

# Egypt's El-Sisi calls on international community to 'shoulder responsibilities' in Libya

Tue, 2019-04-23 19:52

CAIRO: Egypt's president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi called on Tuesday for the international community to "shoulder its responsibilities" to ensure the start of political negotiations between parties in Libya.

Speaking at the African Union Summit, he asked countries of the bloc to offer their support to Libya to help eliminate terrorism in the country.

El-Sisi said: "You must enable the army and police in Libya to perform their duty to maintain security and stability."

Egypt was hosting African leaders for emergency talks on Tuesday on the upheavals in Sudan and Libya, as El-Sisi warned against "a slide into chaos."

El-Sisi called for a coherent regional response to Sudan, as protesters in Khartoum keep up demands for a civilian government and Libyan military strongman Khalifa Haftar's forces bear down on Tripoli.

The leaders in Cairo urged Sudan's military rulers, who took power after toppling longtime president Omar Al-Bashir, to implement "peaceful, organised and democratic transition measures" within three months, the Egyptian presidency said.

But they also agreed on "the need for more time" for a transition, urging the African Union to extend its end of April deadline for the ruling military council to hand power to civilians or face suspension from the bloc.





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Egypt to host African summits Tuesday on Sudan, Libya  
Libyan force slows Tripoli push over concerns for civilians

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## [Jared Kushner: US to present Middle East peace plan after Ramadan](#)

Author:

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Tue, 2019-04-23 15:28

NEW YORK: President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner said Tuesday that he would present his long-awaited Middle East peace plan after the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan ends in early June.

Kushner, speaking at a forum of Time magazine, said he had hoped to offer the proposal late last year but that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu then called elections and still needs time to form a coalition.

"Once that's done we'll probably be in the middle of Ramadan, so we'll wait

until after Ramadan and then we'll put our plan out," said Kushner, a senior adviser to Trump.

Kushner, who is President Donald Trump's son-in-law, would not discuss any details of the plan, including whether it would endorse a two-state solution for Israel and the Palestinians.

The peace proposal has been in the works for two years and the process has been greeted with skepticism both on Capitol Hill and in global capitals.

*(With Agencies)*



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Pompeo says Israeli-Palestinian peace plan to be presented 'before too long'

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## [US calls on Iran to keep energy flow through Strait of Hormuz](#)

Tue, 2019-04-23 18:12

WASHINGTON: The US State Department has called on Iran to keep the straits of Hormuz and Bab Al-Mandeb open, an official said on Tuesday after the US a day earlier demanded that Iran oil buyers halt their purchases by May 1.

"We call on Iran, and all countries, to respect the free flow of energy and commerce, and freedom of navigation" in the straits, the official said.

Iran has said it would block the Strait of Hormuz if it was barred from using the strategic waterway through which about a fifth of oil that is consumed globally passes.

The threat from an Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) commander followed a US announcement on Monday that it would end exemptions granted last year to eight buyers of Iranian oil and demanding they stop purchases by May 1 or face sanctions.

Oil prices have surged to six-month highs.

The Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route linking Middle East oil producers to markets in Asia, Europe, North America and beyond, has been at the heart of regional tensions for decades. Iran has made threats to block the waterway in the past, without acting on them.



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US Secretary of State: Iran does not control Strait of Hormuz  
US sanctions over Iran oil will 'intensify Mideast turmoil': China

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## [Egypt to host African summits Tuesday on Sudan, Libya](#)

Author:

Mon, 2019-04-22 21:19

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi will lead two emergency summits with other African leaders on Tuesday to address events in Sudan and Libya, his presidency said.

The leaders will focus on “the evolution of the situation in Sudan” where protests continue after the military toppled president Omar Al-Bashir. They will also seek to “stem the current crisis” in Libya, where commander Khalifa Haftar is leading an offensive on Tripoli, Egypt’s presidency said in a statement.

El-Sisi is also the current president of the African Union. He will receive the Chadian president Idriss Deby, Rwanda’s head of state Paul Kagame, Congo’s Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Somalia’s Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed and South Africa’s Cyril Ramaphosa as well as Djibouti’s leader Ismail Omar Guelleh.

The planned summits are the first to be convened by African leaders on the current crises in Sudan and Libya.

For Sudan, the objective “is to discuss ... the most appropriate ways to address the evolution of the situation and to contribute to stability and peace,” Egypt’s presidency said.

The AU on April 15 threatened to suspend Sudan if the military does not hand over power within 15 days of that date to a civilian authority.

President of the African Union commission Moussa Faki is also expected to participate in the discussions, along with officials from Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria.

Another summit on Libya, which will bring together the leaders of Rwanda, South Africa and the Congo with El-Sisi, will focus on “relaunching a political process... (and) the elimination of terrorism,” Egypt’s presidency said.

Strongman Haftar’s self-styled Libyan National Army launched an offensive against Tripoli, the seat of the internationally recognized Government of National Accord, on April 4.

Egypt is a strong ally of Haftar, who is also backed by the UAE and – according to the White House – was consulted by US President Donald Trump in a phone call last week.



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Sudan tensions escalate after talks with military break downLibyan force slows Tripoli push over concerns for civilians

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## [Libyan force slows Tripoli push over concerns for civilians](#)

Author:

Mon, 2019-04-22 21:09

TUNIS, Tunisia: A self-styled Libyan army slowed down its push on the country's capital over concerns for civilians caught up in the violence as the UN refugee agency said Monday that the fighting for Tripoli has displaced more than 32,000 people.

Fighting erupted on April 5, pitting the self-styled Libyan National Army, led by commander Khalifa Haftar and aligned with a rival government in the east, against militias affiliated with Tripoli's UN-supported government. The clashes threaten to ignite a new civil war in Libya on the scale of the 2011 uprising that toppled and killed longtime dictator Muammar Qaddafi. The death toll from this month's fighting climbed to 254, including combatants and civilians, the World Health Organization said Sunday. At least 34 more people died in the past two days, WHO said; 1,228 were wounded. Since launching his push, which many see as a power grab for Tripoli, Haftar's forces have captured the districts of Gharyan and Qasr Bani Ghashi, along with several smaller towns. They also seized the capital's shuttered old airport.

Fighting is now underway for control of Ain Zara and Azizyia, two larger towns near Tripoli, and in the Abu Salim district, about 7 kilometers (4 miles) from Tripoli center.

Abdelhadi Lahouij, the top diplomat for the east-based government, told The Associated Press in Tunis on Sunday that Haftar's push was slowed down because of concerns for civilians in the greater Tripoli area, estimated to number about 3 million.

If the civilians had not been taken into account, the battle would not have lasted even a week, he said.

"The army is today 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) from Tripoli. It controls the (old) airport and the bridge that connects the airport to the city center," Lahouij said.

He also lauded President Donald Trump's call to Haftar last week expressing US support for the Libyan commander's perceived stance against terrorism and

Haftar's role in "securing Libya's oil resources."

A White House statement on Friday also said "the two discussed a shared vision for Libya's transition to a stable, democratic political system."

Trump's phone call was a step "in the right direction," Lahouij said.

Since Gaddafi's ouster, Libya has slid into chaos, governed by rival authorities in the east and in Tripoli, each backed by various militias and armed groups fighting over resources and territory.

Haftar has vowed to unify the country. He has led previous campaigns against Islamic militants and other rivals in eastern Libya, and has received support from the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Russia and France.



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Haftar forces press offensive on Libyan capital  
Libya reopens Tripoli's only functioning airport