



Defense Intelligence Report

Military Leadership Profile

21 December 2011

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(U) **Name.** Major General¹ (Maj Gen) Khalifa Belqasim HAFTAR.²

(U) **Position.** Nominee for Chief of Staff of the Libyan Armed Forces to succeed Maj Gen Suleiman Mahmud Obeidi.³ Maj Gen HAFTAR is the current Field Commander of Libyan Transitional National Council (TNC) military forces.⁴

(U) **Significance.** Maj Gen HAFTAR was nominated for Chief of Staff during a 17 November gathering of Libyan military officers in the eastern city of al-Baida, according to press reporting. The officers believed the TNC Ministry of Defense (MOD) leadership was hostile toward them and ultimately responsible for continued delays in the official reconstitution of the Libyan Army. Upon Maj Gen HAFTAR's nomination as Chief of Staff, the officers announced the reactivation of the army.⁵ We cannot confirm that either Maj Gen HAFTAR or the TNC has accepted the nomination.

(U) Maj Gen HAFTAR is a former Libyan Army officer who has been involved with anti-Qadhafi opposition groups since the late-1980s, according to press reports.⁶ In August 2011, regional news reporting described Maj Gen HAFTAR as both pro-U.S. and respected enough in Libya to be able to reunite the army and "end the chaos."⁷

(U) This is in contrast to a U.S.-centric April 2011 Washington Post article, in which an opposition spokesman said that Maj Gen HAFTAR swaggered into Libya "like Clint Eastwood" with aspirations of leadership.⁸ Press reporting also indicated suspicions among opposition members over Maj Gen HAFTAR's ties to the United States.⁹

(U) **Politics.** According to an April 2011 Reuters report, Maj Gen HAFTAR supported Muammar Qadhafi's 1969 coup d'état and was a member of Qadhafi's Revolutionary Command Council until 1987 when he broke from the regime. The same report, citing a paper by the Jamestown Foundation, described Maj Gen HAFTAR as an "old school secular Nasserist," referring to the pan-Arab ideology espoused by

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former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. It further referred to him as the "commander-in-exile" of the Libyan National Army (LNA), which is the armed wing of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), an exiled opposition group.¹⁰

(U) **Personal Data.** According to Western news organizations, Maj Gen HAFTAR was brought to the United States around 1990 as a political refugee (NFI).¹¹ He received asylum in the United States and lived in the Fairfax, Virginia area until March 2011.¹² Maj Gen HAFTAR is a member of the al-Farjani tribe with roots traced to the Bani Hilal, a centuries-old confederation of Arabian Bedouin tribes.¹³

(U) **Career.** Maj Gen HAFTAR is a graduate of the Benghazi Military Academy and trained in the former Soviet Union, according to press reports.¹⁴ According to press reports and a May 2006 United Nations Refugee Agency report, Maj Gen HAFTAR, then a Colonel, joined the NFSL in March 1987 after being captured during the Chadian-Libyan conflict.¹⁵ For the next 2 years, he led the LNA, which operated in Libya and Chad,^{16, 17} and eventually came to the United States.¹⁸ From the United States, Maj Gen HAFTAR directed anti-government uprisings in Libya in the 1990s.¹⁹

(U//~~FOUO~~) In March and April 2011 the TNC issued several conflicting messages concerning who—Maj Gen HAFTAR or Maj Gen Abd al-Fatah Yunis al-Ubaydi—was the overall TNC military commander.^{20, 21, 22} However, by July 2011 press reporting indicated that Maj Gen HAFTAR had become marginalized within the TNC military apparatus.²³ We believe that Maj Gen HAFTAR's appointment as Field Commander may have been an effort to marginalize him without removing him from the TNC military altogether.

(U) Source Summary Statement

(U) DIA's information on Maj Gen HAFTAR derives from open sources.

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¹ (U) <<http://www.acus.org/print/53133>>; Accessed 29 November 2011; 17 November 2011; Atlantic Council; (U) **Libya's Old Army Appoints New Chief**; Overall classification is U.

² (U) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khalifa_Belqasim_Haftar>; Accessed 29 November 2011; 24 October 2011; Wikipedia; (U) **Khalifa Belqasim Haftar**; Overall classification is U.

³ (U) **Libya's Old Army Appoints New Chief**; Extracted information is U.

⁴ (U) <<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/abd48080-6f5a-11e0-952c-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1gKRRUyux>>; Accessed 12 December 2011; 25 April 2011; Financial Times; (U) **Libyan rebels' limitations hinder progress**; Overall classification is U.

⁵ (U) **Libya's Old Army Appoints New Chief**.

⁶ (U) <<http://www.businessinsider.com/the-cias-man-in-libya-2011-4>>; Accessed 9 December 2011; 22 April 2011; Business Insider; (U) **Is General Khalifa The CIA's Man In Libya?**; Overall classification is U.

⁷ (U) <<http://english.al-akhbar.com/print/369>>; Accessed 9 December 2011; 28 August 2011; Al Akhbar English; (U) **Libya's New Generals (I): Conflicting Loyalties**; Overall classification is U.

⁸ (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

⁹ 3 April 2011; Washington Post; (U) **Strife Among Rebel Leaders**; Overall classification is U.

¹⁰ (U) **Libya's New Generals (I): Conflicting Loyalties**.

¹¹ (U) <<http://af.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=AFLDE72U0VQ20110401>>; Accessed 30 November 2011; 1 April 2011; Reuters; (U) **Rebel army chief is veteran Gaddafi foe—think-tank**; Overall classification is U.

¹² (U) <http://articles.cnn.com/2011-04-04-world/Libya.rebel.leader_1_wadi-doum-libyan-exiles-libyan-pows?_s=PM:WORLD>; Accessed 29 November 2011; 4 April 2011; CNN; (U) **Khalifa Haftar: The man who left Virginia to lead Libya's rebels**; Overall classification is U.

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- ¹² (U) <<http://www.abcnews.go.com/Blotter/Libyan-rebel-general-fairfax-virginia/story?id=13256324>>; Accessed 29 November 2011; 30 March 2011; ABC News; (U) **Libyan Rebel Commander Is From Fairfax, Virginia**; Overall classification is **U**.
- ¹³ (U) Libya's New Generals (I): Conflicting Loyalties.
- ¹⁴ (U) <<http://news.yahoo.com/chief-libyas-revamped-national-army-174713334.html>>; Accessed 9 December 2011; 17 November 2011; Agence France-Presse; (U) **New chief for Libya's revamped national army**; Overall classification is **U**.
- ¹⁵ (U) <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher/IRBC,,LBY,45f147662,0.html>>; Accessed 29 November 2011; 9 May 2006; The UN Refugee Agency; (U) **Libya: The Djava Khalifa Haftar movement, whose founding leader is reportedly a soldier named Khalifa Haftar, who currently in exile in the United States**; Overall classification is **U**.
- ¹⁶ (U) Libya: The Djava Khalifa Haftar movement, whose founding leader is reportedly a soldier named Khalifa Haftar, who currently in exile in the United States.
- ¹⁷ (U) Khalifa Haftar: The man who left Virginia to lead Libya's rebels.
- ¹⁸ (U) Khalifa Haftar: The man who left Virginia to lead Libya's rebels.
- ¹⁹ (U) Libya: The Djava Khalifa Haftar movement, whose founding leader is reportedly a soldier named Khalifa Haftar, who currently in exile in the United States.
- ²⁰ (U) **OSC; GMP20110728966151**; 2B2230Z JUL 11; (U) AL JAZEERA.NET: YOUNES DEATH HALTS MOMENTUM FOR LIBYAN REBELS; Overall classification is **U**.
- ²¹ (U) <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/03/Libya-rebel-leadership-split/print>>; Accessed 9 December 2011; 3 April 2011; The Guardian; (U) **Libyan rebel efforts frustrated by internal disputes over leadership**; Overall classification is **U**.
- ²² (U) Libyan rebels' limitations hinder progress.
- ²³ (U) GMP20110728966151.