

Answer to Question

## Latest Developments in Libya

(Translated)

**Question:**

After the continuing sporadic clashes between Haftar, the agent of America, and the forces affiliated with Al-Sarraj, the agent of Europe, Haftar's forces have resumed their attack towards the capital, Tripoli. Does Haftar, and behind him America, see that the control of Tripoli is possible now? And what happened for the clashes to break out with such ferocity? Then what is the truth about the Turkish support for the Fayeze Al-Sarraj's government in Tripoli? Is Russia's intervention in Libya real, or is this a matter of intimidation? What is expected from the Berlin Conference called by Germany on the Libyan crisis?

**Answer:**

In order to clarify the answer to the above questions, we will review the following:

**First:** After America succeeded in imposing its agent Haftar as a strong element in the field of the military conflict in Libya, Libya has become divided between two influences, the influence of the American agent in the areas he controls, and the influence of British and European agents in the remaining regions of Libya. And as America increased the pace of military support provided for its agent Haftar, especially through Egypt, its influence has taken the form of escalation in Libya, and this appeared in Haftar's attack on southern Libya. The European influence became diminished, especially with the attack launched by Haftar on Tripoli in early April 2019. Haftar, and behind him America, wanted to increase pressure on Al-Sarraj government, the European agent in Tripoli, and to take this as a way to win the lion's share in the political negotiations. Thus, Haftar's attack on Tripoli at the beginning of April 2019, after its prior control of the south taking advantage of Algeria's preoccupation with itself, constituted a preponderance of Haftar's power, and America attempted to get out of the crucible of the legitimately recognized government in Tripoli by publicly communicating with Haftar in a manner similar to contacting a formal government official "US President made a phone call to Haftar ..." (Sky News Arabia, 19/04/2019).

**Second:** Europe could not find in face of this except to move the Libyan issue politically, and thus was the initiative and invitation of German Chancellor Merkel to an international conference in Berlin to solve the Libyan crisis. And although this initiative did not set a specific date. "There is no specific date for the conference expected to be held in the German capital Berlin ..." (Deutsche Welle 12/12/2019), there is unconfirmed media news that its meeting may be late this month. After all, it is an implementation of what Europe wanted and planned since the G-7 meeting, "The G-7 group called for an international conference on the conflict in Libya. The group concluded at the end of its summit in the French city of Biarritz on Monday that all concerned parties and regional powers should participate in the conference" (Al-Quds Al-Arabi 26/8/2019). European countries see in the Berlin conference a glimmer of hope to preserve their agents in Libya and thus maintain their influence, "Al-Sarraj received today, in Tripoli, the Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio, to whom he conveyed Italy's support for his efforts to achieve security and stability in the country. Di Maio reiterated that there is no military solution to the Libyan crisis, and that his country supports Salame's efforts to revive the political process, expressing his hope that the Berlin Conference will achieve consensus between all countries interested in Libyan affairs" (Arabic Independent 17/12/2019).

**Third:** it appeared that America is trying very hard to block the course of Europe in the convening of the Berlin Conference, especially with the conditions that the American international envoy to Libya places before the Berlin Conference. "The UN envoy to Libya, Ghassan Salame, revealed he had set three conditions during the arrangements for the Berlin Conference". Stressing that "the margin of his movement to solve the crisis has become very difficult due to the division in the Security Council ..." (Bawabat Al Wasat, 11/13/2019). This reluctance from the

international envoy reveals an American reluctance towards the Berlin Conference and it seems that it is the reason for the difficulty of determining the date of its convening! However, America was not satisfied with that, but instead it introduced Russia and Turkey into the Libyan arena, thus shuffled regional and international cards regarding Libya which confused European efforts and thus influencing the conference before it was held by introducing Russia and Turkey into the Libyan arena, so that Europe is not a key element with America in the solution, but it is disputed by or advanced by Russia and Turkey and thus weakens the European role. Thus, it is expected that the outcome of the conference will not be what Europe would hope for if the conference were to take place! Europe is trying to influence America's position to support the conference and its attendance in every way and means, so that European officials are trying to embarrass America by declaring on behalf of America that it is interested in the conference! "Maas - German Foreign Minister - explained during a press conference with his Italian counterpart, Luigi de Maio, that the United States is very interested in the Berlin Conference, and that it will exert its influence to make the conference successful. (Ean Libya, 10/11/2019) i.e. it is not America that declares! As for America, its eye is on the arena in Libya. After the preparatory meeting in Berlin for the conference, on 9/17/2019, the American ambassador to Libya, Richard Norland, travelled to Algeria, although he was not invited to attend the Berlin conference and met with the Algerian Foreign Minister Bougadam (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 11/2/2019) which indicates that the American eye does not leave Algeria and fears its interference against Haftar in Libya.

**Fourth:** As for how America shuffled the cards by introducing Russia and Turkey into the Libyan arena to weaken Europe's position and then that of Al-Sarraj, it is as follows:

A- America has given Russia its green light to intervene and support its agent Haftar, and the Russian security company, Wagner Group appeared in Libya, and this company is the Russian counterpart of the American criminal company Blackwater that has emerged in Iraq. It seems that America inspired Russia to introduce Wagner to Libya to support Haftar, a company equipped with advanced Russian military equipment, such as flight jamming systems, making it an important element in weighting Haftar's military against his opponents in Libya, and it is very close to President Putin, and it is working to earn money through foreign military contracts. The Russian President Putin has admitted responding to American demands and said: "Russia has contacts with Haftar and with al-Sarraj government..." (Russia Today, 12/19/2019) Meanwhile, America also supports Haftar: "the White House said at the time that Trump acknowledged Field Marshal Haftar's important role in combating terrorism and ensuring security Libya's oil resources ..." (Deutsche Welle, 24/11/2019). America wants to show Libya as a battlefield between it and Russia, and Deutsche Welle German has released on 24/11/2019 a statement issued by American government agencies "supporting Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of Russia's attempts to exploit the conflict against the will of the Libyan people."

B- As for Turkey, its role in the Libyan crisis has been blatantly prominent "with the signing of Turkish President Erdogan and Libyan Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj on two memoranda of understanding on 27/11/2019 for security and military cooperation between Ankara and Tripoli, and identifying areas of maritime validity. Erdogan said in remarks to reporters: "What does Egypt do in Libya? What does the government of Abu Dhabi do in Libya?". Regarding the Russian role, Erdogan said, "Through the group named Wagner, they are literally working as Haftar's mercenaries in Libya. You know who is paying them". He added, "That is the case, and it would not be right for us to remain silent against all of this. We have done our best until now, and will continue to do so..." (Al-Jazeera Net, 20/12/2019). Subsequently, the Turkish parliament approved Erdogan's project, "Turkish parliament approved a bill with 325 to 184 that authorizes the deployment of troops to Libya in support of the UN-recognised Tripoli government headed by Al-Sarraj. This mandate allows Ankara to send non-combat troops as advisers and trainers for the recognized government forces in its war against Khalifa Haftar's forces in Tripoli" ... (BBC Arabic, 2/1/2020).

**Fifth:** As for America's goals of pushing the Turkish role in Libya, it is not to support Al-Sarraj as Erdogan declares; instead, scrutinization of what is going on with exploration and deep consideration shows that the objectives are local, regional and international, and most likely they are as follows:

**1- Locally**, there are many military factions that fall under the banner of the Al-Sarraj government that are considered “moderate Islamists,” and Turkey has contacts with them prior to this intervention, and it is easy for Turkey to drag those groups to their death as it did in Syria when it pushed the factions loyal to it to hand over the regions to the criminal Bashar. Thus, Turkey is fighting in Libya a battle to take loyalties and weaken the government of Al-Sarraj in front of Haftar. And Al-Sarraj must be realizing that Erdogan is moving in the orbit of America and that he did not intervene to support him but to deceive him to tip Haftar's scale by attenuating the factions by withdrawing them from sensitive areas as he did with the factions in Syria. However, Al-Sarraj with an arrangement with Europe wants to embarrass America through his proximity to Turkey and to make Erdogan's Turkey forced to support his government, as an internationally recognized government entitled to seek help from any country, and then Europe raises an international outcry on the Turkish intervention and from behind it the American and then the Egyptian. Al-Sarraj, and behind him Europe, expects that this embarrassment and noise will cause America to ease Haftar and Egypt pressure on al-Sarraj.

**2- Regionally**, under the pretexts of Turkish military support, Egypt can strongly increase its support for Haftar at a time when it is difficult for Algeria to provide support to the government of al-Sarraj because of its current conditions. Egypt may send forces directly to fight in Libya, whereas Turkey's support for the government of al-Sarraj will be symbolic and not significant, just like Turkey's support for the Syrian factions loyal to it. As Turkey is already far from Libya, not to mention that its goals are limited to fanfare and talk of support with only offering a little of it with the aim of bringing Libyan forces into the trap of Turkish support, which they will find a mirage as it was in Syria.

**3- Internationally**, Turkish intervention makes the Libyan arena a field of tension and attraction between it and Russia, and it is happening now. Erdogan attacks his Russian military presence in Libya, and Russia announces its disapproval of the Turkish intervention, then these statements follow other statements about agreements between Turkey and Russia on Libya! It is quite similar to Turkey's conspiracies with Russia over the events in Syria.

4- As for what Erdogan is trying to deceive people with, by his agreement with Al-Sarraj in order to exploit it in exploration for gas and oil, “Turkish Energy Minister Fatih Donmez said that once a maritime accord between Ankara and Libya's Tripoli-based government is approved and registered by the United Nations, Turkey will start working on licensing for oil and gas exploration and production in the region”, and said “I think we will start the process in the first months of 2020” (Reuters 18/12/2019). It appears that Erdogan has found this an opportunity to deceive as if he intervened in the search for gas and oil and so he signed this agreement, as his steps to search for gas in the Mediterranean, 100 km deep off the state of Antalya since October 2018 was not as serious, like to pound water in a mortar. And the Minister of Energy admitted that Turkey had not started drilling for oil and gas, despite sending ships for this purpose, and now he wants to delude people that he will carry out oil and gas exploration and that he is intervening in Libya in order to achieve Turkish interests while he plays this deceptive role in Libya for America.

**Sixth:** As for resolving the battle of Tripoli, there are factors that have emerged in recent months that outweigh Haftar's side:

1- In front of the confused scene of Europe that America created by introducing Russia and Turkey in the Libyan arena and the escalation of the effectiveness of the Egyptian role as we have shown above, Haftar was encouraged to escalate military actions in Tripoli “Commander of the so-called Libyan National Army, Khalifa Haftar, announced on Thursday evening, December 12, the start of the decisive battle and advance towards Tripoli, and ordered the advanced units to abide by the rules of engagement”. Dressed in military uniform Haftar declared, in a televised speech, the "Zero Hour" for all military units in Tripoli, saying: "Today, we announce the decisive battle and the advancement towards the heart of the capital..." (Deutsche Welle German, 12/12/2019), and the escalation of military action continues.

2- Russia's intervention, especially the Wagner Group alongside Haftar, where America gave Russia its green light to intervene and support its agent Haftar. It is a company equipped with advanced Russian military equipment such as flight jamming systems, making it an important element in weighting Haftar's military against his opponents in Libya. Russian President Putin

has admitted to responding to the American demands, saying, "Russia has contacts with Haftar and with the Al-Sarraj government ..." (Russia Today, 19/12/2019).

3- Turkey's intervention in the Libyan arena, as there are many military factions that fall under the banner of the Al-Sarraj government that are considered "moderate Islamists," and Turkey has contacts with them before this intervention, and it is easy for Turkey to drag those groups to their death as it did in Syria when it pushed the factions loyal to it to hand over the regions to the criminal Bashar. Thus, Turkey is fighting in Libya a battle to take loyalties and weaken the government of Al-Sarraj in front of Haftar. This is on the one hand, and on the other hand, Turkey's announcement that it is intervening in Libya to support al-Sarraj is a prelude to Egypt to announce its intervention in Libya instead of keeping it a secret!

4- The deception between Turkey and Russia, as Turkey shows that its intervention to support al-Sarraj and Erdogan, attacking Russia because it supports Haftar, declares that "Through the group named Wagner, they are literally working as Haftar's mercenaries in Libya. You know who is paying them". He added, "That is the case, and it would not be right for us to remain silent against all of this. We have done our best until now, and will continue to do so..." (Al-Jazeera Net, 20/12/2019). Then two days later, he announces meeting with Putin! "He and President Putin formed two delegations to discuss developments in Libya and that the officials of the two countries will meet soon ..." (Turkish NTV, 18/12/2019). Just as he met with Russia and cooperated with it as it bombs the people of Syria day and night while at the same time showing hypocrisy that he entered Syria to support the factions and the people of Syria! It is like both sides are playing a game they think is hidden from the eyes while it is exposed! Al-Jazeera Net reported on 20/12/2019 from the Italian site Corriere Della Sera, "That the Libyan scene is witnessing a Turkish-Russian game, and that there is an agreement that has begun to take shape in the Black Sea between the two parties, as they are ready to replicate the Syrian peace experience in Libya", and the exposure of deception between Turkey Russia facilitates and activates Haftar's work.

These four factors support and motivate Haftar's position to escalate the fighting in Tripoli and encourage him to do so. Of course, these factors are managed and arranged by America. This is from Haftar's side. As for Al-Sarraj's side, there is no doubt that Europe supports him, especially Britain, France, and Italy. This is in addition to the solidity of the fighting factions, especially the Misurata fighters, but the continuation of interventions as indicated above and the increase in military pressure on Tripoli and gained loyalty to Turkey from within Al-Sarraj camp means that European influence in Libya has become shaky. Also it is difficult for the large political milieu of Britain and Europe in Libya to save that influence, especially after America shuffled the cards by introducing Russia and Turkey into the Libyan arena. Meaning that the European influence in Libya is difficult to return as it was according to the realized events and facts. However, it is not easy to resolve the crisis militarily in the foreseeable future, and therefore it is expected to resort to political solutions in their way as capitalists in accepting the compromise if it is difficult for either party to revolve militarily, taking into account the preponderance of political gains according to the military weight, which is currently on Haftar's side, i.e. the American side.

**Seventh:** In conclusion, it is painful that the Muslim countries to be a battlefield in which the Kaffir colonists compete with tools from us to serve the interests of Kufr and its people, out of loyalty of the rulers in Muslim countries for the disbelievers to keep them on their broken crooked chairs! These rulers do not know that the best outcome is for the righteous, for Islam and its people, and then they will regret, but it will not be a time for regret,

﴿فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ فَيُضْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ تَادِمِينَ﴾

**"So, you see those in whose hearts is disease hastening into [association with] them, saying, "We are afraid a misfortune may strike us." But perhaps Allah will bring conquest or a decision from Him, and they will become, over what they have been concealing within themselves, regretful." [Al-Maidah: 52].**

11<sup>th</sup> Jumada I 1441 AH

06/01/2020 CE