

LIBYA SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

JULY - OCTOBER 2019



Executive summary



Our research and analysis suggest that currently Libyans are far more interested in reading about and discussing **political news and security** than the UN, elections or the constitution.



The prevalence of stories about **airstrikes** and developments in the **civil war** demonstrates that information relating to civilians' wellbeing is given discernible priority over much else; the relative lack of engagement on the kidnapping of the Member of Parliament Seham Sergiwa (it is not known if she was killed or if she is still alive) or the Berlin conference in its initial stages is further evidence of this.



Moreover, the fractured and disparate nature of much of the political conversation that draws such a high percentage of the available attention reflects the current state of Libyan society and its political system. However, the surge in interest seen around the actual occurrence of the **Berlin conference** suggest that Libyans have not become entirely jaded to the possibility of progress and reconciliation, but that they demand concrete evidence that the talk will manifest into action.



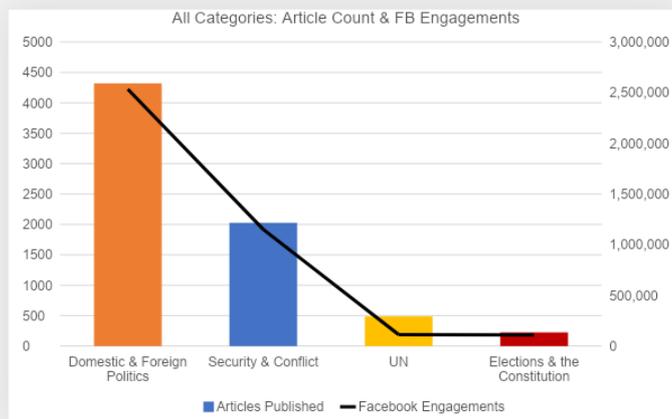
The effect of the Libyan National Army's assault on Tripoli on media coverage and engagement continued to ripple throughout the following several months. The domination of the UAE-backed 218tv in particular highlights the considerable potential **foreign interference in the Libyan media**



The other media outlets to consistently receive a significant proportion of engagements was the pro-Haftar Almarsad. While second to 218tv in all but one category, they were the most interacted-with Facebook page with only a one exception. Their slick presentation and consistent stream of posts and updates likely contributes to this, and their position as the most engaged-with site on the topic of the UN shows their potential to be a decisive voice both on that issue and overall.

Introduction

Ever since the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (previously known as the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Haftar) attempted to take control of Tripoli from the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) on April 4, 2019, the prospect of political stabilisation, a presidential election and a constitutional referendum has become increasingly remote. This is reflected in our analysis of Libyan social media activity over the period from July 1 to October 31, as political discussion dominates coverage and engagements followed by security, while elections, the constitution and the UN struggle to make an impact.



The following report will analyse Libyan social media activity across the four categories of:

- Security and Conflict
- Domestic and Foreign Politics
- Elections and the Constitution
- The UN

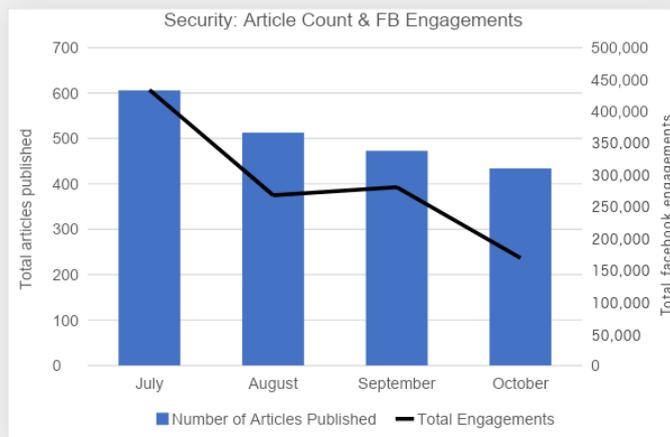
Using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research, it will evaluate the prominent themes in online discussion relating to these four topics and the key voices that propagate them. This will be done using a base list of 20 Arabic language, Libya-focused publications, in addition to all .ly domains, and 48 international, national and local Facebook pages of the same criteria.

The methodology used for this report can be found at the end of this document.



Security and Conflict is defined as news relating to military activity, threats to civic order and the safety of civilians, and potential or realised violence. This can include ceasefire negotiations, direct military attacks or intervention and the behaviour or statements of armed groups.

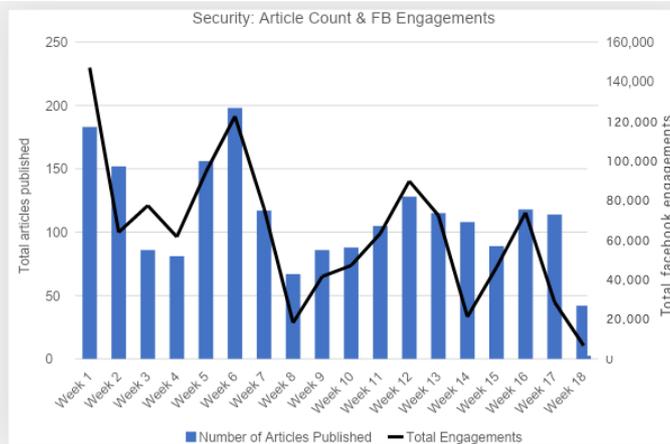
In the period from July 1 to October 31, 2,033 articles were published by Libyan media outlets on the subject of security. These garnered 1,152,519 Facebook engagements at an average of 566 per article. There was a consistent decline in interest across the four months, resulting in less content and demonstrating a waning interest in security issues as distance builds between the present and the assault on Tripoli in April. July provided the peak at 606 articles and 433,706 Facebook engagements at an average of 716 engagements per article. This is almost 30% of the total articles published and a significant step above the average engagements for the period. In contrast, October saw 434 articles and 168,984 engagements at an average of 289, producing only 21% of the total articles published and a 60% drop in average engagements when compared to July.



The topic that has driven security-related engagement over the period appears to be airstrikes. The top-performing article in each month has either directly reported on airstrikes or on comments made by high-profile officials in response to them. For example, the article that drew the most engagement over the entire period was 218tv.net's report on August 14 that LAAF spokesman Ahmed al-Mismari had referred to GNA soldiers as "terrorists" for the recent bombings in Murzuq and near Benghazi. It received 24,300 engagements.

This points to another key driver of activity, which is the mention of terrorism or Daesh (IS). While not drawing the same numbers as coverage of airstrikes, at least one article with reference to terrorists or terrorism appears in the top 5-interacted with articles of every month. For example, while October's most interacted-with [article](#) is about airstrikes conducted by the LAAF, the [second](#) and [third](#) place articles are about IS-related activity. These articles reported on the arrest of a suspected IS member in Sirte on October 14 and the US-led airstrikes targeting IS, beginning in late September. They drew 13,800 and 12,100 engagements, respectively.

The weekly distribution of activity reinforces this observation. The peaks in reporting and engagements seen below demonstrate a response to a pattern of events, namely significant airstrikes and the consequent activity.

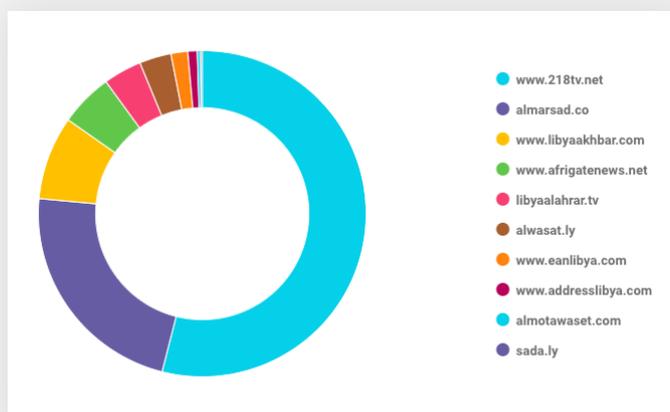


Week	Top Article	English
Week 1	البنفور: ضربات جوية "مكثفة" تنتظر طرابلس	Manfour: "Intense airstrikes await Tripoli"
Week 6	الجيش يعلن تنفيذ 5 ضربات جوية بمحيط مرزق	The army announces carrying out 5 airstrikes on the environs of Merzeg
Week 12	الجيش يشن "غارات عنيفة" على مخازن الوفاق	The army launches "violent strikes" on Wifaq storehouses
Week 16	قوة مكافحة الإرهاب تلقي القبض على إرهابي من عناصر داعش في سيرت	Anti-terror force arrests a Daesh terrorist in Sirte

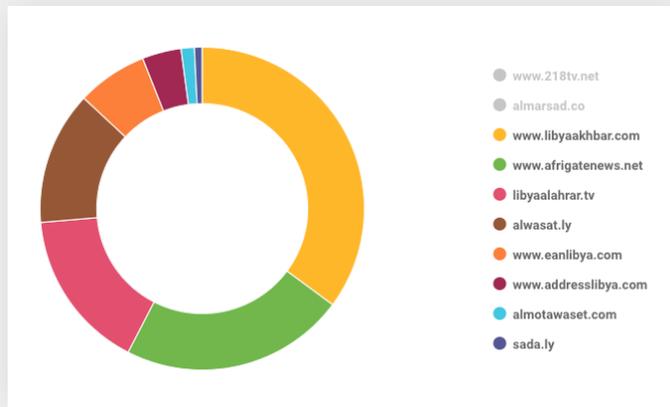
The week commencing July 1 saw 183 articles published and 147,066 engagements. Eight of the top ten articles that week were about the LAAF's announcement of an airstrike campaign targeting Tripoli or the airstrikes themselves. Much of the coverage focused on the strike against a migrant centre in Tajoura, near Tripoli, on July 2. An exception to this was an Almarsad [article](#) that discussed the prime minister of the Government of National Accord, Fayeze al-Sarraj, asking Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan for support from the Turkish air force, in order to combat the onslaught from Haftar and the LAAF, which was ranked fifth for the week and received 10,400 engagements.

This trend of spikes in activity to correspond with new airstrikes or terrorism-related news continues with the other three standout weeks, albeit with diminishing returns as overall engagement decreases. The week commencing August 5 is dominated by discussion of the airstrikes in Murzuq and Misrata, September 16 by reports of those targeting Mitiga, Misrata and Sirte, and October 14 by articles detailing the aforementioned US airstrikes against IS and the fallout from the bombing of the Farnaj neighbourhood of Tripoli. These four weeks earned 38% of the total engagement for 18-week period. At the lowest point for engagement, the week of August 19, the only [article](#) to receive any notable traffic was about another shelling of Mitiga airport. It received 10,900 engagements, versus an article about protestors from the state electricity company being attacked that earned 609 engagements in second place for the week.

218tv.net dominates the security-related articles published over the period in question, producing 172 articles and 620,690 engagements at an average of 3,609 per article. The chart below shows the share of engagements between the surveyed publications:



218tv produced the most engaged-with article every month, and the entirety of the top five in July and October and the top ten in August and September, earning 54% of the month's engagements. Almarsad also dominates, publishing only 103 articles, but earning 24% of the total engagements across all of the 10 surveyed sources. If these two outlets are taken out of the equation, we see a more diverse spread:



Libya Akhbar produced 34% of the articles across the period, but their engagements per article was 75% lower than the average (160 versus 692). Afrigate News published 298 articles for 5% of the engagements. Overall, 218tv is comfortably the most popular source for security-related news, publishing the top 16 articles across the period in question, followed by Almarsad. With 218tv and Almarsad removed, the top [article](#) for the period was Libya Akhbar's report on the injury of alleged GNA-aligned commander Salah Badi in the Farnaj airstrikes on October 17, which received 6,100 interactions. Second and third place went to Afrigate News articles detailing the [downing](#) of a drone on September 12th and the [comments](#) of a GNA-aligned military leader supporting the merger of political and military institutions. These earned 2,200 and 5,400 interactions respectively.

On Facebook there is a broader spread of engagement across the top ten pages for security-related discussion between July and October, seen in the table below. ObservatoryLY (the name of Almarsad's Facebook page) and AJEL.Aradshif.News earn around 1m interactions each, whereas third place al-Akhbar al'aajilat walmu'kiduh receives 364,201; however, the comparable interaction rate seen for the pages at 7, 8 and 10 in the table below demonstrate that a more diverse set of voices are being heard on Facebook than in published media.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	1,08M	0.47%	319	785,060	1.2x	723,810
عاجل أرض الشريف الإخبارية	985,027	0.31%	914	492,875	-1.1x	347,600
الأخبار العاجله والمؤكده	364,201	0.25%	773	62,627	-1.6x	189,504
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الأحرار	264,310	0.04%	431	901,201	-1.4x	1.61M
عين ليبيا	181,809	0.03%	235	47,566	-1.1x	2.27M
اخبار ليبيا	162,088	0.02%	1,004	—	1.0x	980,878
شعبة مكافحة الإرهاب الإلكتروني	155,349	0.32%	290	46,680	-1.5x	165,004
صحيفة العنوان الليبية	141,144	0.31%	303	35,299	-1.1x	151,654
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	134,973	0.04%	291	190,324	-1.2x	1.32M
Libya Alhadath - قناة ليبيا الحدث مباشر TV Live	99,302	0.38%	84	175,605	1.3x	311,470

The top posts from July to October demonstrate much the same story as the articles. A [post](#) from OnlyLibya on October 3 that received 14,856 interactions served as a prayer for the safety of anyone in the vicinity of incoming airstrikes. The discussion in response to the post was primarily religious messages of support and condolence for the victims of the airstrikes, and repeated lamentation of the violence with almost no political sentiment on display at all.



The top [post](#) for the period was again from 218tv on October 7 announcing the death of a doctor in a recent airstrike, and it received much the same response as OnlyLibya's, with an outpouring of prayers and criticism of the violence that led to his death. Political commentary was muted, with some minimal expression of general pro-Libya views and criticism of political leaders for allowing such deaths to occur.



A [post](#) from Eye of Libya on September 13th reported on the death of three high-profile LAAF military personnel and received 4,876 interactions. The comments section shared the religious tone of the previous posts' responses but differed in that 32 of the 50 coded comments expressed anti-GNA sentiment. The politicized nature of military killings rather than civilian is reflected in the comments.



Eight of the top ten posts are warning of incoming airstrikes or commemorating recent casualties.

Twitter analysis tells much the same story. The vast majority of the 51,665 posts referred to news or rumours of military action. Updates on airstrikes are numerous and often highlight those carried out by Haftar's forces and their allies. Human and material losses incurred by attacks is a common theme.

Examples of the most engaged-with posts include this [tweet](#) reporting the LAAF airstrikes targeting a migrant centre in Tajoura.



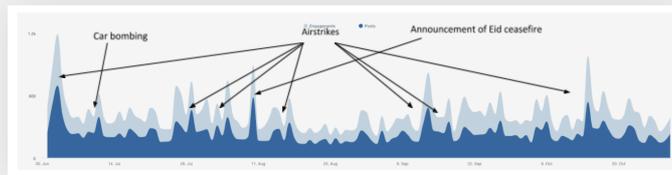
Or this [tweet](#) from 218tv that accuses GNA-aligned armed groups of forcing migrants into military uniform despite claiming the LAAF is using migrants in combat.



This [post](#) reports on images showing the recovery operation after LAAF airstrikes, accusing Haftar of being a war criminal.



In fact, many the spikes in Twitter activity can clearly be attributed to news relating to airstrikes and bombings:



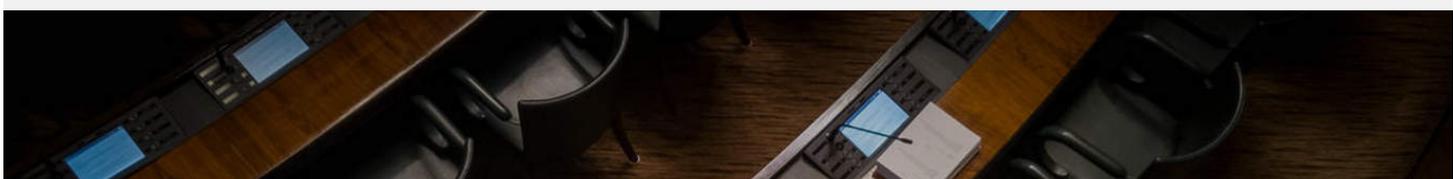
It is also worth noting the key voices on Twitter, whose posts reach the greatest number of people:



Many of the same names seen on Facebook are also seen on Twitter. Almarsad notably plays a much smaller role on Twitter; this graphic differs from their typically strong performance on Facebook throughout this report. Twitter account [@hosseinmosa](#) is an extremely prominent voice not seen on the other platforms, whose most popular tweets within the topic share updates on military activity. Regardless of the source of the post, very little Twitter content received more than a few retweets; posts are seen and interacted with, but not passed on.

Ultimately, it appears that many Libyans have been most concerned with keeping up to date with events that they feel pose an imminent danger to their safety, exemplified by the popularity of articles and posts commenting on airstrikes, IS and terrorism-linked activity. The wider spread seen on Facebook pages is possibly indicative of a shift in how audiences receive and engage with news, moving towards peer-to-peer dissemination and not leaning as heavily on an outlet-driven news cycle. This setup has given Libyan readers more power to dictate the structures and form in which they receive information.

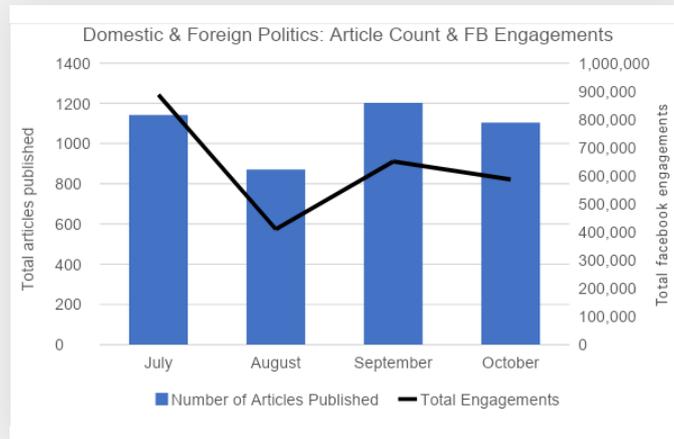
It is significant to note that 218tv, Alwasat and Afrigate are [reported](#) to have received UAE funding, and Almarsad [espouses](#) evidently pro-Haftar, and anti-Turkey, views. Attention was drawn to Almarsad's pro-Haftar stance and Emirati funding by Sky News correspondent Alex Crawford when she [accused](#) them of misrepresenting a report of hers. Between them, these four outlets produced 997 articles, almost half of the content; however, political discussion on their social media pages appears to be limited to the posts for which it is explicitly relevant. These sentiments are not so intensely fierce as to spill over into any online interaction.



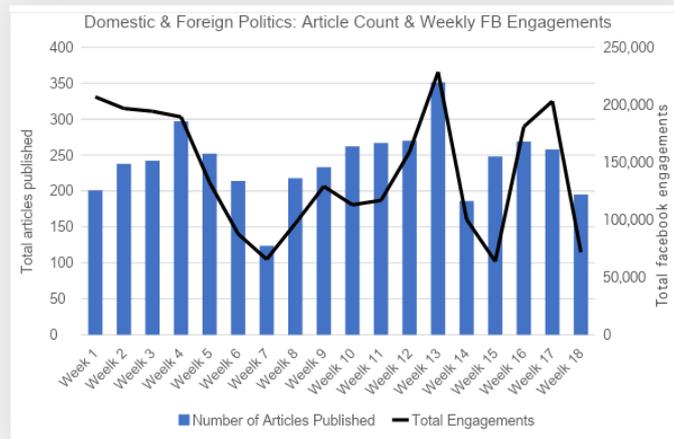
Domestic and Foreign Politics

Domestic and Foreign Politics is defined as news relating to political figures, institutions and factions. It can involve discussion of public services, international relations or state-owned enterprise. It encompasses the operation of government and other political institutions and individuals, whereas Elections refers exclusively to electoral politics.

Between July 1 and October 31, 2019, 4,325 articles were published reporting on political news. These earned 2,535,715 engagements at an average of 586 interactions per article. It is immediately worth taking note of the fact that, while the average engagements for political articles is roughly the same as that seen for security-related articles, the volume of content produced is over double. This suggests that there is a considerably greater appetite for political news. Political news saw a fluctuation in both the number of articles published and the number of engagements, but the peaks of these respective metrics did not occur in the same month. July saw the highest number of engagements, 887,560, in response to 1,142 articles; however, 1,202 articles were published in September, yet they received only 650,445 engagements. This is a decrease of 30% in average engagements despite the slightly higher volume of content.



The low point is between the two, in August, in which 871 articles were published and received 409,775 interactions. There is nothing that stands out topically or in the news cycle that could explain this dip, so it is likely due to Eid taking place from August 11th to 15. In fact, the week-by-week analysis will show us that the week of Eid is comfortably the low point for both articles published and engagements, with 124 and 65,529 respectively. The interactions per article rate of 528 is not dramatically lower than the total average of 586, suggesting that readers' appetite remained, but content to consume was limited due to the religious holiday.



Week	Top Article	English
Week 1	الجيش يعلنها. معركة طرابلس تدخل مرحلة جديدة	The army announces that the battle for Tripoli enters a new stage
Week 9	أفريكان إنتلجنس: "حقت زار موسكو" له أيام	African intelligence: Haftar visited Moscow for four days
Week 13	النسراج: أردوغان صديق حقيقي يظهر في الأوقات الصعبة	Sarraj: Erdogan is a true friend in difficult times

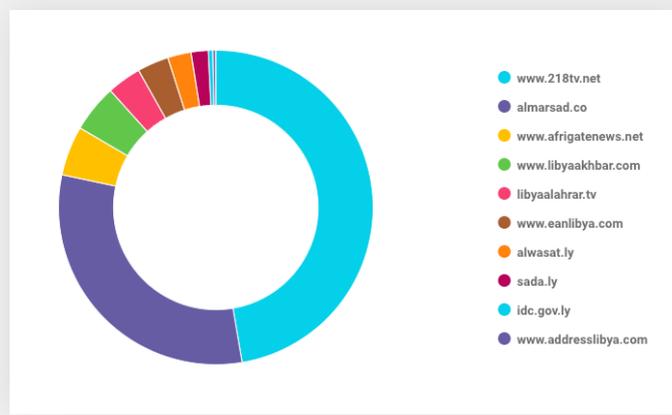
Week 17	كان برفقة السراج أثناء اعتقال "أبو عبيدة" في روسيا	News of the arrest of Aby Ubaidah, who accompanied Sarraj to Russia
------------	---	--

The week commencing September 23 saw the highest numbers by both metrics, likely due to the UN General Assembly session concurrently taking place. The most popular [article](#) of the week was also the top article for the month. It received 33,800 interactions and detailed PM al-Sarraj's meeting with Turkish President Erdogan at the UN General Assembly.

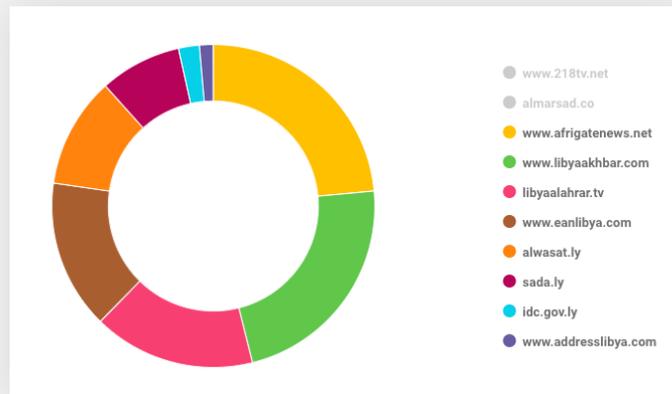
After the General Assembly there is another precipitous fall in activity, before spiking back up in mid-October. The top [article](#) in the first week of the jump received 20,400 interactions and detailed Khalifa Haftar's comments on Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's right to run for President. The second most interacted-with [reports](#) on al-Sarraj's denial of any involvement with Russia mercenaries and responding directly to Haftar's accusations. There is evidently interest in the public comments made by political figures, and this sparked traffic after a relative news drought over the previous two weeks, during which the most interacted-with [article](#) was about educational reform. The top articles in July focus on foreign interference and comments from political leaders in relation to the civil war. The most interacted-with [article](#) featured a GNA denial that they had recruited Salah Badi, a militia leader sanctioned by the US, UK and France, that received 35,100 interactions.

This culminates in an impression that the primary drivers of engagement in political news are the activity of a foreign governments in Libya or with Libyan actors, and the political progress and context behind the ongoing civil war.

Again, we can see that the engagements are driven by two outlets in particular: the UAE-backed 218tv and the pro-Haftar Almarsad. They produced 19% of the published articles between them while amassing 78% of the engagements.



If these two media outlets are taken out of the equation, we can see a much more even distribution amongst the remaining outlets. This highlights that 218tv and Almarsad are receiving a disproportionately high level of engagement with their published content when compared to their competition.



This exclusion somewhat broadens the range of topics discussed in the articles receiving the most engagements every month. Without 218tv and Almarsad, the top article for July would be Afrigate News' [report](#) on a legal dispute involving Mu'tasim Billah, son of Muammar Gaddafi, which received 4,900 engagements. In September, it would have been another Afrigate [article](#) on the late Gaddafi's family's appeal to the African Union to investigate his death. However, the themes prevalent in the overall landscape do not disappear if the two dominant media outlets are excluded: the second most interacted-with article for October would be a Libya Akhbar [report](#) detailing Haftar's denial that he is in contact with Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. Overall, the narratives that receive significant coverage from the two biggest outlets are broadly popular beyond this audience, but they shroud a slightly more diverse set of interests, such as the state of social services.

An analysis of Facebook posts reveals that Almarsad's Facebook page, Libyan Observatory, and 218tv still receive high numbers of interactions, but their domination is less pronounced. This is especially true on the part of 218tv, which ranks seventh for the period, while Almarsad sits at the top of the table below. There is a mixture of written publications, TV news networks and dedicated Facebook groups, and overall the topic of domestic and foreign politics is garnering significant attention.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	1,81M	0.2%	1,214	745,764	1.0x	725,654
عاجل أرض الشريف الإخبارية	825,657	0.33%	720	422,797	-1.0x	348,169
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الأحرار	359,607	0.04%	617	1.48M	-1.3x	1.61M
عين ليبيا	348,656	0.02%	822	68,362	-1.3x	2.27M
الأخبار العاجله والمؤكد	340,637	0.28%	633	63,745	-1.3x	189,560
اخبار ليبيا	283,101	0.01%	2,277	—	-1.4x	981,295
218TV	272,463	0.05%	202	2.07M	-1.1x	2.91M
ليبيا فقط	231,635	0.38%	31	—	-1.1x	1.94M
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	228,926	0.02%	897	398,896	-1.3x	1.32M
ليبيا 24 - ليبيا 24	180,886	0.03%	834	668,180	-1.5x	648,685

This broader array of sources results in more diverse discussions, which demonstrates a similar trend to the analysis of published articles when the two major outlets had been removed; the pool of narratives discussed among the top posts and pages deepens. This [post](#) from online personality Heema Saad about the disappearance of a Libyan MP, Seham Sergiwa, received over 8,000 interactions, including 6,000 comments. He claimed that she was dead and accused Khalifa Haftar of being responsible for or complicit in her kidnapping. The comments were split between those in agreement and those who took issue with his claims, with several comments expressing support for Sergiwa's kidnapping.



A post from the Russia-backed Libya Mandela page, promoting the apparent political return of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, received over 8,000 interactions.



Only Libya's [commemoration](#) of the anniversary of the death of Muammar Gaddafi received almost 20,000 interactions, further demonstrating the more diverse set of topics amongst the most interacted-with Facebook posts. The responses were overwhelmingly supportive, with 40 of the 50 coded comments commemorating his death and no political divide within the comments.



These two 218tv posts linking to articles relating to power outages received over 10,000 and 20,000 interactions each, respectively. The first [post's](#) comments are universally critical of the authorities for allowing the power cuts to occur, but the second [post](#) has an even split between commenters criticising the government and those accusing 218tv of bias or false reporting.





Twitter demonstrates a similar pattern, with the most engaged-with of the 44,354 tweets sharing news items on major political developments and a diverse spread of domestic issues and localised news. Examples include;

This [tweet](#) links to a news story about Sarraj attacking the UAE, Egypt and France over their support for Haftar at the UN General Assembly.



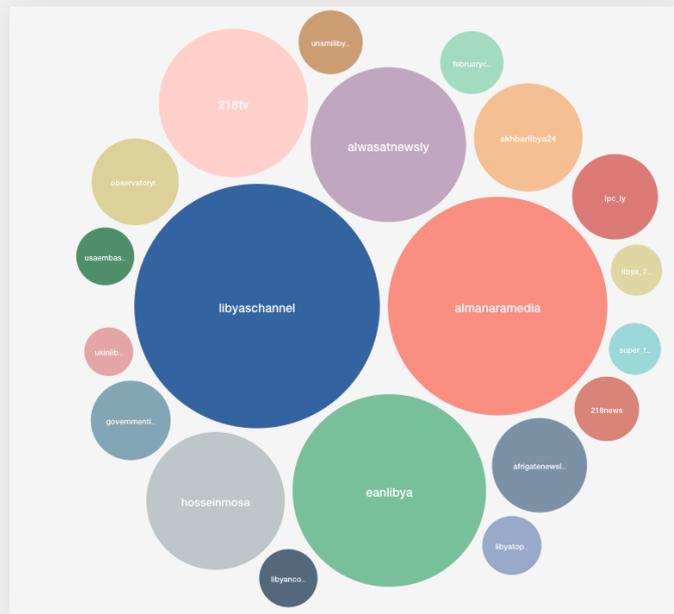
This is a [complaint](#) about the 'failing government' leading to water and electricity supplies being cut and the dysfunctional sewage system in Tripoli.



The pattern of Twitter activity highlights particular interest in Sarraj's attendance of the UN General Assembly in September, but the topics discussed throughout are generally too diffuse to establish a clear driving-force at other times; conversation ebbs and flows with news of international, domestic and local news.



The key voices on the platform mostly reflect what was seen in the Conflict and Security topic. Digital media platforms dominate, and 218tv and Almarsad continue to play a less dominant role, but posts were rarely shared beyond their original source.



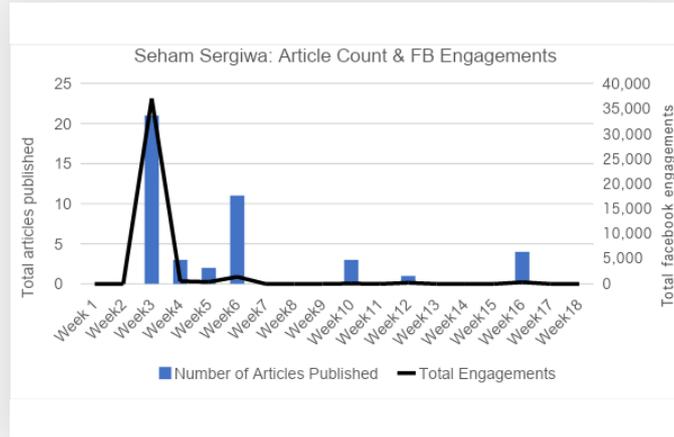
The diversity in popular posts on Facebook and Twitter suggests that the dominant narratives of the civil war and foreign interference are extremely pronounced at the very highest levels of engagement, but their grip loosens when looking past those top-performing articles and posts and they compete with commentary on public services and the Gaddafi legacy for the public's attention. The instances of divided responses in the comments to these posts show a notable polarisation, even on topics that are seemingly marginal, such as power cuts. This matches with the trends seen in the analysis of published media.

Thematically, there is some overlap with the Conflict and Security topic, but this is to be expected at a time that civil overshadows political dialogue in Libya. The narratives most discussed by UAE-backed media outlets are taking up most of the available bandwidth in terms of written media consumption but are failing to achieve the same results beyond their existing audience. In the broad pool of the greater Libyan public, coverage and opinions are fractured and diffuse.

Spotlight: Seham Sergiwa

The abduction and killing of Libyan MP Seham Sergiwa should have presented a major headline in the Libyan news cycle for July and beyond; however, coverage and engagement were extremely limited. The initial reporting saw 21 articles published in the week of July 15 and these received 36,954 engagements. This figure was hugely bolstered by a 218tv [article](#) on July 19 that earned 18,700 interactions.

There was a spike in the number of articles published in the week of August 5, when several major European governments released a joint statement expressing their concern and the Tobruk government's interior minister commented on the disappearance, but the engagement did not rise with it. The story was ultimately only covered by five outlets (218tv, Libya Akhbar, Alwasat, Libya Alahrar and Ean Libya).



Analysis of engagement with the topic on Facebook paints a similar but not identical picture. Outlets such as Almarsad and Afrigate News that did not publish articles on the topic nonetheless shared Facebook posts about it. Facebook interactions are high relative to article engagements, with Almarsad reaching 31,809 interactions and the top five all breaking 15,000, as demonstrated below, showing that much of the conversation surrounding the kidnapping took place outside of the published-media ecosystem.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	31,809	0.27%	16	23,453	1.2x	725,654
Heema Saad	19,350	2.55%	3	—	2.3x	252,535
عين ليبيا	19,053	0.03%	25	—	-1.0x	2.27M
218TV	17,434	0.6%	1	—	9.0x	2.91M
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الأحرار	15,232	0.04%	22	81,489	-1.2x	1.61M
اخبار ليبيا	6,523	0.01%	45	—	-1.1x	981,295
من طرابلس حصرياً	5,141	0.2%	7	—	1.2x	375,562
عاجل أرض الشرف الإخبارية	4,303	0.62%	2	—	1.6x	348,169
وكالة ليبيا بوست للأنباء	2,414	0.66%	4	—	14.4x	91,010
Afrigate News الإخبارية	2,270	0.04%	10	—	1.1x	531,180

The most striking element of the Facebook coverage is the disparate variations of the story being shared. One [post](#) on July 17 received over 3,000 interactions and falsely claimed that Sergiwa died in hospital after being attacked: A substantial proportion of the responses in the comments were about the kidnapping and alleged murder (15 of 50), meanwhile the majority were critical of Sergiwa herself and supportive of her kidnapping and ongoing disappearance (27). A very small number of posts questioned the truth of the news.



[Another](#) on September 4 asserted, again falsely, that she had been killed and thrown into the sea: This post saw the same kind of responses as the previous example, with 16 of the 50 coded comments lamenting Sergiwa's fate and 23 expressing support for it. Unlike the previous example, 10 of the 50 coded comments expressed a pro-LAAF sentiment and politicised the events to a notable degree.



There are several possibilities for the lack of interest in the abduction. One is that Libyans simply have more pressing things to worry about, like their own safety as seen in the Security section. Another is that the media coverage was poor, given that engagement with the initial reporting was reasonably strong. Finally, it is possible that the variety of stories being pushed from various sources make it extremely difficult to ascertain what really happened, and the prevalence of this disinformation means that many readers may have simply disengaged. Regardless, it is clear that the attitudes of those that do engage in online discussion are relatively split on the topic, but with a discernible lean towards cynicism. Sympathy was far from in abundance.

Spotlight: Berlin conference

Another event that would be expected to attract significant attention was the announcement on September 11th by the German Ambassador to Libya that later in 2019, a conference would be held in Berlin in order to try and stabilise the political conditions. The announcement of the conference failed to generate much attention initially, but engagements jumped significantly when 218tv published two articles about it on September [17](#) and [19](#), earning 13,500 and 14,500 respectively.

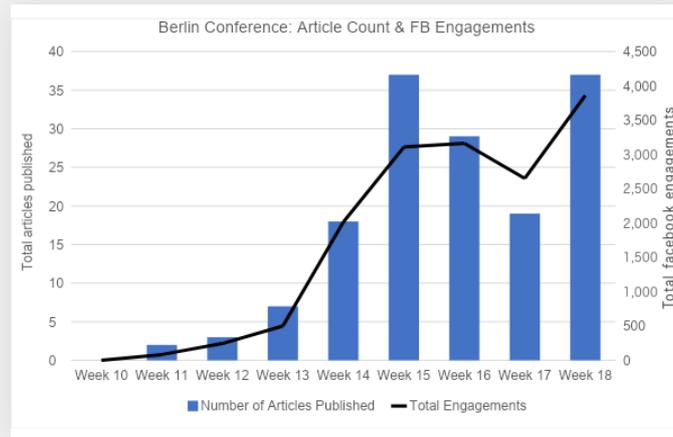


Week	Top Article	English
Week 12	مؤتمر برلين يُشعل السباق الفرنسي الإيطالي على ليبيا	Berlin conference: The French-Italian race for Libya has been launched
Week 15	برلين ستعلن خلال أيام موعد مؤتمرها بشأن ليبيا	Berlin to announce the date of its Libya conference within days
Week 18	سعيد و مايس يبحثان التحضيرات لـ "مؤتمر برلين"	Said and Maas discuss preparations for Berlin conference

Of the total 214 articles about the conference published since its announcement, 187 came in October. Fifty-seven of these came in the week commencing October 7 and received a total of 49,310 engagements. These were spearheaded by three 218tv articles that discussed rumours beginning to spread about the possible dates and attendees of the conference, and then its eventual delay, earning 31,700 of the 49,300 engagements for the week. Engagements bounced back from the subsequent dip when, on October 28, 218tv reported on a meeting between the German foreign minister and the Tunisian president to discuss the Berlin conference, which received 12,900 interactions.

Interestingly, 218tv [reported](#) that the German Mission to the UN had tweeted that a military solution was not acceptable in Libya the previous week, but this had only garnered 6,500 of the (still modest) 14,100. The week before 218tv also had an article discussing Turkey's potential role in the conference earning 1,900 of the 14,500 for the week. This suggests that while 218tv may be the leading outlet for most political stories, they cannot always dictate what is or is not newsworthy, and only more significant news relating to the conference has generated interest.

While 218tv yet again dominates, the pattern is in fact clearer without their content being considered. We can observe (see chart below – minus 218tv data) a gradual build in both articles published and engagements received as awareness of the impending conference grows; however, interest is low, with a peak of 3,860 engagements in the week commencing October 21, and the top [article](#) receiving only 492.



Week	Top Article	English
Week 16	المسار من القيادة العامة تطالب المشاركين في مؤتمر برلين تضمين مكافحة الإرهاب ضمن أعمال المؤتمر	Memsawi: The general leadership demand participants in Berlin conference to include counter-terror on agenda
Week 18	سعيد يستعرض مع وزير خارجية ألمانيا استعدادات تنظيم مؤتمر برلين حول ليبيا	Said: "We are reviewing preparations with the German foreign minister" for organizing the Berlin conference on Libya

Almarsad's page, Libya Observatory, produced by far the most Facebook activity related to the conference.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	47,224	0.14%	46	—	-1.4x	725,654
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الأحرار	9,648	0.02%	29	91,379	-1.6x	1.61M
اخبار ليبيا	7,832	0.01%	92	—	-2.3x	981,295
عاجل أرض الشريف الإخبارية	7,089	0.34%	6	19,174	1.0x	348,169
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	5,980	0.01%	48	22,049	-1.7x	1.32M
ليبيا 24 - 24 ليبيا	5,000	0.03%	30	—	-2.2x	648,685
عين ليبيا	3,598	0.01%	17	—	-1.7x	2.27M
من طرابلس حصرياً	3,367	0.18%	5	—	1.1x	375,562
الأخبار العاجله والمؤكده	2,965	0.26%	6	—	-1.6x	189,560
Afrigate News افريقييا الاخبارية	2,668	0.03%	19	—	-1.2x	531,180

Their most popular posts include [reporting](#) on LAAF statements in support of a Berlin conference:

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
18 October · 🌐

القيادة العامة للقوات المسلحة: نرحب بكافة الجهود الدولية بما فيها مؤتمر برلين طالما إستهدفت مخرجاته إنهاء المليشيات ومحاربة الإرهاب والوصول الى عملية سياسية كاملة. #ليبيا#المرصد .

See Translation



19 أكتوبر 2019

القيادة العامة للقوات المسلحة:
نرحب بكافة الجهود الدولية بما فيها مؤتمر برلين طالما
إستهدفت مخرجاته إنهاء المليشيات ومحاربة الإرهاب والوصول
الى عملية سياسية كاملة .

ALMARSAD
المرصد
ALMARSAD.CO

👍👎👏 2.7K 67 comments 11 shares

And [rumours](#) that Qatar was being excluded from the conference:

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
8 October · 🌐

إنتلجنس : #قطر أستبعدت من حضور مؤتمر برلين حول #ليبيا والسراج يتمسك بحضورها. #المرصد

See Translation



ALMARSAD
المرصد
ALMARSAD.CO

ALMARSAD.CO
إنتلجنس : قطر أستبعدت من حضور مؤتمر برلين حول ليبيا والسراج
يتمسك بحضورها

👍👎👏 1.5K 118 comments 55 shares

The comments in response to these posts were overwhelmingly negative and, for the second example, mocking of the idea of a Berlin conference. Interestingly, the first example drew a notable anti-LAAF response, whereas the second garnered significant anti-GNA discussion. This is likely due to the nature of each post, with the news of Haftar-backing Qatar's possible exclusion galvanising LAAF supporters to drown out the opposing side on a more transparently partisan issue.

A significant number of the posts are extremely long and detailed, varying from political [commentary](#) to public [appeals](#) to the UN to exclude various actors from the process. The coverage strikes a variety of tones, but the consistent factor is recognition of the importance of the potential opportunity presented by a future Berlin conference. Libya's Channel's demand for Turkey to be excluded from the Berlin conference was accompanied by a thorough examination of their reasoning and received responses that were a mixture of supportive of Turkey's exclusion (18), critical of the conference (24) and critical of the LAAF (16).



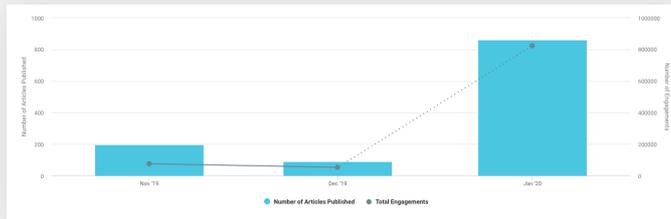
Alwatan Libya's pessimistic post discussing the Berlin conference and the failures of the peace process received a heavily critical and anti-LAAF response in the comments.



Overall, the initial response to the announcement of the conference was somewhat sceptical and interest was minimal. Despite this, and the eventual postponement of the conference, the volume of content and engagement grew throughout October, spiking in accordance with relevant news. However, interest remains relatively low, as demonstrated by the consistently lower-than-average post performance across the surveyed pages. Moreover, social media discussion is overwhelmingly negative, with Libyans taking an extremely cynical and critical stance on the possibility of progress and the issue quickly slipping into partisanship.

Recent Updates:

After this report was first written, the Berlin conference took place on January 19, 2020. Online engagement remained extremely low through to mid-January, but then interest significantly jumped in the days preceding the conference.

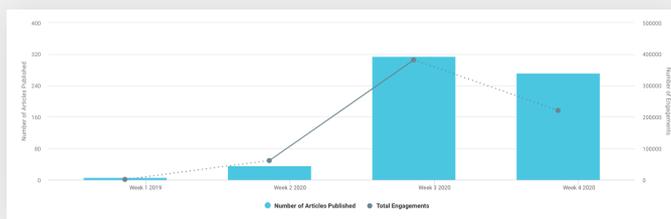


November saw 197 articles published with 76,225 engagements, up from 49,179 engagements for 196 articles in October. Much of that jump in attention came from three 218tv articles; the first, published on October 18, reported on UN envoy Ghasan Salame's report to the Security Council in which he confirmed that he held talks with the GNA and LAAF leaders and that they were both committed to finding a solution, reaffirming the importance of the Berlin conference. This earned 10,500 engagements.

Following that, on November 21, they published another piece highlighting a European Council on Foreign Relations report that evaluated the potential successes and failures of the Berlin conference, receiving 13,400 interactions. Finally, a report on preparations in Geneva for the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue to host a meeting in order to formulate ideas for bridging the gap between factions, published again on November 21, received 8,000 interactions.

The numbers fell in December, down to 92 articles with 53,100 engagements. The average engagement level of 577 is a significant jump from October's 250, and even November's 387. This suggests that, while overall numbers may be down month-to-month, the remaining engagements are less concentrated on two or three tentpole articles for the month and the audience is, overall, more engaged. Three of the top five articles relate to Turkey's potential participation in the conference, and half of the top 10 reported on further debate around participation, suggesting that there was a burgeoning interest in who would be attending.

The spike in January is severe: 861 articles with 822,731 engagements. This is driven by a wave of 218tv content; they produced the entirety of the top 20 articles on the topic for the month, with a high of 28,700 engagements and a low of 10,300.



Predictably, this is instigated by the ramping up of plans for, and eventual confirmation of, the Berlin conference and its participants, as demonstrated by the weekly breakdown for January seen above. The week

commencing January 12 had 315 articles published for 382,061 engagements at an average of 1,212 per article, a more than twofold increase over the December average and number of articles, and over seven times the overall engagements.

This suggests that there is potential to engage Libyans in processes and events akin to the Berlin conference but, as seen later in this report with elections and the constitution, this attention demands tangible progress; plans and promises gain little traction. Politicised editorial is entirely absent from the most engaged-with articles of the week, suggesting that politicized narratives from the media may not have played a decisive role in how this information was communicated to the Libyan public. The most controversial article is 218tv's January 20 [piece](#) reporting that President Erdogan did not stay for dinner during the Berlin conference, receiving 18,800 engagements.

There are, however, some stories of note. Turkey's participation was rejected by Libyan's sympathetic to the LAAF. [Almarsad](#) and [Libya Alhadath](#) both livestreamed footage of a protest outside the venue of the conference. The reports claimed that the protestors were Kurdish, Libyans and Yezidis unhappy at Erdogan's presence, and the video's received 126,945 and 110,000 views, respectively. These are extremely high figures relative to the other posts which highlight a key point of contention as the peace process moves forward.

As demonstrated by the table below, overall social media interaction with the topic boomed when the conference took place. Even at 10th place for the month, Afrigate News earned more interactions, 12,649, than Libya Alahrar TV did to earn second place in October.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	237,008	0.35%	84	282,357	-1.0x	795,203
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الإحرار	131,645	0.12%	63	825,467	1.1x	1.68M
ليبيا 24 - ليبيا 24	42,901	0.04%	157	16,326	-1.2x	669,345
عين ليبيا	35,578	0.03%	56	5,478	-1.5x	2.28M
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	29,442	0.03%	67	153,173	-1.1x	1.36M
اخبار ليبيا	26,120	0.02%	165	—	-1.2x	995,284
قناة ليبيا الحدث مباشر - Libya Alhadath TV Live	20,568	1.06%	5	224,197	1.5x	389,927
صحيفة العنوان الليبية	17,729	0.27%	34	7,902	-1.7x	194,943
24 اخبار ليبيا - AkhbarLibya24	14,959	0.03%	56	21,051	1.2x	1.02M
بوابة افريقيا الاخبارية Afrigate News	12,649	0.04%	58	10,513	-1.3x	533,494

Many of the most interacted-with posts demonstrate a primarily balanced attitude towards the conference. This [post](#) from 218tv was the top interacted-with for January and shares a purely factual article reporting on the formal invitations to the conference. The responses in the comments mostly mirrored this attitude. There was a notable presence of pro-Tunisian sentiment in response to their absence from the invite list (10 of the top 50 most relevant) and a single commenter opposed the conference altogether; however, other political sentiment was not present.



Almarsad's Facebook page shared a livestream of the attendees' arrival on the day of the conference. The stream and archive of the [video](#) received over 115,000 views, pointing to the buzz around the conference. Eleven of the top 50 most relevant comments expressed a pro-LAAF sentiment, in line with expectations given Almarsad's content and audience, but this did not overwhelm discussion and did not provoke much contradictory response.



A prior [post](#) from January 16 reported on Egypt, Italy and Greece's joint statement in condemnation of the Turkish military intervention in Libya as counter-productive in the days preceded the Berlin conference. The comments were dominated by anti-Turkish sentiment, with 21 of the 50 coded comments unhappy with their behaviour and involvement in the conference.



Libya Alahrar's [post](#) on January 18 reporting that GNA leader al-Sarraj would be in attendance at the Berlin conference provoked a politically charged response. Fourteen of the top 50 most relevant comments were in support of Sarraj's role in the conference, but 25 were expressly critical of it. It is worth noting the opinionated but fairly balanced response, despite the negative skew. Given that Libya Alahrar is [run out of Doha and supported by the Qatari government](#), it could be expected to cultivate an audience sympathetic to Qatari interests; however, while that sympathy is the primary sentiment, in this case the opposing view has made its presence felt.

Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا... 6 days ago · 1,684,652 Likes

عاجل | وفد حكومة الوفاق برئاسة فائز السراج ووزيري الخارجية والداخلية يتوجه إلى ألمانيا للمشاركة في مؤتمر برلين غدا الأحد



عاجل

وفد حكومة الوفاق برئاسة فائز السراج ووزيري الخارجية والداخلية يتوجه إلى ألمانيا للمشاركة في مؤتمر برلين غدا الأحد

libyaalahrar.tv | f t y i LibyaAlahrarTV

Why did this match the search?

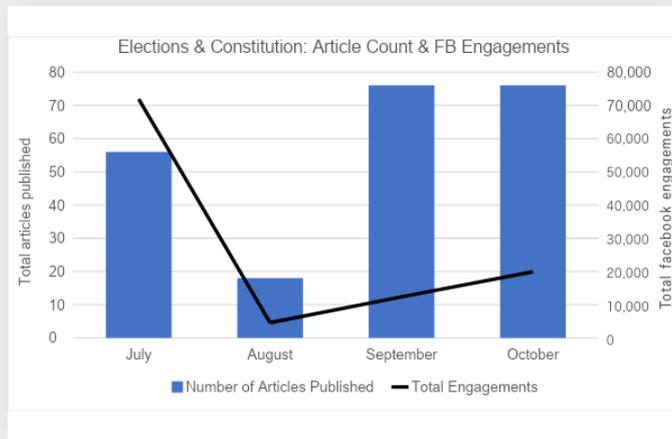
7,086 785 83

Elections and the Constitution

Elections and the Constitution is defined as news relating to the electoral behaviour of political leaders, parties and institutions, the Libyan democratic process and the status of constitutional reform. This includes references to judicial elections and referenda.

Between July 1 and October 31, 226 articles were published on the topics of elections or the constitution and they received a total of 108,709 engagements. This was at an average of 481 per article; however, this figure is skewed by July's average of 1,284. There is a distinct drop in the ratio between the number of articles being published and the engagements they are receiving in September and October, from July's high down to 212.

This demonstrates that while the number of articles in fact increases, to 76 in both September and October, these articles are not being read at anything like the rate seen in July, suggesting interest declined significantly. Elections and the constitution received dramatically less attention than either security or politics.

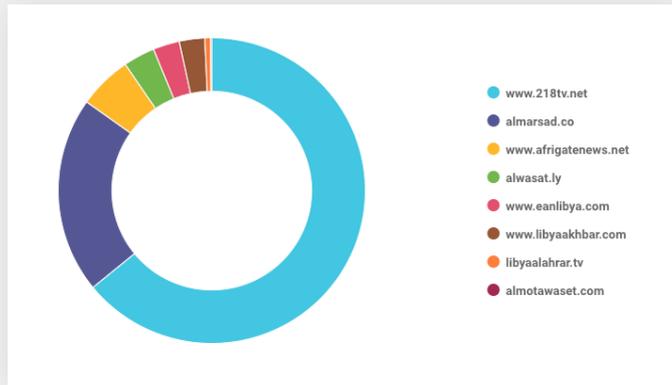


Stories about Saif al-Islam Gaddafi dominated the entire period. Five of the top 10 articles between July and October reported on comments from or rumours about his future political plans. However, all of those five were published in July. The most interacted-with [article](#), receiving 27,300 engagements, was from 218tv reporting a supposed secret meeting held between Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and Russia representatives in Libya. Of July's 71,921 engagements, 47,800 of them came from the top two articles in which 218tv discussed Saif al-Islam's relations with the governments of other countries, both positive (Russia) and negative ([Lebanon](#)).

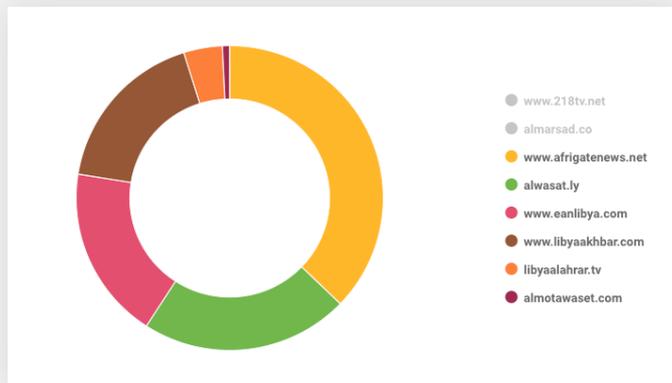
Other topics covered in the overall top 10 include a July [report](#) on Russian interference in Libyan politics (10,300 interactions), in September a member of the constituent assembly of Libya [saying](#) that the country must be independently politically stable before any constitutional referendum (2,900) and in October the [announcement](#) of municipal council elections by the LAAF government (1,900).

August saw almost no activity at all, with 18 articles and 4,545 engagements, 3,400 of them coming from 218tv's piece on the Tunisian presidential elections. This was likely impacted by Eid from August 11 to 15, but the dip in activity encompassed the entire month and so the lack of any real news certainly played a role. For September, the number of articles jumped as updates on the status of a new constitution trickled out through the comments of various officials, but these failed to gain any kind of traction as the month saw a total of only 12,355 engagements. For October, Almarsad's [piece](#) on Haftar's assertion that Saif al-Islam Gaddafi has a right to run in a future election saw 11,600 engagements. The second [article](#), however, detailing GNA senior advisor Khalid al-Mashiri's abandoning of his stance that a constitutional referendum must come before an election, earned only 1,900.

This suggests an extremely minimal interest in elections or constitutional issues as demonstrated by the substantial decline of the number of articles and engagements. The below chart shows the share of engagement per surveyed media outlet:



An overwhelming amount of engagements comes from 218tv's 66,900, of which 47.8 came from their two articles about Saif al-Islam in July, followed again by Almarsad's 21,700. If, as in previous sections, we remove these outlets we can see a much more even share among the remaining publications:



However, with the highest figure being Afrigate News' 5,900, engagement is extremely low. Removing the articles about Saif al-Islam reveals that, while the number of articles only drops by 27 to 199, engagements fall

by 65% to 37,433. This highlights that there is even less interest in election and constitutional issues as a whole than outside of a single figure.

Discussion on Facebook is minimal but fairly evenly distributed, with the similar groups to previous categories taking the largest share. The tone is mostly one of frustration and criticism of the various authorities and political figures for their failure to sort out the fundamentals of Libya's political system.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
ليبيا فقط	29,176	1.5%	1	—	2.9x	1.94M
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	19,774	0.21%	13	26,862	-1.3x	728,392
218TV	17,273	0.07%	9	8,391	1.4x	2.92M
من طرابلس حصرياً	11,430	0.19%	16	—	1.2x	375,506
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	8,757	0.03%	23	2,118	-1.8x	1.32M
عين ليبيا	8,632	0.01%	36	9,568	-2.1x	2.27M
وكالة ليبيا بوست للأخبار	5,600	2.05%	3	—	5.4x	91,002
Heema Saad	4,430	1.75%	1	—	1.1x	252,532
Alwatan Libya	4,279	0.1%	13	—	1.0x	343,854
عاجل ارض الشريف الاخبارية	4,181	0.4%	3	—	1.2x	348,644

This [post](#) from the Libya Post news agency criticises the Tobruk House of Representatives and holds them responsible for the failure to organise a constitutional referendum. It provoked an evenly divided response in the comments between those in agreement and those not.



This [post](#) from AJEL.Aradshif.News reports on Haftar's comments that Saif al-Islam Gaddafi is entitled to run for president, and received a notably positive response with 27 of the 50 coded comments in support of Haftar's statement and 23 directly praising the LAAF. In comparison, 15 commenters were opposed to the idea of Saif al-Islam being allowed to run for president.



This [post](#) mocking the Tobruk House of Representatives as elected by children and old men earned over 4,000 interactions. Thirty-two of the 50 coded comments responded negatively to this but were entirely critical of the attitude demonstrated by the post rather than responding politically.



The fact that the post making fun of a Libyan electoral institution received over twice the levels of interaction of the other two examples demonstrates the prevalent attitude towards elections and the constitution. They have potentially become secondary issues with no immediate relevance or concern.

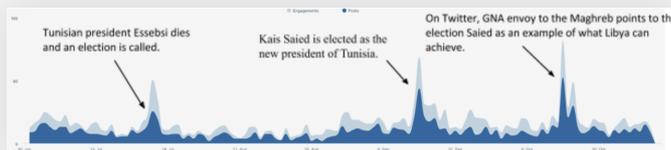
The total of 2,973 tweets on the topic cements the impression that elections and the constitution are low priorities for Libyans. The discussion that does occur focuses on wrangles over the political process and what is and is not constitutional, as well as further discussion of Saif al-Islam's potential as a political leader. For example, this [tweet](#) condemns as unconstitutional a meeting of Libyan deputies abroad in Egypt.



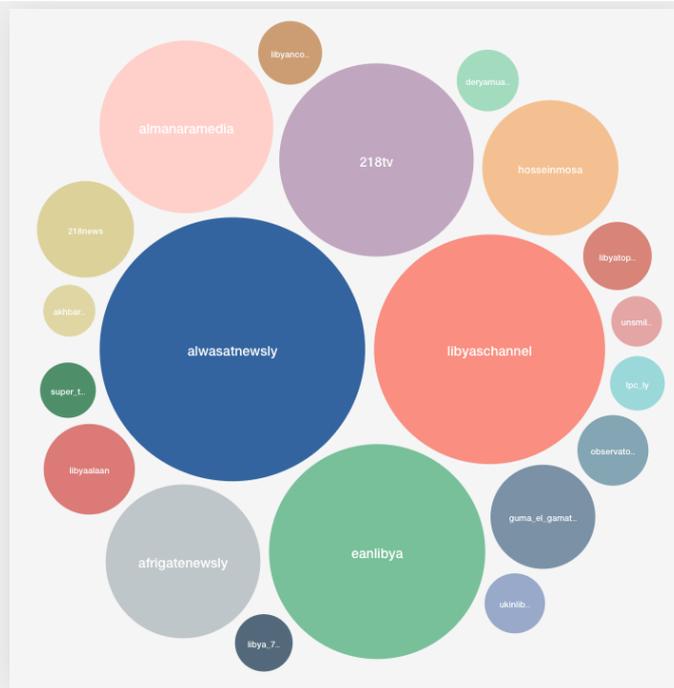
This [post](#) from Almarsad quotes Haftar saying that Saif al-Islam Gaddafi has the right to run for president.



The interest in elections and the constitution is so low that the driving force of online discussion has been the Tunisian presidential election, with Libyans often comparing the two countries and questioning why the conditions in each are so different. We can see spikes in engagements in tandem with key events in the Tunisian election.



These discussions are taking place between Libyans and inside Libya, and yet the Tunisian election is the favoured topic. This demonstrates the level of apathy towards their own prospects for meaningful elections. The key voices on Twitter are again comparable to other platforms and dominated by the same digital media publications.



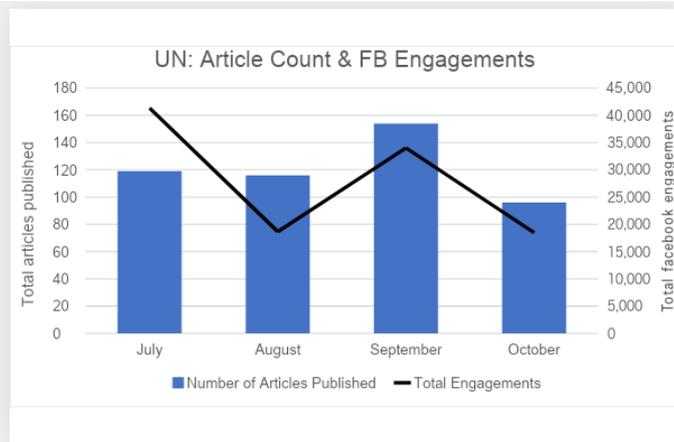
There are very few articles being written and posts shared, and engagement with them is very low. There are prominent examples of mockery of the electoral system and Libyans are often more interested in the elections of a neighbouring country than their own. It is again important to take stock of the prevalence of the same UAE-backed and pro-Haftar outlets and their high volume of coverage of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, as their reduced overall activity here matches the overall reduction in engagement. The lack of progress or news in terms of new elections or constitutional reforms has come to define the discussion around them – it is almost entirely absent.

UN

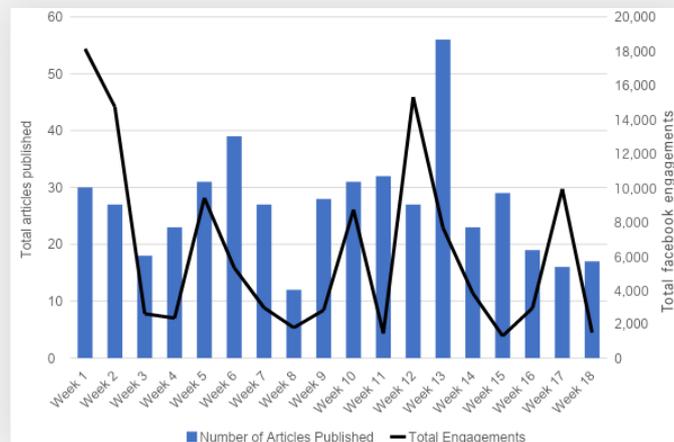
The UN is defined as news relating to the activity of United Nations representatives or at UN summits with regards to Libya. This includes activity related to the UN-backed peace process and contact between the UN Special Mission to Libya and the GNA or LAAF.

A total of 485 articles were published by online media pages on the topic of the UN and the associated peace process between July 1 and October 31, 2019. These earned 112,475 total engagements at an average of 231 per article. The top [article](#) for the period was a September report on Lord Empey's appeal to the UN, as head of the Ulster Unionist Party, to continue to hold Libya accountable for Muammar Gaddafi's support of the IRA, receiving 13,800 interactions. It is followed by an [article](#) stating that the UN had revealed information that detailed the murder of refugees fleeing the July Tajoura airstrikes by armed guards, with 9,300 engagements.

Other major articles include the [demand](#) of the GNA interior minister that UN envoy to Libya Ghassan Salame resign (2,000), the UN-sanctioned al-Samoud Brigade [criticising](#) Sarraj's delegation to the UN General Assembly for lacking "revolutionaries" (4,000) and Ghassan Salame's pessimistic [assessment](#) of his two years in Libya (7,400).



Assessing the metric week by week shows that interest in the UN spikes when there is relevant news, such as the UN General Assembly session in September or Ghassan Salame's meeting with LAAF leader Haftra in late July.



Week	Top Article	English
Week 1	الأمم المتحدة تكشف عن تعرض المهاجرين في تاجوراء لإطلاق النار من قبل الحرايس	The UN reveals that emigrants in Tajoura have been exposed to gunfire by guards
Week 5	الشاطر ل قناة الجزيرة: غسان سلامة جاسوس مزروع بيننا	Shater to Al Jazeera: Ghassan Salameh is a spy planted in Libya
Week 10	إواء الصمود يطالب السراج بضم "قادة من الثوار" لوفده المشارك في اجتماع جمعية الأمم المتحدة	Liwa Sumoud demands that Sarraj includes "leaders from the revolutionaries" in his delegation to the UNA meeting
Week 12	إيبي يناشد الأمم المتحدة: ليبيا يجب أن تدفع ثمن دعم القذافي للجيش الإبرلندي	MP implores the UN: Libya must pay the price of Gaddafi's support for the IRA
Week 17	وصفته الأمم المتحدة بـ"المتعطش للدماء" إيبي عتُهم بتهريب البشر في مقابلة صحفية	A Libyan is accused of people trafficking in a press interview and the UN describes him as "A drinker of the blood"

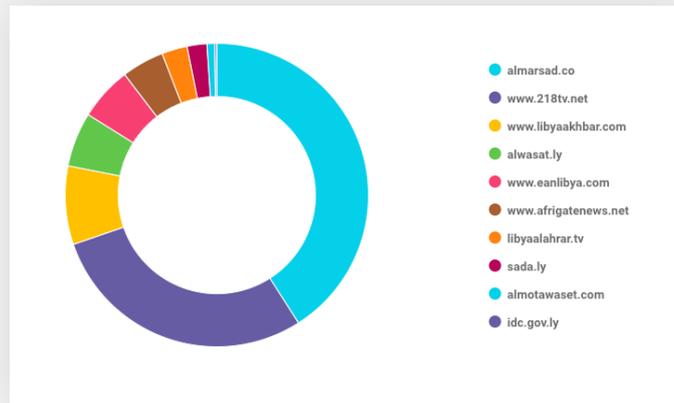
The top five articles in the week commencing July 29 are all Almarsad reports on high-profile LAAF voices criticising Salame and earned 7,300 of the week's 9,300 engagements, explaining the leap in interest when compared to the weeks prior and following. In early September Fayez al-Sarraj announced the members of his delegation to the UN General Assembly later that month, and this was accompanied by the previously mentioned Almarsad article detailing a notorious military faction's criticism of it and the associated 4,000 engagements. Interestingly it is the Ulster Unionist's statement to the UN that gives the jump in engagements in the week of September 16; the week's 15,300 engagements almost entirely come from the 218tv article's 13,800.

The UN General Assembly session the following week was the focus of a significant number of articles, with 56 of the month's 154, it did not produce many engagements to accompany it. Even though the 7,600 it did earn is significantly more than the previous week's 1,500 without 218tv's Ulster Unionists report, only a single [article](#) broke 1,000 interactions. This was an article reporting on a statement from the Tripoli Protection Force commending al-Sarraj for his performance in New York, which earned 1,500.

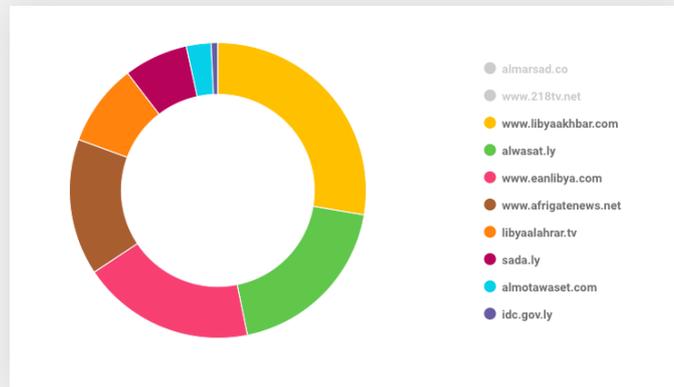
The final leap in engagements, in the week of October 21, is attributable to a 218tv [article](#) about a Libyan man sanctioned by the UN and accused of drowning migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean. It earned 7,800 of the week's 9,800 engagements.

This pattern demonstrates that coverage of and interest in the UN and the peace process is low in the media. In fact the formal peace process is not the primary focus of any the top twenty articles of any week across the period. Any significant news or statements from the UN, particularly from UNSMIL general secretary Ghassan Salame, or meeting between representatives from the UN and either government, draw the most interaction.

A particularly notable variation from other categories is the split of engagements between outlets. While the same top two, Almarsad and 218tv, dominate, this is the only topic for which Almarsad articles received the most overall interactions.



It is possible that Almarsad's overtly pro-Haftar stance motivated it to sustain higher levels of publication where others saw a dip in coverage (34 of the 485 articles, compared to 218tv's 19), earning it 45,700 of the 112,475 engagements. Given the average engagements of 1,344 received by Almarsad articles is well over five times higher than the overall average, it appears that their audience is disproportionately interested in UN-related news.



Once again, if we remove the two dominant outlets there is a much more even spread of engagement amongst the remaining publications, but it is extremely low. If Almarsad and 218tv are removed entirely, the average engagements per article drops to just 80, a loss of 64%, despite the number of articles only dropping 11% to 432. The increased prevalence of Almarsad is reflected in the evaluation of Facebook activity. The Almarsad page received 297,281 interactions, compared to the second place Ean Libya's 43,023.

This enormous disparity may be a reflection of a pro-Haftar audience's increased interest in UN-related stories, especially given the relatively small number of posts seen across the four-month period. Almarsad's dominance, along with 218tv, in the other categories has potentially helped it concentrate influence over UN-related discussion. As seen with the analysis of published articles, they are not producing the highest volume of content, but are comfortably receiving most of the engagement.

Page Name	Total Interactions	Interaction Rate	Total Posts	Video Views	Post Performance	Page Likes
صحيفة المرصد الليبية	297,281	0.2%	206	69,114	-1.3x	728,392
عين ليبيا	43,023	0.01%	165	—	-1.6x	2.27M
اخبار ليبيا	38,629	0.01%	417	—	-1.8x	981,621
ليبيا 24 - 24 ليبيا	35,825	0.02%	252	—	-2.5x	648,956
Libya's Channel - قناة ليبيا	32,052	0.01%	185	36,198	-2.0x	1.32M
Libya Alahrar TV - قناة ليبيا الأحرار	30,651	0.03%	62	136,738	-1.6x	1.61M
عاجل ارض الشريف الإخبارية	25,011	0.2%	35	6,174	-1.7x	348,644
من طرابلس حصرياً	21,641	0.13%	45	—	-1.2x	375,506
صحيفة العنوان الليبية	17,830	0.15%	80	951	-1.5x	152,091
بوابة افريقيا الاخبارية Afrigate News	13,966	0.02%	123	1,650	-1.8x	531,215

The increased interest of Almarsad's audience does not appear to be the result of an editorial bias. The majority of the posts shared simply report on news and offer no commentary.

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
9 September · 🌐

بعثة الأمم المتحدة تؤكد لـ #المرصد أن الأخبار العاجلة التي نقلتها قناة #ليبيا بانوراما (ذراع العدالة والبناء) من تصريحات بالفرنسية أدلى بها المبعوث سلامة لصحيفة ليبارسيون عن المشير حفتر قد تم تحريفها تماماً وإخراجها عن سياقها .

See Translation



5.4K 299 comments 113 shares

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
23 July · 🌐

السفارة الأمريكية لدى #ليبيا : القائم بالأعمال " جوشوا هاريس " إلتقى برئيس المجلس الرئاسي فائز السراج اليوم في #تونس وقد أكد كلاهما على أهمية الوقف الفوري للقتال في #طرابلس والعودة للعملية السياسية برعاية الأمم المتحدة . #المرصد

See Translation



4.9K 176 comments 17 shares

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
4 August · 🌐

مصدر دبلوماسي أممي لـ #المرصد : أمين عام الأمم المتحدة " أنطونيو غوتيريس " يجدد والدول الأعضاء دائمة العضوية ثقتهم في مبعوثهم إلى #ليبيا غسان سلامة ويمددون له في منصبه عاماً آخرأ على رأس البعثة الأممية .

See Translation



3.6K 147 comments 56 shares

صحيفة المرصد الليبية
19 October · 🌐

صور | #تونس | جانب من إجتماع بعض الشخصيات الليبية من مسؤولين سابقين وحاليين ودبلوماسيين أجانب بحضور المبعوث غسان سلامة في جلسات حوارية كانت برعاية منظمة " صناع السلام " . #ليبيا #المرصد

See Translation



2.9K 1.6K comments 118 shares

coded comments).

Notably, there were some accusations of positive bias towards Khalifa Haftar from Ghassan Salame, such as this [post](#) from the Libya Post News.

وكالة ليبيا بوست للأخبار
29 July · 🌐

غضب ليبي من إنحياز سلامة لحفتر وإتهامات بتلقيه أموال إماراتية
أبدى عدد من النشطاء ورواد مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي، عن غضبهم من إنحياز غسان سلامة في إحاطته بمجلس الأمن: لحفتر وتستره على العدوان الذي تتعرض له العاصمة طرابلس.
وأضاف عدد من النشطاء الليبيين، أن سلامة لم يعد طرفا محايدا في الازمة الليبية، وأنه أصبح اداة إماراتية مصرية لتنفيذ خطط هذه الدول في ليبيا لمساعدة خليفة حفتر في الاستيلاء على السلطة، محمليين اياه مسؤولية الجرائم التي ترتكب في حق المدنيين بمدينة طرابلس، وأخرها إستهدافهم لمستشفى ميداني بطريق المطار والذي أسفر عن مقتل 5 أطباء وإصابة العشرات.

See Translation

غضب ليبي من إنحياز سلامة لحفتر وإتهامات بتلقيه أموال إماراتية

1.9K 392 comments 89 shares

This accusation received significant support in the comments (27 of 50) but nonetheless the presence of dissenting views was prominent (17 of 50). The divide in public perception of Ghassan Salame and the UN mission in Libya is deeply entrenched, but both sides share the same negative impression. There are prominent arguments for bias towards either side, but very little advocacy for the UN's independence.

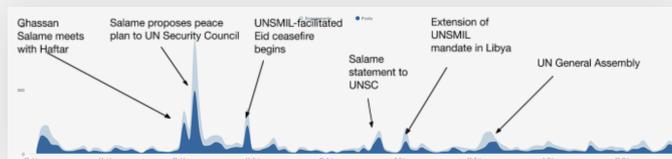
On Twitter, posts from the UNSMIL Twitter feed dominate the 8,976 tweets. Tweets by individuals are often negative, with Salameh the subject of frequent criticism. For example, the below [post](#) accuses Salame of being a 'slave' of the UN and ignoring the violence of anti-government militias.

twitter.com
14-08-2019 (23:36)

غسان سلامة صبي الإمارات، لم يتطرق أبداً في كلمته اليوم، عن مليشيات المتمردين التي قامت بخرق هدنة عيد الأضحى المنيا... بل ويكفل قلة أدب وصحة وجه قال (نحن نأمل أن يتحول م...)

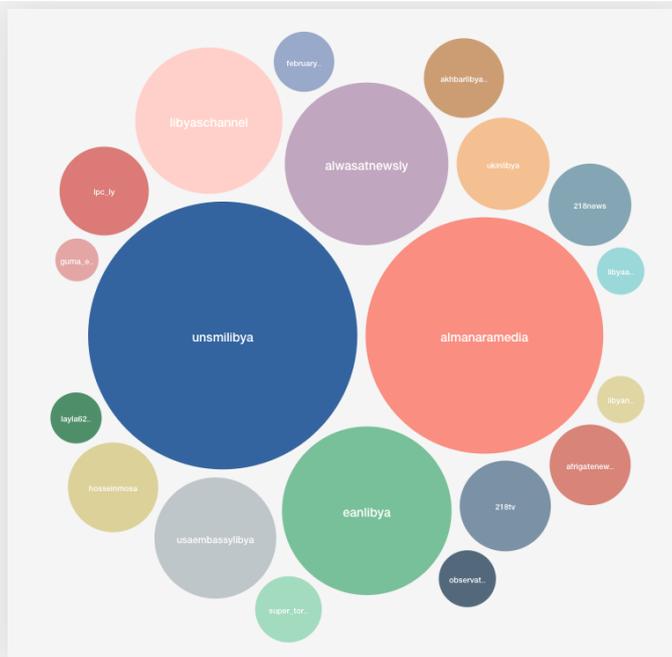
7 100 168.47 4,115 libya arabic

The pattern of overall engagement across the period in question demonstrates a tailing-off of enthusiasm from an inconsistent and fickle interest to an almost non-existent one.



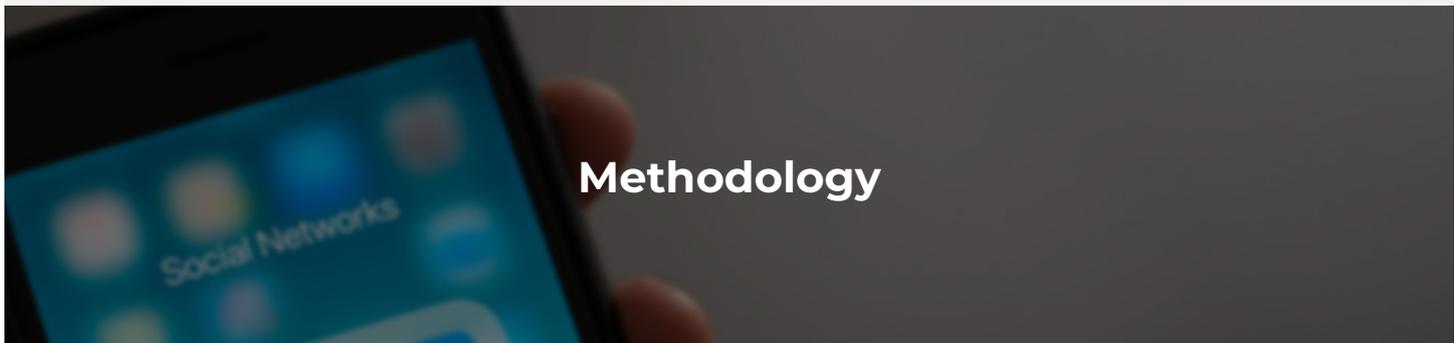
In July, UNSMIL-related news sparks interest and online discussion, despite generally low levels of activity; however, as time has gone on, activity has failed to jump in accordance with relevant news or developments. The UN General Assembly generated a lot of discussion in the political context of Sarraj's speech, but barely moved the needle at all in terms of general interest in the UN.

An analysis of key voices further demonstrates the driving force that the UNSMIL Twitter account for online discussion, and that again the same media outlets dominate.



Coverage of and engagement with the UN, in both published media and on social media, is ultimately very low. The prevalent attitude towards either the UN or the peace process is one of apathy, but online discussion skews extremely negatively. There is evidently an interest in following the words and actions of Ghassan Salame, who has a notable presence as a public figure.

It is clear that the pro-Haftar Almarsad is the focal point for such discussions, and that there are accusations of bias from both GNA and LAAF supporters, but it may take stronger signs of real progress along the path to peace to grow the levels of engagement in the media more broadly. As with elections and the constitution, the lack of news and developments appears to be a key factor.



Methodology

Zinc adopted a research method combining both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Boolean search queries were created in order to collect data for the following categories, which reflect the situation in Libya for the reporting period in question: a) Conflict and Security; b) Domestic and Foreign Politics; c) Elections and the Constitution; d) UN. See glossary below for more detail on search query terms.

These search queries were used to collect data from social media intelligence and content analysis tools CrowdTangle and BuzzSumo. BuzzSumo enabled Zinc to run category keyword searches against a pre-defined list of Libyan news outlets (see glossary), to ascertain the leading stories and URLs shared across Facebook, in this instance ranked by total Facebook engagements. Libya specific domains (.ly) were identified first through BuzzSumo's top-level domain filter, and then combined with a manually derived list of Libyan sources that do not use the .ly domain. From this data-led approach, Zinc was able to qualitatively analyse the leading news stories for each category and derive key narratives and insights.

CrowdTangle enabled Zinc to run category keyword searches against a pre-defined list of public Libyan FB pages (see glossary below), to ascertain the leading posts across the platform ranked by total interactions. As above, Zinc was able to qualitatively analyse the leading stories for each category.

Pulsar enabled the same category searches to be setup to collect data directly from Twitter's application programming interface (API), limited to Libyan tweets only. This enabled Zinc to analyse the data and compare and contrast to Facebook insights and narratives. Specifically, Pulsar enabled Zinc to shed light on how Twitter conversation trended over time, influential voices on the platform in terms of volume and impressions, top performing content, and the most shared websites and social networks across Twitter discussion.

Due to Facebook's API restrictions, FB analysis was restricted to public pages only, meaning that any personal messages or posts shared on private groups were not within the scope of this report.

Category Definitions:

Security and Conflict is defined as news relating to military activity, threats to civic order and the safety of civilians, and potential or realised violence. This can include ceasefire negotiations, direct military attacks or

intervention and the behaviour or statements of armed groups.

Domestic and Foreign Politics is defined as news relating to political figures, institutions and factions. It can involve discussion of public services, international relations or state-owned enterprise. It encompasses the operation of government and other political institutions and individuals, whereas Elections refers exclusively to electoral politics.

Elections and the Constitution is defined as news relating to the electoral behaviour of political leaders, parties and institutions, the Libyan democratic process and the status of constitutional reform. This includes references to judicial elections and referenda.

The UN is defined as news relating to the activity of United Nations representatives or at UN summits with regards to Libya. This includes activity related to the UN-backed peace process and contact between the UN Special Mission to Libya and the GNA or LAAF.

Glossary

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/afriqatnews/posts/?ref=page_internal
<https://www.facebook.com/LibyaAlkhabar/>
<https://www.facebook.com/%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%84-%D8%B7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AB-293532664399015/>
<https://www.facebook.com/218tv>
<https://www.facebook.com/libyaalkhbar/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Albawaba.eg/>
<https://www.facebook.com/HunaLibya.ly/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ObservatoryLY/>
<https://www.facebook.com/libya24tv/>
<https://www.facebook.com/OnlyLibya/>
<https://www.facebook.com/eanlibya/>
<https://www.facebook.com/tanasuh.channel>
<https://www.facebook.com/heema.sa3d/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ElectronicCounterterrorism/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Libyan.Address.Journal>
<https://www.facebook.com/almashhadlibya/>
<https://www.facebook.com/AnaLiby.Wmarati.Liybia/>
<https://www.facebook.com/almotwasetnews/>
<https://www.facebook.com/AlAraby.ar>
<https://www.facebook.com/AlArabija/>
<https://www.facebook.com/warinformationdivision/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Tkyhrogkshy2/>
<https://www.facebook.com/lyobserver.arabic/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LibyaAlAhrarTV/>
<https://www.facebook.com/BjohaBenghazi/>
<https://www.facebook.com/%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A9-HD-1357013311043793/>
<https://www.facebook.com/saitara1999/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ayonbenghazi8/>
<https://www.facebook.com/AJEL.Ardalsharif.News/>
<https://www.facebook.com/akbaraglawamoakdh/>
<https://www.facebook.com/%D8%BA%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A9-935274453171494/>
<https://www.facebook.com/exclusivefromtripli/>
<https://www.facebook.com/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%88%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7-2005433186410319/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Watan.AL.Harabah.Channel/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LibyaPostNews/>
<https://www.facebook.com/AlHadath/>
<https://www.facebook.com/libyamandela/>
<https://www.facebook.com/libyaalain/>
<https://www.facebook.com/libyaschannel/>
<https://www.facebook.com/akhbarlibya24/>
<https://www.facebook.com/elkul.libya/>
<https://www.facebook.com/iqtisadia/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LibyaAlhadathLive/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Lebdafim/>
<https://www.facebook.com/TodayLibyaCom/>
<https://www.facebook.com/alwataniya.ly/>
<https://www.facebook.com/101.1FM/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ccmce/>

Publications:

www.libyaalkhabar.com
www.218tv.net
libyaalkhbar.com
almarsad.co
www.libya24.tv
www.eanlibya.com
www.tanasuh.tv
www.addresslibya.com
almashhadlibya.com

almotawaset.com
en.libyaobserver.ly
libyaalahrar.tv
www.manlibya.com
www.libyaschannel.com
www.akhbarlibya24.net
libyanbusiness.tv
www.libyaalhadath.net
www.alwatanlibya.net
www.tv.ly
<https://www.afriqatnews.net/>

Boolean Strings:

Security:

OR "قذائف" OR "غارة" OR "غارات" OR "طائرة بدون طيار" OR "طائرة استطلاع" OR "صوت رماية" OR "رماية الان" OR "بالغارات" OR "عبوة ناسفة" OR "سيارة مفخخة" OR "حزام ناسف" OR "انفجارات" OR "انفجار" OR "الحشد" OR "اطلاق نار" OR "قصف" OR "امن" OR "الامن" OR "شهداء" OR "شهيد" OR "جرحى" OR "مسيبة" OR "مسيبة" OR "تظاهرات" OR "تظاهرات" OR "ناسفة" OR "القوات الجوية" OR "ارتداد" OR "هدنة" OR "ضربات جوية" OR "داعشي" OR "إرهابي" OR "إرهابية" OR "إرهاب" OR "مسلح" OR "مسلحين" OR "مسلحون" OR "تفجيرات" OR "غرفة عمليات ثوار ليبيا" OR "قوة درع ليبيا" OR "القوات الخاصة" OR "صاروخ" OR "صواريخ" OR "المدفعية" OR "قذائف الهاون" OR "قاذفة" OR "طائرة المقاتل" OR "لاجيء" OR "لاجئين" OR "لاجئون" OR "المدفعية" OR "صاروخ ارض جو" OR "هليكوبتر" OR "بي تي آر" OR "دبابة" OR "بي ام بي" OR "قذيفة موجبة مضادة للدبابات" OR "في صاروخ" OR "بصاروخ" OR "ار بي جي" OR "في انفجار قنبلة يدوية" OR "قنبلة يدوية" OR "دبابات" OR "المضادة للطائرات" OR "الجيش الليبي" OR "قوة الحماية في طرابلس" OR "يحرر" OR "نسف" OR "طائرة محطمة" OR "تحطم طائرة" OR "سقطت الطائرة" OR "الثوار" OR "الوطني"

Domestic and Foreign Politics:

وكالة مكافحة" OR "الطحييني" OR "عبد الله الطحييني" OR "الدبيبة" OR "عبد الحميد الدبيبة" OR "بلحاج" OR "عبد الحكيم بلحاج" OR "معتيق" OR "احمد عمر معتيق" OR "معتيق" OR "احمد معتيق" OR "عيسى" OR "عقيلة صالح عيسى" OR "الجريمة المنظمة" OR "محمد بن طالب" OR "البنك المركزي قتي بركة" OR "النايض" OR "عارف علي النايض" OR "المجلس الامازيغي الأعلى" OR "علي" OR "حزب" OR "موسى" OR "حسن موسى" OR "السراج" OR "فايز السراج" OR "ياشاغا" OR "فتحي علي ياشاغا" OR "بن طالب" OR "خليفة الغويل" OR "المشري" OR "خالد المشري" OR "حزب العدالة والبناء" OR "إبراهيم بن" OR "مجلس النواب" OR "الوطن" OR "صوان" OR "محمد صوان" OR "محمد ال" OR "حفتر" OR "المارشال خليفة حفتر" OR "المجلس الأعلى للدولة الليبية" OR "الغويل" OR "جامعة الدول" OR "الواء ثوار طرابلس" OR "القذافي" OR "سيف الإسلام القذافي" OR "الجويلي" OR "أسامة الجويلي" OR "نواصي" OR "طبرق" OR "جرائم حرب" OR "سفير" OR "وزير الخارجية" OR "المدافعون" OR "منع الاعلام" OR "موسكو" OR "العربية" OR "سيركيوة" OR "سيرجوة" OR "سهم" OR "غير شرعي" OR "تدخل" OR "الاتحاد الأوربي" OR "الولايات المتحدة الامريكية" OR "اللازم" OR "انقطاع الكهرباء" OR "انقطاع التيار الكهربائي" OR "اختطاف" OR "سهم سرقية" OR "سرقية" OR "سيركيوة" OR "تحرير طرابلس" OR "الجيش الوطني الليبي" OR "حكومة الوفاق الوطني" OR "البريقة" OR "المؤسسة الوطنية للنفط" OR "الصحية" OR "المجلس الرئاسي"

Seham Sergiwa:

"سركيوه" OR "سركيوه" OR "سرقيوه" OR "اختطاف سرقيوه" OR "سهم سركيوه ليبيا" OR "سهم سركيوه ليبيا" OR "سهم سرقيوه" OR "سهم سرقيوه" OR "الاختطاف في ليبيا" OR "سهم" OR "سهم"

Berlin conference:

مؤتمر برلين" OR "برلين"

Elections and the Constitution:

مرشح" OR "انتخابات" OR "استفتاء دستوري" OR "استفتاء" OR "الدستور" OR "انتخاب" OR "القضاء الاعلى او القضاء العالي" OR "سيف الإسلام" OR "حزب سياسي" OR "دستوري" OR "تاخين" OR "انتخابات"

UN:

يو" OR "مجلس الامن الدولي" OR "عسان سلامة" OR "مهمة الأمم المتحدة لمساندة ليبيا" OR "يوان اس ام أي ال" OR "الأمم المتحدة" OR "مفاوضات سلام" OR "مبادرات سلام" OR "قمة الامم المتحدة" OR "مجلس الامن التابع للأمم المتحدة" OR "ان اس سي"

This publication is produced by Democracy Reporting International and authored by ZINC Network. The publication is part of DRI's project "Strengthening Libyan Civil Society"

Engagement on the Constitution and the Political Transition", funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.

Images: unsplash.com, pexels.com