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The German foreign ministry is opening a liaison office in Benghazi

On 12 May, the German foreign ministry recognised the Libyan National Council as the legitimate partner for talks representing the Libyan people in relations with Germany and decided to open a liaison office in Benghazi. The office is to maintain regular contact with the interim Libyan National Council and to coordinate German aid actions in eastern Libya. On the one hand, this decision has to be seen as a desire to demonstrate German activity in Libya after the stance Germany took in late March/early April on the Libyan crisis, which was criticised across the EU, and on the other as preparations for the establishment of economic and energy relations with Libya.

Since Germany has been criticised by its Western partners for having abstained from voting on resolution 1973 of the UN Security Council and has chosen not to participate in NATO military actions in Libya, it now wishes to prove that it is a responsible partner for France and the United Kingdom in the European Union. At a conference in Brussels on 13 May, Germany confirmed its previously promised military engagement in a possible EU military mission (EUFOR Libya), whose task would be to protect convoys with humanitarian aid from the EU to Libya. In turn, the German foreign ministry on 12 May in fact recognised the Libyan National Council as a body representing Libya although it had refused to do so in March this year and had sharply criticised France for making this step. The recognition of the Council by Berlin entailed the decision to open a liaison office in Benghazi. These moves also have to be seen as an expression of pragmatic care for German economic and energy interests. Since France, the United Kingdom and Italy have been very active in Benghazi, Germany would also like to establish contacts and good relations with the future government in Libya as a whole (or at least in its eastern part). <jus>