

ARAB DISPATCH

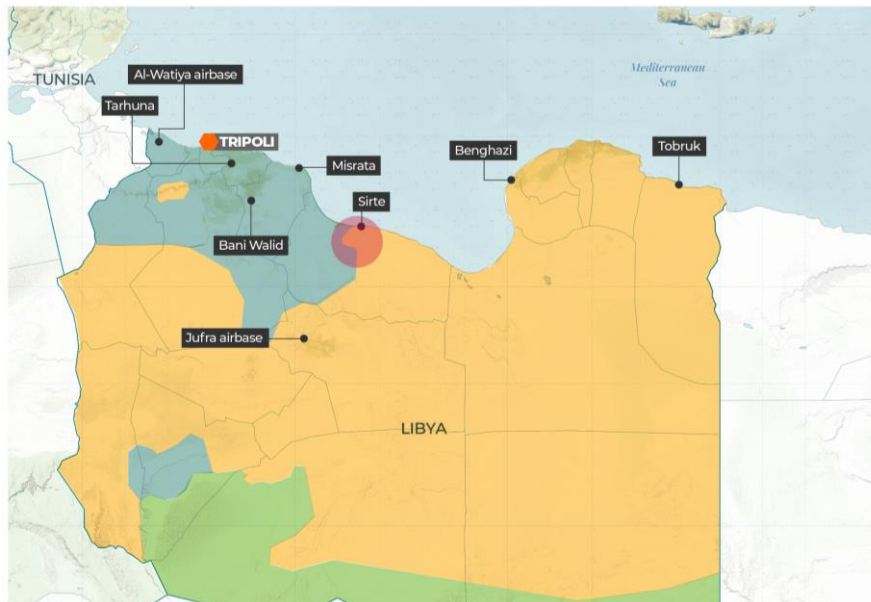
Arab Dispatch - a project by the NATO Defense College Foundation

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North Africa

#Libya - Egypt has threatened to send his army against GNA Forces



Source Al Jazeera

The Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi has expressed his willingness to intervene in the Libyan conflict in order to protect Egyptian borders. He announced that the city of Sirte and the military base of al-Jufra represent an unquestionable Red Line, because it runs along the oil crescent of Libya (an

essential economic resource) and because al Jufra is the recruiting, training and logistics hub for African mercenary forces and Russians alike, in addition of hosting a mixed squadron of Russian strike and multirole aircraft.

Al-Sisi urged the GNA to end its counteroffensive against Haftar's Army. Al-Sarraj rejected the ultimatum and accused Egypt of violating Libya's sovereignty. Egypt has not followed on its threats, but tension remains high. Egyptian Army logistics and the distance from the border (1.100) make it rather improbable for a sizeable land force to be sent and supported on the red line. Air incursions could be more probable, but sustained operations are less likely.

Moreover an intensified conflict would complicate the strategic leverage of Egypt on the vital Renaissance Dam dispute with Ethiopia.

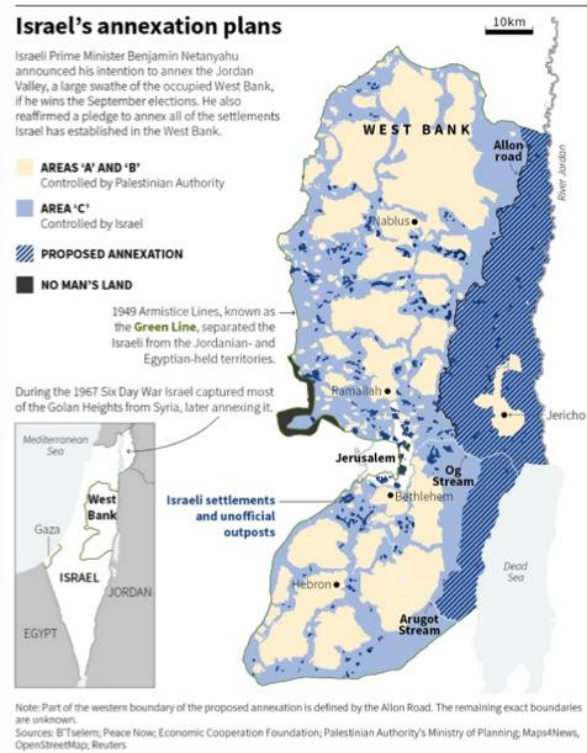
Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister called for an immediate ceasefire in Libya adding that the backing forces should step back from the conflict. He also underlined that Egypt and Turkey had previously agreed on a political solution for the Libyan war.

To know more about this topic:

- *Al Arabiya*, Libya conflict: Sirte-Jufra 'redline' set to be next major flash point, 06/22/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/2YQXi5F>
- *Libya Observer*, Egypt's Sisi threatens military intervention in Libya, 06/20/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/2NS5BI9>
- *Libya Observer*, Lavrov calls for a total ceasefire in Libya, 06/24/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/2AnHWfq>
- *TRT World*, Intervening in Libya won't secure Egypt, but will make it 'vulnerable', 06/22/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/31A3iBD>

Levant

#Occupied territories - Anxieties over Israel's annexation plan of the West Bank



Source: Reuters

The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced his intention to implement the annexation plan on July 1st.

The United Nation and the European Union expressed their concerns regarding the consequences that the annexation plan might have on the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

HAMAS has warned that the annexation plan will be considered a declaration of war, and is in talks with other political factions to coordinate the resistance. The movement might consider the possibility of establishing a dialogue or even a political unity with his rival FATAH.

Although many Palestinians consider the annexation plan only a formality, it should be noted that Netanyahu's decision will certainly affect Israel diplomatic relations with Jordan, that, together with Egypt, are the only two Arab countries to have signed a peace treaty with Israel.

Ron Dermer, Israel's Ambassador to the US has declared to The Washington Post that the Annexation Plan "will shatter the two-state illusion". Although his vision of a Palestinian State corresponds to a series of enclaves in the West Bank and in Gaza, he is in somehow supporting the two-state solution.

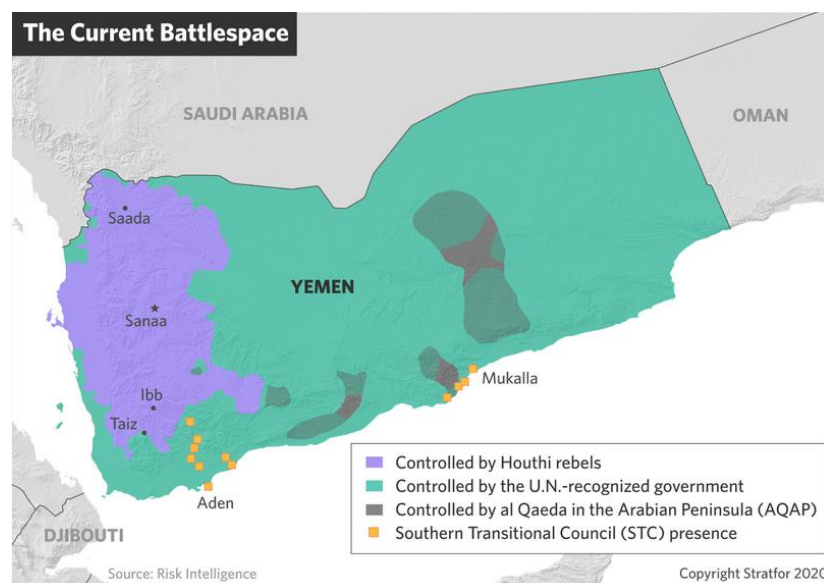
The Commanders for Israel's Security (CIS, a non-partisan movement comprising the overwhelming majority of available retired IDF generals and intelligence and police equivalents), sketches instead worrying consequences for the security of the country in case of an annexation.

To know more about this topic:

- *Arab News*, “Tough choices fo Hamas over Israeli annexation plans”,06/29/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/3dP0Mtv>
- *Al Arabiya*, “Arab League condemns Israel’s plan to extend sovereignty to parts of West Bank”, 06/20/2020, available at: <https://bit.ly/3glzAEo>
- *Haaretz*, “No, diaspora jews won’t divorce Israel over annexation”, 06/25/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/3dNoaru>
- *COMMANDERS For Israel’s Security*, Ramification of the West Bank Annexation: Security and Beyond,, 10/18, available at: <https://bit.ly/2VF3XO6>

Gulf

#Yemen – The Arab Coalition calls for a ceasefire between the separatist Southern Transitional Council and the Yemeni Government



Source: Stratfor

The Arab Coalition had sent observers in the Yemeni province of Abyan to guide the implementation of a ceasefire between the UN recognised government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), a separatist group of the anti-Houthi alliance backed by the United Arab Emirates.

On Saturday, the STC had deposed the governor of Socotra and occupied the military facilities of the island, rising even further the already high level of tension with Hadi's government. President Hadi accused the STC of attempting a coup and urged Saudi Arabia to restore last year's power-sharing peace agreement: the [Riyadh Agreement](#).

The tension within the anti-Houthi alliance and between their international sponsor involved in the conflict, had weakened the military action of the alliance and paved the way for the Houthis to new attacks against the Saudi Ministry of Defense and the King Salman Air Base in Riyadh. Apparently the the Houthis are trying to sabotage any peace negotiation that could possibly bring back together the alliance.

To know more about this topic:

- *Asbarq Al-Amsat*, High-Level Consultations underway to Implement Riyadh Agreement, 06/29/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/3eUXyGf>
- *Al Jazeera*, Yemen accuses UAE-backed separatists of staging a coup in Socotra, 06/21/20, available at: <https://bit.ly/3eUD4xf>

#ArabInsight

By Maria Bagnara

#Tunisia – New wave of protests is spreading across South Tunisia



Source: The Arab Weekly

Tunisia, which was the first Arab country to face massive demonstrations in 2011 and the only one to experience a transition to multiparty democracy, is now facing a major economic crisis worsened by the global pandemic and by the restrictions imposed by the government.

Yet in 2017 protests erupted in the region of Tataouine and Kebili against the oil and gas French company Perenco and the Austrian Group OMV operating in the area. After months of clashes between the security forces and protesting unemployed youth, the government granted a deal promising new job opportunities for locals.

Since the 2017 protests, those areas remain economically vulnerable with high unemployment level. Tunisians are now taking the streets in the South regions of the country to renew their requests and to ask for the actual implementation of the 2017 deal by providing more jobs in the Oil sector.

For several weeks, protesters have been blocking roads and burning tires and the police is answering by firing tear gas and arresting activists.

Tareq Haddad, the spokesman of the popular mobilisation, said that the living conditions in Tataouine, where unemployment ranks at the 30%, are very critical. He added that the government did not implemented the 2017 agreement except for 2.500 unemployed in the environmental, planting and horticultural companies.

Today, Tunisians are demanding the government to create and provide 1.500 jobs in the oil sector and 500 jobs in government companies. According to the World Bank “*The economy is projected to contract by 4% in 2020 in a scenario where COVID-19 spreads globally with disruptions to travel and trade, as well as social distancing behaviors, all of which impact economic growth*”. The same report underlines the problem of low and volatile energy prices in the months to come. A difficult scenario for job creation.

Source:

- *Asbarq Al-Awsat*: <https://bit.ly/3dVnsIy>
- *The World Bank*, Tunisia’s Economic Update - April 2020, available at: <https://bit.ly/3gx2XE7>

As a general disclaimer, the articles do not necessarily reflect the view of the NATO Defense College Foundation