

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

March 5, 2012

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Libyan government attempts to control conflict, links to Egypt

SOURCE: Sources with direct access to the Libyan National Transitional Council, as well as the highest levels of European Governments, and Western Intelligence and security services.

1. During the first week of March 2012, Libyan Prime Minister Abdurrahim el-Keib stated in a private conversation that he had been assured by Abubakir Saddiqe and the other leaders of the Tibu tribe that they are willing to accept the mediation of the representatives of the National Transitional Council (NTC) government and a group of tribal and religious elders gathered from around the country. According to sources with direct access to the el-Keib administration, the Prime Minister is convinced that these negotiations can bring an end to the tribal fighting in the southeastern part of the country. In the opinion of this individual, the central government's inability to bring an end to the conflict between the Tibu and their ancient enemy, the Zwai, has weakened the el-Keib regime in the eyes of the remaining 160 Libyan tribes, all of whom have long standing grievances and claims that were repressed by the forces of former dictator Muammar al Qaddafi. Accordingly, el-Keib views the resolution of the conflict as one of the most important tasks facing his administration. He also fears that the government's loss of authority in the region is encouraging the supporters of the Qaddafi family to continue their efforts to destabilize the southern portion of Libya, with the assistance of Sudanese dictator Omar al Bashir.

2. (Source Comment: In the opinion of an extremely sensitive source, the fighting between the Tibu and Zwai in and around the southeastern Libyan city of al Kufra resulted in the death of over two hundred people. This source believes that in order to gain the support of the tribal elders in resolving the al Kufra crisis, el-Keib made promises to many of them that he may have difficulty keeping, particularly regarding advantages and power to be given to their ethnic constituencies. This source warns that the effort to resolve the situation in al Kufra may lead to

new crises in other parts of the country. They believe that these tribal, ethnic, and religious rivalries represent the most important, and immediate challenge facing Libya's new leadership as it struggles to build national stability after the fall of the Qaddafi regime in 2011.)

3. In the opinion of a very knowledgeable source, the Libyan military moved into the al Kufra region in force during the last week of February 2012, in an effort to end fighting between the Zwai and Tibu. This source believes that this is a rare example of the government in Tripoli imposing its authority over a region in conflict. The decision to make this move involved a debate between the National Army's ground force commander General Khalifa Belqasim Haftar and the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Yousef Mangoush. Haftar believes that the army should focus on the Qaddafi loyalist operating along the Sudan border, returning to the al Kufra situation when the supply of weapons from Sudan has been reduced or stopped. For his part, Mangoush is following el-Keib's orders to make a statement of government authority in al Kufra. In the end Haftar took his orders and detached troops and armored vehicles to al Kufra.

4. (Source Comment: In the opinion of a very knowledgeable source, Haftar's acceptance of Mangoush's orders is one of the most important features of this situation. El-Keib, Mangoush, and Minister of Defense Osama al Juwali were concerned that the independent minded Haftar was establishing himself and the army ground forces under his command, as an independent force, free of direct control by the central government. El-Keib was particularly relieved by this turn of events.)

5. According to a very sensitive source, el-Keib has received word that the elders from southern and eastern Libya came to al Kufra in the last week of February, and began a series of meetings with the leaders of both the Tibu and Zwai. In a first step, and with the assistance of the National Army, the elders were able to arrange a temporary ceasefire, and hope to have a formal peace agreement by mid-March 2012.

6. This source notes that al Kufra is in the region dominated by the al Senussi clan, the old royal family of Libya. This individual believes that the al Senussi leaders, who had held the NTC at arm's length during the 2011 revolution, assisted the National Army commanders, and the visiting elders with the ceasefire, in return for increased influence with the el-Keib regime. This individual also believes that the al Senussi are being supported in secret by the Egyptian military, acting under orders from Field Marshall Mohammed Tantawi and the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed forces (SCAF). In the opinion of this source, Tantawi may have used his influence with the al Senussi at the request el-Keib.

7. According to very sensitive sources in both Libya and Egypt, the leaders of the SCAF and the Libyan NTC have been in secret negotiation for some time, with the knowledge of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. All of these parties believe that the post revolutionary

governments in Libya and Egypt must work together in areas of common interest. These areas include security, relations with Israel; counter terrorism activities, health care, and the best strategies for dealing with the foreign firms who will move in to both countries as the regional security situation comes under control.

8. At the same time, this sensitive source added that Haftar is reporting to el-Keib that al Kufra remained tense as of the weekend of March 2, and at least half of the town's population has sought refuge elsewhere. In addition, 200 foreign migrants are waiting to be moved out of the area. This group includes Sudanese, Chadian, and Egyptian citizens. The United Nations personnel in the area are attempting to provide medicine, mattresses, blankets and hygiene kits to vulnerable neighborhoods where basic services have been interrupted by fighting. This source adds that members of the Tibu are attempting to return to their area of origin in Chad. At the same time, Haftar reports that the leaders of the Zwai stated that former Qaddafi mercenaries from Chad are supporting the Tibu in this fighting.