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Libya

New attempt at a unity government in Libya

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Attempts to resolve the crisis are coming up against the interference of foreign powers and the leaders of militias who are profiting greatly from the country's troubles.

Meeting in Tunis, 120 members of the two parliaments, one in Tripoli, controlled by Prime Minister Dbeibah, and the other in the east, led by Marshal Haftar, agreed to move towards elections to end the Libyan crisis.

Cairo conference

A few days later, under the aegis of the Arab League, the representatives of the three state bodies, the Presidential Council, the High Council of State and the House of Representatives, signed an agreement. The agreement provides for the appointment of a tightly-knit government of technocrats, whose main task would be to organise the elections.

By refusing this process, Prime Minister Dbeibah is only reinforcing his isolation. He has lost most of his supporters, including Al-Seddik Omar al-Kabir, the governor of the Central Bank. He is also strongly opposed on the streets. The economic crisis is deepening: the Libyan dinar is losing value, exacerbating inflation as almost all food and goods are imported. For the anniversary of the Libyan Revolution on 17 February, the Prime Minister embarked on a lavish spending spree. The people present protested loudly against this waste of money, at a time when most civil servants are experiencing salary arrears. Dbeibah has spent more time placing members of his extended family in the state apparatus than trying to resolve the political and economic crisis.

Profitable chaos

This umpteenth attempt at a political settlement is likely to fail because of two obstacles. The first is the interference of foreign powers. The government in Tripoli enjoys the support of Turkey, which is taking advantage of the situation to get its hands on oil in the Libyan Sea. Haftar, for his part, is supported by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, as well as by Russia via Wagner's troops.

France is not to be outdone. While it is officially supporting the efforts of United Nations envoy Abdoulaye Bathily, it is also providing covert military support for Haftar's troops, alongside Wagner. The discovery of weapons from French stocks, such as Javelin missiles, and the death of three soldiers in a helicopter crash in Benghazi confirm this commitment.

The second obstacle is that the situation of confusion allows most of the militia-backed leaders to enrich themselves by plundering oil resources and engaging in all kinds of highly lucrative illegal trades. These range from fuel trafficking to drug smuggling and, most sordid of all, the trafficking of sub-Saharan migrants for ransom or forced labour.

While this is not an ideal situation for European countries, they are perfectly happy with it as long as the militias act as police and prevent migrants from embarking for Europe.

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Translated by *International Viewpoint* from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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