

December Elections in Libya Risk a Return to Civil War

by [Ben Fishman \(/experts/ben-fishman\)](#)

Nov 21, 2021

Also available in

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Also published in *National Interest*

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Authorities have come too far to risk resuming violence or dividing the country with a rushed, heavily boycotted vote.

Just over ten years after the demise of Muammar Gaddafi, his once “reform-minded” son turned internationally-wanted war criminal announced he will run for president of Libya in elections scheduled for December 24. Seif al-Islam’s political aspirations demonstrate just one of many problems with holding elections next month. If he is allowed to run, Libyans who fought against Ghaddafi may boycott or turn to violence. Conversely, if Seif’s candidacy is rejected by the electoral commission that is expected to determine his eligibility, supporters of the old regime could boycott or disrupt the elections. The same dynamic will occur now that Khalifa Haftar, the eastern-based commander who wantonly attacked Tripoli in 2019, has entered the race. Given this hyper-polarized climate and the risk of substantial violence, it is far more prudent to delay elections for a certain period until several critical issues are resolved...

[Read the full article on the National Interest website. \(https://nationalinterest.org/feature/december-elections-libya-risk-return-civil-war-196702\)](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/december-elections-libya-risk-return-civil-war-196702) ❖

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