

France and the UN on Peace Talks in Libya

By [Richard Galustian](#)

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*The current situation in Libya shows that the processes that the UN and the West tried to implement still are failing. Nevertheless, there is a new tendency to look at Libya in terms of settling disputes on the ground by rearranging a variety of players, too numerous and complex to detail, even so France sent last Thursday its **Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian**, to visit Libya in a continuing futile attempt to **impose** a forced marriage between UN selected and backed **Fayez Serraj** and the head of the Libyan National Army (LNA), East Libya based **Field Marshall Khalifa Haftar**. An absolute impossibility.*

There seems no reality, an almost delusional way of thinking in France and amongst the UN members. The fact is the LNA and Haftar controls almost all the oil in Libya and the majority of the country's territory. Whereas Serraj is unable to move beyond the small naval base situated by the sea in Tripoli, heavily protected by paid militias.

Following Le Drian's meeting in Tripoli with Serraj, Le Drian flew to Benghazi for a meeting with Haftar, he described "to discuss the political process in Libya and the war on terrorism led by the Libyan army."

Haftar told Le Drian that the army will not stop fighting terrorism in all of Libya. In response Le Drian is said to have informed Haftar of the international community's respect for the sacrifices of the army against terrorist groups.

At the same time, however Le Drian **demanded** Haftar and the army command respect the political process of the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) and to work on a complete settlement with all Libyan parties.

Le Drian nor the UN or Western powers fail still to understand the the LPA is rejected by the Libyan people as a totally illegitimate document, and completely irrelevant to the whole peace process. Haftar will not commit to the political process as **dictated** by the UN, and continued to stress the importance the acknowledgment be made public by the UN and international community's of their respect for the LNA's efforts against terrorism. Haftar allegedly then firmly added

"Lifting the arms embargo on the army, if done by the UN Security Council, will be very welcomed".

The LNA Command still believes that some international powers are trying to keep the arms embargo in place, in order to give leverage to a certain political party in the country, or perhaps to recreate another political Islamist party in Libya, by inference, Haftar is presumed to be mainly talking about the overt international support by UK, US, UN and EU to back the existing Muslim Brotherhood Party and its members, something Haftar

vehemently opposes.

At this point it should be noted that most Libyans know that Serraj 'is a slave' to the Brotherhood.

Further let's be very clear. Haftar announced the other day that the Libyan Political Agreement "expired" two years after the Libyan political parties signed it. Saying

"As of Dec. 17, 2017, the so-called political agreement expires. Therefore, all bodies resulting from this agreement automatically lost their legitimacy, which is questioned since day one," Haftar stated in a televised speech a few days ago.

Haftar and the majority of the Libyan people are saying emphatically "no" to the LPA.

Why the UN persists with this fantasy either means they are on drugs or they are incompetent, possibly both, forgive the flippancy.

The LPA ain't gonna happen. It's impossible.

Let everyone come back down to earth.

First, Libyans don't give a toss about migrants that Liberal Western Press and EU seem to think is a priority. For Libyans it's not. Libyans want migrants to go home and the UN to stop interfering and let the strongest player on the ground in Libya bring order and peace to their country. That player is Haftar and the LNA and the only thing stopping this natural evolution is this constant pointless interference by the Western world.

France and the UN and its members continued talks with duplicated institutions and entities, from both East and West Libya, only hampers a solution to the Libyan quagmire. Simply put, the West picked the wrong side in choosing to back the West of Libya when the East owns and occupies, courtesy of Haftar's LNA, the majority of Libya's oil and country.

The Saudis are important; with various factions' agreement, including Haftar, sent senior clerics to help to help in terms of the religious map of Misrata (and the whole of Libya). The assassination a few days ago of the Mayor of Misrata is part of this overall struggle against on the one hand ISIS ideology and it's opposite, secularism. Some see Salafism as a 'half way house' so to speak.

Though it can't be confirmed, Haftar appears to have actually made a deal with the Saudis that a handful of their clerics 'sort out' Misrata by allowing the promotion of Salafism in the belief that that will destroy the remnants of ISIS extremism in and around Misrata and of course elsewhere in the Country. This 'trade off' between the lesser of two evils, Salafists and ISIS ideology has to find space, in reality, for a degree of secularism to evolve, something that most Libyans want. No easy thing.

The UAE is also crucial to Libya's future. One because of its closeness to the new generation of Saudi leadership and secondly from a practical view point, because of its own airbase established nearly two years ago in East Libya. The complete construction of the UAE's Al Khadim Air Base in Eastern Libya means in less than a few weeks they can have full deployment of a range of their aircraft to support Haftar. Fully deploying their Jets to the

Libya Civil War theatre. Clearly, the UAE is preparing to intervene in Libya militarily even more. Many welcome this. Al Khadim AFB is located in Al Marj province, near where Haftar's main HQ is, and has recently added a new large parking area and aircraft shelters that will accommodate a variety of aircraft.

Haftar will never commit to the LPA as dictated by the UN and has said so very clearly.

In summary this is the reality:

Politically it is only Russia's, not UN, EU or US, role, mainly through friends from Chechnya, that remains one of the most critical and one that can be truly effective to restore peace to Libya.

And militarily, Haftar will eventually succeed, with military assistance mainly from both Egypt and the UAE.

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