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Libya In The Post Ghadaffi Era

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Abstract:

Despite a significant investment of military and political capital in helping the Libyan rebels overthrow Qaddafi, international actors have done very little to support Libya's post-conflict recovery to date. In contrast with all other cases of military campaign in the state by NATO and its allied forces it has done little or nothing compared to a handful of smaller organizations to restore peace back to the place. In essence, the United States and its NATO allies have played a very limited role. The research work is therefore aimed at x-raying the state of Libya in the pre-Ghaddafi days vis-à-vis the current travesty been portrayed in the region. The researchers look at the economic cum political and social condition of Libya under which Ghaddafi ruled compared with what is obtainable today and ultimately what the future holds. The research concludes that although Libya under Ghaddafi's reign wasn't the best of Democracies it sure isn't better after his demise. It recommends amongst others that more should have been done and still needs to be done to restore normalcy to the troubled state, as the United States, its allies and indeed the entire region have both moral and strategic interests in ensuring that Libya does not collapse back into civil war or become a safe haven for armed militants threatening world peace. Terrorist violence is already a problem in Libya, and any increase could have a spiral effect on the fragile and failing Sahel region and the entire world. In contrast, if Libya sees gradual political stabilization under representative government and constitutional rule, the United States and its allies would benefit from Libya's energy and other resources. International actors have recently started increasing their efforts in Libya somewhat and that is indeed plausible.

Keywords: Arab Uprisings, Democracy, Terrorism, military.

INTRODUCTION

Two watershed events, - perhaps to the writer - will shape what is about to unfold in this text. First was a dis-affectionate and gross imagery of the state of the colored (Berber) Libyans known as

(Tebo), in the post Gadhafi Libya and the second was a photograph displayed on the internet that showcased and likened what Libya looked like in the pre and post Gadhafi era. It is quiet appalling even for those who had vehemently stood opposed

to the Gadhafi regime. The image revealed of the post Gadhafi era connotes only one thing; that Libya is in a state of abysmal dismal, it's therefore failing. This is in direct contrast to the idea or notion of 'salvaging' the people which those who stood solemnly opposed to the Gadhafi regime cloth themselves with to pull down the regime. In the wake of the Arab revolution the neoconservatives particularly, who seemed passionately attached to the notion of democratic revolution, told us this would be a generational struggle. Arabs were asked to be patient, and to wait. In order to move toward democracy, they would first have to build a secular middle class, reach a certain level of economic growth, and, somehow, foster a democratic culture. As if to say democracy - particularly the American self-acclaimed version of it - was the best thing that ever happened to the world. Again, it was never quite explained how a democratic culture could become in reality a draconian dictatorship, such as has been displayed by the US-NATO alliance in Libya. The plight of the ordinary and extraordinary Libyan whether Arab, colored, Muslim, Christian or Jew have on this ground exonerated the claim that a Libya without Gadhafi or perhaps one with a toppled Gadhafi by insincere power hungry Arabs and their American allies will do Libya no good. Kaplan (2010)

When the US-NATO alliance sent its warplanes to bomb Libya, a first and then a second invasion of Western journalists and scholars descended upon the country. With the media in box and controlled

by the sponsors of the revolution, the scenario conjured up visions of the 1830 French invasion of Algiers, when well-heeled citizens of the Republic hired luxury liners to observe the military proceedings first hand. This spur of attention, though, did little to add to the knowledge of the reality in the country. Until the exploitation of its oil began in the 1960s, Libya subsisted in part on rent paid for British and American bases in the country. In the early 1970s, it played a leading role in wresting pricing controls from the hands of the multinational oil companies and went into trading and partnering with the United States, following the 1969 coup that brought Colonel Mu'ammur Qaddafi to power. Thus the socioeconomic upheaval that has marked Libya's contemporary history began little more than a decade ago. As Ruth (2013) first argued in 1974, contemporary Libya carries a double burden of development: nation-statehood and interaction with the international economy are both quite new experiences for Libya, this becomes even more difficult considering Qaddafi's relationship with the West and the combined pressures have produced some remarkable results worthy of investigating.

LIBYA BEFORE THE UPRISING

Ghadaffi's Rise to Power

On September 1, 1969, a group of about 100 junior army officers – the “Free Unionist Officers” – led by Muammar Gaddafi, then 27, deposed aging King Idris. Prior to King Idris, Libya had been under foreign rule for centuries:

Ottoman rule from 1551 to 1911, then Italian rule from 1911 to 1951. Idris, ruler since Libya's 1951 independence, was the grandson of the founder of the Sanusi Order, an Islamic revival movement founded in al-Bayda in the 1840s. He thus drew much of his political support from the tribes of the interior of Cyrenaica (eastern Libya) where the Sanusi Order was most influential. A week after the 1969 coup, the name of the new commander in chief—Muammar Gaddafi—was revealed. He was identified as chairman of a 12-member Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The other RCC members' names were only revealed in January 1970. Gaddafi was the RCC's central figure from the outset, embodying its repudiation of foreign domination and earlier corrupt regimes. The RCC officers were of varied backgrounds — 5 of the 12 were from fairly privileged tribes, although Gaddafi later tried to present the RCC as uniformly of humble origins. They were young and had enrolled in the Benghazi Military Academy in hopes of upward mobility and an opportunity to overthrow the monarchy. Like the then much admired Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, they were pan-Arab nationalists and Arab socialists, interested in asserting Libya's political sovereignty and in achieving social and economic reform. Ahmed (2012)

The RCC purged the diplomatic corps and upper government bureaucracy of people tied to King Idris, and ran government ministries directly, except for the Ministry of Oil, for which the RCC

lacked technical knowledge. The RCC established various bodies purporting to enable popular participation in decision-making—Popular Congresses, the Arab Socialist Union and the “Popular Revolution.” However, the Libyan public quickly became disillusioned with these institutions, as real political power remained with the RCC, especially Gaddafi. This contradiction between the formal but mythical “popular” power, and the reality of Gaddafi's domination of all decision-making, has characterized Libya ever since. Divisions arose within the RCC over the use of Libya's oil income—99 percent of government revenues—and over Gaddafi's dominance. Gaddafi prevailed over an attempted coup by several other RCC members in 1975. By the end of 1975, the original 12-member RCC was reduced to five Gaddafi loyalists. He then consolidated his control, removing both civilian and military personnel suspected of potential disloyalty from the country's planning institutes and ministries. Sensitive security and army positions were steadily filled by members of Gaddafi's tribe, the Qadhadhfa, and allied tribes. Gaddafi also systematically destroyed civil society: political parties, independent trade unions and other civil organizations were prohibited. Opponents were imprisoned, tortured or executed, even in exile. Televised executions created an environment of fear, and helped Gaddafi strengthen control. Despite the growing repression, given Libya's large oil revenues and relatively small population, the Gaddafi

government was able to provide health care, education, and subsidized housing. After 1993 Gaddafi established a system of People's Social Leadership Committees (PSLC), composed of tribal leaders and other influential persons. The PSLCs channel state largesse, like student grants and subsidized housing, but are expected to discipline any anti-Gaddafi dissenters among their respective tribes, or risk collective punishment. The implicit social contract under Gaddafi has been that in return for citizens' political quiescence, the Libyan state would take care of their most basic daily economic needs. With its large oil revenues and small population, the Gaddafi government has been able to keep Libya's incidence of absolute and relative poverty lower than neighboring Egypt's. Average incomes are \$12,000 a year—a fraction of those in the Gulf States, but five times those of Egypt.

Ghadaffi's horrid Relationship with the West; Archiving to his depose

“Oil companies are controlled by foreigners who have made millions from them. Now, Libyans must take their place to profit from this money.”—Muammar Gadhafi, 2006.

Gaddafi's alleged support for various radical groups, including some involved in acts of international terrorism, led to US trade restrictions and the withdrawal of oil companies under Jimmy Carter. Under Ronald Reagan, a full-scale oil embargo and sanctions were imposed and Libya's capital, Tripoli, and its second largest city,

Benghazi, were bombed in April 1986. Libyans were 'implicated' in the December 1988 bombing of a plane over Lockerbie, Scotland and the September 1989 bombing of a UTA flight over Niger. As a result, in March 1992 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 748 imposing an economic embargo on Libya after Gaddafi refused to turn over the alleged terror suspects. Although the direct impact of the sanctions was minor, when world oil prices dropped in the 90s Gaddafi's ability to maintain his social contract with Libyans was jeopardized. In effect, his political survival depended on reconciliation with the West.

Following the intercession of Nelson Mandela and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Gaddafi agreed in 1999 to hand over the Lockerbie bombing suspects to the Netherlands for trial under Scottish law. UN sanctions were suspended, although US sanctions continued. In 2003, Libya announced its abandonment of its weapons of mass destruction programmes. In August 2003 Libya wrote to the United Nations formally assuming “responsibility for the actions of its officials” in the Lockerbie bombing and agreed to pay \$2.7 billion compensation to the families of the 270 victims. In 2004, the US lifted economic sanctions and resumed official relations with Libya, followed by key Western European leaders. Despite his previous public railing against the West, since 2005 Gaddafi welcomed ExxonMobil, Chevron, Shell and other oil giants to help exploit Libya's oil and gas wealth. Even

though the relationship seemed to have become cordial, there were exceptional and non-reconcilable grudge between leaders of the West and the deposed Libyan leader – particularly, his rough patches with Tony Blair and George Bush – and this could have led to what we witnessed in the inhuman and brutal murder of the Libyan leader. Al-Khalidi (2013)

Oil Politics and Ghadaffi's Ouster

The Wall Street Journal of 5 May offers evidence, additional to that already accumulated, that last year's NATO military intervention in Libya was rooted in objections to the Gadhafi government's economic policies. According to the newspaper, private oil companies were incensed at the pro-Libyan oil deals the Gadhafi government was negotiating and "hoped regime change in Libya...would bring relief in some of the tough terms they had agreed to in partnership deals" with Libya's national oil company. For decades, many European companies had enjoyed deals that granted them half of the high-quality oil produced in Libyan fields. Some major oil companies hoped the country would open further to investment after sanctions from Washington were lifted in 2004 and U.S. giants re-entered the North African nation. But in the years that followed, the Gadhafi regime renegotiated the companies' share of oil from each field to as low as 12%, from about 50%.

Just after the fall of the regime, several foreign oil companies expressed hopes of better terms on

existing deals or attractive ones for future contracts. Among the incumbents that expressed hopes in Libyan expansion were France's Total SA and Royal Dutch Shell PLC. 'We see Libya as a great opportunity under the new government,' Sara Akbar, chief executive of privately owned Kuwait Energy Co., said in an interview in November. 'Under Gadhafi, it was off the radar screen' because of its 'very harsh' terms, said Mrs. Akbar. The Journal had earlier noted the "harsh" (read pro-Libyan) terms the Gadhafi government had imposed on foreign oil companies. Under a stringent new system known as EPSA-4, the regime judged companies' bids on how large a share of future production they would let Libya have. Winners routinely promised more than 90% of their oil output to NOC (Libya's state-owned National Oil Corp). Meanwhile, Libya kept its crown jewels off limits to foreigners. The huge onshore oil fields that accounted for the bulk of its production remained the preserve of Libya's state companies. Even firms that had been in Libya for years got tough treatments; and in 2007, authorities began forcing them to renegotiate their contracts to bring them in line with EPSA-4. One casualty was Italian energy giant EniSpA. In 2007, it had to pay a \$1 billion signing bonus to be able to extend the life of its Libyan interests until 2042. It also saw its share of production drop from between 35% and 50%—depending on the field—to just 12%. Oil companies were also frustrated that Libya's state-owned oil company

“stipulated that foreign companies had to hire Libyans for top jobs.”

A November 2007 US State Department cable had warned that those “who dominate Libya’s political and economic leadership are pursuing increasingly nationalistic policies in the energy sector” and that there was “growing evidence of Libyan resource nationalism.” The cable cited a 2006 speech in which Gadhafi said: “Oil companies are controlled by foreigners who have made millions from them. Now, Libyans must take their place to profit from this money.” Gadhafi’s government had forced oil companies to give their local subsidiaries Libyan names. Worse, “labor laws were amended to ‘Libyanize’ the economy,” that is, turn it to the advantage of Libyans. Oil firms “were pressed to hire Libyan managers, finance people and human resources directors.” The New York Times summed up the West’s objections. “Colonel Gadhafi,” the US newspaper of record said last year, “proved to be a problematic partner for international oil companies, frequently raising fees and taxes and making other demands.” To be sure, that private oil companies and the US government objected to Gadhafi’s pro-Libya economic policies doesn’t prove that NATO intervened militarily to topple the Gadhafi government. But it is consistent with panoply of evidence that points in this direction. First, we can dismiss the West’s claims that it pressed its military alliance into service on humanitarian grounds. As civil strife heated up in Libya, a Saudi-led alliance of petro-monarchies sent tanks

and troops to crush an uprising in Bahrain. The United States, Britain and France—leaders of the intervention in Libya—did nothing to stop the violent Bahraini crackdown. Significantly, Bahrain is home to the US Fifth Fleet. Equally significantly, its economic policies—unlike Libya’s under Gadhafi—are designed to put foreign investors first. Second, without exception, countries that are the object of Western regime change efforts—North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Belarus, Iran—have set the economic interests of some part of their populations, or all of it, above those of foreign investors and foreign corporations. True, the economic policies of India, Russia and China are nationalist to some degree, and yet these countries do not face the same extent of regime change pressures, but they are too large for a US alliance to conquer without an onerous expense in blood and treasure. The West targets the weak. Finally, Western governments are dominated by major investors and corporations. Corporate and financial domination of the state happens in a number of ways: lobbying; the buying of politicians through political campaign funding and the promise of lucrative post-political jobs; the funding of think-tanks to recommend government policy; and the placement of corporate CEOs and corporate lawyers in key positions in the state. To expect that foreign policy is shaped by humanitarian concerns and not the profit-making interests of oil companies, arms manufacturers, exporters, and engineering firms seeking

infrastructure and reconstruction contracts aboard is to ignore the enormous influence big business and big finance exert over Western states. In some parts of the world, the arrangement is different. There, governments have organized their economies to serve their citizens, rather than organizing labor, the country's markets and its natural resources to serve outside investors and foreign corporations. For refusing to give their citizens' lives over to the enrichment of foreign titans of finance and captains of industry, these countries are made to pay a price. Their leaders are vilified by scurrilous propaganda and threatened with prosecutions by international criminal tribunals funded and controlled by Western states; they're targeted by economy-disrupting blockades and sanctions whose chaotic effects are dishonestly blamed on the governments' "mismanagement" and "unsound" economic policies and whose aim is to create widespread misery to pressure populations to rise up against their governments; fifth columns are created with Western funding and support to engineer regime change from within; and the omnipresent threat of outside military intervention is maintained to pressure the countries' governments to back down from putting their citizens' interests first. Gadhafi's sins weren't crimes against humanity but actions in its service. His reputation blackened, government overthrown, country besieged from without and destabilized from within, his life was ended for daring to enact a radical idea—pressing the

economy into the service of the people of his country, rather than the people of his country and their natural resources into the service of foreign business interests. Al-Khalidi (2013)

Condition of Libya under Ghadaffi's Reign and his alleged crimes

In 1967 Colonel Gaddafi inherited one of the poorest nations in Africa; however, by the time he was assassinated, Gaddafi had turned Libya into Africa's wealthiest nation. Libya had the highest GDP per capita and life expectancy on the continent. Less people lived below the poverty line than in the Netherlands. After NATO's intervention in 2011, Libya is now a failed state and its economy is in shambles. As the government's control slips through their fingers and into the militia fighters' hands, oil production has all but stopped. The militias variously local, tribal, and regional, Islamist or criminal, that have plagued Libya since NATO's intervention, have recently lined up into two warring factions. Libya now has two governments, each with its own Prime Minister, parliament and army. On one side, in the West of the country, Islamist-allied militias took over control of the capital Tripoli and other cities and set up their own government, chasing away a parliament that was elected over the summer. On the other side, in the East of the Country, the "legitimate" government dominated by anti-Islamist politicians, exiled 1,200 kilometers away in Tobruk, no longer governs anything. The fall of Gaddafi's administration has created all of the country's worst-case scenarios:

Western embassies have all left, the South of the country has become a haven for terrorists, and the Northern coast a center of migrant trafficking. Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia have all closed their borders with Libya. This all occurs amidst a backdrop of widespread rape, assassinations and torture that complete the picture of a state that is failed to the bone. America is clearly fed up with the two inept governments in Libya and is now backing a third force: long-time CIA asset, General Khalifa Hifter, who aims to set himself up as Libya's new dictator. Hifter, who broke with Gaddafi in the 1980s and lived for years in Langley, Virginia, close to the CIA's headquarters, where he was trained by the CIA, has taken part in numerous American regime change efforts, including the aborted attempt to overthrow Gaddafi in 1996. In 1991 the New York Times reported that Hifter may have been one of "600 Libyan soldiers trained by American intelligence officials in sabotage and other guerrilla skills...to fit in neatly into the Reagan Administration's eagerness to topple Colonel Qaddafi". Hifter's forces are currently vying with the Al Qaeda group Ansar al-Sharia for control of Libya's second largest city, Benghazi. Ansar al-Sharia was armed by America during the NATO campaign against Colonel Gaddafi. In yet another example of the U.S. backing terrorists backfiring, Ansar al-Sharia has recently been blamed by America for the brutal assassination of U.S. Ambassador Stevens. Hifter is currently receiving logistical and air support from the U.S. because

his faction envision a mostly secular Libya open to Western financiers, speculators, and capital. Perhaps, Gaddafi's greatest crime, in the eyes of NATO, was his desire to put the interests of local labour above foreign capital and his quest for a strong and truly United States of Africa. In fact, in August 2011, President Obama confiscated \$30 billion from Libya's Central Bank, which Gaddafi had earmarked for the establishment of the African IMF and African Central Bank. In 2011, the West's objective was clearly not to help the Libyan people, who already had the highest standard of living in Africa, but to oust Gaddafi, install a puppet regime, and gain control of Libya's natural resources. For over 40 years, Gaddafi promoted economic democracy and used the nationalized oil wealth to sustain progressive social welfare programs for all Libyans. Under Gaddafi's rule, Libyans enjoyed not only free health-care and free education, but also free electricity and interest-free loans. Now thanks to NATO's intervention the health-care sector is on the verge of collapse as thousands of Filipino health workers flee the country, institutions of higher education across the East of the country are shut down, and black outs are a common occurrence in once thriving Tripoli. One group that has suffered immensely from NATO's bombing campaign is the nation's women. Unlike many other Arab nations, women in Gaddafi's Libya had the right to education, hold jobs, divorce, hold property and have an income. The United Nations Human Rights Council praised

Gaddafi for his promotion of women's rights. When the colonel seized power in 1969, few women went to university. Today, more than half of Libya's university students are women. One of the first laws Gaddafi passed in 1970 was an equal pay for equal work law. Nowadays, the new "democratic" Libyan regime is clamping down on women's rights. The new ruling tribes are tied to traditions that are strongly patriarchal. Also, the chaotic nature of post-intervention Libyan politics has allowed free reign to extremist Islamic forces that see gender equality as a Western perversion. Three years ago, NATO declared that the mission in Libya had been "one of the most successful in NATO history." Truth is, Western interventions have produced nothing but colossal failures in Libya, Iraq, and Syria. Lest we forget, prior to western military involvement in these three nations, they were the most modern and secular states in the Middle East and North Africa with the highest regional women's rights and standards of living. A decade of failed military expeditions in the Middle East has left the American people in trillions of dollars of debt. However, one group has benefited immensely from the costly and deadly wars: America's Military-Industrial-Complex. Building new military bases means billions of dollars for America's military elite. As Will Blum has pointed out, following the bombing of Iraq, the United States built new bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Saudi Arabia. Following the bombing of Afghanistan, the United States is now

building military bases in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Following the recent bombing of Libya, the United States has built new military bases in the Seychelles, Kenya, South Sudan, Niger and Burkina Faso. Given that Libya sits atop the strategic intersection of the African, Middle Eastern and European worlds, Western control of the nation has always been a remarkably effective way to project power into these three regions and beyond. NATO's military intervention may have been a resounding success for America's military elite and oil companies but for the ordinary Libyan, the military campaign may indeed go down in history as one of the greatest failures of the 21st century. Christopher (2013)

Ghadaffi's Reign and respect for Democratic Values

Contrary to popular belief, Libya, which western media described as "Gaddafi's military dictatorship" was in actual fact one of the world's most democratic States. In 1977 the people of Libya proclaimed the Jamahiriya or "government of the popular masses by themselves and for themselves." The Jamahiriya was a higher form of direct democracy with 'the People as President.' Traditional institutions of government were disbanded and abolished, and power belonged to the people directly through various committees and congresses. The nation State of Libya was divided into several small communities that were essentially "mini-autonomous States" within a

State. These autonomous States had control over their districts and could make a range of decisions including how to allocate oil revenue and budgetary funds. Within these mini autonomous States, the three main bodies of Libya's democracy were Local Committees, People's Congresses and Executive Revolutionary Councils. In 2009, Mr. Gaddafi invited the New York Times to Libya to spend two weeks observing the nation's direct democracy. Even the New York Times, that was always highly critical of Colonel Gaddafi, conceded that in Libya, the intention was that "everyone is involved in every decision...Tens of thousands of people take part in local committee meetings to discuss issues and vote on everything from foreign treaties to building schools." The purpose of these committee meetings was to build a broad based national consensus. One step up from the Local Committees was the People's Congresses. Representatives from all 800 local committees around the country would meet several times a year at People's Congresses, in Mr. Gaddafi's hometown of Sirte, to pass laws based on what the people said in their local meetings. These congresses had legislative power to write new laws, formulate economic and public policy as well as ratify treaties and agreements. All Libyans were allowed to take part in local committees meetings and at times Colonel Gaddafi was criticized. In fact, there were numerous occasions when his proposals were rejected by popular vote and the opposite was approved and put forward

for legislation. For instance, on many occasions Mr. Gaddafi proposed the abolition of capital punishment and he pushed for home schooling over traditional schools. However, the People's Congresses wanted to maintain the death penalty and classic schools, and ultimately the will of the People's Congresses prevailed. Similarly, in 2009, Colonel Gaddafi put forward a proposal to essentially abolish the central government altogether and give all the oil proceeds directly to each family. The People's Congresses rejected this idea too.

One step up from the People's Congresses was the Executive Revolutionary Councils. These Revolutionary Councils were elected by the People's Congresses and were in charge of implementing policies put forward by the people. Revolutionary Councils were accountable only to ordinary citizens and may have been changed or recalled by them at any time. Consequently, decisions taken by the People's Congresses and implemented by the Executive Revolutionary Councils reflected the sovereign will of the whole people, and not merely that of any particular class, faction, tribe or individual. The Libyan direct democracy system utilized the word 'elevation' rather than 'election', and avoided the political campaigning that is a feature of traditional political parties and benefits only the bourgeoisie's well-heeled and well-to-do. Unlike in the West, Libyans did not vote once every four years for a President and local parliamentarian who would then make all decisions for them. Ordinary

Libyans made decisions regarding foreign, domestic and economic policy themselves. Several western commentators have rightfully pointed out that the unique Jamahiriya system had certain drawbacks, inter alia, regarding attendance, initiative to speak up, and sufficient supervision. Nevertheless, it is clear that Libya conceptualized sovereignty and democracy in a different and progressive way. Democracy is not just about elections or political parties. True democracy is also about human rights. During the NATO bombardment of Libya, western media conveniently forgot to mention that the United Nations had just prepared a lengthy dossier praising Mr. Gaddafi's human rights achievements. The UN report commended Libya for bettering its "legal protections" for citizens, making human rights a "priority," improving women's rights, educational opportunities and access to housing. During Mr. Gaddafi's era housing was considered a human right. Consequently, there was virtually no homelessness or Libyans living under bridges. How many Libyan homes and bridges did NATO destroy? One area where the United Nations Human Rights Council praised Mr. Gaddafi profusely is women's rights. Unlike many other nations in the Arab world, women in Libya had the right to education, hold jobs, divorce, hold property and have an income. When Colonel Gaddafi seized power in 1969, few women went to university. Today more than half of Libya's university students are women. One of the first

laws Mr. Gaddafi passed in 1970 was an equal pay for equal work law, only a few years after a similar law was passed in the U.S. In fact, Libyan working mothers enjoyed a range of benefits including cash bonuses for children, free day care, free health care centers and retirement at 55. Democracy is not merely about holding elections simply to choose which particular representatives of the elite class should rule over the masses. True democracy is about democratizing the economy and giving economic power to the majority. Fact is, the west has shown that unfettered free markets and genuinely free elections simply cannot co-exist. Organized greed always defeats disorganized democracy. How can capitalism and democracy co-exist if one concentrates wealth and power in the hands of few, and the other seeks to spread power and wealth among many? Mr. Gaddafi's Jamahiriya however, sought to spread economic power amongst the downtrodden many rather than just the privileged few. Prior to Colonel Gaddafi, King Idris let Standard Oil essentially write Libya's petroleum laws. Mr. Gaddafi put an end to all of that. Money from oil proceeds was deposited directly into every Libyan citizen's bank account. One wonders if Exxon Mobil and British Petroleum will continue this practice under the new democratic Libya. Democracy is not merely about elections or political parties. True democracy is also about equal opportunity through education and the right to life through access to health care. Therefore, isn't it ironic that

America supposedly bombarded Libya to spread democracy, but increasingly education in America is becoming a privilege not a right and ultimately a debt sentence. If a bright and talented child in the richest nation on earth cannot afford to go to the best schools, society has failed that child. In fact, for young people the world over, education is a passport to freedom. Any nation that makes one pay for such a passport is only free for the rich but not the poor. Under Mr. Gaddafi, education was a human right and it was free for all Libyans. If a Libyan was unable to find employment after graduation the State would pay that person the average salary of their profession. For millions of Americans health care is also increasingly becoming a privilege not a right. A recent study by Harvard Medical School estimates that lack of health insurance causes 44,789 excess deaths annually in America. Under Mr. Gaddafi, health care was a human right and it was free for all Libyans. Thus, with regards to health care, education and economic justice, is America in any position to export democracy to Libya or should America have taken a leaf out of Libya's book?

Muammar Gaddafi inherited one of the poorest nations in Africa. However, by the time he was assassinated, Libya was unquestionably Africa's most prosperous nation. Libya had the highest GDP per capita and life expectancy in Africa and less people lived below the poverty line than in the Netherlands. Libyans did not only enjoy free health care and free education, they also enjoyed free electricity and interest free loans. The price of

petrol was around \$0.14 per liter and 40 loaves of bread cost just \$0.15. Consequently, the UN designated Libya the 53rd highest in the world in human development. The fundamental difference between western democratic systems and the Jamahiriya's direct democracy is that in Libya citizens were given the chance to contribute directly to the decision-making process, not merely through elected representatives. Hence, all Libyans were allowed to voice their views directly – not in one parliament of only a few hundred elite politicians – but in hundreds of committees attended by tens of thousands of ordinary citizens. Far from being a military dictatorship, Libya under Mr. Gaddafi was Africa's most prosperous democracy. Ashour (2012)

Challenges Confronting Modern day Libya and the way forward

Since the 2011 overthrow of the Qaddafi regime, Libya's path has been tumultuous. Despite a number of advantages compared with other post-conflict societies, progress on political, economic, and security fronts has fallen far behind, generating frustration and threatening the recovery altogether. Libya has teetered on the brink of a relapse into civil war on more than one occasion in the past year. In the absence of a functioning state, jihadist groups have made inroads. The broader Sahel and Maghreb regions, meanwhile, are becoming more and more fragile and southern Libya verges on becoming a safe haven for al Qaeda-linked groups recently chased from Mali

by French military forces. The right international approach to Libya could nevertheless still help avert a more serious breakdown and real damage to U.S. and European regional and global interests—above all counterterrorism and the stability of world energy markets. This study examines what has been accomplished in Libya to date, draws lessons from the experience, and identifies some possible ways forward. Christopher (2012)

Lack of Security

Libya's most serious problem since 2011 has been the lack of security. Insecurity has had negative repercussions across the spectrum. It has undermined efforts to build functioning political and administrative institutions, further constricted an already minimal international footprint, and facilitated the expansion of criminal and jihadist groups within Libya and the wider region. Libyan political leaders have been under constant threat of attack, as displayed most dramatically in the October 2013 kidnapping of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan. The lack of security stems primarily from the failure of the effort to disarm and demobilize rebel militias after the war. Both international advisors and Libya's political leadership recognized the importance of rebel disarmament from the outset, but neither has been able to implement it. As a result, various types of armed groups control much of the country and the elected government is at their mercy. Until the security situation is brought under control,

progress on all other fronts will be very slow and always at risk.

Stalled State building Process

The lack of security has greatly undermined an already difficult state building process in Libya, where the post-Qaddafi state was very weak politically and administratively. To begin with, Libya's constitutional process has not kept pace with the schedule originally set out during the war. That schedule aimed to provide Libya with a constitution within a year of liberation. More than two years after Qaddafi's death, however, the constitutional drafting committee has yet to begin its work. Meanwhile, groups in the eastern province of Cyrenaica have seized control of oil facilities there and threatened to create an autonomous state-within-a-state. Islamist and revolutionary groups have forced the passage of a political isolation law that excludes many Libyans from participation in government, thus exacerbating existing rifts in society and reducing the available pool of talent for government positions. The General National Congress, which was elected in July 2012, has been deeply divided over many issues. In general, Libyan public administration is in very poor shape and capacity building is sorely needed to strengthen the state. Public confidence in the democratic political process has declined as frustration has mounted. In the absence of a national state, regional and tribal sub state actors have strengthened and will likely seek to hold onto their entrenched power.

Economic Challenges

Oil production restarted quickly in the aftermath of the war and has allowed Libya to avoid some of the most serious choices that post-conflict societies face because it could fund reconstruction and pay salaries to many groups, including militias. With the armed takeover of many of Libya's oil facilities in the summer of 2013, however, the stability of Libya's economy—including the ability of the government to continue to pay salaries indefinitely—was drawn into question. Libya also eventually needs economic reforms that will create a more business-friendly environment. The postwar Libyan government has taken a few steps in the right direction, but it has also been forced to increase government salaries and subsidies, both of which distort the economy and work against sustainable, broad-based economic growth.

Upping the International Role

Despite a significant investment of military and political capital in helping the Libyan rebels overthrow Qaddafi, international actors have done very little to support Libya's post-conflict recovery to date. In contrast with all other cases of NATO military intervention, a very small

United Nations (UN) mission with no executive authority has led the international effort to help stabilize the country. The United States and its NATO allies have played a very limited role.

International actors have recently started increasing their efforts in Libya somewhat. More should have been done and still needs to be done, however. The United States and its allies have

both moral and strategic interests in ensuring that Libya does not collapse back into civil war or become a safe haven for al Qaeda or other jihadist groups within striking distance of Europe. Terrorist violence is already a problem in Libya, and any increase could have a devastating impact on the fragile and failing Sahel region. Needless to say, if Libya were to become a terrorist safe haven, it would be a very serious problem for the West and a tragic end to the West's well-intentioned and initially very effective effort to topple Qaddafi. It would be tragic if that initial victory were allowed to turn into strategic defeat. In contrast, if Libya sees gradual political stabilization under representative government and constitutional rule, the United States and its allies would benefit from Libya's energy and other resources. The region as a whole would also be much stronger. Improvements will take time, but despite its current challenges, Libya still has many advantages when compared with other post-conflict societies. Notably, it can foot much of the bill for its post-conflict needs—even if it currently lacks the administrative capacity to manage complex payments to foreign entities.

The Way Forward

Improving Libya's future prospects will take several years, given the limited international role. There are four areas that international actors should focus on while looking ahead:

Support a National Reconciliation Process

The most serious problem in Libya today is continued insecurity, which impedes political and

other advances and could wipe them out altogether. Absent an international peacekeeping force, which should be considered but would be difficult under current circumstances, the best way to improve security is to engage Libyans in a national reconciliation dialogue. Such a process could facilitate disarmament, complement constitution making, and increase international actors' access to information about the capabilities and intentions of key Libyan groups. Although the process would need strong support from the Libyan government itself, outside actors, such as the UN or European Union (EU), could play crucial facilitating and mediating roles. Objectives of such a process could include creating a vehicle for broader discussions of disarmament, establishing rules of the road, and generally building trust and increasing the flow of information between different Libyan groups. Ideally, the process would be led by a high-level European, such as Paddy Ashdown, or another figure of international stature from a Muslim country. The newly created position of U.S. Special Coordinator for Libya could also play a role.

Strengthen Libya's National Security Forces

Insecurity in Libya is partially attributable to a lack of reliable national security forces. International actors are well placed to help remedy this lacuna, and Libya is prepared to foot the bill. Recent U.S. and European efforts to train a so-called "general-purpose force" of approximately 15,000 over the next several years will help. The

effort should proceed in parallel with reconciliation and strike a balanced representation of Libyan society, lest individual groups perceive the training as being directed against them and revolt. Police training is also much needed. These efforts need to be fully funded. The Libyans should pay for as much as possible, but other countries should also contribute as needed, especially while Libya's institutional capacity for payments is still weak.

Help Libya Strengthen Border Security

Border security remains a major challenge. The porousness of Libya's borders and their susceptibility to smuggling and the circulation of criminals and jihadists will continue to undermine Libyan and broader regional security. Improvements will take time and require building institutional capacity within the Libyan state as well as investments in monitoring capabilities, such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms. Establishing an effective, modern border-management system, with all its legal and administrative requirements, will be far more difficult given the sorry state of Libya's legal and administrative structures. International efforts in this area exist but need to be greatly expanded if they are to have any impact.

Help Libya Build Its Public Administration

The personalistic nature of the Qaddafi regime left Libya with a severe lack of public administrative and bureaucratic structures. International actors are well positioned to help Libya improve its

public administration, especially if the security situation improves. The EU and its member states are in a particularly good position for this task, due to their proximity to Libya. They should significantly increase their level of effort as soon as the security situation improves. As a temporary alternative, training in Europe should be encouraged. This training should include local as well as national-level institutions. Charles (2013)

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