



A security checkpoint belonging to one of the security agencies in Tripoli – Source: Social Media

Monthly Report ^{No. 78}

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN LIBYA DURING MAY 2026



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**Legal Disclaimer: This report is based on documentation files, testimonies from victims, survivors, and witnesses, as well as other available evidence, in line with international standards for documenting human rights violations, and should not be regarded as a legal determination of facts or responsibilities.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This monthly report represents the culmination of sustained, cumulative efforts, issued consistently at the beginning of each month since 2019. These efforts are made possible by the invaluable trust placed in us by victims, survivors, and witnesses, who have allowed us to document and amplify their stories

The report is a testament to the extraordinary dedication of our field monitoring and documentation team, who operate under extremely challenging conditions to reach victims, gather information, and verify it with the utmost precision and professionalism. It also reflects the unwavering commitment of our entire team, who work diligently to draft, refine, and publish this report with the highest standards of quality and timeliness, despite limited resources. This work aims to shed light on the state of human rights in Libya, bolster accountability efforts, and confront the pervasive culture of impunity.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to everyone who contributed to this endeavour, whether by providing information, offering support, or making any other effort. We affirm that this work could not continue without the dedication, sacrifice, and determination of our team, who remain steadfast in fulfilling their noble mission in a risk-laden environment, despite significant challenges.

Field Research and Documentation:

LCW Field Team

Prepared by:

Ahmed Mustafa (He/Him)

Anas Helal (Any pronouns)

Review and Editorial Support:

Ali Omar (He/Him)

Nour Khalifa (She/Her)

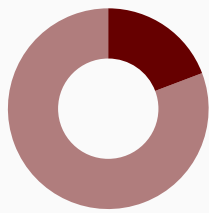


Support and
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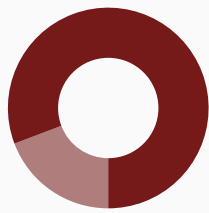
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CONTENTS

- I. SUMMARY..... 5**
- II. DETAILS..... 7**
 - May 1 7
 - May 8 7
 - May 13 7
 - May 14 7
 - May 15 7
 - May 21 7
 - May 24 8
 - May 25 8
 - May 30 8
 - May 31 8
- III. RECOMMENDATIONS 10**
- MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY 12**

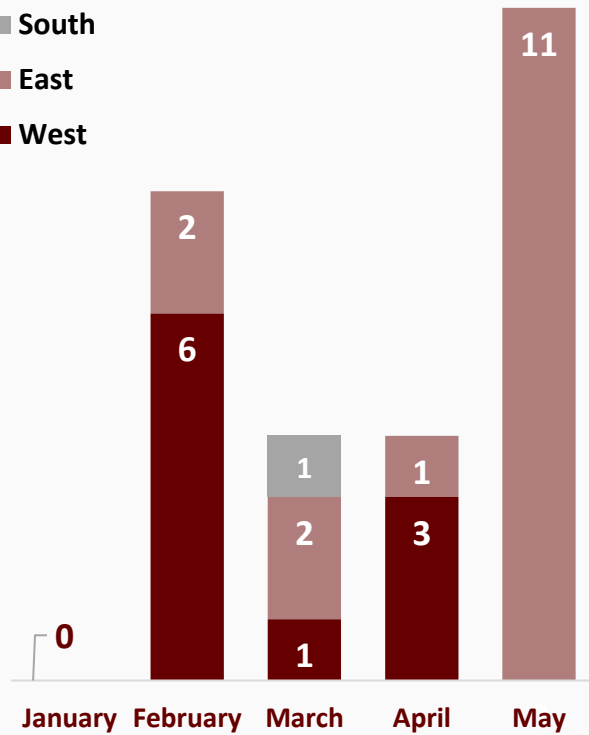


5 Women



21 Men

■ South
■ East
■ West



**ARBITRARY DETENTION IN 2026:
Monthly and Gender Comparison**

**According to the LCW database*

I. SUMMARY

May 2026 saw the continuation of serious human rights violations across Libya, including unlawful killings resulting from armed clashes and indiscriminate fire, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, and the ongoing loss of migrant lives along migration routes. The authorities in both eastern and western Libya have remained unable to protect civilians and have failed to ensure accountability for violations, further entrenching a culture of impunity.

During the reporting period, LCW's field team documented the killing of four (4) civilians, including two women, in incidents involving a shell striking a residential property in Al-Zawiya, indiscriminate fire in Tajoura, and the killing of a civilian by unidentified armed men in Al-Ajaylat. The team also documented damage to civilian infrastructure resulting from armed clashes in Al-Zawiya, which endangered the civilian population and had a direct impact on essential services.

With regard to arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, LCW's field team documented the arrest of eleven (11) civilians, including five women, in the cities of Sirte and Benghazi. Among of the cases were a Sufi sheikh, as well as ten participants in the Al-Sumud Maghrebi Relief Convoy as they attempted to continue their journey towards Gaza. This reflects an expansion of arbitrary detention during May to include activists participating in cross-border humanitarian campaigns, alongside the continued targeting of followers of Sufi orders on the basis of their religious beliefs and practices in eastern Libya.

With regard to migrant fatalities, LCW's field team monitored the recovery during May of twelve (12) bodies believed to be those of migrants, including four Sudanese nationals, at dispersed locations including Derna, Janzour, Qasr Al-Akhyar, Al-Qarabulli, Tobruk, and a desert area near the Libyan Chadian border. These figures reflect the continuation of serious violations along migration routes, in the absence of effective measures by Libyan authorities to protect migrant lives on land and at sea.

Based on analysis of LCW's database, LCW concludes that the authorities in both eastern and western Libya bear direct and indirect responsibility for the violations documented during this period, including the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), the General Directorate of Security Operations (GDSO) and the Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM), both operating under the Ministry of Interior of the Libyan Government accredited by the House of Representatives (HoR), the Anti-Security Threats Agency (ASTA) operating under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Government of National Unity (GNU), and local authorities along migration routes. This responsibility encompasses direct involvement in violations, command responsibility over implicated entities, and failure to prevent, investigate, and hold perpetrators to account.

In terms of recommendations, LCW calls on the authorities in eastern and western Libya to take urgent measures to protect civilians from the effects of armed clashes and indiscriminate fire, to halt arbitrary detentions and targeting on the basis of religious belief, and to ensure respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. LCW reiterates its call for the protection of migrant lives along migration routes, and urges the Libyan Public Prosecutor to open urgent, independent investigations into all violations and to hold those responsible to account.

As in all reports issued by LCW, the cases contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the full scale of serious violations committed during the reporting period. They are limited to what LCW's field team was able to verify in accordance with its established documentation methodology, and in line with risk analysis, privacy, and informed consent procedures that require certain information to be withheld or not published.

II. DETAILS

May 1

LCW monitored the recovery of two (2) unidentified bodies, on 1 May, believed to be those of migrants, on the seashore in the Bay of Bomba area in the city of Derna. The bodies were retrieved by the Libyan Red Crescent, Derna branch, and handed over to the local authorities for the completion of legal procedures.

May 8

On 8 May, LCW documented the death of **Masouda Ali Abu Harba**, who succumbed to serious injuries sustained when a shell struck her home in the Bir Muammar area, south of Al-Zawiya, during armed clashes that erupted in residential neighbourhoods of the city between the ASTA, operating under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the GNU, and other armed groups active in the city.

In the same clashes, LCW documented damage to oil facilities belonging to the Brega Oil Marketing Company, as well as damage to three electricity network stations, resulting in disruptions to fuel and electricity supplies in western Libya.

In connection with the same incidents, LCW documented the death of **Zaeira Ramadan Al-Ghuwail** (62 years old), who sustained a gunshot wound to the head inside her home in Al-Zawiya. She was transferred to hospital in a critical condition and died six days later, on 13 May, as a result of complications from her injuries.

May 13

Between 11 and 13 May, LCW monitored the recovery of two (2) unidentified bodies, believed to be those of migrants, on the seashore in the Janzour area, west of Tripoli. The bodies were retrieved by the Libyan Red Crescent, Tripoli branch, and handed over to the Emergency and Ambulance Service of the Ministry of Health of the GNU for the completion of legal procedures.

May 14

LCW documented the killing of **Mouayed Omar Balman** (34 years old), on 14 May, who was struck by a bullet of unknown origin in the Tajoura area, east of Tripoli, and died immediately. The authorities in western Libya had not announced the opening of an investigation into the incident at the time of publication.

May 15

On 15 May, LCW monitored the recovery of one (1) unidentified body, believed to be that of a migrant, on the seashore in the Qasr Al-Akhyar area, west of the city of Al-Khums. The body was retrieved by the Libyan Red Crescent, Al-Khums branch, and handed over to the local authorities for the completion of legal procedures.

May 21

LCW monitored the recovery of one (1) unidentified body, on 21 May, believed to be that of a migrant, on the seashore in the Al-Qarabulli area, east of Tripoli. The body was retrieved by

the Libyan Red Crescent, Tripoli branch, and handed over to the local authorities for the completion of legal procedures.

May 24

Between 21 and 24 May, LCW monitored the recovery of the bodies of **Mohammed Ibrahim Youssef** (24 years old), **Saeed Jumaa Omar** (26 years old), **Moussa Adam Moussa** (23 years old), and **Marghani Abkar Fadl** (38 years old), Sudanese nationals, in a desert area near the Libyan Chadian border.

On the same date, 24 May, LCW documented the arbitrary detention of ten (10) civilians, including five women, participating in the Al-Sumud Maghrebi Relief Convoy, which was travelling to break the siege on Gaza, near the 5+5 checkpoint in the city of Sirte. The detentions were carried out by security personnel affiliated with the Ministry of Interior of the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, following the convoy participants' approach towards the checkpoint with the intention of crossing eastwards to continue their journey towards the Libyan Egyptian border en route to Gaza.

On 2 June, the ten detainees, who are nationals of Argentina, Portugal, the United States, Poland, Tunisia, Italy, Uruguay, and Spain, appeared before the Office of the Attorney General in Benghazi, where the authorities in eastern Libya announced a ten-day extension of their pre-trial detention and their placement in the custody of the Directorate Compacting Illegal Migrations (DCIM) under the Ministry of Interior of the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR.

May 25

LCW monitored the recovery of two (2) unidentified bodies, between 16 and 25 May, believed to be those of migrants, on the seashore in the Al-Qa'ra area, east of the city of Tobruk. The bodies were retrieved by the Libyan Red Crescent, Tobruk branch, and handed over to the Tobruk Medical Centre for the completion of legal procedures.

May 30

On 30 May, LCW documented the killing of **Hassan Adel Al-Wakwak**, who was shot by unidentified armed men on a public road in the Al-Dawraniya area in the city of Al-Ajaylat, and died immediately. The authorities in western Libya had not announced the opening of an investigation into the incident at the time of publication.

May 31

On 31 May, LCW documented the arbitrary detention of **Sheikh Jumaa Faraj Al-Fitouri** (69 years old), Sheikh of the Al-Arousiya Sufi Zawiya in Benghazi, after armed personnel affiliated with the LAAF stormed his home in the Sidi Khalifa area, north of the city, and took him to an unknown location. He remains forcibly disappeared at the time of publication.

The arrest of Sheikh Jumaa follows, by eight months, the arbitrary detention of his son, **Mohammed Jumaa Al-Fitouri**, in November 2025, who also remains forcibly disappeared. Prior to his arrest, Sheikh Al-Fitouri had been subjected to sustained threats and harassment by personnel affiliated with the GDSO, operating under the Libyan Government accredited by the HoR, before these escalated into his arbitrary detention.

The arrests of the Sheikh and his son form part of a sustained campaign of arbitrary detention that has been ongoing since January 2024, targeting more than eighty (80) civilians in eastern Libya, including women, on charges of sorcery and witchcraft. The majority of those detained remain held without legal process and forcibly disappeared at the time of publication.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- LCW calls on the authorities in eastern and western Libya to take all necessary measures to prevent the recurrence of armed clashes or the conduct of attacks within populated areas, and to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian objects. LCW further calls for the establishment of effective procedures to limit the use of force in residential neighbourhoods, and for compliance with the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution, in accordance with international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL).
- LCW calls on the authorities in eastern Libya to halt all forms of systematic targeting on the basis of religious belief and practice, particularly that directed against followers of Sufi orders, and to immediately and unconditionally release all individuals arbitrarily detained on account of the exercise of their right to freedom of religion or belief.
- LCW calls on the authorities in eastern and western Libya to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under IHRL, in particular freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly. LCW further calls for an immediate end to arbitrary detentions and prosecutions targeting activists and dissidents on account of their opinions or peaceful activities, the release of all arbitrarily detained individuals, guarantees of non-recurrence, and the accountability of those responsible.
- LCW calls on the Libyan Attorney General to open independent and transparent investigations into all serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial killing, unlawful killing, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, abduction, and conditions within formal and informal places of detention, and to ensure the accountability of those responsible in accordance with international fair trial standards.
- LCW reiterates its call on the authorities in Libya to fulfil their responsibilities in protecting migrant lives along desert and maritime migration routes, and to cooperate with relevant international organisations to establish effective search and rescue mechanisms, cooperate with international rescue organisations, determine the fate of missing persons, and ensure their identification. LCW further calls on the Libyan Public Prosecutor to open an independent and transparent investigation into drowning incidents and violations related to human trafficking, and to hold those responsible to account in line with international accountability standards.
- LCW calls on the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the ICC to continue and expand its ongoing investigations into the situation in Libya and to issue additional arrest warrants, particularly targeting those bearing responsibility at the highest levels. LCW further urges the Office to intensify pressure on the Libyan authorities to fulfil their legal obligations to cooperate with the Court, implement its arrest warrants, and surrender those sought, given the continued absence of the will, capacity, and

effectiveness of national judicial mechanisms, and their inability to conduct investigations and prosecutions in conformity with the requirements of the complementarity principle enshrined in the Rome Statute.

- LCW reiterates its call on the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) and its member states to appoint a Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Libya, to fill the gap left by the conclusion of the mandate of the Independent Fact-Finding Mission, and to ensure the continuation of monitoring and investigation of serious violations and the identification of those responsible, in support of accountability processes and in furtherance of efforts to end impunity.
- LCW calls on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and relevant states to intensify pressure on all parties to respect human rights, and to work seriously towards achieving transitional justice, truth-telling, reparation for victims, and an end to the culture of impunity that sustains the continuation of violations.

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY

At LCW, our work primarily revolves around comprehensive monitoring and documentation. We gather information through our field monitoring and documentation team, which specialises in monitoring, documenting, and tracking human rights violations and international crimes. Our team comprises experts in monitoring and documenting violations, with diverse professional, gender, sexual, religious and ethnic backgrounds, working in fields such as law, journalism, and civil society activism. They operate across all regions of Libya, including hard-to-reach areas, as well as relevant countries abroad.

Principles

Our monitoring and documentation team has a deep understanding of Libyan and international contexts and continuously keeps track of developments. The team consults experts across various fields, including legal, security, political, social, and psychological disciplines. They conduct risk analyses at every stage of their work to identify threats to victims, survivors, witnesses, team members, partners, and collaborators, including threats to physical, psychological, and digital safety.

The team is committed to obtaining informed and renewed consent from victims, survivors, witnesses, and collaborators—ensuring they are fully aware of the risks and purposes of each action taken. They adhere to principles of objectivity, aligning exclusively with victims and survivors, treating them equally, and maintaining their privacy and confidentiality. The team integrates an intersectional perspective throughout all stages of its work.

Tools

To access and verify information, the monitoring and documentation team collects initial signs of violations through field sources, LCW's reporting channels, and available open-source information. Team members then organise preliminary data, establish contact with victims, survivors, or witnesses, and assess the validity of their accounts. Verification is conducted using multiple sources, including official documents, testimonies from other victims and witnesses, local collaborators, and open-source analysis.

The team creates detailed documentation files based on verified testimonies and information, categorising and archiving them securely. Data is analysed by gender, age group, geographic location, type of violation, and victim needs, and stored in a secure and central database.

Scope

At LCW, we dedicate our efforts to violations and international crimes against civilians. Our work highlights critical issues such as extrajudicial killings, civilian harm caused by armed conflict, torture, ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and enforced disappearances. We also focus on violations linked to human trafficking and smuggling, as well as abuses targeting civil society and vulnerable groups, including women, LGBTQIA+, religious and ethnic minorities. In addition, we pay close attention to violations perpetrated by parties involved in the armed conflict and other influential forces in Libya.



LIBYA CRIMES WATCH
رصد الجرائم في ليبيا

Website: www.lcw.ngo

Email: Info@lcw.ngo

Phone: +442080588815



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