance transparency and monetary control.

The committee also pledged continued engagement with the CBL strengthen fiscal policies and economic governance.

Economy



34 Egyptian companies establish industrial city in Libya

The member of the Board of Directors of the Wood and Furniture Industry Chamber and member of the Arab Cooperation Committee of the Federation of Egyptian Industries, Alaa Nasr, has confirmed that 34 Egyptian companies are currently establishing a partnership to establish an industrial city in Libya.

Nasr indicated in press statements that this came during the recent visit organized by the Federation's Arab Cooperation Committee to Libya, which witnessed the participation of more than 34 Egyptian companies that specialize in the fields of industry, trade, contracting, consulting and services.

He added that these companies will have offices in Libya to promote and facilitate government services. Nasr has explained that Egypt also needs to localize and deepen local raw material industries in various food, industrial, agricultural, pharmaceutical and other industries, to achieve self-sufficiency in various food, industrial, pharmaceutical goods and products.



Health

Libya opens medical waste treatment centre in national clean-up drive

Deputy Prime Minister/ Acting Minister of Health, Ramadan Abu Janah, has inaugurated a new medical waste treatment centre at the Rabita Factory.

The launch was attended by senior health and environmental officials, alongside representatives from key institutions, who reviewed the facility's waste management operations and advanced treatment technologies.

The Libyan Ministry of Health announced plans to expand the in-

itiative, with new medical waste treatment stations set to be established in the central, southern, and eastern regions.

The move is aimed at boosting the country's waste disposal capabilities and ensuring safe, sustainable management of hazardous materials.

Officials say the project aligns with national efforts to improve waste management infrastructure and reduce health risks associated with untreated medical waste.



Health

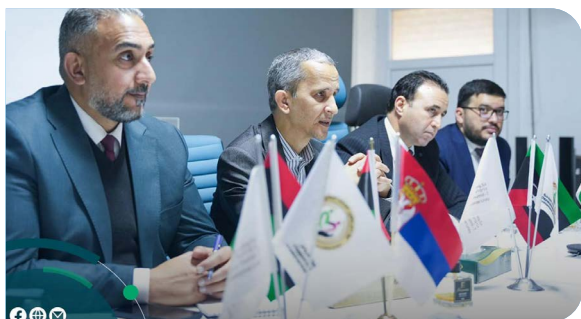
Health Ministry moves to restart Rabita pharmaceutical plant

The Health Ministry is taking steps to revive a key pharmaceutical factory as part of efforts to strengthen the country's drug security.

Deputy Minister of Health Tawfiq Al-Darsi held talks with a specialized committee following a field visit to the Rabita pharmaceutical plant, affiliated with the state-owned General Pharmaceutical Company.

Discussions focused on overcoming operational challenges and implementing a plan approved by the Drug Security Committee to resume production.

The ministry reaffirmed its commitment to regulating drug manufacturing and procurement under legal frameworks to ensure the availability of essential medicines in Libya.



Health

Libya, Serbia discuss healthcare cooperation

The Therapeutic Services Support and Development Agency has held discussions with a delegation from the Republic of Serbia on ways to enhance cooperation in developing the healthcare sector, on the sidelines of the Libyan-Serbian Economic Forum held in Tripoli.

The Serbian delegation, which included the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Serbia's Ambassador to Libya, emphasized their country's full commit-

ment to collaborating with Libya in advancing the healthcare sector, with a particular focus on training and development to improve healthcare services.

During their visit to the agency HQ, the Serbian delegation reviewed a number of local and international agreements signed by the agency to enhance medical services, aiming to provide the best healthcare services at both local and international levels.





Sports

Libya to host window 2 qualifiers of AfroBasket 2025

The Ministry of Sports of the Government of National Unity announced the start of preparations to sponsor and host “window 2 qualifiers” for AfroBasket 2025 - which is going to be held in Angola. The Ministry explained that the qualifiers would be held in the Grand Hall in Tripoli during the period from February 21 to 23 for the teams of the second and fifth groups.

It adds that this step comes as a continuation of the series of Arab, African and international championships that Libya has hosted in recent years and the remarkable organizational and administrative success, as well as its keenness to embrace Arab and African sports in various games and championships.



Sports

Derna to host Africa Minifootball Nations Cup

President of the African Minifootball Confederation, Achraf Ben Salha, has announced the selection of the Libyan city of Derna as the “African Mini-Football Capital” for 2025, as it will host the Africa Mini-Football Nations Cup.

The tournament will kick off on July 14, 2025, with the opening match on July 15, and the final on July 25 of the same year. The tournament is expected to bring together teams from across the African continent, with the African Football Confederation transporting all teams on private planes bearing the tournament logo from Cairo, Tunis, and Istanbul airports to Derna Airport.



Sport

Benghazi International Stadium receives full marks from CAF Committee

A delegation from the Confederation of African Football visited Benghazi International Stadium to accredit it to host African matches for league and national teams.

The inspection committee expressed its admiration for the stadium and its integrated facilities, as all comments were positive about the stadium that contains all safety standards, praising its excellent ground, according to officials from the Libyan Football Federation.

The stadium received full marks during the visit of the committee that will send its report to the Confederation of African Football, obtaining accreditation will take from one week to ten days from the date of forwarding the report, which means that the national team’s match next March will be the first on the Benghazi Stadium ground after the development.



Migration

Human remains found in Wahat region, likely linked to illegal migration

The Wahat Security Directorate has announced the discovery of a human skeletal remains in the Al-Harash oil field area in the Wahat region.

The Criminal Investigation Department of the directorate indicated that the skeletal remains were found by the Oil Installations Security Force, which is part of the 59th field, during a routine patrol approximately 11 kilometers from the area.

The incident has been reported to the Public Prosecution in Jalu, as well as to the Red Crescent.

Legal procedures have been initiated, and the Criminal Investigation Department is continuing its investigations to uncover the details and circumstances of the incident, which is likely related to illegal migration.

Opinions

Libya's de facto partition demands a solution designed for it—not for outside contenders



By *Hani Shennib*,
the founding president of the National Council on
US-Libya Relations

While the West continues to fixate on elections in promoting democracy worldwide, many Libyans today have become resentful. They largely perceive the elections touted by the West as part of a strategy to legitimize a government that serves foreign interests rather than fulfilling Libyans' needs for stability and institution building. They simply do not trust that elections conducted under current conditions—characterized by a lack of constitutional foundations, profound corruption, forceful arrests, and streets dominated by militias and warlords—can lead to fair outcomes.

Meanwhile, the West and its partners, caught up in defending democracy and human rights, feel guilt over their failure to stabilize Libya following an intervention that bizarrely morphed from a mission to protect a population from Muammar Gaddafi's wrath into one of regime change. Consequently, the coalition has yet again turned to an inept United Nations (UN) to push for democratic change through elections. However, this goal has not materialized and is unlikely to do so in the near future.

Historically, other countries have approached resolving the situation in Libya with a mindset of "what's in it for me?," highlighting how national and regional interests shape attempts at change—particularly in the context of Libya. This was similarly true during UN discussions on how to address Ital-

ian colonies taken by the Allies post-World War II and the intense negotiations among the United States, European countries, and Russia regarding Libya's fate in the late 1940s. Notably, strong views were expressed by Azzam Pasha (an Egyptian diplomat who was at the time the secretary general of the Arab League) regarding Egypt's interests in Libya. Such discussions have an eerie similarity to today's regional and international negotiations about Libya's future. Currently, the motivations for international involvement in Libya are shaped by three main concerns: 1) Europe's alarm over the massive scale of illegal migration flowing through porous Libyan borders and its significant security and socio-economic implications; 2) unease about the potential downward spiral of sociopolitical conditions in North African and Sahel states, which could undermine the economic interests of major corporations in the region; and 3) worry that a chaotic and fragile state may allow terrorist entities to thrive and potentially spread, escalating security threats. In the eyes of the international community, these concerns require dealing with a central authority in Libya, regardless of the authority's perceived legitimacy or its true value to the Libyan people and their institution building. These factors have, in part, led to a series of poorly devised proposals and roadmaps put forth by the UN and endorsed by international actors, which have

resulted in little progress and worsened the divisions currently observed in Libya today. From my observations during my frequent visits to the country and my conversations with Libyan leaders, politicians, and academics, I have identified five reasons why previous efforts put forth by the international community to shape a modern state in Libya have failed. First, there are historical roots of division that have not yet been addressed. This is one of the reasons why the numerous attempts by multiple representatives of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to engage Libyan actors in various stabilizing roadmaps over the last thirteen years have failed miserably. The last effort, expected to lead to elections in December 2022, went nowhere due to political wrangling between two executive bodies and two legislative ones located—by no coincidence—in the eastern and western parts of the country, reflecting the historical divisions between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. It is practically impossible to envision effective presidential and parliamentary elections occurring in the near future without acknowledging these historical roots of division. Second, it is clear that political and security actors on the ground in both regions of Libya have exploited these divisions for their own political and financial benefit through alliances with benefactor militias, corrupt entrepreneurs, members of the nouveau riche, and cross-border smugglers.

This blend of neo-militocracy and kleptocracy heavily influences political and security decisions in the executive, legislative, judicial, and security branches in Libya, ensuring that national and international distractions allow them to remain in power for the foreseeable future. Third, after forty-two years of oppression and a dismissal of rights and democracy under Gaddafi, as well as additional fourteen years of poverty and insecurity following the collapse of state institutions in 2011, the populace is busy with surviving day by day and lacks the means necessary to express their discontent. This, along with a sense of defeat regarding their aspirations for a better life following the failed Arab Spring, renders it unlikely that any significant movement will arise from the streets of Libyan cities in the near future, creating grounds for the continuation of the status quo. Fourth and most importantly, the emergence of more pressing global conflicts and a shift in the international community's priorities over the past four years, particularly with a focus on Ukraine and Southeast Asia, has diminished the attention and resources devoted to Libya's situation.

That is the case despite the fact that the West is concerned about the exponential growth of Russian and Chinese influence in Libya and the African continent at large. Last, it is clear that the populations of many developing countries, particularly in the Middle East and Africa (including Libya), perceive Western governments to have lost their moral compass and can no longer be trusted as custodians of democratic and humanitarian change. This perception has been exacerbated by the catastrophe that has befallen the Arab people of Gaza—which countries in the West either failed to prevent or openly supported. Thus, in the eyes of the Libyan people, the West's ability to recommend, supervise, or contribute to any democratic or nation-building initiatives has become compromised.

This observation reinforces a dec-

ade-long sentiment among Arabs that it is not uncommon for Western governments to support and deal with autocracies and militaries throughout the Arab world—from Algeria to Egypt to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States—contributing to their skepticism about elections and hopes for democratic change. One of the few successes in Libya since 2020 (the year that marked the end of the civil war that divided the country into territories east and west of the city of Sirte), is that the line dividing the country has become more distinct. Today, Libya has two governments, effectively two legislative bodies, and two security entities controlling the political, economic, and daily operations in their respective regions. Ironically—despite initial unifying efforts to address the disastrous situation in the aftermath of Storm Daniel in 2023, which claimed nearly twelve thousand lives—grand reconstruction opportunities in the regions have instead led to further segmentation of decision making and project funding. Such mega-funding and the anticipated engagement of international corporations and governments has only further entrenched Libya's split. Thus, Libya is currently a de facto two-state entity. The elusive internationally recognized government based in Tripoli exists primarily to allow the international community and its corporations to advance their own interests, failing to address the complex realities on the ground in Libya.

International players such as China, Russia, and others are moving within Libya with disregard to issues of migration or border security, and are more focused on strategic economic engagement with Africa. This further undermines European and US interests while taking advantage of the West's inertia and lack of clear strategy and engagement in Libya. Furthermore, Libyans have grown disillusioned with the role of the international community and the United Nations, and they no longer trust or see much value in UNSMIL. Libyans are now gradually accepting

and adapting to the current de facto demarcation of the country, going along with this in almost every aspect of their daily functions. An unnatural symbiosis seems to be developing between the aspirations of the people of Cyrenaica for more regional governance—away from the centralist hegemony Tripolitania exercised since 1969—and the military autocracy led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar.

At the same time, the internationally recognized government in Libya's west continues to struggle to maintain power under the leadership of Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah who (along with his cousin) was sanctioned for corruption by the Libyan interim government and continues to face allegations of corruption, which he denies. Recent street anger against Dbeibah, stemming from his government's attempt at rapprochement with Israeli officials as well as an escalation of pressure from dissatisfied militia, could catalyze the collapse of the internationally recognized government.

This, in turn, could prompt Dbeibah to resort to military skirmishes with the east to distract from public discontent and prolong his government's lifespan.

This week, the UN secretary-general appointed Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, a seasoned Ghanaian diplomat, as the new head of UNSMIL, making her the tenth person to serve that position in thirteen years. The appointment came after much wrangling between the United States and Russia, again suggesting that foreign interests will likely continue to dominate conversations about resolutions for Libya. Libya needs new ideas and a national and international will to reset a realistic path toward a modern state, premised on a recognition of its history and a mentality of "what's in it" not just for the international community but, more importantly, for its own people, as well.