

## LIBYA Security and Political Awareness Report

7 July to 13 July 2014

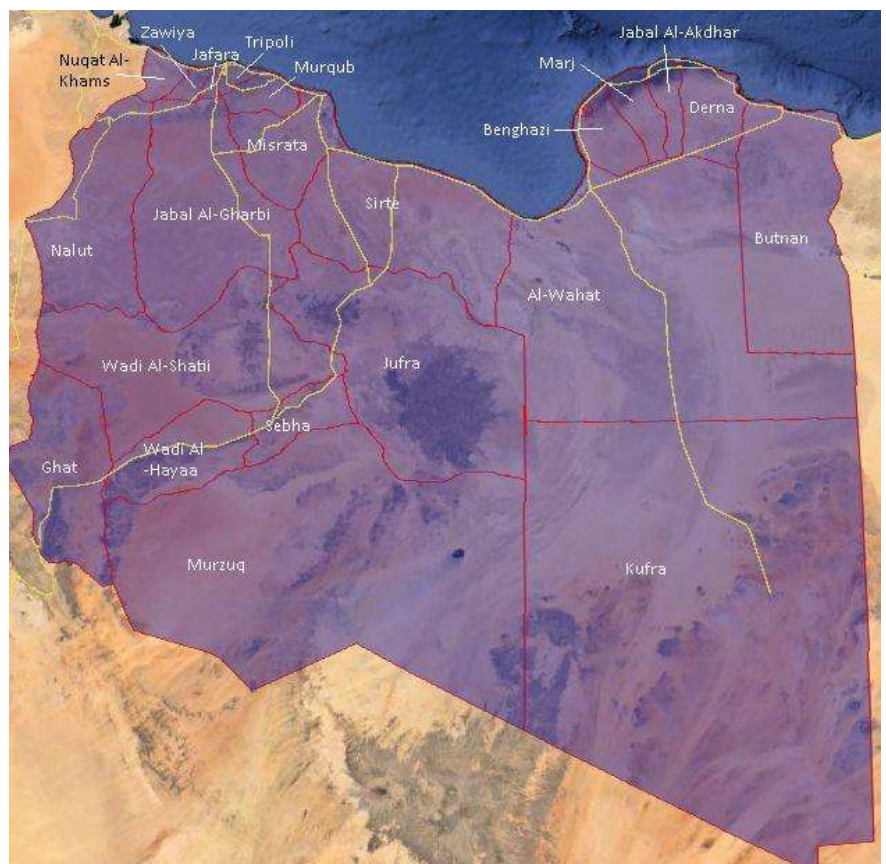
### Overview

The week saw continuing violence throughout. The forces of Operation Dignity continued to strike Islamist groups in Benghazi and surrounding areas. Tripoli saw the creation of a new alliance called the Stability and Security Force- whose 1<sup>st</sup> operation was to destabilise Tripoli by attacking the Zintani militias present in the city.

Politically there were moves to resolve an apparent budget shortfall and the growing polarisation between militias supporting Islamism and those supporting democracy and liberalism grew.

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## TRIPOLI

### Security Analysis

After a few weeks of calm, violence continued in Tripoli this week with pitched battles being fought between Zintan and Islamist militias.

The week started with tensions from last week's fighting between Zintan and Islamist militias in the Janzour area dominating life in the city. The tensions exploded into a skirmish between the Qaaqaa and Ignewa militias in the Abu Salim area on 12.07.

Following these clashes a group of Islamist militias announced Operation Fajr (Dawn) that would clear Zintan militias from Tripoli- calling them forces opposed to democracy. Their proclamation gave a deadline of the 20<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan (18<sup>th</sup> July) for the Zintani units and their allies to leave Tripoli, before the Islamist alliance would commence their offensive.

In a surprise move Mitiga airbase was for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 2 years handed to the Ministry of Defence and occupied by Central Shield militias on 12.07. Following this handover, a meeting between various Islamist militias was held preparing for Operation Dawn. The end result of the meeting was the announcement of a new group- the Stability and Security Force, made up of Central Shield; LROR; Fursan Janzour; Ignewa and other smaller Islamist militias.

13.07 saw the start of Operation Dawn- 4 days ahead of the supposed deadline- striking at Zintan militia strongholds, the Islamist Security and Stability Force attacked and gained a foothold in Tripoli Airport following rocket attacks. Zintani forces counterattacked and remained in control of the airport. Elsewhere the fighting saw a VBIED explosion in the Hay Al-Akwakh area and also saw the Qaaqaa militia lose control of the 7 April Camp off the Al-Sawani Road. The fighting was costly and particularly affected the airport which was closed until further notice as a result. Afriqiyah Airways saw all 7 of their planes at Tripoli damaged, with at least 1- an A330 worth \$250 million- being deemed a complete write off.

We also saw the build up of other militias, at present the conflict is between the Islamists forming the Stability and Security Force and the Zintani militias- Qaaqaa; Sawaiq and Madani. The Warshefana militias are also on the side of the Zintani militias and are mobilising 21,000 fighters in Janzour.

### Security Forecast

The security situation in Tripoli remains unstable, the Security and Stability Force will continue to launch attacks to try and dislodge and eventually drive out the Zintani forces in Tripoli. This fighting has already led to the complete closure of Tripoli airport and while it has been suggested this closure will only be until the 16<sup>th</sup>, until such time as either side demonstrates outright control of Tripoli it is unlikely that the airport will reopen.

It is also reported that the Zintan Military Council has despatched additional units to Tripoli to support the Qaaqaa; Sawaiq and Madani brigades already present. It is likely that further heavy fighting will take place before the week is over.



Incident Map 1, Tripoli

1. **Sowahilli.** 07.07 Gunmen abduct Health Ministry's medical supply chairman outside the Corinthia Hotel.
2. **Downtown.** 07.07 Gunmen kidnap Director of Planning for the African Holding Company.
3. **Zawiyat Addhmani.** 08.07 Parliament Chief of Staff kidnapped by militia.
4. **Ben Ashour.** 09.07 Gunmen rob Azerbaijani embassy.
5. **Dahra.** 10.07 Gunmen rob Customs Authority HQ.
6. **Tajoura.** 11.07 12 bodies discovered on beach
7. **Abu Salim.** 12.07 Fighting between Ignewa and Qaaqaa militias.
8. **Mitiga.** 12.07 Mitiga now under Central Shield control
9. **Ben Ashour.** 12.07 VBIED defused outside Foreign Ministry.
10. **Tajoura.** 12.07 Fighting between rival families.
11. **Hay Al-Akwakh.** 13.07 VBIED attack on Qaaqaa militia positions.
12. **Airport.** 13.07 Stability and Security Force capture part of airport from Qaaqaa militia.
13. **Airport.** 13.07 Qaaqaa and Sawaiq militias retake Airport from Stability and Security Force.
14. **Dahra.** 13.07 Fighting between Stability and Security Force and Sawaiq militia.
15. **Ben Ashour.** 13.07 Fighting between Stability and Security Force and Sawaiq militia.
16. **Airport.** 13.07 Stability and Security Force launch rocket attack.
17. **Gurji.** 13.07 Fighting between Qaaqaa and Stability and Security Force.
18. **Gibiss.** 13.07 Fighting between Qaaqaa and Stability and Security Force.
19. **Gibiss.** 13.07 Stability and Security Force capture 7 April Base from Qaaqaa militia.
20. **Janzour.** 13.07 Fursan militia attacked by Sawaiq militia.
21. **Janzour.** 13.07 Warshefana militia build up.

## BENGHAZI

### Security Analysis

The week saw continuing fighting between the forces supporting Operation Dignity and the Islamist militias in Benghazi, it also saw a spike in assassinations with at least 5 people falling victim- including another popular figure from the revolution.

Fighting between Islamists and Operation Dignity forces remains concentrated in the south-west of Benghazi in the Sidi Faraj; Hawari; Qawarishah; Garyounis and now Qanfouda areas. Ansar Al-Sharia; Al-Battar Brigade; February 17 Brigade; Rafallah Al-Sahati and Central Shield militias all occupy numerous fortified positions throughout these areas and currently the Operation Dignity forces are fighting to dislodge the Islamist militias from these areas.

The assassinations this week saw civilians and military personnel fall, including "Chico" a popular revolutionary and political activist. Gunmen also kidnapped at least 8 people and attempted to kidnap the son of General Obeidi- a supporter of General Hiftar. The Saiqa Brigade report that they estimate at least 60+ people are now held by unknown groups. While there is no evidence that Islamist groups hold all the hostages, they are suspected to hold the majority.

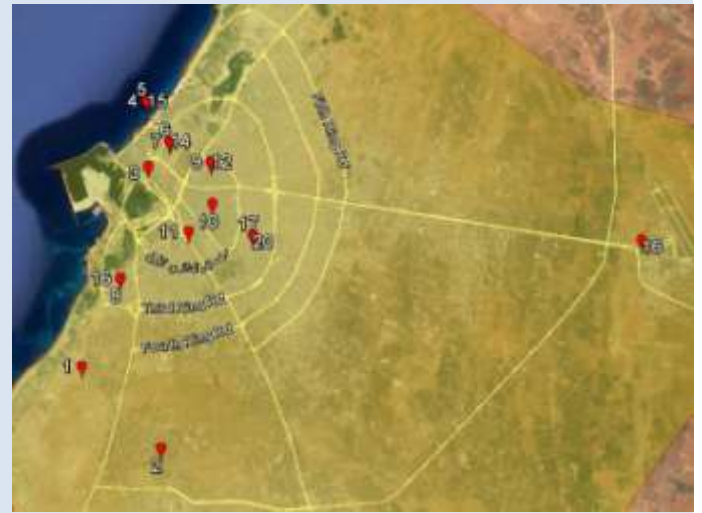
The week saw further indication- if any was needed- that Ansar Al-Sharia is attracting foreign support. On 08.07 Hiftar's forces detained 5 suspects in Sabri- possibly linked to the destruction of the Sabri Police station. The surprise was that of these 4 were Yemeni nationals. While it is not beyond the realms of possibility that there might be Yemenis in Libya unconnected to established jihadist movements, it seems highly unlikely. Indeed Hiftar's forces have indicated they have evidence that the 5 were linked to Al-Qaeda. If so it would further imply links between Ansar Al-Sharia and Al-Qaeda and could indicate that further Al-Qaeda support- including fighters- may be forthcoming to Ansar al-Sharia in the near future.

### Security Forecast

Although the Operation Dignity forces have had some success, the campaign is drawing to a stalemate. Although Hiftar's forces have superior firepower, they have been unable to transfer this into capturing territory from the Islamists and have resorted to using airstrikes to dislodge Islamist fighters from their defences.

Fighting in the northern half of the city to dislodge Ansar Al-Sharia from the Jalaa Hospital is likely following the failure of negotiations aimed at returning control to the Joint Security Room.

The Operation Dignity forces will undoubtedly face long term fighting in Benghazi to secure the city in the face of an ongoing insurgency once they free areas from Islamist control.



Incident Map 2, Benghazi

1. **Garyounis.** 07.07 Hiftar's forces attack February 17 militia.
2. **Qawarishah.** 07.07 Hiftar's forces attack Ansar Al-Sharia.
3. **Downtown.** 07.07 Gunmen assassinate businessman.
4. **Sabri.** 08.07 Police Station destroyed in 2nd IED attack
5. **Sabri.** 08.07 Hiftar's forces detain 4 Yemenis and 1 Libyan suspected of being Al-Qaeda members.
6. **Sidi Hsayn.** 09.07 Former revolutionary and political activist assassinated.
7. **Sidi Hsayn.** 09.07 Protestors block Al-Istiqlal Street due to earlier assassination.
8. **Taballino.** 09.07 Ansar Al-Sharia launches rocket attack damaging TV Station and houses.
9. **Al-Salmani.** 09.07 Gunmen kill civilian during carjacking
10. **Al-Berka.** 09.07 Gunmen assassinate soldier.
11. **Al-Keesh.** 10.07 Gunmen kidnap son of General Obeidi, freed by Saiqa forces.
12. **Al-Hadaa'iq.** 10.07 Gunmen assassinate Air force Officer.
13. **Al-Salmani.** 10.07 Gunmen kidnap 3 people.
14. **Sidi Hsayn.** 10.07 Gunmen kidnap 2 civilians.
15. **Sabri.** 10.07 Gunmen kidnap 3 military personnel.
16. **Benina.** 11.07 Rocket attack damages Airport buildings.
17. **Al-Hadaa'iq.** 11.07 Gunmen assassinate Army Officer.
18. **Taballino.** 13.07 Gunmen injure 1 civilian and kidnap 1.
19. **Sabri.** 13.07 Gunmen assassinate Saiqa member.
20. **Al-Hadaa'iq.** 13.07 Gunmen injure Police Officer.



Forecast Map 2, Benghazi



## LIBYA

### Security Analysis

Outside of Tripoli and Benghazi, violence increased this week with a number of incidents in Derna. The week also saw criminal incidents spread across Libya with several armed robberies; netting thieves over 2 million LYD.

Derna saw a number of attacks aimed at Ansar Al-Sharia and it is presumed that there has been another flare up of tensions between Ansar Al-Sharia and the Abu-Salim Martyrs Brigade. These attacks saw the deaths of at least 3 Ansar Al-Sharia members, including the driver of Sufian Bin-Qumu- Head of Ansar Al-Sharia in Derna. While details are patchy it is likely that Bin Qumu's driver died in a failed assassination attempt on Bin Qumu. These attacks on Ansar Al-Sharia saw reprisals; including the attempted assassination of the former- some say current- head of the Abu-Salim Martyrs.

The West of Libya saw 2 incidents linked to the start of Operation Fajr (Dawn) in Tripoli by the Security and Stability Force. On 13.07 reinforcements from the Central Shield moved to Garabouli east of Tripoli and took control of the town, security Tripoli's eastern edge. There was also an outbreak of fighting in Gharyan, when the Gharyan Martyrs- an Islamist militia forming part of the Security and Stability Force attempted to block Zintan reinforcements heading to Tripoli. Following heavy fighting in and around Gharyan the Zintan column was able to press onto Tripoli.

### Security Forecast

Libya in itself is unpredictable with extreme violence occurring throughout the country. That being said aside from Tripoli and Benghazi an increase in violence in Derna; Tobruk and Beida is expected.

This rise in violence will be caused in the short term by Islamist groups supporting Ansar Al-Sharia's campaign in Benghazi and long term by displaced Islamists from Benghazi fighting to secure new bases.

In the short to mid-term we are likely to see movement of pro-Hiftar forces to both Derna and Tripoli to make good on his promises to defeat the "terrorists".



Incident Map 3, Libya

1. **Derna.** 07.07 Leader of Ansar Al-Sharia survives assassination attempt.
2. **Derna.** 07.07 Car dealership destroyed in IED attack.
3. **Zuetina.** 07.07 Gunmen assassinate army officer.
4. **Derna.** 08.07 IED attack on marketplace.
5. **Tarhuna.** 08.07 Gunmen attempt to hijack vehicle carrying 6 million LYD, security personnel prevent hijack.
6. **Derna.** 08.07 Gunmen assassinate 2 Ansar Al-Sharia members.
7. **Qaminis.** 08.07 Security forces seize illegal wine warehouse.
8. **Sirte.** 09.07 Gunmen hijack vehicle carrying money to bank, 1.5 million LYD stolen.
9. **Derna.** 09.07 Former commander of Abu Salim Martyrs survives assassination attempt.
10. **Derna.** 09.07 Policeman assassinated by unknown gunmen.
11. **Sirte.** 10.07 Gunmen steal 150,000 LYD from bank.
12. **Wadi Ashatti.** 10.07 Gunmen steal 1.7 million LYD from bank.
13. **Brega.** 12.07 Petroleum Facilities Guards blockade Brega Port.
14. **Garabouli.** 13.07 Build up of Central Shield militia.
15. **Gharyan.** 13.07 Gharyan Martyrs (Islamist) militia attempts to prevent Zintan reinforcements from reaching Tripoli. 1 killed.



Forecast Map 4, Libya

## THREAT FORECAST AND GUIDANCE

The situation throughout Libya remains highly dynamic and unstable. Although the majority of incidents are directed at Libyans, there have been a number of incidents affecting foreign nationals, including diplomats.

Fighting in Benghazi is expected to continue in the near future with pro-GNC and Islamist militias resisting moves by the supporters of General Hiftar and those proposing the removal of the GNC.

Tripoli is generally safe, however given the prevailing political and security conditions, violence can erupt at any time. West and South-East Tripoli are at particular risk as they form a frontline between Islamist and Secularist militias.

Areas at particular risk are;

- Tripoli; Benghazi; Derna; Beida; Ajdabiya and Sebha.

The threats affecting international organisations are;

- Militia versus security forces / militia fighting;
- Criminal activity;

Evacuation from Libya remains difficult, currently;

- Eastern region;
  - Benina Airport remains closed until further notice and following damage on 11.07 will remain closed for the foreseeable future;
  - Beida airport was announced as replacing Benina, however the Libyan Government has stated only Libyan Passport holders may use Beida;
- Central region;
  - Misrata airport functions normally and may- in the short term- replace Tripoli;
- Western region;
  - Tripoli airport is closed until further notice- possibly 16.07- due to local fighting;
- Southern region;
  - Sebha airport is again closed due to political concerns.

We have seen a range of tactics used by all combatant groups, including;

- Open fighting using small arms; armoured vehicles and airstrikes;
- Indirect fire attacks- mortars; rockets and artillery;
- Kidnaps- both for ransom and for political purposes;

We would advise all organisations operating in Libya to exercise the highest levels of security.

- All facilities should be hardened to resist terrorist attack, with perimeter security and safe areas in place, measures should also include an adequate guard force and hardening of the buildings structure to resist explosive attacks.
- Movement in country should be limited to necessary travel only and should be risk assessed to ensure it is necessary.
- Meetings should be conducted in secure facilities only and never in places openly accessible to the public. Militias and criminal groups have demonstrated their ability to conduct strikes targeted at security and international personnel in public areas.
- We would recommend international organisations to apply these same security measures to local staff.
- The existence of many armed militias and lack of effective government control over large swathes of Libya allows militias and criminal gangs' free reign. Criminal activity ranges from illegal tolls on roads to the kidnap of staff.

The non-payment of government employees and military personnel by the Libyan Government directly affects the security situation. Unpaid security personnel have been directly linked to criminal acts including setting up illegal checkpoints on roads; robbery and kidnapping.

## POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

### The Budget Crisis

There are signs that the Libyan Government realises that the current financial situation needs review and that significant changes need to be made if Libya wants to avoid the ignominy of going bankrupt. The budget for 2014 was for 59 Billion LYD and in better times that would be more than achievable, however with oil production just now increasing and revenues still way down there needed to be action to rectify the shortfall. The budget in itself contains some measures that have a negative effect on the Libyan economy and it seems apparent that the Libyan Government is taking steps to remove these.

This week Prime Minister Al-Thinni; members of his cabinet and representatives from the National Oil Company met to discuss removal of the national fuel subsidy. While Libya is an oil producing country the total cost of the subsidy stands at 365 million LYD per month. The budget set aside 7 billion for fuel subsidies- actually more than for healthcare. From the Governments perspective, given Libya's economic reliance on oil, a situation where petrol is cheaper than water is untenable economically. In addition we have seen in recent weeks a number of stories about oil and petrol being illegally exported from Libya and smuggled to neighbouring countries and also links between petrol being smuggled out and illegal goods- alcohol for starters- being smuggled in exchange.

The Governments perspective is that a balance between reducing subsidies and ensuring those that need the subsidy retain access needs to be struck. The Government also indicated its concerns about removing the subsidy completely in one go and the resulting impact on a nation that expects it. WE should expect to see a phased withdrawal of the fuel subsidies and a gradual price rise from the current 0.15 LYD per litre over the next 3 to 6 months.

What is not definite is the impact on stability that the removal of the subsidies will have. While the Government is aiming to ensure the needy will still obtain subsidised fuel, this move will undoubtedly meet censure from others and could negatively affect the Government.

### The Islamist / Secularist Conflict

The week saw the start of the inevitable showdown between the Islamists and Secularists and while the conflict has been identified as being between religious factions, it is also worth considering it as a political and territorial conflict.

A coalition of Islamist militias- including elements of the Central Shield; the LROR; the Ignewa; Fursan Janzour and Gharyan Martyrs- aligned to form a new group called the Stability and Security Force. In a move aimed to mock General Hiftar and Operation Dignity, the new Islamist operation was named Operation "Fajr Libya" (Libya Dawn). The Security and Stability Force announced that they consider the Zintani militias to be illegal and issued a proclamation that demanded- among other things- the forces aligned to Operation Dignity- the Zintani militias- withdraw from Tripoli by the 20<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan (18<sup>th</sup> July) or they would be considered enemies of the February 17 Revolution.

For their part the Zintani militias are actually pro-government, they just happen to be anti-GNC and anti-Islamist. The Zintani militias have also been open in their support of Operation Dignity and have accused the Islamists engaged in the Stability and Security Force of trying to control the capital and of sabotaging the democratic process in Libya.

They say you can't keep a good man down- equally the other phrase that applies is "a bad penny always turns up"- and 12.07 saw a meeting of the Security and Stability Force in Tripoli that was a who is who among Islamist militia leaders. Particularly notable was the attendance of Saladin Badi and Abdulmonem Al-Said. Badi is the leader of the Central Shield Hettin Brigade and is known as "The Butcher of Ghargour", he was the leader of the Central Shield unit that fired and killed 47 protestors in the Ghargour area of Tripoli in 2013. Abdulmonem Al-Said was a leader in the LROR and was directly linked to the kidnapping of Prime Minister Zeidan in late 2013.

Politically the fighting comes at a bad time for Libya, with a temporary government in place, a lame duck parliament and the new House of Representatives still to meet there is little chance of any overall direction to resolving the fighting, not that militias tend to listen to the Government at the best of times. However, as one Representative suggested by destroying the means of air travel it affects the ability of the House of Representatives to assemble in Benghazi.

Territorially the control of Tripoli airport is a money earner in terms of government payouts for whichever militia holds the airport- in addition to money earned from illegal activity under the militia's protection. There is also a suspicion that the Central Shield aim to seize Tripoli Airport to ensure that the 2 major airports that remain open- Tripoli and Misrata- are under their control.

## POLITICAL FORECAST

The fighting between the Islamist Stability and Security Force and the Zintani militias in Tripoli has been a long time coming; that it is happening now is an unintended consequence of Operation Dignity. However, it was always going to happen at some point, the pressure to establish clearly who has the most influence and power- embodied in control of Tripoli- between the Islamists (dominated by Misrata) and the Secularists (Zintan being one of the leading elements) has been present since the end of the revolution. The unfortunate fact was that the revolutionary forces were not a single grouping, but a collection of various factions and the war ended without any single one having clearly established dominance. The fighting in Tripoli and the surrounding area that is expected to continue for the next few weeks is a natural adjustment, at the end there is very likely to be one clearly dominant side that will aim to control the agenda going forward and to an extent this would be preferable to the current power vacuum.

Long term the readjustment of militia power is of minimal importance compared to the lack of governance. The election for the House of Representatives has merely demonstrated the apathy and hopelessness of the Libyan electorate and has created a body that cannot in anyway be termed truly representative or widely supported. The GNC demonstrated time and again that it was out of touch and in the weeks leading up to the election was not even meeting to hold sessions. The concern is that the House of Representatives may perpetuate the cycle of poor leadership and failure to govern effectively. There is no indication at present of the process the House of Representatives will govern under, the Constitution remains to be drafted, as such it is likely that- initially at least- the House of Representatives will meet under the GNCs procedural rules.

The House of Representatives will face an uphill struggle when it assumes office- tentatively its first session will be 3<sup>rd</sup> August. In addition to resolving the security situation in Libya- a situation that will affect the House of Representatives itself as it will be based in Benghazi- the economy and even the selection of a new Prime Minister are all set to prove contentious issues.

However, long term the most immediate political need for Libya is the drafting of a Constitution. While it is early in the era of the House of Representatives, the lack of a formal Constitution will lead to further tensions. As has often been remarked the GNC operated in accordance with a Constitutional Decree published in 2012, not a formal Constitution written and ratified by the Libyan people. The creation of the Constitutional Assembly earlier this year was supposed to usher in a process by which a Constitution would be created and ratified either by referendum or voting in the GNC. Obviously events overtook the Constitutional Assembly's drafting process, but one wonders at the wisdom that has led to the creation of a House of Representatives that operates under what has already been seen to be a flawed Constitutional Decree. Indeed at present there is no indication as to the procedural rules that the House of Representatives will operate under. When- or if- a formal Constitution is drafted there remains a question as to how this will affect the House of Representatives going forward.

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**BLUE BORDER**  
HOLDINGS

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