



COI QUERY

Country of Origin	Libya
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information on an organisation called 'Al-Ahdaf Al-Hayawiya' (period 2005-2014)2. Information on a group called 'Lajnat Al Thouar' (or Thuar/Thuwar/Thuwwar)
Date of completion	28/05/2018
Query Code	Q77
Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	

Disclaimer

This response to a COI query has been elaborated according to the [Common EU Guidelines for Processing COI](#) and [EASO COI Report Methodology](#).

The information provided in this response has been researched, evaluated and processed with utmost care within a limited time frame. All sources used are referenced. A quality review has been performed in line with the above mentioned methodology. This document does not claim to be exhaustive neither conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. If a certain event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

The information in the response does not necessarily reflect the opinion of EASO and makes no political statement whatsoever.

The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on the 28/05/2018. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



COI QUERY RESPONSE

1. Information on an organisation called 'Al-Ahdaf Al-Hayawiya' (period 2005-2014)

Among the sources consulted and within the timeframe allocated to respond to this query, scarce information was found on an organisation called 'Al-Ahdaf Al-Hayawiya'. The only mention of this group was found on a news bulletin by the Long War Journal dated 24 July 2014. The brief dispatch reports:

'In Benghazi, eight people were killed and 19 injured, some critically, in ongoing clashes between Ansar al Sharia¹ and the forces of Operation Dignity², which have been bolstered by Ibrahim Jadhan's militia as well as the Al-Ahdaf Al-Hayawiya from Tobruk and Beida'³.

2. Information on a group called 'Lajnat Al Thouar' or Thuar (Thuwwar/Thuwar)⁴

No information on a group called and spelled 'Lajnat Al Thouar' or Thuar could be found among all sources consulted. The only source mentioning a group called 'El Thouar' was found on a blog in Italian language. According to this blog post, 'El Thouar' are the first rebel groups which fought against Gaddafi during the 2011 revolution⁵. The reliability of this source, however, could not be verified.

Nonetheless, information is available on rebel groups named and spelled Thuwar or Thuwwar.

A publication by Small Arms Survey explains that the Thuwar (also referred to as the 'revolutionary fighters') are considered the victors of the revolution that led to the overthrow and death of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. In the aftermath of the revolution, the Thuwar asserted 'revolutionary legitimacy' as the groups that had fought Gaddafi's regime. Between 2011 and 2012, many members of the Thuwar from Misrata, Zintan, as well as from Islamist groups, were appointed to ministerial positions. Since the aftermath of the revolution, these revolutionary armed groups opposed the continued presence of Gaddafi-era officials in the armed forces, ministries, and security services⁶.

In a 2012 article published on 'open Democracy'⁷, the author observes that, following Gaddafi's ousting, the Thuwar were seen as the heroes, having the unofficial mandate to protect the revolution and maintain a semblance of security. In the following months, some fighters went back to civilian life, some were assimilated into the National Army and Police forces and the rest remained within the

¹ For more information on 'Ansar al Sharia', see: BBC, *Profile: Libya's Ansar Al-Sharia*, 13 June 2014 ([url](#))

² For more information on 'Operation Dignity', see: Tawil, C., *Operation Dignity: General Haftar's latest battle may Decide Libya's future*, 30 May 2014, in *Terrorism Monitor*, Volume 12, Issue 11 (Jamestown Foundation), ([url](#))

³ The Long War Journal, *Libya*, 24 July 2014, ([url](#))

⁴ The following spelling variations were found on the groups: Thuwar or Thuwwar. For ease of reference, the spelling Thuwar is used throughout this document.

⁵ Medium, *Cronache dalla Libia*, 14 September 2016, ([url](#))

⁶ Lacher W., Cole P., *Politics by Other Means: conflicting Interests in Libya's Security Sector*, Small Arms Survey, October 2014, p. 12, 14, 16 ([url](#))

⁷ openDemocracy is an independent global media platform publishing articles on social and political issues. For more information, see: openDemocracy, About, ([url](#))



brigades. These brigades (or militias) were either brought under the control of the Ministries of Defence and Interior, or were left on the periphery. The article notes that the same Thuwar that had fought for freedom, however, became the ones imposing repressive rules:

‘Many ‘thuwar’ have no intention of submitting to the will of the elected government, nor of giving up their mantle of ‘defenders of the revolution’. Sufi shrines were destroyed with the support of the Supreme Security Council, (a Ministry-controlled brigade), members of the SSC threatened to blow up a hotel over grievances with the government and the American ambassador to Libya was killed in an attack allegedly led by Libyan brigade Ansar al-Sharia. Instead of protecting the road to Libya’s future, these brigades are now the biggest obstacle preventing the country from moving forward’⁸.

In 2012, Amnesty International reported on a series of violent attacks, against the Libyan community of the Tawarghas⁹, which were committed by opposition fighters from Misrata, known as Thuwar. The Thuwar, the report states, wanted revenge because they believed the Tawarghas had supported the former Libyan leader, Gaddafi, during the conflict¹⁰.

According to an article published by ‘Terrorism Monitor’, the Jamestown Foundation’s journal, a massacre, on 18 May 2017, in southern Libya, resulted in the death of 141 people¹¹, including civilians but mostly soldiers loyal to Khalifa Haftar. This massacre was perpetrated by a militia from Misrata and their allies, the ‘Benghazi Defense Brigades’ (BDB or ‘Saraya Difaa al-Bengazhi’). The BDB alliance was founded in 2016 and describes itself ‘not as an Islamist coalition, but as a group of thuwar and soldiers’ who oppose Haftar’s Libyan National Army (LNA). The author of this same article states that the BDB is ‘a politically enigmatic military coalition that claims it is anti-terrorist in nature while consistently being described as terrorist by its enemies’¹².

For more information on the most prominent armed groups in Libya, it is possible to consult the following: BBC, *Guide to key Libyan militias*¹³.

For more information on the security situation in Libya, it is possible to consult the UK Home Office, Country Police and Information Note, *Libya: Security and humanitarian situation*¹⁴.

⁸ Smith, R. *From revolutionaries to militia: the tables are turning against Libya’s ‘thuwar’*, (openDemocracy), 1 October 2012, ([url](#))

⁹ For more information on the Tawarghan community, see: Amnesty International, *Barred from Their Homes - The Continued Displacement and Persecution of Tawarghas and Other Communities in Libya*, 23 October 2013, ([url](#))

¹⁰ Amnesty International, *Libya: ‘We are not safe anywhere’: Tawarghas in Libya*, 8 June 2012, p.2 ([url](#))

¹¹ The Guardian, *Attack on Libyan airbase by troops loyal to UN-backed faction kills 141*, 19 May 2017, ([url](#))

¹² McGregor A., *Libya’s Military Wild Card: The Benghazi Defense Brigades and the Massacre at Brak al-Shatti*, in *Terrorism Monitor* Volume 15, Issue 11 (Jamestown Foundation), 2 June 2017, pp. 8-13, ([url](#))

¹³ BBC, *Guide to key Libyan militias*, 11 January 2016 ([url](#))

¹⁴ UK Home Office, Country Police and Information Note, *Libya: Security and humanitarian situation*, January 2018, ([url](#))



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