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# Gunvor Shipping Fuel to Benghazi for Libyan Rebels

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LONDON — Libyan rebels will get fresh supplies of fuel from Russia, although Moscow, a longtime ally of Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi, has yet to recognize them.

On Friday, trading sources said Swiss-based trading house Gunvor, co-founded by Russian businessman Gennady Timchenko, would supply a cargo of gas oil loaded at the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiisk and bound for rebels in Benghazi.

The 30,000-ton cargo was loaded aboard the Norient Star, which was expected to reach the Libyan port from Russia on Aug. 31.

Some rebel officials have warned that Russia, along with China and Brazil, may lose out with the new government due to their lack of support or even opposition to international sanctions and a NATO-led military campaign in Libya.

But some analysts, including political risk consultancy Stratfor, have suggested that decades of ties with Libya will help Moscow ultimately rebuild its positions.

President Dmitry Medvedev said this week that Moscow might establish formal relations with the rebels if they were able to "unite the country for a new democratic start."

Russia did not use its UN Security Council veto power in March to block military intervention, but Russian officials have previously warned that NATO aerial support for the takeover of Tripoli could jeopardize the rebels' legitimacy.

A spokesman for Gunvor was not immediately available to comment, and the ship's owner said details of the transaction could not be provided because they are confidential.

The rebels were also due to receive a fresh fuel shipment aboard the Delos, which loaded from floating storage supplies in Malta and appeared to have reached the west Libyan port of Zawiya late on Friday, according to shipping data.

Traders said the charterer was most likely Vitol, a Swiss-based trader that has more or less consistently supplied the rebels with fuel since the conflict began and had previously sent the Delos to Libya.

Vitol and the government of Qatar have been the main suppliers of fuel to cash-strapped rebels during the past six months.

As the rebels progressed toward Tripoli and their victory looked more likely, more companies began shipping fuel to Benghazi to help the uprising.

Among them were the Turkish state oil company Turkiye Petrolleri and trading firm BB Energy. Italy's oil firm Eni has also promised to sign a fuel supply deal with Libya next week.

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