

Video: Failed Show of Power by Libyan National Army Increases Chances of Turkish Attack on Sirte

By [South Front](#)

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On July 19, the Libyan National Army (LNA) test-fired the Soviet-era P-15 Termit anti-ship missile near Zawiyat Zanzur, on the Libyan coast.

The P-15 Termit is guided by active radar homing and equipped with an inertial navigation system. Missiles of this type have a range between 35 and 80 km depending on the variant and a top speed of Mach 0.95. The Gaddafi-era Libyan Navy had large stockpiles of P-15 missiles and also operated an unknown number of 4K51 Rubezh coastal defense systems, which were armed with an advanced copy of the missile. Thus, the LNA may have access to at least a part of these stockpiles.

The test-launch of the anti-ship missile was presented by pro-LNA sources as a message to Turkey that its warships deployed near the Libyan shores will become the target of anti-ship missile launches should they try to support the attack by the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord on the port city of Sirte. However, the test-launch had a quite different effect when on July 20 the video from the test site leaked online. It showed that the missile fell just a few moments after launching putting in question any potential anti-ship missile capabilities of the LNA.

https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_22_07_20.mp4

Meanwhile, tensions within the LNA factions erupted in al-Brega, where the Al Saiqa Brigade was demanding the release of several affiliated people from custody. As of July 22, the area still remains the focal point of tensions.

Such failed missile tests and other demonstrations of issues within the LNA only strengthen the Turkish commitment to launch a full-scale attack on the port city of Sirte. According to Turkish media, Ankara is deploying T-155 Firtina howitzers and T-122 Sakarya multiple launch rocket systems to the frontline west of the port city. The largest convoy with Turkish weapons and equipment arrived at the frontline from Misrata, an important logistical hub for Turkish supplies, on July 18. Nonetheless, reinforcements and weapons continued pouring into the western countryside of Sirte.

Right now, the main factor deterring further escalation is Egypt's strong position describing a potential Turkish attack on Sirte or Jufra as a red line after which it would directly intervene in the conflict on the side of the LNA. On July 21, Egypt's Parliament already approved "sending elements of the Egyptian armed forces in combat missions outside the borders of the Egyptian state to defend the Egyptian national security in the western strategic front against the acts of criminal militias and foreign terrorist elements until the

forces' mission ends." Thus, a preparatory attack on Sirte risks turning into a military confrontation between Turkey and Egypt on a Libyan battleground. The Erdogan government has not demonstrated readiness for such a scenario. However, if the LNA carries out some more failed missile tests like the one on July 19, Ankara may just take that risk.

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