Interview with USEMB DOD team, March 17, 2025.

* We value miso/pa but they cannot solve problems alone with messaging.
* With us as a partner, miso is supportivej
* Libya wants more mil to mil engagement, training and defense acquisitions
* They are highly receptive in both east and west.
* While miso is important, we need to remove our own obstacles to improving mil to mil relationships
* World’s strictest adherence to arms embargo. Got the arms embargo modified but lawyers are restricting many good ideas.
* Some angles such as increased sof presence, starting with knowledge exchange. Bc of embargo. To Libyans it was training and very well received
* First east/west training event with east/west on security. 800% increase of number of Libyans who have gotten us military engagement in last 24 months. 1,000 participants in last 12 month period
* It is a success story in the war on terror, their CT forces anihalated sahel netowrks in Libya. In 2016 they destroyed isis in Cert with Africom support
* They have reasonable ct capabilities….
* So a lot of money and desire, seen as extremely prestigious to be trained by us military
* We have arms embargo so we can’t take money for FMS (foreign military sales) bc of how we classify the LNO as a government (seen as a non-state militia though government ties are growing)
* Divided military, state army and now state militia. If want to play in Libya you can’t treat as black and white (there are many shades of gray)
* In west, recognize the government, what were militias are now in the government with old militia commanders having senior gov roles
* It has always been this way back when kadaffi was in charge. This is something we can work with but it doesn’t fit with us rule and regulations

recommendations

* Before January lacked money and authorities, esp title 22. We are able to use title 50 and title 10 but 22 is only for military of recognized government, applies to the east but not west.
* Russia actively seeking to bifurcate Libya and wants to keep its influence in the east
* Russia Africa corps has replaced wagner, have a Russian Muslim commander and have Russian SOF.
* Belarusian exchanges. Gen Sadam wants to disassociate with Russian military but things that working with the belarusians accomplishes this (but it does not)
* Russia is resource predators, working counterfitting, funding smuggling. Rusian military africorps has subsumed the Wagner group that used to be here. Interview respondents think africorps is improve over wagner but charge d affairs does not think so.
* Libyans have large arsenol of old Russian weapons so they need Russian support. Lna officers going to china
* We are starting to change the narrative.
* Turkey is big in the west, biggest military supporters. Italians never left. They are trying to work with the Libyan military. I talians do training in both east and west while turkey is more in the west. Turkey MIT is shadier, provides direct support of militias.
* Disinformation. Most remarkable campaign started a year ago, claiming that Amentum a security company is conducting mil to. Mil training in the west which cis completely false. Amentum works a basic training class for the RSO. We visited a naval base and quickly photos were released showing us working with amentum.
* Media space: Libya is not a mature information space. The average user has 6-7 years of internet experience and they can’t curate online and are 25 year old une ployed men so they do not work and they share stuff online.
* Works for us because nothing sticks. It is so saturated with ignorant conspiracy theory mindset. Fake document of the Africom 4 star for example was hardly worth out mind, nothing sticks
* With the fake Africom memo, we had our own contacts who we have a directline with and we can contact them directly and do damage control. “you can do a lot of damage control to sway leaders”. I am more concerned with the views of the 6 libyans I work with than the average Libyan.
* Ditra event here, Russia says the us is working with Kadafi chemical weapons together with UK. It died quickly and didn’t matter.
* Unclass miso objectives: 1) Pol-mil unification; 2) Government unification
* Russia not doing bad things now, they used to do indiscriminate strikes and land mines and that was all wagner. They have presence at 4 air bases with unlimited access. In return the lna get air defense system to protect against Turkish aggression and maintainance. It is not directly harming the populace (charg d affairs does not agree). They are not benign bc they make unification impossible. Gives west an excuse to say we can’t work with you in the east.
* King for a day?
  + Focus on Russia, they are working to setup proxy; interim security national defense strategy still has Russia focus.we have not lost in transition, still al ot of us investment in Likeun villages
  + Counter veo helped shape the environment, Libya helped stabilize veo threat but as us pulls out of sahel veo presence may expans so threat has grown and it will surge into Libya
  + Counter veo would help with oil and gas investments
  + Let Libyans invest in their own defense, we want the us to drive investment as we open doors, increase FMS engagmenet
  + Sweep aside legal stuff and help CT partner rebuild
  + Environment with increase trust and joint activities is env where investment is safer, reunification not own goal but supports broader economic investment.
  + Libyans want to know if they can send their battalions to the us. That is not how it works but they can send officers to the us for training courses
  + Embassy is constrained to 26 pax and it has a one-man OSC team which is very small. Seen 30 gofo stars come to the embassy and with all those visits we are not doing the work of OSC. We are deeply understaffed so so we need more staff.
  + Training
    - We are doing Human capitol development, working on objectives, budgets, joint processes. 40 year kadafi army didn’t prioritize military education.
    - Interating operational capabilities, CT, migration, air safety, cyber security, disaster response, border security.
  + FM sales. Because of restraints on fms… “Nobody follows US Arms embargo”
  + Impact of decreased humanitarian support?
  + Usg engagement will be dififuclt and will make it harder for the us. It is not a desperately poor country though, nobody is starving
  + MISO: We are going in the right direction, it is hard to win or lose in the information space
  + Psyop can be help make stuff butter but clearly bigger need is to do tangible things for the military
  + Take Libya off the visa restrictions