

Will Conflict Reignite in Libya?

(Translated)

[Al-Rayah Newspaper - Issue 573 - 12/11/2025](#)

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In the heart of the Sahara Desert, hidden connecting links extend, linking Sudan's Darfur to southern Libya, not only through sand and ancient roads, but also through tribes, interests, and networks of influence that do not recognize borders.

Since Gaddafi's fall in 2011, an international struggle over Libya ensued between the US and Britain. This conflict intensified until the newly elected executive authority secured 132 votes out of 188 in the Libyan House of Representatives on March 10, 2021, thus granting confidence to the government of Abdul Hamid Dbeibah – nominated by Stephanie Turco Williams, deputy head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) for Political Affairs. Subsequently, Fayez al-Sarraj's government was defeated and easily relinquished power...

Then a political conflict began, and some countries tried to use corrupt political money as bribes and to buy votes and consciences. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was referred to in this regard, as was its attempt to influence the selection of members of the Libyan Dialogue Forum (Al Jazeera Net, 16 November 2020). After that, America's reliance on Haftar decreased, and he temporarily withdrew from the political scene. The entire political scene in Libya shifted in America's favor, with continuous attempts by Britain and European countries due to the presence of a political nexus, and interests, of countries like France and Italy.

During this period of state collapse, local tribal militias emerged in southern Libya, controlling smuggling routes and maintaining close ties with Darfuri groups, particularly the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Movement. Southern Libya served as a safe haven for these groups, facilitating funding, training, and undertaking the gold and arms trade. This occurred between 2012 and 2015. Subsequently, Haftar, with Egyptian support, expanded his influence from eastern Libya southward, ultimately achieving relative control through force. During this time, Darfuri fighters were present in Libya, operating as mercenaries, a situation exploited by the Bashir regime. Following Bashir's downfall in 2019, the fundamental nature of the relationship between Sudan and Libya shifted.

Following the UN-brokered ceasefire agreement in Libya in 2020, calls were made for the withdrawal of foreign fighters, including Sudanese mercenaries, from the country. However, many remained in Sabha, Murzuq, and Kufra until 2022. After the outbreak of war between the Sudanese Army and the Rapid Support Forces in 2023, some factions sought refuge in southern Libya. With Hemedti's current victory in Darfur, following the massacre he perpetrated in the last Darfur stronghold of El Fasher, there are indications of tribal movements loyal to Hemedti in southern Libya, particularly among the Tebu and Mahamid. This could reignite the conflict in Libya, especially in Fezzan, amidst tensions between Haftar's forces and the Russian presence. We might also witness Turkish intervention in response to Hemedti's

actions. This could prompt Hemedti, likely under American orders, to enter southern Libya and instigate tribal conflict based on the expansion of his tribal supporters. This would bolster the secession of southern Libya from the rest of the country, or its division among the warring factions, providing Hemedti with a way out of the conflict.

Southern Libya is the most fragile region in the country and is often outside the complete control of any party. Hemedti has ambitions there. He may not aim to occupy southern Libya entirely, but he could use it as leverage to achieve several objectives, including:

- * Hemedti wields significant leverage over Haftar through the support of certain tribes, enabling him to exert considerable influence on the ground regarding gold and fuel trade, and even the Russian presence in Fezzan.

- * The south borders Chad, Niger, and Sudan, a vital region for gold and uranium trade. Controlling this triangle would enhance Hemedti's ability to manage cross-border mineral trade, potentially allowing him to secure international deals with the US, thus excluding other parties.

- * Hemedti could use Darfur as a bargaining chip in negotiations concerning migration, energy, and border security, thereby establishing himself as an indispensable player.

- * Given Darfur's natural tribal and geographical extension to southern Libya, it would provide Hemedti with a defensive buffer against any threat from the Sudanese army or any hostile forces from eastern Sudan, further bolstering the prospect of secession from Sudan.

Therefore, the possibility of Hemedti's intervention in the Libyan arena seems more realistic, given what he will gain from it and within the context of the ongoing transformations in Sudan, where he has consolidated his influence in western Sudan and seeks to expand his movement towards southern Libya, where tribal interests intersect and tribal separation occurs. Of course, this aligns with America's view of the region to transform the current borders into tribal borders. Also, the fragility of the situation in the Libyan state allows him to consider such a step. Of course, such a matter is not as simple as words, but rather has a price that the Sudanese and Libyan peoples will pay in seas of Muslim blood. All of this is linked to the extent of Libya's ability to secure its southern borders and the extent to which America accepts this plan.

It is saddening and painful to see Muslim lands turned into battlegrounds for internal conflict, serving Western plans to dismantle what remains of our unity, witnessing plunder of our resources, and even preventing us from contemplating the idea of unification. This is because we are constantly preoccupied with ethnic, tribal, and sectarian conflicts, and so on, thus banishing even the mere thought of our return to a single unified state.

The truth is that we will not escape this vicious cycle unless we join forces with Hizb ut Tahrir to resume the Islamic way of life and establish the Second Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly-Guided Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood, as promised by Allah (swt) and given glad tidings of by His Messenger (saw).