



### [Turkey Slams Joint Statement by Five Nations on Libya](#)

Turkey slammed a joint statement made by the foreign ministers of France, Greece, Egypt, Cyprus, and the United Arab Emirates regarding their policy in Libya and the eastern Mediterranean Sea. The five nations criticized Turkey for supporting the internationally-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) in Libya, and Turkey responded by accusing the group of “seeking regional chaos and instability” and “sacrificing Libyans’ hope for democracy” by backing renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar – who has laid siege on the capital city of Tripoli since April of 2019. The GNA also rejected the joint statement, calling it “blatant interference in Libya’s internal affairs” and emphasized that it has the right to defend the interests of the Libyan state as an internationally-recognized entity.

In their joint statement, the group of five nations were additionally critical of the Libyan-Turkish Maritime Memorandum of Understanding. The agreement was signed in November of 2019, and has been rejected by Libyan military commander Haftar as well as the governments of Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece. The GNA responded by insisting that the Libyan-Turkish memorandum of understanding was signed between those two governments as “two Mediterranean states in accordance with international conventions and does not infringe on the rights of any third party.” They also called on countries in the Mediterranean region to review their stance on the Libyan issue and take a clear and strong position in condemning the aggression by Haftar, in which he and his Libyan National Army (LNA) forces have laid siege against the capital city of Tripoli for over a year.

In addition to attacking Turkey’s policy in Libya, the joint statement also denounced their actions in the eastern Mediterranean. The parties accused Turkey of partaking in illegal activities in the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone and its territorial waters. Turkey is at odds with Greek Cyprus over gas reserves in the region and has been sending drilling ships to explore the area. Greek Cyprus claims that the waters are part of its exclusive economic zone, while Turkey argues that it is protecting the claims of Turkish Cypriots in the northern part of the divided island.

Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Hami Aksoy’s reaction to the joint statement accused the group of five nations of being hypocritical with their comments and merely expressing frustration with Turkey’s success in not allowing them to undermine Libyan democracy. Aksoy stated that “the joint declaration of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, France, and the UAE on the eastern Mediterranean and Libya is a case in point of the hypocrisy of a group of countries who are seeking regional chaos and instability through the policies they pursue and seeing no harm in sacrificing the democratic aspirations of the peoples to the callous aggression of putschist dictators, and which have fallen into a delirium, as their agendas are being disrupted by Turkey.” He was also critical of the behavior of the countries individually, particularly Egypt and the United Arab Emirates: the former for failing to protect the rights of its own people domestically and the latter for having no connection to the eastern Mediterranean region.