

Turkish Airlines Suspends Libya Flights Amid Deepening Crisis



Ankara, January 8 (RHC)-- Turkish Airlines has suspended all flights to Libya as the security situation worsens in the North African country. According to a company spokesman on Tuesday, Turkish Airlines suspended its flights to the restive Libyan city of Misrata, the only remaining destination in the country.

"We have suspended our Misrata flights until further notice, due to operational issues," said the spokesman, adding: "Turkish Airlines is not operating any scheduled flights to Libya." The Turkish company had earlier cancelled its flights to the capital Tripoli, Benghazi and Sebha. Turkish Airlines was the only foreign company to offer flights to the war-ridden North African country.

Libya's government and elected parliament moved to the eastern city of Tobruk after an armed group from the northwestern city of Misrata seized Tripoli and most government institutions in August. The new Tripoli rulers have set up a rival parliament and government not recognized by the international community.

Libya plunged into chaos following the U.S.-led NATO intervention that led to the ouster of Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. The overthrow of Gaddafi gave rise to a patchwork of heavily-armed militias and deep political divisions.

The country has been witnessing numerous clashes between government forces and rival militia groups that refuse to lay down arms. Battles between the rival militants are mainly over the control of oil facilities

in eastern Libya and have left hundreds dead and thousands displaced in recent weeks.

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