

## Video: Egypt Sends Battle Tanks to Libyan Border as Haftar Forces Retreat Under Turkish Strikes

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Global Research, June 09, 2020

[South Front](#) 8 June 2020

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Military](#) and

[WMD](#)

*The Turkish involvement in the Libyan conflict allowed the Government of National Accord (GNA) to turn the tide of the battle of Tripoli and even develop further success by expanding control over a notable chunk of northern Libya.*

After capturing Tripoli International Airport last week, GNA forces and Syrian militant groups with a direct support from the Turkish Armed Forces forced the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Khalifa Haftar to retreat from a number of villages and towns including Tarhuna and Dawun.

Retreating LNA fighters left behind dozens of weapons and pieces of military equipment, including T-55 and T-62 battle tanks and howitzers. Pro-GNA sources also showcased a destroyed Pantsir-S system, which the LNA had received from the UAE. The town of Tarhuna was looted and a large number of buildings there were destroyed by Turkish-backed forces. The residents of this town are known for their support to the LNA. A large number of civilians fled the town with the retreating LNA units.

On June 6, Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi announced a new diplomatic initiative for Libya proposing a ceasefire from June 6 and the resumption of the political process. Egypt alongside with the UAE are key backers of the LNA.

Apparently, Ankara and the GNA saw this move as a sign of the weakness. The GNA even announced an advance on the port city of Sirte controlled by the LNA. However, Turkish-led forces failed to reach the city on June 6 and June 7 suffering casualties. According to local sources, over 30 Turkish proxies were killed. A Turkish Bayraktar TB2 combat UAV was also shot down. In response, Turkey shot down a Wing Loong II combat UAV operated by the LNA and conducted a series of airstrikes on LNA positions near Sirte. On June 8, the GNA and its allies conducted another attempt to advance on Sirte. Clashes are ongoing.

[https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR\\_08\\_06\\_2020\\_ENG.mp4](https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_08_06_2020_ENG.mp4)

Egypt reacted to these developments by sending reinforcements to the border with Libya. At least 2 large columns with Egyptian battle tanks were filmed moving towards the border. The geographic location of Egypt allows its leadership, if there is a political will and a strong decision, to freely employ its ground and air forces to support the LNA in the conflict against Turkish proxies. Cairo could opt to choose the strategy of direct actions if Turkish-led forces capture Sirte threatening the LNA heartland in northeastern Libya.

The modern military political leadership of Turkey, in particular President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his inner circle, has views on the needed structure of the Islamic world, which

are to a great extent similar to those of the Muslim Brotherhood. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood thinks that the leading Islamic states should be headed by leaders with a rather strong religious agenda.

Egypt traditionally has a complex and balanced cooperation of the religious and secular parts of their society. In the view of the Muslim Brotherhood, the religious factor should be developed further, even at the cost of the interests of the secular part of the society. This goes contrary to the current reality in Egypt, which is ruled by relatively secular leaders. Furthermore, the Muslim Brotherhood and armed groups affiliated with it are considered terrorist organizations in Egypt. Therefore, Cairo sees the expansion of forces ideologically close to the organization as a direct threat to its national security.

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