

Request to the European Parliament to demand a Hearing on France's Illegal and Destructive Meddling in Libya's Civil War

05.08.2019

**The Honorable Mr. David Sassoli
President of the European Parliament**

The recent revelations, as reported by the New York Timesⁱ, that the advanced American weapons found in a rebel's military camp South West of the Libyan Capital Tripoli, were part of American weapons purchased by France in 2010, are very alarming and have potential grave consequences on Europe.

The government of France, by supplying these weapons to the renegade retired Major General Haftar, has violated the United Nations Security Council resolutionsⁱⁱ concerning the embargo on transfer of weapons to Libya, undermined the efforts by the United Nations to find a negotiated political solution to the raging war in Libya, and undermined all the efforts by the European Union vis-à-vis Libya. Stability in Libya is very important to the security of the EU; on illegal migration, fight against terrorism, and energy.

Thanks to efforts by the Government of National Accord (GNA), the internationally recognized government of Libya, supported by the United Statesⁱⁱⁱ and Italy^{iv}, the threat posed by the terrorist organization ISIS to the security of the EU was eradicated in the areas controlled by forces loyal to the GNA. ISIS was defeated in Sirte, central Libya, and in Sabratha, Western Libya. But now, with the attack by Haftar, an attack supported by French weapons and special forces, on Tripoli, ISIS is making a comeback^v in central and southern regions of Libya.

Haftar's attack on Tripoli started on the 4th April 2019, forced the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to cancel the National Conference which was scheduled on 14th April. By militarily supporting Haftar, France intentionally sabotaged UNSMIL's political process to end the civil war in Libya, a process France was publicly supporting. Furthermore, France's blocking of efforts at the Security Council, by the United Kingdom and Germany, to issue a resolution to demand immediate ceasefire and retreat of Haftar's militias, to its pre-4th April positions, France intentionally prolonged Haftar's aggression on Tripoli. The war now in its 4th month, the toll is 1093 dead, including 106 civilians, and 5752 injured, including 294 civilians, according to the latest report from the World Health Organization (WHO)^{vi}. The indiscriminate attacks on Tripoli and the clashes in the Southern Districts has forced over 100 Thousand residents to flee their homes^{vii}.

On the night of 2nd July 2019, a pro Haftar jet hit a detention centre^{viii} for illegal migrations and refugees with two missiles, killing 53 migrants and wounding over 130 others^{ix}.

The deliberate attack on a civilian facility was described by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Libya as an act that amounts to a war crime^x. The military spokesman of Haftar admitted responsibility for the attack^{xi}, but blamed “those who brought illegal immigrants here.”, as he put it in a press conference.

Mr. President, we, the undersigned non-governmental organizations, plead to you to schedule a hearing in the European Parliament on these destructive, illegal and reckless actions by the French government in Libya. The hearing should:

- Investigate the extent of involvement of the French Government in supporting the renegade General Haftar to sabotage the UN led, EU supported, peace process to end conflict in Libya,
- Investigate the type and quantities^{xii} of weapons the French Government illegally, in violation of UNSC resolutions, supplied to Haftar,
- Demand an independent investigation into the criminal act of bombing the Tajoura Detention Center for Migrants, and
- Condemn the actions of the French Government and demand immediate halt to any support to the renegade General Haftar. A Man who has no respect for the sanctity of human life, rule of law, nor any respect for democratic rule or freedoms.

Sincerely,

- Human Rights Solidarity, Switzerland
- El Shehab for Human Rights, United Kingdom
- Paris Francophone Institute for Freedoms, France
- Geneva Council for Rights and Liberties, Switzerland
- Association of Victims of Torture in Tunisia, Switzerland
- International Federation for Rights and Development, Italy
- United towns agency for north south cooperation, Switzerland
- Organization of human rights justice for those affected by war, Libya
- Salam International Organization for Protection of Human Rights, United Kingdom
- Belaasy Organization for Human Rights, Libya
- Advocates for Human Rights, Bulgaria
- British Arab Forum, United Kingdom
- International Arabic Organization for Woman’s Rights, Libya
- Democracy Center for Transparency, Brussels
- Libyan Council for International Relations, Canada
- Libios y Libias por los Derechos Humanos y contra la Guerra, Spain
- Geneva Center for Democracy and Human Rights, Switzerland
- International Association for Justice and Human Rights

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- ⁱ New York Times: "[U.S. Missiles Found in Libyan Rebel Camp Were First Sold to France](#)", 9th July 2019.
- ⁱⁱ United Nations Security Council: "[Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#)", 26th February 2011, and all UNSC subsequent relevant resolutions, including the most recent [Resolution 2473 \(2019\)](#), 10th June 2019.
- ⁱⁱⁱ The United States Air Force supported the forces of the GNA in their campaign to liberate the city of Sirte from the terrorist organization ISIS in the summer of 2016. Reuters: "[U.S. strikes easing advance against Islamic State in Sirte, says commander](#)", 3rd August 2016.
- ^{iv} Italy provided a military field hospital to treat the casualties from the military campaign to liberate Sirte. ANSAMED: "[Military hospital set up by Italy in Misrata operational](#)", 20th October 2016.
- ^v Middle East Institute: "[Is ISIS the real winner of Hifter's Tripoli offensive?](#)", 30th May 2019. The article spells the stakes for Europe "*the stakes are high. Not only would an ISIS presence in Libya pose a direct security threat to EU member states, but it could also trigger a rise in migration across the Mediterranean and disrupt the flow of oil, while further complicating international efforts to make peace in the war-torn country.*"
- ^{vi} World Health Organization in Libya: "[The violence in #Tripoli has killed 1093 people, including 106 civilians, and injured 5752 people, including 294 civilians. More than 100 000 people are displaced.](#)", WHO Libya on Twitter, 9th July 2019.
- ^{vii} International Organization for Migration: "[Libya — Tripoli Rapid Migrant Assessment \(04 July 2019\)](#)", 5th July 2019. Excerpt from the report "*Since the onset of armed conflict in the southern areas of Tripoli on 04 April 2019, a significant number of people have been affected by the conflict. As per the most recent flash update published by IOM Libya's Displacement Tracking Matrix, at least 20,975 families (approximately 104,875 individuals) were identified as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)*".
- ^{viii} The Detention Center is located in Tajoura, about 25 Km East of Tripoli's downtown.
- ^{ix} World Health Organization in Libya: "[The casualties of this week's attack on a #migrant centre in #Tajoura are 53 dead and 130 injured, making the overall toll of the #Tripoli conflict nearly 1000 dead & more than 5000 wounded.](#)", WHO Libya on Twitter, 5th July 2019.
- ^x UN News: "[Libya detention centre airstrike could amount to a war crime says UN, as Guterres calls for independent investigation](#)", 3rd July 2019.
- ^{xi} Middle East Monitor: "[Haftar forces admit to Libya migrant camp airstrike](#)", 4th July 2019.
- ^{xii} Information abound that not all the weapons, left behind by Haftar's hasty retreat from Gheryan, are accounted for. Militias and gangs have gotten to some of the weapons depots before pro GNA forces. Also, some of Haftar's own militias, are selling their weapons and ammo to smugglers, on their way out deserting the frontlines. A campaign that they thought would take tops two weeks, is now in its fourth month with no end in sight.