Libya Country Report:
Children & Security

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

Updated as of 31 January 2017

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I. BACKGROUND

Map of Libya[1]

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[1]   Central Intelligence Agency, 'Libya', available https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html accessed 31 January 2017.

Children in Libya – Struggle Within Conflict

Armed conflict, insecurity, and political instability have impacted civilians in Libya, with far-reaching and devastating effects on children. Libya remains politically divided and volatile, with fighting nearly six years after the revolution in 2011. In January 2017, the situation in Libya was still considered serious, with escalating tensions and the threat of renewed conflict following developments in central Libya.[2] Since 2014, child protection concerns have increased dramatically with continued armed confrontations and the expansion of terrorist groups.[3] Children are particularly affected by protracted fighting in Benghazi as well as sporadic armed clashes in Ajdabiya, Darnah, Kufra, Sabha, Sirte, Tripoli and the oil crescent.[4]

Children are victims of indiscriminate shelling in residential areas, air strikes, suicide bombings, crossfire as well as summary executions by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).[5] The recruitment and use of children is prevalent and the abduction of children by armed groups, militias, and criminal organisations is on the rise.[6] Children, especially in western and southern Libya, are reportedly targeted for kidnappings, which are motivated by ransom.[7] Schools as well as medical facilities and personnel have also come under attack, with 40 schools reportedly damaged or destroyed in 2015.[8]

Conflict in Libya has forced civilians, including children, to flee their homes. An estimated half a million civilians have been internally displaced, with numbers increasing since September 2016.[9] Internally displaced persons (IDPs), the non-displaced conflict-affected population, refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants are among the 1.3 million people estimated to be in need of protection and some form of

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[2] United Nations News Centre, 'Libya: Amid threat of renewed conflict, UN envoy urges restraint' (4 January 2017), available http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=55906#.WHOFN3eZPdQ accessed 30 January 2017.

[3] United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya', UN Doc. S/2016/182 (25 February 2016) ('February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL'), para. 79; United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence', UN Doc. S/2016/361 (20 April 2016) ('2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence'), para. 43.

[4] United Nations Security Council, 'Children and Armed conflict: report of the Secretary-General', UN Doc. S/2016/360 (20 April 2016) ('2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report'), para. 86.

[5] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 88.

[6] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, paras. 87, 90.

[7] February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 42.

[8] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 89.

[9] Human Rights Watch, 'World Report 2017: Events of 2016' (2017) ('2017 Human Rights Watch Report'), p. 403; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 'Libya IDP Figures Analysis', available http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/libya/figures-analysis accessed 30 January 2017; UNHCR, 'Numbers of Internally displaced in Libya double since September' (30 June 2015), available http://www.unhcr.org/559276de2.html accessed 15 January 2017 ('UNHCR IDPs').

humanitarian assistance, with 439,000 children in need of humanitarian assistance at the end of 2016.[10] IDPs have taken refuge in IDP camps, schools, factories and even empty water tanks.[11] Children assessed in IDP camps have exhibited moderate to severe post-stress symptoms.[12] Libya also serves as an important, yet perilous route for child migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. Notably, migrant children are often arbitrarily detained and exposed to abuse and exploitation.

II. SECURITY SITUATION

1. Context

Libya was subject to Mummar Gaddafi's brutal dictatorship and autocratic government for over four decades. Unrest commenced in February 2011 when the Arab Spring swept across the region. What started out as peaceful protests in Libya spiralled into a civil war between forces loyal to the Gaddafi Government and anti-Gaddafi forces, ultimately leading to the ousting and death of Gaddafi. Gaddafi's fall created a power vacuum, leading to a devolved political and security situation, an extended period of instability, and the expansion of armed groups, including ISIL.[13] Revolutionary armed groups rose quickly after Gaddafi unleashed violence upon protesters. The Libyan revolutionaries received weapons from multiple sources, including by seizing weapons convoys, and abandoned Gaddafi stockpiles.

Despite the establishment of an interim government, known as the Government of National Accord (GNA), in March 2016, insecurity and political instability persist with mounting opposition by the Tobruk-based House of Representatives and militias clashing and competing for legitimacy and control over resources and infrastructure.[14] In particular, the GNA has failed to gain control over territory or intuitions or to gain popular support. Efforts to achieve political settlement by the United Nations (UN) and backed by the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), France, and Italy have failed, and instability continues to 'aggravate the plight of the civilian population in many parts of the country, particularly in Benghazi'.[15]

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[10] UNOCHA, '2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Libya' (November 2016), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_libya_humanitarian_needs_overview_november_2016.pdf accessed 30 January 2017 ('2017 HNO'), p. 6.

[11] UNHCR IDPs.

[12] February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 79.

[13] European Council on Foreign Relations, 'A Quick Guide to Libya's Main Players', available http://www.ecfr.eu/mena/mapping_libya_conflict# accessed 30 January 2017 ('ECFR Main Players').

[14] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 403.

[15] See 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 209; February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 2.

A number of actors are present in Libya and vying for power, including armed groups, city-states (particularly in western and southern Libya), and tribes, which are particularly relevant in central and eastern Libya.[16] In spite of the establishment of the GNA, there are few truly national actors, with local players – some of whom are relevant at the national level while representing the interests of their region or city – who also have tribal allegiances.[17]

Multiple armed groups have formed with varying allegiances, some pledging allegiance to ISIL. Armed groups operate in Tripoli and can be broadly categorised in terms of whether or not they support the Unity Government.[18] Armed tribal groups have also formed,[19] most notably the Tuareg and Tebu militias in southern and western Libya.[20] In 2016, armed groups continued to indiscriminately shell civilian areas, mostly in Benghazi, Derna, and Sirte. Civilian casualties continue, with 141 civilians killed, including 30 children, and 146 injured, including 28 children between Match and September 2016.[21]

In 2016, fighting remained concentrated in Benghazi, with civilians in the Ganfouda neighbourhood trapped by a standoff between the Libyan National Army (LNA) and militants since 2014.[22] Fighters loyal to ISIL controlled the coastal town of Sirte and subjected residents to a rigid interpretation of Sharia law. This often included 'public floggings, amputation of limbs, and public lynching, often leaving the victims' corpses on display'.[23] In May, armed groups allied with the GNA, backed by US airstrikes, launched a military offensive against ISIL and took back control in December 2016. Fighting between the LNA and the Derna Revolutionaries Shura Council, an alliance of militias that participated in the ousting of ISIL from the Derna in 2015, has continued into 2017.[24] These are but a few examples demonstrating the complex security situation and changing frontlines in Libya. International players also add to this complex web of political

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[16] ECFR Main Players.
[17] ECFR Main Players.
[18] ECFR Main Players.
[19] United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Investigation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Libya', UN Doc. A/HRC/31/47 (15 February 2016) ('2016 OHCHR Libya Report'), para. 63.
[20] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, para. 63.
[21] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 405.
[22] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 405.
[23] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 405.
[24] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 406.

and military players. In 2016, the US, UK, France, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) expanded their military activities in support of forces fighting armed groups like ISIL in Sirte and Benghazi.[25]

Since the escalation began, humanitarian and monitoring access has been severely limited. All parties to the conflict in Libya are alleged to have committed human rights violations, including unlawful killings, indiscriminate attacks impacting civilians, schools, and hospitals, arbitrary detention, abduction, torture, use and recruitment of children, and sexual and gender-based violence.[26] Members of rival groups have often resorted to torture and execution. Tens of thousands of people have been detained, many in secret detention facilities, with little to no access to effective due process.[27] A further report of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is expected in March 2017.

With the breakdown of rule of law and unrest in the region, Libya also continues to serve as an important, yet dangerous, route for irregular movements to Europe.[28] A total of 181,126 people reportedly took the central Mediterranean route to Europe in 2016 alone.[29] The death toll of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea, mostly from the Libyan coast, hit a new record in November 2016. From 1 to 25 January 2017, the International Organization for Migration reported 319 migrants rescued at sea by Libyan authorities or commercial fishermen, with a total of 42 bodies recovered.[30] Migrant children who arrive in Libya continued to be arbitrarily detained in detention centers – mostly run by the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration – without formal legal process or access to lawyers or judicial authorities.[31]

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[25] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 403.

[26] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report paras. 59, 60, 64; 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, paras. 86-90. See also Human Rights Watch, 'World Report 2016: Events of 2015' (2016) ('2016 Human Rights Watch Report'), p. 378; Human Rights Watch Report 2017, p. 423.

[27] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, paras. 26-28, 30. See also February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 40.

[28] European Commission, 'Managing migration along the Central Mediterranean Route – Commission contributes to Malta discussion' (25 January 2017), available http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-134_en.htm accessed 30 January 2017.

[29] European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 'Central Mediterranean Route', available http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/central-mediterranean-route/ accessed 30 January 2017. See also FRONTEX, 'FRAN Quarterly, Quarter 4: October–December 2015' (2016), available http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/FRAN_Q4_2015.pdf accessed 30 January 2017.

[30] International Organization for Migration, 'Missing Migrants Project: Mediterranean migrant arrivals reach 3,829 Deaths at Sea: 246' (27 January 2017), accessed http://missingmigrants.iom.int/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-3829-deaths-sea-246 accessed 30 January 2017.

[31] UNSMIL & UNHCHR, '"Detained and Dehumanised": Report on Human Rights Abuses Against Migrants in Libya' (13 December 2016), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/DetainedAndDehumanis ed_en.pdf accessed 30 January 2017 ('UNSMIL & UNHCHR'), p. 1.

Migrants and refugees are subjected to beatings, forced labour, and sexual violence by guards and militia members.

2. State, Non-State, International and Regional Actors

a) State Actors

Government Forces

In 2011, the National Transitional Council (NTC) was formed as the internationally recognised government.[32] In January 2012, protests against the NTC broke out in Benghazi and the NTC's legitimacy was questioned. The NTC was officially dissolved in August 2012, with power subsequently transferred to the General National Congress (GNC) in 2012. Two competing governments were subsequently established: Libya's Tourbek-based legislative body the HoR (or Council of Deputies) who took power following 2014 elections; and the GNC, based in Tripoli, which is the self-proclaimed National Salvation Government.

The Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) (or Shikrat Agreement) signed in December 2015 sought to bring political stability to Libya and establish power-sharing formula. Borne out of the LPA, the GNA was established as an interim government based in Tripoli in March 2016.

The establishment of political stability has, however, not been forthcoming, despite international recognition and support. First, the former Prime Minister of the National Salvation Government attempted to reassert himself in October 2016 by taking over the State Council (the advisory body attached to the GNA) but failed to obtain wider support.[33] Second, the cabinet proposed was not recognized by the Toubrek-based HoR and continued to operate as a rival authority from al-Bayda and Tobruk. Third, the GNA has struggled to gain support domestically as well as authority and control over territory and institutions in spite of enjoying international support.[34] These are among the few obstacles facing the

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[32] United Nations Security Council, 'Chronology of Events: Libya' (29 December 2016), available http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/chronology/libya.php?page=5 accessed 30 January 2017 ('Chronology of Events: Libya').

[33] United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya', UN Doc. S/2016/1011 (1 December 2016) ('December 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL'), para. 5; 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 404.

[34] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 404.

nascent interim government. Dozens of rival armed groups and military forces – all of whom have varying agendas and allegiances – continue to operate in the absence of a state authority exercising control over all of Libya.[35]

The interim government, allied with the LNA, gained control of substantial territory in 2016, including in the oil crescent, where they took over major terminals.[36] In May 2016, armed groups allied with the GNA, backed by US airstrikes, launched a military offensive against ISIL fighters in Sirte, resulting in their loss of control of the city in December 2016.

b) Non-state Actors

There are many armed actors and tribe militias active in Libya. What follows is a description of the most prominent actors, but is not intended to be an exhaustive account of the many players in Libya.

General Khalifa Haftar and the LNA

General Khalifa Haftar commands the LNA, which is a mix of military units and tribal or regional-based armed groups.[37] The LNA enjoys different degrees of control in the areas of central and eastern Libya that border with Egypt.[38] The LNA is currently a close ally of the HoR, a rival to the Tripoli-based GNA. In May 2014, Haftar launched Al Karamah ('Operation Dignity') against terrorist groups from eastern Libya as well as the GNC.[39] Operation Dignity involved offensive operations by various forces loyal to Haftar, including non-Islamist fighters and former Libyan soldiers, to re-establish control of Benghazi, with support from Egypt.[40] Some senior military figures refused to join Operation Dignity and have since joined forces with Haftar's adversaries or with local jihadist-led groups.[41] Many extremist groups, including Ansar al-Sharia, joined the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council to fight against Operation Dignity. Haftar's opponents claim its irregular forces include Sudanese mercenaries, particularly from the Darfuri rebel-group JEM.

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[35] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 405.
[36] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 404.
[37] ECFR Main Players.
[38] ECFR Main Players.
[39] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, para. 8.
[40] ECFR Main Players.
[41] ECFR Main Players.

In 2016, the LNA allied with the interim government, gained control of substantial territory, including in the oil crescent, where they took over major terminals.[42] By April 2016, the LNA pushed the Islamist militias out of much of Benghazi.[43] In September 2016, the LNA launched operation Swift Thunder against the ports in Libya.[44]

The Former Libya Dawn and affiliated groups

Libya Dawn formed in July 2014 in response to Operation Dignity. Libya Dawn was comprised of both Islamist and non-Islamist militias supported by the GNC. Libya Shield Forces was made up of several militia groups operating in various parts around Libya, including Tripoli and Benghazi. Among the groups in Libya Dawn are Libyan Shield Forces (affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood), together with other revolutionary armed groups, including Libya Revolutionaries Operations Room, and the Tripoli Brigade.[45] The group, which had fractured, signed a UN-brokered deal aimed at establishing unity.[46]

Ansar al-Sharia

Ansar al-Sharia is Al-Qaeda's Libyan affiliated group, prominent in eastern Libya.[47] Before 2011, Ansar al-Sharia was not a structured organisation, but a loose coalition of groups, according to some analysts.[48] Ansar al-Sharia benefitted from weapons looted from abandoned Libyan Army stocks after the fall of Gaddafi.[49] Ansar al-Sharia has established over time a significant presence in Libya, including training

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[42] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 404.

[43] See BBC, 'Profile: Libya's military strongman Khalifa Haftar' (15 September 2016), available http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27492354 accessed 30 January 2017.

[44] See Al-Jazeera, 'Forces loyal to Khalifa Haftar attack ports in Libya' (11 September 2016), available http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/forces-loyal-khalifa-haftar-attack-ports-libya-160911104408441.html accessed 30 January 2017.

[45] Al Arabiya Institute for Studies, 'Libyan Dawn: Map of allies and enemies' (25 August 2014), available http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/alarabiya-studies/2014/08/25/Libyan-Dawn-Map-of-allies-and-enemies.html accessed 30 January 2017.

[46] ECFR Main Players.

[47] BBC, 'Guide to key Libyan militias' (11 January 2016), available http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19744533 accessed 30 January 2017 ('Guide to key Libyan militias').

[48] United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 18 November 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the Report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to paragraph 13 of Security Council resolution 2214 (2015) concerning the terrorism threat in Libya posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Ansar al Charia, and all other Al-Qaida associates', UN Doc. S/2015/891 (19 November 2015) ('UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya'), para. 16.

[49] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 14.

facilities, the presence of which imply a long term strategic goal of sustaining a presence in Libya.[50] It is believed that Ansar al-Sharia staged the 11 September 2012 attack on the Consulate of the United States in Benghazi that resulted in the death of an American diplomat.[51]

In late January 2015, Ansar al-Sharia began running police patrols and a religious court.[52] The group was considered in 2015 to be funded sufficiently to sustain operations.[53] However, it has been weakened since the establishment of ISIL in Libya, with many of its fighters either joining ISIL or killed in clashes with them.[54] Fighters have also joined the anti-ISIL coalition under the banner of the Shura Council of Mujahideen in Derna or Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries.[55]

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

ISIL is a designated terrorist organisation responsible for grave violations against civilians. First established by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2004 in Iraq, ISIL was initially linked to al-Qaeda and known as al-Qaeda in Iraq. Following the death of al-Zarqawi in June 2006, the group merged with a number of other radical groups and rebranded itself as the Islamic State in Iraq. It became widely known for igniting a sectarian war with Iraq's Shiite community and for its use of particularly brutal tactics. In 2011, ISIL helped found Jabhat al-Nusra, marking its first entry into the Syrian conflict. After a falling-out between the two groups in April 2013, ISIL commenced its own operations in Syria, rebranding itself in the process as the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham.[56] On 29 June 2014, two weeks after capturing Mosul, Iraq's second city, ISIL declared the creation of a caliphate over the Muslim world and renamed itself as 'the Islamic State' in recognition of its global ambitions.[57]

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[50] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 6.
[51] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 17.
[52] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 46.
[53] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 3.
[54] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, paras. 2,18.
[55] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 18.
[56] Cole Bunzel, 'From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State' (Brookings, March 2015), available https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-ideology-of-the-Islamic-State.pdf accessed 30 January 2017 ('From Paper State to Caliphate'), pp. 25–26.
[57] From Paper State to Caliphate, p. 31.

ISIL has actively promoted its brutality through publications, photographs, video footage, and social media, in an attempt to consolidate its authority, attract recruits, and threaten those that challenge its ideology.[58] ISIL is listed by the UN Secretary-General for its recruitment and use of children.[59]. It has reportedly recruited and trained children as young as six and has extensively used young people in both support and combat roles, including suicide bombing missions in a number of countries.[60]

Libya is a retreat and operational zone for ISIL fighters unable to reach the Middle East.[61] It has also been of great strategic importance to ISIL as a gateway to Africa and Europe. In 2013, there was an influx of foreign terrorist fighters in Libya from the Maghreb, Egypt, Yemen, the Palestinian territories, and Mali.[62] In December 2015, ISIL stood at between 2,000-3,000 fighters in Libya according to a UN Panel of Experts report. The conflict in Syria served to strengthen ISIL forces with Libyan nationals returning from Syria.[63] ISIL has carried out attacks in all major Libyan cities, including the capital Tripoli, and has had a presence in other parts of Libya, including Benghazi. In 2015, ISIL gained a strong foothold and became established in Libya,[64] controlling a strip of more than 250 km, with a stronghold established in Sirte, a central coastal city[65] before it lost control to anti-Hathar forces backed by US airstrikes in December 2016.

Gross human rights abuses are reported in areas under ISIL's control, including summary executions, abductions and torture.[66] ISIL is listed by the Secretary-General as a party that recruits and uses children. In 2015, ISIL reportedly operated training camps south of Sitre where children have been trained.[67]

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[58] United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, Rule of Terror: Living under ISIL in Syria', UN Doc. A/HRC/27/CRP.3 (19 November 2014) ('Rule of Terror'), paras. 2–3.

[59] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 150, Annex I.

[60] United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Iraq', UN Doc. S/2015/852 (9 November 2015), para. 33; United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic', UN Doc. A/HRC/30/48 (13 August 2015), para. 75.

[61] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 19.

[62] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 20.

[63] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 4.

[64] UN SC Letter concerning terrorism threat in Libya, para. 2.

[65] February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 24.

[66] February 2016 SG Report on UNSMIL, para. 37.

[67] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 87.

Shura Councils

The Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council is an umbrella group comprising a number of Islamist and self-described revolutionary factions including Islamist militias such as Ansar al-Sharia that fight alongside ISIL against the LNA.[68] Some factions, like Derna Mujahidin Shura Council, are also affiliated with Al-Qaeda. This faction came into the spotlight in July 2015 when it drove out ISIL militants from Derna.[69] Other Shura councils have fought alongside the LNA, such as the Ajdabiya Revolutionaries Shura Council under the leadership of Muhammad al-Zawi.

The Petroleum Facilities Guards

The Petroleum Facilities Guards (PFG) were forces in the eastern part of Libya under the command of Ibrahim Jathran, a former revolutionary fighter. In 2013, the PFG took control of the main oil export terminals in eastern Libya. The PFG disbanded and currently supports the UN-backed unity government under the Ministry of Defence, 'though in reality its various local units […] operate their own laws'.[70]

c) International Actors

The new Libyan Unity Government enjoys international support, with the US, France, and UK reportedly participating in military activities in 2016.

United States (US)

The US supported the revolutionaries in their overthrow of Gaddafi and carried out air strikes as early as March 2011 to suppress his forces. The US maintained diplomatic and intelligence personnel in Libya in 2011 and 2012; however, all official personnel were withdrawn following the attack on the consulate in Benghazi on 11 September 2012. The US has remained concerned by the threat posed by ISIL in the region, including in Tunisia, Algeria, and the rest of North Africa.[71] The US continues to conduct airstrikes against ISIL over Libyan airspace, particularly targeting killings.[72] It also increased its presence on the ground in May 2016 and continues to carry out airstrikes on ISIL positions in Libya.

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[68] ECFR Main Players.
[69] Guide to key Libyan militias.
[70] ECFR Main Players.
[71] Dan De Luce and John Hudon, 'Why the U.S. Strike in Libya Wasn't Just About Libya' (Foreign Policy, 19 February 2016), available https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/19/why-the-us-strike-in-libya-wasnt-just-about-libya/ accessed 30 January 2017.
[72] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 647.

European Union (EU)

The EU has played a role in assisting Libya's transition and has supported UN mediation efforts in that process as well as through the provision of humanitarian assistance.[73] In May 2015, the EU approved the establishment of an air and sea operation – known as EU NAVFOR MED or 'Operation Sophia' – in response to the migrant and refugee crisis. This is empowered to use force against people-smuggling networks in Libya. In June 2016, the EU extended its anti-smuggling naval operations in the central Mediterranean, to include training for the Libyan coastguard and navy.[74]

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

With mounting civilian deaths as a result of targeted killings, NATO intervened in 2011 to enforce an arms embargo, maintain a no-fly zone, and protect civilians and civilian-populated areas from attack or the threat of attack.[75] Both France and the UK also contributed to air strikes in Libya in March 2011.[76]

NATO continues to have a presence in Libya. For instance, NATO is committed to providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as capacity-building for the Libyan coastguard and navy in 2016.[77]

United Nations Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)

UNSMIL is a special political mission established in 2011 by the UN Security Council at the request of the Libyan authorities to support the country's new transitional authorities in their post-conflict efforts.[78] UNSMIL, headquartered in Tripoli, with officers in Benghazi and Sabha, is overseen by the United Nations' Department of Political Affairs, which provides guidance and operational assistance.

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[73] European Union External Action, 'EU-Libya relations' (25 January 2017), available https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/factsheet_eu-libya-relations.pdf accessed 27 January 2017, p. 1.

[74] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 411.

[75] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 'NATO and Libya (Archived)' (9 November 2015), available http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_71652.htm accessed 27 January 2017.

[76] Chronology of Events: Libya.

[77] 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 411.

[78] United Nations Support Mission in Libya, 'UNSMIL Background' available https://unsmil.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3545&language=en-US accessed 30 January 2017.

International Criminal Court (ICC)

In 2011, the UN Security Council referred the situation of Libya to the ICC in Resolution 1970 (2011).[79] Arrest warrants were issued for three individuals, including Gaddafi. The case against Gaddafi was, however, terminated after his death in 2011. Currently, one case remains active before the ICC: the case against Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi, charged with crimes against humanity.[80] He is not currently in the custody of the ICC. The ICC Prosecutor indicated that new investigations will consider bringing charges for recent and current instances of serious criminal activities, committed by, *inter alia,* ISIL.[81]

d) Regional Actors

Instability in Libya has been a source of concern for neighbouring countries, including Egypt, which also went through a revolution and is now under the rule of a military leader, General Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. In November 2014, the Egyptian embassy in Tripoli was attacked.[82] Although Egypt has provided assurances of support for the UN-led political process, it has supported Haftar in direct contradiction of UN-backed unity efforts.[83] The relationship between Tobruk and Egypt is defined by significant arms deliveries as well as 'a shared political project: eradicating political Islam and enhancing the autonomy of eastern Libya'.[84] In 2015, Egypt carried out air strikes against targets in Libya. In one case, an airstrike against ISIL affiliates in retaliation to the murder of a group of Egyptian Christians is reported to have resulted in many civilian casualties.[85]

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[79] United Nations Security Council, 'Resolution 1970 (2011)', UN Doc. S/RES/1970 (26 February 2011).

[80] International Criminal Court, 'Case Information Sheet – Situation in Libya: The Prosecutor v. Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi' (13 June 2016), available https://www.icc-cpi.int/libya/gaddafi/Documents/GaddafiEng.pdf accessed 30 January 2017.

[81] International Criminal Court, 'Statement to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Libya, pursuant to UNSCR 1970 (2011)' (9 November 2016), available https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=161109-otp-stat-UNSC1970 accessed 30 January 2017, para. 23.

[82] Al-Jazeera, 'Embassies of Egypt and UAE attacked in Libya' (13 November 2014), available http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/11/embassies-egypt-uae-attacked-libya-201411137319239874.html accessed 30 January 2017.

[83] ECFR Main Players.

[84] ECFR Main Players.

[85] Amnesty International, 'Libya: Mounting Evidence of War Crimes in the Wake of Egypt's Airstrikes', 23 February 2015, available https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/02/libya-mounting-evidence-war-crimes-after-egypt-airstrikes/ accessed 15 January 2017.

The UAE has been supportive of the UN negotiations while continuing to support Haftar and the militias of the city-State of Zintan with arms,[86] violating an arms embargo. The UAE is not alone in violating the arms embargo against Libya, with reports that Qatar, Turkey, Ukraine and Sudan have also violated this embargo by transferring weapons, ammunitions, aircraft or armoured vehicles.[87]

III. CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

1. Recruitment and Use of Children

All parties to the conflict have either recruited and used, or continue to recruit and use, children in Libya. During the 2011 conflict, children were among the ranks of Gaddafi's forces, with reports of boys as young as seven years old being trained in anti-Gaddafi groups during the 2011 conflict. With the drastic deterioration of the security situation in 2014, concerns escalated over the association of children with armed militias.[88] Challenges, however, persist in collecting reliable data on the recruitment and use of children in hostilities, given the current situation in Libya.[89]

Children are reportedly being forcibly recruited into groups 'pledging allegiance' to ISIL and subjected to rather intense training.[90] ISIL reportedly operates training camps south of Sirte.[91] Some children, including those under the age of 15, have been recruited, often forcibly, and used in hostilities and as suicide bombers while others are forced to clean clothes, serve food, and are subjected to sexual violence.[92]

2. Trafficking and Child Labour

Libya is a destination and transit country for men and women from sub-Saharan African and Asia subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking, with armed groups, criminal gangs, smugglers and traffickers

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[86] 2016 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 387.
[87] See 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 426.
[88] Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, 'Libya,' available https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/countries/libya/ accessed 30 January 2017.
[89] United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Investigation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Libya: detailed findings', UN Doc. A/HRC/31/CRP.3 (23 February 2016) ('2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings'), para. 283.
[90] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings, para. 283.
[91] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 87.
[92] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 87; 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, paras. 59, 64.

controlling the flow of migrants through the country.[93] Data on human trafficking and forced labour in Libya is, however, difficult to obtain due to the ongoing security situation.[94] Victims of trafficking, or those vulnerable to trafficking, are also vulnerable to the increased violence in Libya, including torture, abduction, arbitrary killings and detention.[95]

Conflicts in the sub-region have also had an impact on trafficking in Libya. For instance, Syrian nationals temporarily residing in Sudan, including unaccompanied minors, often travel through Libya attempting to reach Europe by using people smugglers.[96] Trafficking networks reach into Libya from Niger, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, as well as Sudan. Prostitution rings have reportedly subjected sub-Saharan women to sex trafficking in brothels.[97] Nigerian women are at heightened risk of being forced into prostitution, while Eritreans, Sudanese, and Somalis are at risk of being subjected to forced labour in Libya.[98] Migrants describe being forced to work in farms as domestic workers or rubbish collectors without payment.

3. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

Both boys and girls are victims of sexual and gender-based violence in Libya.[99] There are reports of forced marriage of women and girls to their fighters.[100] Boys have been reportedly forcibly recruited by groups pledging allegiance to ISIL and subjected to sexual violence.[101]

Many migrant women and girls have been raped and otherwise sexually abused during their transit through Libya and face a greater risk of sexual violence in Libya.[102] Displaced women also experience sexual

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[93] United States Department of State, 'Trafficking in Persons Report' (June 2016) ('2016 TIP Report'), p. 404; UNSMIL & UNHCR, p. 1. See also United States Department of State, 'Trafficking in Persons Report' (July 2015), p. 223.
[94] 2016 TIP Report, p. 404.
[95] 2016 TIP Report, p. 404.
[96] 2016 TIP Report, p. 404.
[97] 2016 TIP Report, p. 404.
[98] 2016 TIP Report, p. 404.
[99] 2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence, para. 43.
[100] 2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence, para. 43; 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, para. 283.
[101] 2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence, para. 43.
[102] 2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence, para. 44; UNSMIL & UNHCHR p. 21.

harassment within the schools housing displaced persons.[103] Child marriage has also been reported to be a problem amongst displaced populations.

Women's fundamental rights have seriously regressed in Libya. Armed groups such as ISIL and Ansar al-Sharia continue to impose draconian regulations on women.[104] In areas controlled by groups pledging allegiance to ISIL, women have been confined to their homes altogether for fear of being targeted.[105] In many areas, strict laws have been implemented and enforced, preventing women from working and forcing them to cover their bodies from head to toe when leaving their homes.[106] Armed groups have made 'human rights defenders' a particular target of harassment, threats, rape, and assassination.[107]

4. Education

As a result of the recent conflict and instability, access to education has been greatly impaired, with nearly half of all children in Libya affected. Many schools have been destroyed, occupied by displaced persons, or converted to military or detention facilities.[108] In 2015, 40 schools were either damaged or destroyed and schools continued to be subject of military use.[109] As of September 2015, 73 per cent of all schools in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, were not functioning.[110] In 2014 and 2015, data collected from the Ministry of Education in Tripoli and Benghazi revealed that 558 schools have been affected by the crisis. Of the schools affected, 30 schools were damaged, 477 partially damaged and 51 are accommodating IDPs.[111]

Internally displaced children are at heightened risk, with only 15 per cent of displaced children attending school.[112] Those children residing in camps for displaced persons are at most risk, with almost no access to education. The situation is bleak for those children with physical and mental disabilities as they are 'often

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[103] Save the Children, 'Save the Children Egypt-Libya-Tunisia Assessment: Assessment Report' (18 June 2015), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SCELTA%20Final%20Report_18_Jun_2015.pdf accessed 30 January 2017 ('Save the Children Egypt-Libya-Tunisia'), p. 34.
[104] 2016 SG Report on conflict-related sexual violence, para. 43.
[105] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings, para. 190.
[106] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings, para. 190.
[107] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings, paras. 222-231.
[108] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 89; 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, para. 41.
[109] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 89.
[110] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report, para. 41.
[111] 2017 HNO, p. 21.
[112] Save the Children Egypt-Libya-Tunisia, p. 35.

completely excluded from the formal education system'.[113] In areas where Sharia law has been established, primarily where groups affiliated with ISIL are in control, girls are either not permitted to attend school or are permitted only if they wear a full-face veil. Even where schools are open and functioning, parents are afraid to send their children, for fear of injury or abduction.[114]

5. Access to Healthcare

The conflict has further taken its toll on access to basic services, such as healthcare, with facilities and personnel the subject of attack. The healthcare system in Libya is 'on the brink of collapse', with some 1.3 million people without to life-saving health care services and resources.[115] An estimated 43 out of 98 assessed hospitals across Libya are either partially functional or non-functional.[116] For instance, the Benghazi medical center was shelled at least four times and four medical personnel in an ambulance were killed in 2015.[117] There have also been documented incidents of the abduction of medical personnel by armed groups, including those groups affiliated with Operation Karamah.[118] A shortage of life-saving medicines, medical supplies and equipment along with critical shortage of human resources, including specialised midwives, is exacerbating the situation.[119] Women and children are particularly vulnerable as a result and do not always have access to clean surgical facilities.[120]

In addition, the state of the mental health of children in Libya presents an additional concern. Having lived through conflict and violence, many children in Libya were already suffering from significant emotional and mental stress in 2011.[121] Such stress is a result of exposure to direct exposure to violence and loss of family members as well as the deprivations of war.[122]

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[113] Save the Children Egypt-Libya-Tunisia, p. 36.
[114] 2016 OHCHR Libya Report: detailed findings, para. 281-282.
[115] 2017 HNO, p. 17; UNOCHA, 'Humanitarian Bulletin Libya' (10 December 2016), available https://unsmil.unmissions.org/Portals/unsmil/Documents/Humanitarian%20Bulletin_Libya_Issue%2010_December_2016_EN.pdf accessed 30 January 2017.
[116] UN HNO 2017, p. 17.
[117] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 89.
[118] 2016 SG Children and Armed Conflict Report, para. 89.
[119] UN HNO 2017, p. 17.
[120] World Health Organization, 'Humanitarian Crisis in Libya: Public Health Risk Assessment and Interventions' (May 2015), available http://www.who.int/hac/crises/lby/libya__phra_may2015.pdf accessed 30 January 2017, p. 7.
[121] Mercy Corps, '"Comfort for Kids" responds to emotional trauma in children' (12 September 2011), available http://www.mercycorps.org.uk/press-room/releases/comfort-kids-responds-emotional-trauma-children accessed 30 January 2017 ('Mercy Corps').
[122] Mercy Corps.

IV. ANNEX I: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
GNA	Government of National Accord
GNC	General National Congress
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
LNA	Libyan National Army
LPA	Libyan Political Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NTC	National Transitional Council
PFG	Petroleum Facilities Guard
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya

V. ANNEX II: KEY FACTS[123]

Libya in a Snapshot

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Geography</td><td>Climate: Mediterranean along coast; dry, extreme desert interior</td></tr>
<tr><td>Terrain: mostly barren, flat to undulating plains, plateaus, depressions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Border countries: Algeria (989 km), Chad (1,050 km), Egypt (1,115 km), Niger (342 km), Sudan (382 km), Tunisia (461 km)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Coastline: 1,770 km</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">People</td><td>Population: 6,541,948 (July 2015 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Median age: 28.5 years (2016 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Languages: Arabic (official), Italian, English (all widely understood in the major cities); Berber (Nafusi, Ghadamis, Suknah, Awjilah, Tamasheq)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ethnic groups: predominantly Arab; but also Afro-Arab, South Asians, Europeans</td></tr>
<tr><td>Religions: Muslim 96.6 %, Christian 2.7 %, Buddhist 0.3 %, others (includes Hindu, Jewish, fold religion and unaffiliated)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Economy</td><td>Capital: Tripoli</td></tr>
<tr><td>Major urban areas: Tripoli 1.126 million (2015)</td></tr>
<tr><td>GDP: $39.39 billion (2015 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>GDP per capita: $14,200 (2016 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Children and youth</td><td>Population under age of 25: 43.58% (2015 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Unemployment (ages 15-24): 48.7% (2015 est.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Child labour (ages 5-14): N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Legal age of conscription: 18</td></tr>
</table>

Relevant UN Security Council Resolutions

Libya Situation Referral to ICC – Resolution 1970 (26 February 2011)

Use of Force, Arms Embargo, No-Fly Zone, Sanctions – Resolutions 1970 (26 February 2011); 1973 (17 March 2011); 2009 (16 September 2011) (partly lifted sanctions); 2016 (27 October 2011); 2174 (27 August 2014); 2278 (31 March 2016)

On UNSMIL – Resolution 2009 (16 September 2011) (mandate extended by subsequent resolutions)

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[123] CIA World Factbook, 'Libya' (12 January 2017), available https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html accessed 30 January 2017.

Non-proliferation of Arms, Chemical Stockpiles, Small Arms – Resolution 2017 (31 October 2011)

Measures against Illicit Oil Transport – Resolutions 2146 (19 March 2014); 2208 (5 March 2015)

Counter-terrorism efforts in Libya – Resolution 2214 (27 March 2015)

Interdiction of Vessels Smuggling Migrants – Resolution 2240 (9 October 2015); 2292 (14 June 2016)

On Political Agreement in Libya – Resolution 2259 (23 December 2015)

Libya Panel of Experts – Resolutions 2144 (14 March 2014); 2213 (27 March 2015) (with mandate extended in various resolutions extending UNSMIL mandate)

Chemical weapons – Resolution 2298 (22 July 2016)

Libyan Child Protection Legislation

National	▪ Draft Constitution[124] ▪ Children's Protection Law (No. 5 1997) ▪ Promotion of Liberty Law (No. 20 of 1991) ▪ Order of the Minister of Labour concerning the definition of industries in which it is prohibited to employ young persons under the age of 18.[125]

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[124] Calls have been made for a substantial revision of the draft Constitution published in October 2015 with a view to ensuring its full compliance with Libya's obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law (see International Commission of Jurists, '*The Draft Libyan Constitution: Procedural Deficiencies, Substantive Flaws*' available https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Libya-Draft-Constitution-Flaws-Deficiencies-Publications-Reports-2015-ENG.pdf accessed 30 January 2017.

[125] Note that the draft Children's Act was under discussion in the Libyan Parliament in late 2010, but has yet to be approved.

International	- Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1993) - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (ratified 2004) - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (ratified 2004) - Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (ratified 2004) - International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 (1999) concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ratified 2000) - International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified 1968) - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ratified 1970) - International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ratified 1970) - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (ratified 1989) - Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (ratified 1989) - International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ratified 2004) - Geneva Conventions, 1949 (ratified 1956) - Additional Protocol (I) to the Geneva Conventions, 1977 (ratified 1978) - Additional Protocol (II) to the Geneva Conventions, 1977 (ratified 1978)
	Relevant Treaties or Optional Protocols which have NOT been Ratified by Libya - Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (not ratified) - Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (not ratified) - Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (not ratified) - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (signed 2008)

VI. ANNEX III: TIMELINE OF NOTABLE EVENTS[126]

From 'Gaddafi Era'

1969

A military coup led by Gaddafi leads to state socialism; most economic activity is nationalised.

1971

In a referendum, the Federation of Arab Republics (Libya, Egypt and Syria) is approved. However, the Federation never becomes a reality.

1973

A 'cultural revolution' is declared by Gaddafi.
The Aozou Strip in Northern Chad is occupied by Libyan forces.

1977

As part of the 'people's revolution', the country's name is changed by Gaddafi to the 'Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah'. Revolutionary Committees are established.

1980

Intervention by Libyan troops in northern Chad's civil war.

1981

Two Libyan planes are shot down by the US over a dispute regarding the Gulf of Sirte, which Libya claims is its territorial water.

1984

Following the death of a British policewoman outside London's Libyan embassy during an anti-Gaddafi protest, the UK ends diplomatic relations with Libya.

1986

In response to 'alleged Libyan involvement' in the bombing of a disco in Berlin attended by members of the US military, the US bombs Libya, including residential areas. 101 people are killed, including Gaddafi's adopted daughter.

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[126] BBC, 'Libya Profile – Timeline' (21 January 2016), available http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13755445 accessed 30 January 2017.

1988

An aeroplane is blown up over Lockerbie, a town in Scotland. Libyan agents are alleged to have been responsible.

1989

Arab Maghreb Union formed by Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.

1992

UN Sanctions imposed over Lockerbie bombing trial controversy.

1994

Aozou strip is returned from Libya to Chad.

1995

30,000 Palestinians are expelled from Libya. This is done in protest at Oslo accords.

1999

Diplomatic relations restored between Libya and UK after Libya hands over suspects of Lockerbie bombing.

2000

September: Many African immigrants are killed in western Libya. The killings are carried out by mobs who are not happy with the numbers of African workers entering Libya.

2001

January: Lockerbie verdict delivered in special court in The Netherlands. One of the accused, Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi, is found guilty. He is sentenced to life imprisonment. The other accused is acquitted.
May: Libyan troops assist to stop an attempted coup against Central African Republic's President Ange-Felix Patasse.

2002

January: Libya and USA announce that talks have been held between the two countries to help restore relations. The long running hostility centres on what the Americans term Libya's sponsorship of terrorism.

2003

January: Libya elected to position of chair of UN Human Rights Commission. Many human rights groups and the US oppose the decision.

August: Libya sends a letter to the UN Security Council assuming responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing, and agrees to compensate the families of the bombing victims
September: UN Security Council removes sanctions on Libya.
December: Libya announces that it will abandon programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction.

2005

January: Libya holds its first auction of oil and gas export licences. This marks the return of US companies after more than 20 years of absence.

2006

February: in response to a Danish newspaper's depiction of prophet Muhammed, clashes break out in Benghazi. At least 10 people are killed.

2007

January: The prime minister announces 400,000 government redundancies. The rationale is to stimulate the private sector and ease public spending.

2008

August: Agreement signed between Libya and US to compensate victims of bombing attacks on the other's citizens.
September: Historic visit by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to Libya.

2009

February: Gaddafi is elected as African Union chairman.

2010

January: Weapons agreement between Russia and Libya. Russia agrees to sell $1.8 billion in weapons.
June: UNHCR expelled from Libya.
October: EU-Libya agreement concluded, aimed at curbing illegal migration.

2011

February: Inspired by events in neighbouring Arab countries, anti-Gaddafi clashes break out in Benghazi, and soon spread to other cities.
March: UN Security Council takes action. A no-fly zone is authorised over Libya. NATO air strikes are authorised in order to protect civilians.
July: The National Transitional Council (NTC), Libya's main opposition group, is recognised as Libya's legitimate government.
August: Gadaffi goes into hiding. His wife and three of his children flee to Algeria.
August -September: African Union recognises the NTC as Libya's new authority.

October: Gaddafi is captured and killed. Rebel fighters take Sirte, Gaddafi's hometown. Libya is declared 'liberated'. Plans to hold elections are announced.

2012

January: Sparked by frustration withthe pace and nature of change under NTC, violence breaks out between rebel forces in Benghazi. Abdel Hafiz Ghoga, NTC's deputy head, resigns.
June: Local militias active in the western Libya. The government struggles to control the area. Tripoli airport is taken over for a brief period by the Al-Awfea Brigade.
August: Power is handed over to the General National Congress. Mohammed Magarief is elected as chairman and interim head of state.
September: Islamist militants kill US ambassador and three other Americans at the consulate in Benghazi. Al-Magarief, head of the General Congress, vows to disband all illegal militias.
October: Ali Zeidan is elected as prime minister.
December: Trial of former Libyan Prime Minister al-Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi.

2013

May: In order to comply with a new law which bans officials from the Gaddafi-era from holding office, al-Magarief resigns.
June: Nuri Abu Sahmein is elected as chairman of the General National Congress.
August: Blockade of oil export terminals begins. The blockade is carried out by the Petroleum Facilities Guard militia.

2014

February: General National Congress refuses to disband despite mandate expiring. This sparks protests.
April: Petroleum Facilities Guard militia ends closure of two terminals.
March: A tanker full of oil breaks through Libyan navy blockade at a rebel-held port. Following this, Ali Zeidan, the prime minister, is sacked. Ahmed Maiteg is elected as prime minister.
May: Khalifa Haftar, a renegade of the Libyan National Army, begins an assault against Islamist groups in Benghazi. The assault includes airstrikes. He also attempts to seize parliament buildings and accuses prime minister Maiteg of being in thrall to Islamist groups.
June: Resignation of prime minister Maiteg following the supreme court declaration that his appointment was illegal. Elections are held to elect a new parliament. The security situation and boycotts contribute to a low turnout. The election results reveal a heavy defeat for Islamists. Fighting breaks out between supporters of the GNC and those of the new parliament.
July: Foreigners and UN staff evacuate the country. Embassies close. Fighting largely destroys Tripoli airport. Most of Benghazi is seized by Ansar al-Sharia.
October: UN Secretary-General visits talks between the new government and Libya Dawn militants who by now hold Tripoli. The UN reports that hundreds of thousands have been displaced by the violence. ISIL militants seize Derna, a port in eastern Libya.

2015

<u>January</u>: Partial ceasefire agreed between Libyan army and militia alliance based in Tripoli.

<u>February</u>: Following a video showing the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians, Egypt bombs ISIL targets in Derna. Libya also launches an offensive in Derna but fails ISIL establishes control over Sirte, a port city between Tripoli and Benghazi.

<u>July</u>: Gaddafi's sons and other former officials are sentenced to death for crimes committed during the 2011 uprising.

2016

<u>January</u>: UN announces interim government to be based in Tunisia. Neither Tobruk nor Tripoli parliaments agree to recognise the interim government's authority.

<u>March</u>: UN-backed Libyan unity government moves to take power as sole ruling authority[127] but fails to do so by the end of the month.

<u>April</u>: UN staff return to Tripoli after absence of nearly two years.

<u>May</u>: Unity government leads a military campaign to retake town of Sirte, which was seized by militants of the Islamic State group a year previously.

<u>September</u>: LNA of General Khalifa Haftar seizes key oil export terminals in the east.

<u>December</u>: Libyan forces retake Sirte from ISIL.

2017

<u>January</u>: US drones target two camps near city of Sirte, killing at least 80 ISIL fighters.

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[127] See The Guardian, 'Libyan Unity Government moves to take power as sole ruling authority', 13 March 2016 available http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/13/libyan-unity-government-moves-to-take-power-as-sole-ruling-authority accessed 15 January 2017.

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