



English translation: “these are special for Misrata terrorist militias and those who follow them. Militias thanks and they said we test it”

Definition: The word “iirhabiayn” translates literally to “terrorists,” though, similarly to the word “Daeshi,” it is used to defame or insult a user’s political or religious opponent in some contexts. In other words, it is sometimes used to insult or accuse people who do not necessarily fall within the broadly used definition of a terrorist as someone who uses unlawful violence and intimidation (especially against civilians) in the pursuit of political aims. People may be labeled as “iirhabiayn” based on their actions, religious or political beliefs, or appearance—particularly more conservative appearances associated with strict adherents of Islam. It is worth noting that the word is not always used as a hate speech term and may be employed as a label for an extremist militant.

Why it’s offensive and inflammatory: This term is offensive and inflammatory in situations when it is used to denigrate, defame, or accuse another person based on differing beliefs or opposing political actions. In Libya, it has also been frequently employed to justify the use of force against so-called “terrorists,” who are often political or military opponents rather than members of actual terrorist groups such as ISIL or al Qaeda. Haftar has used this term frequently in the context of defeating or eliminating the “terrorists” from Libya in order to explain and justify his military actions, most recently in launching the offensive on Tripoli. Haftar and his supporters have labeled the Tripoli-based militias backing the internationally-recognized GNA as “terrorist militias” in response to accusations that the offensive is a power grab.²⁸ Although some of these groups do have documented ties to al Qaeda, Haftar has broadly generalized their goals to justify military action and vilify any militias opposing him. Respondents from the focus groups indicated that supporters of Haftar and the LNA use this term often against anyone who is not a supporter or who is critical of their actions. In particular, in the context of the current military action by the LNA, those who oppose this action are frequently labeled “iirhabiayn.” As one respondent stated, “If you are pro-peace and anti-war, but reside in the west of the country [where opposition to Haftar has typically been strongest], you are considered as a militia supporter or an ISIS member. Terrorist has become a term which is used to discredit people.”

Non-offensive alternative terms: المعارضين / *almuearidin* (English translation: *opponents / objectors*)