

## Politics



## Former UN envoy Stephanie Williams to publish new book on Libya's post-Gaddafi era

Former United Nations envoy to Libya, Stephanie Williams, has announced the release of her latest book, *Libya Since Gaddafi*, scheduled for publication on April 17. The book provides an in-depth analysis of Libya's political landscape since 2011, drawing on Williams' personal experiences during her tenure as a UN diplomat in the country.

Online listings for the book, including on Amazon, suggest that Williams seeks to explore the root causes of Libya's ongoing conflict, the role of international stakeholders, and the internal divisions shaping the country's trajectory.

A key section of the book examines Khalifa Haftar's 2019 offensive on Tripoli, which Williams argues significantly derailed UN-led peace efforts.

She also details her work alongside former UN envoy Ghassan Salamé in coordinating international efforts under the Berlin Conference framework, as well as her mediation role during the COVID-19 pandemic, which culminated in the October 2020 ceasefire agreement.

Williams also addresses the impact of digital media on Libya's instability, highlighting how misinformation and hate speech have exacerbated divisions.

She concludes with recommendations for breaking the cycle of conflict and fostering long-term stability in the country.

Williams served as the acting UN envoy to Libya between March 2020 and February 2021 and later as Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Libya until June 2022.



An investigation conducted by "Eekad" platform has uncovered the fate of the Syrian Airlines cargo fleet following the fall of Bashar Al-Assad. The fleet consists of three Russian-made Ilyushin IL-76 military and civilian transport aircraft.

According to the findings of the "Eekad" team, navigational data and flight analysis showed that the three planes took different routes after Assad's fall. However, one of them has continued to operate in parts of Libya under the control of Khalifa Haftar.

The investigation revealed that the aircraft with registration number "YK-ATD"

departed from Damascus to Benghazi four days before Assad's fall. It is believed to have transported Syrian regime officials and personnel to Libya. Its first recorded appearance since Assad's fall was on January 9, 2025, when it was spotted flying off the Libyan coast after departing from Benina International Airport in Benghazi, heading toward Sabha Airport, which is controlled by Haftar.

The investigation concluded that the continued use of this aircraft in Libya, without being returned to the new Syrian government, supports the theory that it may be involved in suspicious military

or logistical operations. These operations could serve Russian interests in the region or facilitate the movements of Syrian regime figures after Assad's fall.

A previous report by the Malcolm Kerr-Carnegie Middle East Center had highlighted Assad regime's ability to support Haftar and his family's authority in eastern Libya both directly and indirectly. This support is rooted in a shared authoritarian ideology, oligarchic rule, and secret business networks that have boosted the wealth of both regimes. The report also pointed to military aid received by both Assad's regime and Haftar from Russia.



Politics

## Menfi calls Somali President after he survives assassination attempt

The Head of Presidential Council Mohamed Menfi called on Wednesday Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud to check on his well-being following the recent attack that targeted him, resulting in several deaths and injuries.

During the call, Menfi extended his sincere condolences to the families of the victims and to the Somali people, wishing a swift recovery to the injured. He also reaffirmed Libya's full solidarity with Somalia in confronting terrorist threats.

He strongly condemned what he described as a "criminal act," stressing his firm rejection of all forms of violence and terrorism that threaten security and stability and violate international laws.

The attack took place on March 18 and targeted the Somali president's convoy near the presidential palace in the capital, Mogadishu, amid ongoing military operations by the Somali government against Al-Shabaab, which it classifies as a terrorist group.



Politics

## Libyan activist Hussam Al-Gomati says his brother is abducted in Tripoli

Political activist and blogger Hussam Al-Gamati said that his brother, Mohammed, was arrested on Wednesday evening in the capital, Tripoli, by a security apparatus, saying there were no clear reasons for the arrest.

Al-Gamati explained that those who abducted his brother stormed his home under flimsy pretexts in front of neighbors. They searched his electronic devices, looking for anything that could incriminate him. He added that Mohammed was taken simply because he is "Hussam's brother", stressing that Mohammed has no connection to politics and also suffers from a serious illness and is undergoing treatment, "making it difficult for his captors to fabricate charges against him based on his condition," he said.

Hussam pointed out that he had not been in contact with his brother for some time in order to avoid dragging him or other family members into any trouble, according to a video he posted on social media.

He added: "What's happening is aimed at intimidating people, but it won't intimidate us. Our struggle has only grown stronger. Even if they kill my children or eliminate my family, we will not bow to blackmail."

Hussam Al-Gamati is known for sharing news and information on his personal social media accounts that criticize Libya's ruling elite and armed groups in both the east and west, as well as exposing corruption in government and military institutions, according to his video statement.



Politics

## Tetteh meets in Tunisia with US chargé d'affaires in Libya

The Head of UNSMIL, Hanna Tetteh, met in Tunis on Wednesday with the Chargé d'affaires of the United States, Jeremy Berndt, and briefed him on the work of the advisory committee and her recent engagements with Libyan and regional actors, UNSMIL said on X.

It added that Tetteh emphasized during the meeting the necessity to enhance international coordination mechanisms on Libya with the view to maintain unity of purpose to reach general elections as soon as possible. UNSMIL indicated that the discussion also referred to other issues of relevance in Libya including on migration, the limitations on civic space and the necessity for an improved economic management to ensure accountability and transparency in the disbursement of public funds.

"The US Chargé d'affaires reiterated the commitment of the US to reaching a political solution in Libya through general elections and pledging to continue the US's support to the SRSF and UNSMIL," UNSMIL explained.



Politics



## Libya's Fatwa House calls for Zakat al-Fitr donations to Gaza

The Council for Islamic Research and Legal Studies, affiliated with Libya's Dar al-Ifta, has called on Muslims in Libya and beyond to direct their Zakat al-Fitr donations to Gaza, citing the severe famine and blockade imposed by the Israeli occupation. In a statement issued on Saturday, the Council highlighted severe shortages of food, water, medicine, and other essential supplies in the besieged enclave.

It justified the call based on the teachings of Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifa, who permitted the transfer of zakat to those in greater need. The council also referenced Companion Mu'adh ibn Jabal, who sent charity from Yemen to Medina to

support those in hardship.

The statement emphasized the principle of Muslim solidarity and pointed to historical Islamic rulings that allow the redirection of zakat to regions affected by famine and extreme poverty.

Muslims were urged to send their Zakat al-Fitr through trusted organizations before Thursday, the 27th of Ramadan, to ensure it reaches those in need.

The council concluded by expressing solidarity with the people of Gaza and praying for relief for those affected by conflict and hardship worldwide.



Economy

## HoR speaker and CBL Governor discuss Libya's economic and banking situation

House of Representatives Speaker, Aqila Saleh, on Thursday, discussed with the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, Naji Issa, in the city of Qubbah, the country's economic and financial situation.

According to the Central Bank of Libya, the meeting emphasized the need to preserve foreign exchange reserves and achieve financial sustainability for the state, along with the need to control and unify public spending, and the importance of continuous communication with the Presidency of the House of Representatives.

Both officials also discussed the Central Bank's efforts to develop banking services and electronic payment systems, and emphasized the issuance of some laws related to the banking sector to ensure financial and banking stability.

Economy



## NOC denies report about officials' involvement in smuggling oil

The National Oil Corporation (NOC) has denied the accuracy of reports published by Africa Intelligence alleging the involvement of influential Libyan figures in oil smuggling and money laundering networks, which were reportedly based on alleged leaks from the United Nations Security Council Sanctions Committee.

In an official statement, the NOC clarified that the circulated report was not issued by the UN Sanctions Committee and that the information contained in it lacked accuracy and credibility, with no basis in any official sources. The NOC expressed its deep surprise at the circulation of such claims without proper verification.

The NOC has said that it works closely with relevant local and international authorities to combat oil smuggling and supports any international efforts aimed at curbing this phenomenon, which harms the national economy.

It stressed that the fight against smuggling falls under the jurisdiction of security agencies and that all sales and exports are conducted in accordance with established legal frameworks and are closely monitored by both Libyan and international authorities.

The NOC called on media outlets to ensure accuracy and credibility when reporting information and to rely on official sources to avoid spreading misleading reports that could negatively impact the stability of Libya's oil sector. It reaffirmed its commitment to transparency and open communication, expressing its willingness to cooperate with all local and international entities to ensure the transparent management of Libya's oil sector and to protect this national resource from any illegal exploitation.



#### Economy

## Libya, France discuss strengthening bilateral ties and economic cooperation

Acting Foreign Minister, Taher Al-Baour, met with the French Ambassador to Libya, Mostafa Mihraje, to explore ways to enhance cooperation between the two countries across various sectors.

During the meeting, held at the Foreign Ministry in Tripoli, both officials underscored the importance of the Libya-France partnership in advancing mutual interests.

Discussions focused on mechanisms for joint coordination to support stability in Libya and strengthen political and economic relations.

The talks also covered the ongoing situation in Gaza, with both sides exchanging views on regional developments.

Additionally, preparations for the upcoming Libya-France Economic Forum, set to take place in April in Tripoli, were reviewed.

The forum is expected to mark a significant step in boosting economic collaboration between the two nations.



#### Economy

## CBL prints LYD 15 billion ahead of 50-dinar withdrawal

Libya's Central Bank (CBL) has printed 15 billion Libyan dinars in smaller denominations of 5, 10, and 20 dinars in an effort to ease the country's cash shortage. The newly printed banknotes have begun entering circulation, according to the Fawasel news platform. The move comes as the bank prepares to withdraw the 50-dinar note, which accounts for 13 billion dinars in total value.

The withdrawal is set for the end of April, with officials confirming that no extensions will be granted beyond the deadline.

The decision is seen as part of broader efforts to stabilize Libya's monetary system and improve liquidity in the banking sector.



#### Economy

## NOC chief reports surge in production amid industry challenges

Libya's oil production has reached 1.41 million barrels per day, according to the head of the National Oil Corporation (NOC), Masoud Suleiman.

The announcement came during a meeting with the Speaker of Parliament, Aqila Saleh, in the eastern city of Al-Qubah.

The two sides discussed challenges facing the industry and efforts to boost output.

Suleiman highlighted a significant rise in crude oil production in 2024.

The meeting also addressed operational hurdles, ongoing development projects, and strategies to increase efficiency in the sector.



Health

## Ministry of Health warns of circulation of counterfeit cancer drug in Libya

The Ministry of Health of the Government of National Unity has issued a directive prohibiting the circulation of a specific cancer drug in the Libyan market.

The ministry addressed its directive to the Medical Supply Authority, the International Oversight Department, and directors of hospitals and private medical centers, instructing them not to distribute the drug "Lonsurf" due to its lack of the active ingredient necessary for cancer treatment.

According to the directive, the drug is counterfeit and is only legally distributed through the official local representative, as it is currently being circulated illegally.

The ministry has called for immediate action to prevent its distribution and urged all relevant entities to report and withdraw the product to ensure patient safety, emphasizing the importance of monitoring medications post-market.



Health

## Libya, India discuss health cooperation

Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity and Acting Minister of Health, Ramadan Abu Janah, has discussed with the Indian Ambassador to Libya, Ngulkham Gangte, ways to enhance cooperation in the health sector between the two countries.

During Thursday's meeting, the two sides discussed opportunities for cooperation in exchanging medical expertise and providing medicines and medical supplies, in addition to training health personnel, according to a statement from the Ministry of Health on its Facebook page.

The meeting aims to strengthen the partnership between the two countries to develop the health sector in Libya, according to the statement.



Sports

## LFF condemns Angola players' celebration, urges CAF action

The Libyan Football Federation (LFF) has strongly condemned what it calls the "unethical behavior" of Angola's national team players during their goal celebration in a recent World Cup qualifier.

The match, held on Thursday as part of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers, ended in a 1-1 draw. However, Libya's football authorities criticized the conduct of the Angolan players, arguing that their celebration was disrespectful to Libya, the spectators, and millions of television viewers.

In a statement, the Libyan federation described the incident as a "blatant violation" of sportsmanship and fair play, principles upheld by FIFA and the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

The federation has urged CAF's disciplinary committee to take immediate action and enforce necessary regulations to prevent such incidents from recurring, emphasizing the need to uphold the integrity of the sport.





Sports

## Libya loses 3-1 to Cameroon in World Cup qualifiers

The Libyan national football team suffered a heavy 3-1 defeat against hosts Cameroon in the sixth round of Group D in the African qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Cameroon's first goal came in the 27th minute through a penalty converted by Vincent Aboubakar, followed by a second goal from Bryan Mbeumo in the 53rd minute. Aboubakar then scored his second and Cameroon's third in the 61st minute.

Libya's lone goal came in the 90th minute through Ezzo Al-Mariami, after a goal by Moatasem Sabbou had earlier been disallowed by the referee.

With this result, Libya remains on 8 points in third place, behind Cameroon with 12 points in second, and group leaders Cape Verde with 13 points.



Sports

## Libya draws Angola in World Cup 2026 qualifiers

Libya's national football team missed a win that was within its grasp against visiting Angola, settling for a 1-1 draw in the final moments of the match, which was part of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.

With this result, Libya reached eight points, securing third place in Group D — one point behind Cameroon, which played to a goalless draw with Eswatini, and two points behind group leader Cape Verde, which defeated Mauritius 1-0.

Team manager and former international star Tarek Al-Tayeb expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance and urged fans to support the coaching staff and players. He emphasized the importance of building on the positives ahead of the crucial match against Cameroon in Yaoundé, on March 25, in the sixth round of qualifiers.



Migration

## 145 stranded somalis return home from Libya

The official Somali news agency announced on Tuesday that the federal government successfully facilitated the return of 145 Somali citizens who were stranded in Libya via two flights, after facing severe hardships.

The agency explained that this was through the Voluntary Humanitarian Return program, funded by the European Union and coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

According to government officials, 108 people arrived on Monday at Aden Adde International Airport in Mogadishu, while 37 others arrived at Hargeisa International Airport.



Opinions

# Role of Municipal Councils in migration and migrant labour issue



*By Abdullah Alkabar, a Libyan political writer and commentator*

No one expects the de facto authorities to take the initiative to confront the threat of the increasing number of migrants. Their struggles over power, money, and influence distract them from any national concerns or issues. Nor one would expect the people to move to pressure the de facto authorities to address this challenge and respond to it at a level that removes the existential threat to the country.

What should be done, then, to confront the influx of migrants? Reducing their numbers to a reasonable level, so that this does not affect the demographic composition over time and does not provoke European countries into exploiting the issue to get rid of migrants by making Libya a final stop for them.

In fact, Italy has succeeded in recent years, through several agreements with Libyan authorities in both the east and west, in intercepting migrant boats at sea and returning them to Libyan shores. To achieve this goal, it has offered every possible incentive, supporting the Coast Guard with boats and training. In previous years, it directly entered into agreements with militia leaders in the west of the country, offering them money in exchange for stopping the migrant boats. There is no doubt that one of the reasons for the increasing number of foreign migrants in Libya, especially from sub-Saharan African countries, is the country's

vast, unmonitored borders, despite the relative success in preventing them from reaching European shores.

This represents a partial solution to the problem for Europe, leaving Libya to bear the brunt of the responsibility. Since there is no hope for the de facto authorities, who are preoccupied with plunder and consolidating power and influence, and who do not even have statistics on the number of migrants, let alone classify them as refugees, migrants, or workers whose only ambition is to work to improve their living conditions, I suggest that elected municipal councils rise up to address this dilemma. Municipal councils could take stock of migrant workers within the administrative boundaries of each municipality, create a database containing basic information about every resident within the municipality, and urge citizens to cooperate in ensuring the success of this project. By enforcing laws, the municipality would call on all migrants to obtain health certificates, conduct inspections of their workplaces, and punish violators.

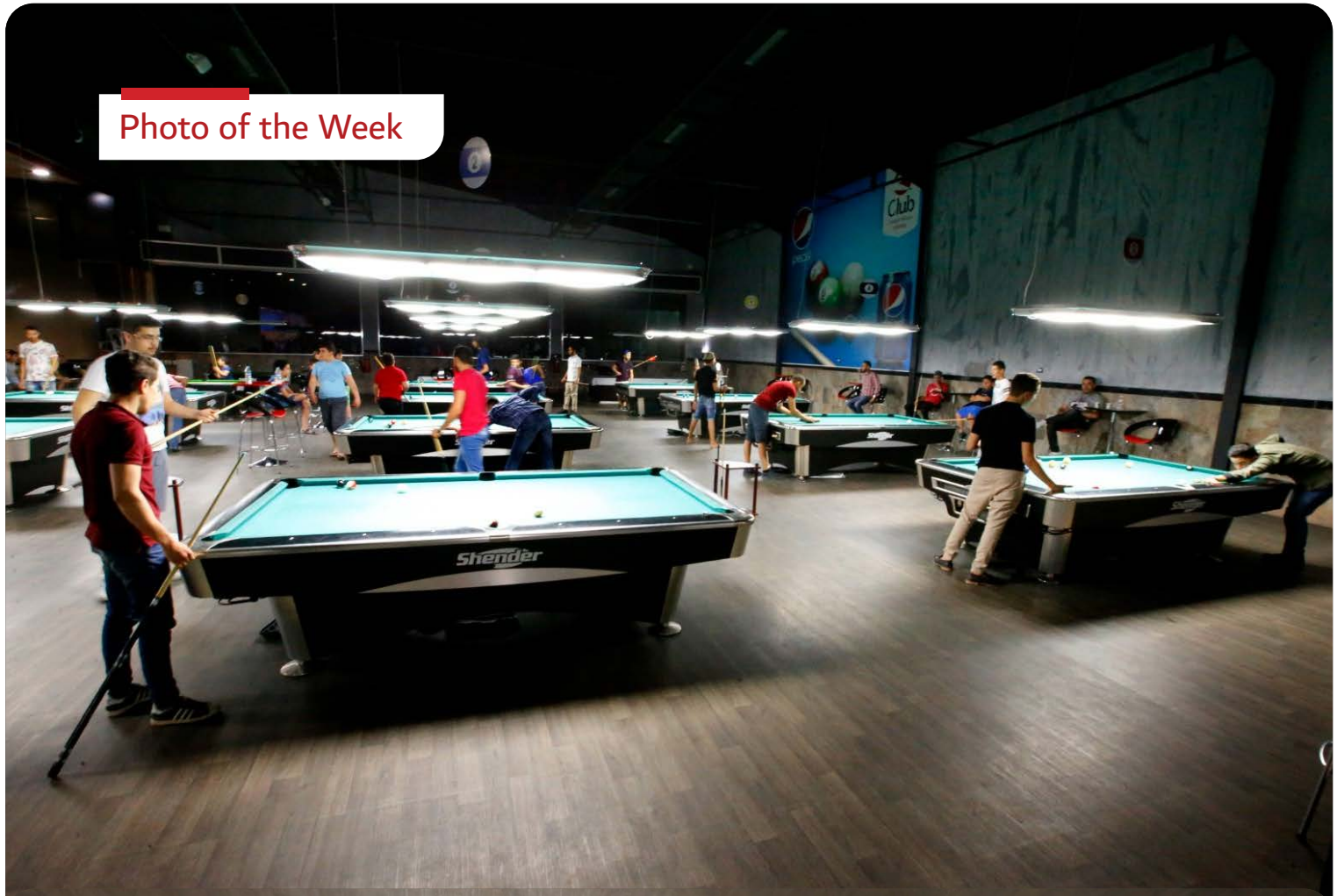
If all municipalities implement this measure, a nearly accurate database will be available for the number of arrivals, their nationalities, ages, and the manner in which they crossed the border. This is where the relevant ministries begin implementing plans to repatriate them, in cooperation with their embassies. These measures may

face objections on the grounds that registering and recording arrivals within a single system will place Libya under legal responsibility for them. The International Organization for Migration will handle official data and statistics and demand that the Libyan state respect all international agreements and treaties it has signed.

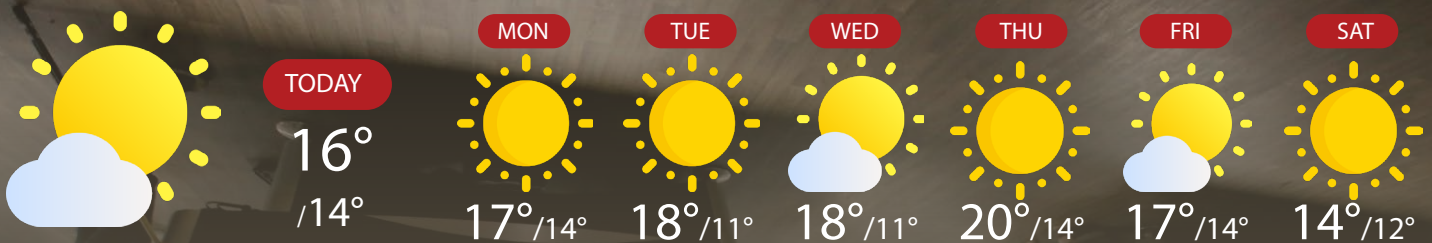
This is certainly true. However, dealing officially and within the confines of full knowledge of all aspects of the migration file, with a comprehensive database on them, means controlling the file and directing it in a manner that serves the national interest, without compromising humanitarian, moral, and legal obligations towards migrants, refugees, and resident arrivals. Perhaps the municipalities' action, as permitted by law, will force the government to respond and interact with the municipalities' demands to rectify the status of immigration, asylum, displacement, and residency within the country. If the government seeks public satisfaction with its performance, it will certainly gain popular support and backing by addressing this extremely sensitive issue, given the continental and international dimensions surrounding it. If the local authorities adhere to the law, there will be no consequences that could hold the Libyan state accountable for any unwanted measures, because the country's local law takes precedence over any international laws or treaties, especially if Libya is not a signatory to them.



### Photo of the Week



### Tripoli Weather Forecast



+218 94 424 69 28 libyaobserver.ly lyobserver

info@libyaobserver.ly lyobserver

ar.libyaobserver.ly lyobserver.ar lyobserver.arabic

libyaobserver thelibyaobserver

## Contact Information