



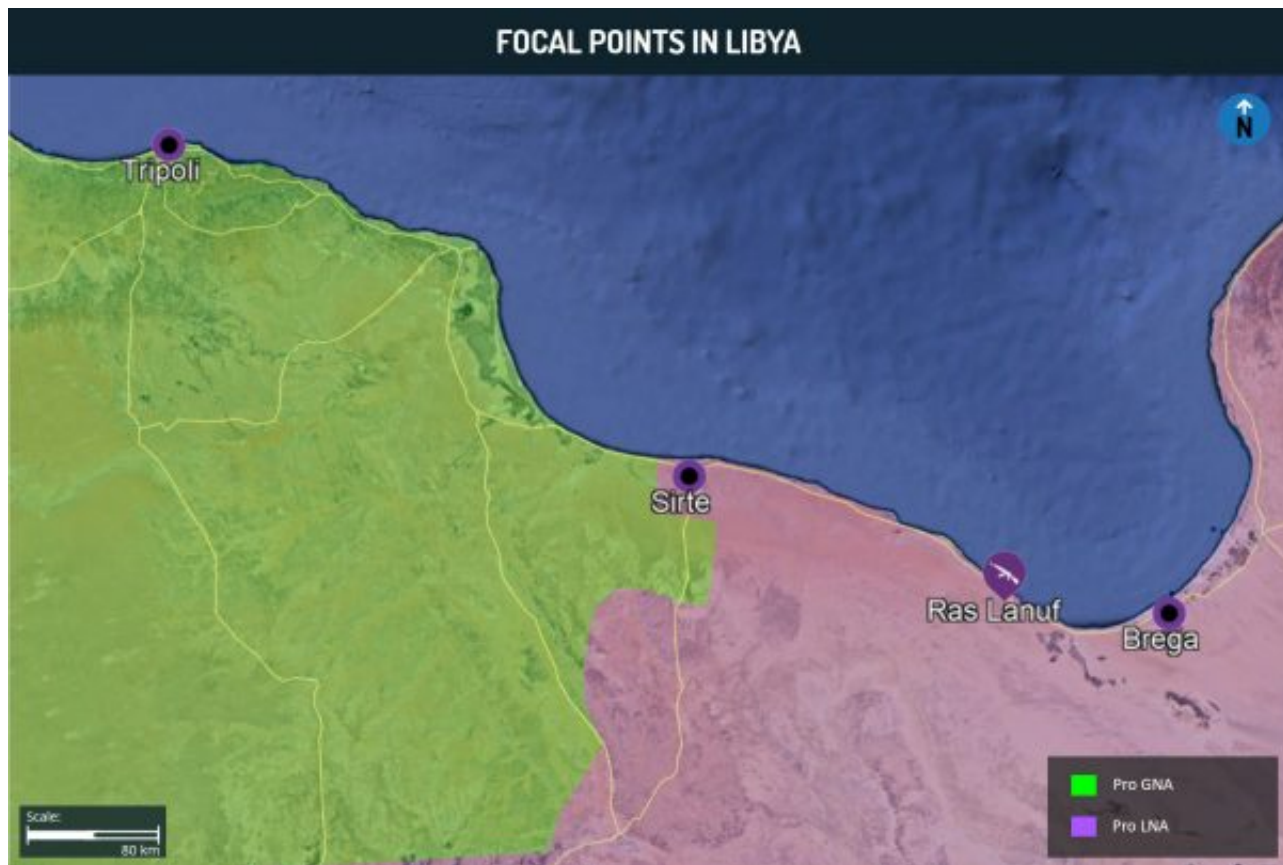
## Politics

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### **Libya SITUATION UPDATE: US Congress passes 'Libya Stabilization Act' on November 18; likely part of effort to put pressure on GNA, HoR to uphold ceasefire agreement**

#### Executive Summary

- On November 14, the participants of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) agreed in Tunis to hold elections in Libya on December 24, 2021. The elections will establish a new Presidency Council (PC) and a Government of National Unity. This development therefore points towards the significant progress of diplomatic negotiations under the auspices of the UN.
- On November 18, the US Congress passed the "Libya Stabilization Act". The act will allow the US to sanction any foreign actors backing either the Government of National Accord (GNA) or the Libyan National Army (LNA). This measure is likely meant to put pressure on the rival sides and their foreign backers to ensure that the October 23 ceasefire agreement is upheld.
- On November 18, the LNA claimed to have thwarted a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) near Ras Lanuf. This is highly notable given the rarity of successful or attempted attacks targeting strategic infrastructure in the Oil Crescent region over recent months. It highlights the underlying risk posed to strategic infrastructure in Libya as a result of the current volatile security environment.
- Overall, while the ongoing ceasefire is fragile, it is likely to be largely upheld by both sides over the coming weeks. However, as the deadline for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Libya approaches, the likelihood that the ceasefire agreement will break down and that the US will implement sanctions under the framework of the "Libya Stabilization Act" will increase.



## Current Situation

Across the country, the following incidents have been reported:

### Oil Crescent

Date	District/City	Brief Description
November 18	Ras Lanuf	According to a statement released by the Libyan National Army's (LNA) 128 Brigade, its forces discovered and dismantled a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) near Ras Lanuf city, located in the Oil Crescent region.

### Tripoli Environs

Map #	Date	District/City	Brief Description
1	November 14	Ruwais power station	The General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) reported that unidentified gunmen

			<p>attacked the station's operators and forced them to disconnect several power lines. Further reports indicated that the perpetrators opened fire on the station's equipment, rendering it out of service.</p>
2	November 14	Mizdah	<p>LNA-linked media reported on an attack carried out by the Salem al-Balaizi al-Zintan militia, who are loyal to the Government of National Accord (GNA) commander of the Western Military Region, Osama al-Juweili. The militia fighters reportedly burned homes in the area.</p>
3	November 15	Ajaylat	<p>Armed clashes were reported in Ajalyat, which witnessed the use of light weapons and RPGs. Reports indicate that the clashes were a result of a family dispute.</p>
4	November 16	Msallata	<p>Unconfirmed reports indicate that the movement of Islamic State (IS) militants in the area.</p>
5	November 16	Sabratha	<p>A Turkish unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that took off from the Mitiga International Airport reportedly targeted an illegal smuggling fuel truck south of Sabratha. The truck was reportedly enroute to Tunisia.</p>



## General Developments

### Date

November 12

### Brief Description

A preliminary agreement on a roadmap to “free, fair, inclusive and credible parliamentary and presidential elections” was reportedly reached during the UN-brokered negotiations between the GNA on one side and the LNA and the House of Representatives (HoR) on the other.

November 14

According to a UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) statement, the participants of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) agreed in Tunis to hold elections in Libya on December 24, 2021. The elections will establish a new Presidency Council (PC) and a Government of National Unity.

November 15

The head of the UNSMIL announced the adjournment of the LPDF in Tunisia without naming a new government to oversee the transition process for the elections in 2021. The talks are slated to resume virtually “next week”.

November 16

The eastern and the western commanders of the Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) reached an agreement under the UN-sponsored 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) talks to restructure and unify under the Tripoli-based National Oil Corporation (NOC) for the protection of oil facilities in Libya.

November 16	The Women's Block of 17 participants at the LPDF demanded 30 percent of leadership positions and the post of a deputy prime minister.
November 17	The Law Enforcement Department reportedly arrested a former GNA Interior Ministry official who was the erstwhile head of the GNA's Acquisition Committee. He was reportedly "wanted" by the Office of the Attorney General on corruption charges.
November 17	The Director of the Hasnawa Water System at the Man-Made River Authority (MMRA), Ahmed Al-Deeb, stated that there was a decrease in the level of water supply in some areas of Tripoli due to some wells being sabotaged.
November 18	US Congress passed the "Libya Stabilization Act". The act will allow the US to sanction any foreign actors backing either the Government of National Accord (GNA) or the Libyan National Army (LNA). It would also allow the US to sanction individuals who illicitly exploit Libya's oil resources or financial institutions as well as those complicit in human rights abuses. The US president can defer the sanctions if a ceasefire is in effect.

## Assessments & Forecast

1. The agreement to set the date for the nationwide election for December 2021 constitutes a notable development. The previous elections held in Libya were in 2014, which resulted in the establishment of the HoR in place of the General National Congress (GNC). This development therefore points towards the significant progress of diplomatic negotiations under the auspices of the UN. This progress is further underscored by the agreement reached in Brega under the framework of the 5+5 JMC to unify the PFG under the Tripoli-based NOC to establish a unified protection force for oil facilities in Libya. This is given that the PFG has thus far been responsible for the guarding of oil facilities. The provision of stable security for the energy sector in the country would serve to streamline the country's oil revenues and therefore facilitate economic development. These developments overall showcase the willingness of the rival political entities in Libya to reach agreements aimed at providing political stability and security to the country. **FORECAST:** However, discord within the LPDF, particularly with regards to the electoral process, will persist. This is evidenced by the suspension of the talks in Tunis without the establishment of an interim government. This can be attributed to the continued power struggles among and within the different political parties for significant representation. This is evidenced by the demands by the Women's Block with regards to receiving 30 percent of leadership positions. Similarly, reports from late October indicated that the Supreme Council of the Tuareg Tribes denounced their perceived exclusion from the negotiations. In 2014, the legitimacy of the HoR was significantly undermined by the low voter turnout and the majority of voters being from eastern Libya. This therefore suggests that should segments of the populace reject the processes through which these agreements are reached, the legitimacy of any future interim government and the election process itself will be challenged over the coming year.
2. This US's "Libya Stabilization Act" comes amid ongoing negotiations between the GNA on one side and the HoR and the LNA on the other side to unify all state institutions as well as the country's security and military apparatuses with the aim of ending the Libyan conflict. These negotiations are dependent upon the current ceasefire agreement being upheld, which was signed in Geneva on [October 23](#). It stipulates the withdrawal of all foreign mercenaries and troops from Libya within 90 days of the signing of the ceasefire agreement. Considering that neither the GNA nor the LNA

has thus far made an attempt to adhere to this stipulation of the ceasefire agreement, the passing of the “Libya Stabilization Act” is likely part of an effort by the US to put pressure on the rival sides and their respective foreign backers to ensure that the ceasefire in Libya is upheld until the process of political transition has been completed. **FORECAST:** Although the ongoing ceasefire is fragile, it is likely to be largely upheld by both sides over the coming weeks. However, the withdrawal of foreign troops from Libya is a controversial issue as both sides are dependent upon foreign military aid to defend their frontlines and positions against a potential offensive by their rival. This mutual distrust is unlikely to dissipate over the coming weeks, despite significant progress during the UN-brokered LPDF and the 5+5 JMC talks over recent weeks. This will threaten the ceasefire agreement and subsequently the ongoing diplomatic negotiations in the long term. Therefore, as the deadline for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Libya approaches, the likelihood that the ceasefire agreement will break down and that the US will implement sanctions under the framework of the “Libya Stabilization Act” will increase.

3. This LNA’s thwarting of a VBIED attack near Ras Lanuf is highly notable given the rarity of successful or attempted attacks targeting strategic infrastructure in the Oil Crescent region over recent months. It follows the UN-sponsored 5+5 JMC talks in Brega on November 16, wherein the eastern and the western commanders of the PFG reached an agreement to restructure and unify under the Tripoli-based NOC for the protection of oil facilities in Libya. In this context, it is possible that the attempted VBIED attack was perpetrated by fringe elements from within the PFG or other militias who are opposed to this agreement. However, it cannot be ruled out that jihadist elements, such as the IS, were responsible for the attempted attack, as they have in the past attempted to target oil infrastructure in the region to harm the country’s economy. However, this possibility is less likely considering that IS’s operational capabilities within Libya have to a large extent been limited to the Fezzan Region over the past year. **FORECAST:** Regardless, this event highlights the underlying threat posed to strategic infrastructure in Libya as a result of the current volatile security environment of the country. The LNA and the PFG will likely elevate their security protocols around oil facilities in the Oil Crescent over the coming days and weeks. However, this will not completely diminish the threat of a successful militant attack in the region.

## Recommendations

1. It is advised to defer all travel to Tripoli and Benghazi at this time due to ongoing violence, threats against foreigners, and the risk of a broad deterioration of security conditions. We advise at this time that those remaining in Tripoli and Benghazi should initiate contingency and emergency evacuation plans due to deterioration in the security situation. Contact us at [Operations@max-security.com](mailto:Operations@max-security.com) or +44 20-3540-0434 for itinerary and contingency support plans.
2. For those remaining in Tripoli, avoid nonessential travel to the outskirts of the city, particularly the al-Swani, Qasr Bin Ghashir, Wadi al-Rabea, Salah al-Din, Abu Salim, and Ain Zara neighborhoods, as well as to vicinity of the Tripoli International Airport, given that the Libyan National Army (LNA) planted landmines in these areas prior to its retreat in May.
3. Those planning to travel through the Mitiga International Airport in Tripoli as well as the Misrata International Airport in Misrata are advised to remain cognizant of the underlying risk of LNA airstrikes against these Government of National Accord (GNA)-held facilities. This threat is higher during the overnight hours and during times of increased hostilities between the sides.
4. Travel to Misrata and Tobruk should be for essential purposes only, while adhering to all security precautions regarding armed conflict, civil unrest, and militancy. We advise against all travel to outlying areas of the country, due to the threat of militancy, kidnapping, and general lawlessness in such areas.
5. Avoid entering Libyan territorial waters in the area between Benghazi and al-Tamimi as well as near the ports of Khoms and Misrata, without the LNA’s prior authorization, as a “no-sail zone” is currently in effect in this area and several naval vessels have been intercepted or attacked due to not following proper procedures.
6. In addition, avoid entering Libyan territorial waters off the coast of Tripoli due to the heavy militarization of the area. If travel is unavoidable, seek prior permission from the relevant



authorities in order to mitigate the risk of interception on account of misidentification.

7. Those planning to conduct air travel to, from and inside Libya should avoid entering the airspace between al-Haysha and Sirte as well as the airspace between Marsa al-Brega, Sirte, and Sebha, as they have been as declared “no-fly zones” by the LNA. If travel is essential, seek prior authorization from the LNA to avoid interception or an attack due to misidentification.
8. We advise against all travel to Libya’s southern Fezzan Region due to the presence of armed criminal networks. It is particularly advised to avoid all travel to the area extending from the Haruj Mountains to Tamanhint, Sebha, Ghadduwah, Taraghin, and Umm al-Aranib, as this currently constitutes the Islamic State’s (IS) primary area of operations in Libya.
9. We further advise against all travel to Libya’s border areas at this time due to persistent violence and lawlessness in these regions.
10. For those operating in or conducting business with oil facilities, it is advised to consult with us for itinerary-based travel recommendations and ground support options.
11. Avoid the immediate vicinity of government buildings, police stations, media outlet offices, and political party and militia headquarters, given that these locales have been targeted by militia groups in the past and recently by militants, and thus remain at increased risk for violence and unrest.
12. Westerners, particularly US citizens, operating in Libya are advised to maintain a low profile and exercise heightened vigilance in light of prevailing anti-Western sentiment and increasing attacks against foreigners.
13. Turkish and Qatari nationals are advised to maintain a low profile while operating in LNA-held territories, given the increased risk of detention of such nationals at this time as a result of an increase in tensions between these countries and the LNA due to the former’s support for the rival GNA.
14. Nationwide, take precautions to mitigate the risk of being targeted for kidnapping. Refrain from traveling in luxury vehicles and maintain a generally low profile. Routinely alter travel routes and refrain from divulging sensitive itinerary information to strangers.