

LIBYAN UPRISING AND INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION: NATO'S MISSION AND LIBYA'S GRIDLOCK

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ABSTRACT

Although neither NATO's documents nor the UN Security Council resolution in 1973 legitimizing the use of force allow for the direct overthrow of Gaddafi, some NATO member Heads of States have stated that the goal of the Libyan operation was clearly explained as overthrowing Qaddafi. As such, the NATO member states clearly have different policies in the Libyan crisis, despite the fact that NATO overtook command of the Libyan mission. In addition, on June 5, 2011, it was understood that—in military terms—neither the opponents nor Gaddafi's forces had enough power to take control Libya, which resulted in the subsequent NATO strategies to gain considerable importance.

Key words: Libya, Libyan Uprising, NATO, Middle East, Security.

LİBYA İSYANI VE ULUSLARARASI MÜDAHALE: NATO'NUN GÖREVİ VE LİBYA ÇIKMAZI

ÖZET

Her ne kadar NATO belgeleri ve 1973 tarihli Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi kararı Kaddafi'nin iktidardan indirilmesini engellese de, NATO'ya üye bazı önemli ülkeler Libya operasyonunun Kaddafi'yi devirmek için yapıldığını belirtmişlerdir. Yine her ne kadar NATO Kaddafi'yi devirmek için görev almış olsa da, NATO üyelerinin Libya krizinde farklı amaçları vardır. Ayrıca, 5 Haziran 2011 tarihinde Libya'nın kontrol edilmesinde ne muhaliflerin ne de Kaddafi güçlerinin yeterli olabileceği anlaşıldı. Ki bu durum, NATO stratejilerinin büyük önem kazanması sonucunu doğurdu.

Anahtar kelimeler: Libya, Libya İsyanı, NATO, Ortadoğu, Güvenlik.

Introduction

The arrest of the attorney and dissident Fathi Terbil on February 15, 2011, in Benghazi sparked civil war in Libya. The detention took place in a metropolis located in the middle of ancient Cyrenaica, which was the administrative center during King Idris's reign. Although the security forces' crackdown against the peaceful mass demonstrations and the civilian life

lost during the incidents caused the crisis to escalate, the aforementioned tension led to rallies on the Day of Rage through the call to the opposition on February 17. In a short time, the incidents in Libya became a full-scale rebellion of the Libyan tribes that had been excluded from the Gaddafi administration or had restricted access to the echelons of power. The rebellion resulted in an international intervention as Gaddafi continued using force against the protesters. The aim of this essay is to analyze the structure of the social opposition movement in Libya and the effect of the international intervention in the process.

Libya: Society, Tribe, and Revolutions

Libya's social and socio-economic structures are somewhat similar to those of the Gulf countries. Known for its energy reserves, Libya is home to approximately 6.5 million people, including foreign workers and residents. The ratio of foreigners to the total population varies from year to year, but on the whole they constitute about 25-30% of the population. In addition to Arabs, the inhabitants of Libya include Berbers, also called Amazigh, once the dominant ethnic group throughout North Africa, as well as Christians, Jews, Bahais, Buddhists, and Hindus. (OPEC, 2009:11, 22-23; Lipton, 2002:27). Whereas the majority of the Arab tribes in Libya adhere to the Maliki sect, the IbaniBanu al-Khattab tribe, which is Oman-centered, has contributed to the spread of the Ibadī sect in Libya (Ahmida, 2009: 24-25). The Arab population has increased in the coastal and inland areas from East Libya to Algeria. The Berbers of Libya live primarily in remote mountain areas or in desert localities, where successive waves of Arab migration failed to reach or to which they retreated to escape the invaders. In the 1980s, Berbers, or native speakers of Berber dialects, constituted about 5%, or 135,000, of the total population, although a substantially larger proportion is bilingual in Arabic and Berber. Berber place names are still common in some areas where Berber is no longer spoken. The language survives most notably in the Jabal Nafusah highlands of Tripolitania and in the Cyrenaican town of Awjilah¹

The other significant characteristic of Libya's population is its age structure. Approximately 30% of the population is younger than 14 years old and 50% is younger than 20 (Javdan, 2011). The unemployment rate was 30% in 2004 and 21% in 2009, despite the rich energy reserves in the country. Considering the fact that the youth are most affected by unemployment, the growing economy could not make serious contributions to employing the youth. In additions, more than 16% of the country's population has no stable income, while 43.%of the households have just one source of income.

More than 5% of the population lives in unhealthy housing conditions, including city slum shacks (Tripoli Post, 2009). Libya has failed to diversify its economy, although it has a young and dynamic population. The Libyan economy depends primarily upon revenues from the oil sector, which contribute about 95% of export earnings, 25% of GDP, and 80% of government revenues (CIA Fact Book, 2011). Libya has an estimated 46 billion barrels of oil reserves and 1.5 trillion cubic meters of natural gas.

Within this framework, the economic and political problems in Libya have caused an anti-regime social base to appear in society organized along tribal lines. In Libya, 85% of the social structure has been organized in terms of a tribal structure; apart from the Arabs, the Berbers live as tribes in the region from Chad and Niger to Sudan, and the political and administrative structures have historically been directly affected by the social structure of the region. Therefore, the tribal allegiances, numerical proportions, and regions under tribal control play a primary role in the constitution of political and administrative structures. The tribes were known to influence economy and security issues during the Ottoman era as well as following the Italian and the Senussi periods. "Tribal influence in Libya is extremely important, particularly since the 1970s, with tribal affiliation being important with regards to obtain their rights, and for protection, and even in order to find a job, particularly in the state apparatus" (Hatitah, 2011). Indeed, from the Fatimids to the Ottoman eras, the political and administrative structure composed of three separate provinces was formed based on the distribution of tribes. These political and administrative regions are Cyrenaica, which is situated between Egypt and Tripoli, the Fezzan region, which constitutes the border of Libya with Chad and Niger, and Tripoli, which is located from Sirte to inland (Martínez, 2007:98).

The main reasons affecting the spread of the anti-Gaddafi demonstrations to Fezzan and Tripoli after they started in Cyrenaica (the East Libyan Territories) relate to the Ottoman era. The historical background of the incidents dates back to the first Arab immigration. However, this paper will focus on 1830 onwards. The Ottomans moved toward the Fezzan region 50 or 60 years after they first formed their authority over the tribes in Cyrenaica. Nevertheless, the control in Fezzan was unsatisfactory until the end of the 1800s, and the tribes maintained their independence. During Sultan Abdulhamid's reign, the Ottomans cooperated with the Senussi Cult, which was active in Cyrenaica and Fezzan. As a result, they tried to dominate the tribes that supported the cult, particularly in the Cyrenaica and Fezzan regions. After the Senussi Cult first declared its autonomy in 1890 in Al-Jaghbug, it tried to organize the society in religious and social domains by building hermitages in different regions, such as Fezzan, Kufra, Tripoli, and Darnah, in a short period. After a while, the

Senussi movement transformed into emirates under the leadership of Amir Idris, with English support in 1949 in Benghazi-centered Cyrenaica territories; in 1951, it became the Kingdom of Libya, which had a federal structure through the merge of Tripoli and Fezzan. However, the tribes in Cyrenaica, who were the administrator of the region as it had been during the period before the independence, had the power in real terms instead of King Idris. Contrary to Omar Mukhtar, King Idris revealed administrative weaknesses and preferred coming to terms with the English, the Americans, and later the Italians. Meanwhile, Libyan soldiers were impressed by the Free Officers Movement, and Colonel Gaddafi overthrew King Idris, who had lost the support of many tribes, and subsequently came to power in 1969. Colonel Gaddafi accepted the tribes as a guarantor of the social stability and security and established the state in terms of the power of tribes, their commitment to government, and leverage in the social domain (Obeidii, 2011: 116). After 1970, the fact that the administration was mainly handed over the Tripolitania tribes from the tribes of Cyrenaica and Fezzan within the political, administrative, and security dimensions caused the support for the Gaddafi government to be limited in these regions.

During Gaddafi's rule, many groups adhering to the East Libya-centered Beni Salim Tribe failed to produce the desired effect. The most powerful tribe in Libya, the Beni Salim tribe originated from the Arab Peninsula and settled in Cyrenaica while the Beni Hilal settled in western Libya around Tripoli. Some Libyan researchers and experts have shown that approximately 15% of the Libyan population have no tribal affiliation whatsoever, being descendents of the Berber, Turkish, or other communities (Hatitah, 2011: 98). Libya has an estimated 140 tribes, only about 30 of which are viewed as having any real significance (Issachar, 2011). Some of the branches of the Libyan tribes live in Egypt, Chad, and Algeria as well. For instance, the majority of Awlad Ali and Al-Haraba tribes also live in Egypt. After the tribe members—who had supported the rebellion from the very beginning—had directly taken control of both sides of the Egyptian-Libyan border, they provided the tribe members in Libya with arms support and fundamental needs such as food and healthcare products (Ismail, 2011). However, the other tribe members in Egypt sent 400 members to Libya to fight on behalf of Gaddafi (Fattah, 2011).

Eventually, the inter-tribe relations became seriously decisive in determining the regime, although the rhetoric about direct popular rule, green socialism, or local government emerged during Gaddafi's rule. The Gaddafi tribe, which held the power in Tripoli carried from Benghazi, was not well known as an effective tribe in Libya or with a large population until 1969. The Warfallah tribe, the largest tribe in Libya with one million members, the

Magariha tribe, the Al-Awaqir tribe, which fought against the Ottomans and the Italians, the Al-Mujabra tribe, the Obeidat tribe, and the Farjan tribe played a significant role in Gaddafi's government. The Warfallah tribe provided effective military forces, especially air forces, until 1993. After the 1993 assassination attempt against Gaddafi, the Gaddafi tribe took control of this unit. The Magariha tribe was one of the more prominent tribes that supported the regime. Three tribes provided significant social support to the regime: the Gaddafi tribe, followed by the Magariha and Warfallah tribes (Wehrey, 2011).

However, General Abdul Sallam Jalloud, the second in command, was loyal to the Magariha tribe as well, which held the key positions in the system. General Abdul Sallam Jalloud, who participated in the 1969 coup d'état and was a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, had been excluded from the government since 1995. The most powerful members of the Magariha tribe is Colonel Abdullah al-Sanussi, the head of the Jamahiriya Security Organization (JSO), which includes both the Internal Security Organization and the External Security Organization, and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, known as the Lockerbie bomber (Issachar, 2011). Major General AbdulfattahYounis Al-Obaidi, one of the tribal leaders of Al-Obaidi tribe—one of the most powerful tribes in East Libya—held the position of Interior Ministry until February 23, 2011. After major protests in Benghazi in 2006, the appointment of Major General al-Obaidi as interior minister in 2008 represented a concession to the East Libyan tribe (Liu, 2011).

The tribal allegiances played a primary role in the distribution of political and bureaucratic responsibilities. Gaddafi not only played the tribes against each other, but also integrated the trusted tribes in the political system; he granted privileges to these tribes in terms of security, intelligence, and bureaucracy. Limiting the effect and the power of the dissident tribes, Gaddafi prevented the coup attempts against himself. Consequently, the power structure he established through the tribal structures remained successful until 2011.

February 17 Rebellion in Libya: Loss of Gaddafi's Legitimacy amongst the Tribes

The power shift also influenced the opposition movement in Libya after the mass demonstrations organized in Tunisia and Egypt at the beginning of 2011. Gaddafi's harsh measures against the anti-regime protests intensified the crisis. On February 15 in Benghazi, where the center of ancient Cyrenaica is located and which served as the administrative center during King Idris's reign, attorney and dissident Fathi Terbil was arrested, sparking the civil war in Libya. The protests spread due to the police crackdown in front of Benghazi Police

Station. The number of participants demonstrating for the release of Terbil reached 600 to 700 people in a short time; coupled with the police crackdown, this caused the anti-regime protests to be organized in different regions, particularly in East Libya. The protests spread to Benghazi, Al Bayda, Tobruk, Darnah, Zawiya and Zwara in West Libya, and Gharyan and Yafran in South Libya in a short time after 40 protestors loyal to different tribes, particularly in Zintan in southwest Tripoli, were injured during the incidents. While the crackdown by the security forces against the peaceful mass demonstrations and the civilian loss during the incidents caused the crisis to escalate, the tension culminated in rallies on the Day of Rage thanks to the opposition's call on February 17. On the Day of Rage, the Gaddafi administration used Special Forces and African mercenaries, which resulted in civilian loss that transformed the crisis into inter-tribal conflict (Daoud, 2011:209). Nevertheless, the Gaddafi government preferred using the trusted units and soldiers during the incidents because Gaddafi knew the tribal allegiances of the army. However, Gaddafi's approach to the incidents generated the rebellion of the tribes, which were excluded from the administration for years or could not take part in the administration as much as they wish. The demonstrations have focused directly on terminating Gaddafi's government.

The Warfallah tribe, the largest tribe of Libya, has been the prominent other groups that engaged in a direct rebellion against the Gaddafi regime after February 15. On February 20 Akram al-Warfalli, a senior member of the Warfalla tribe, declared that it was withdrawing support from Qaddafi, saying "he is no longer a brother" (Alexander, 2011). Some of the Warfallah members, who are effective in southern Tripoli, live in the capital city. Another significant tribe, the Tarhuna, also supported the rebellion (Beals, 2011). The Tarhuna has 900,000 to 1 million members in the capital, in Tripoli, and in the west. The majority of the Tarhuna tribe members who supported the Gaddafi regime held positions in the military bureaucracy. The other tribe that supported the riot in Tripoli was the Zintan tribe, whose members in Zintan and Tripoli have shown great resistance since February 16 (Basu, 2011). The prominent tribes that supported the rebellion in Cyrenaica are the Zuwayya, the Awaguire, the Misurata, and the Obeidat. The Zawiya tribal leaders threatened to cut off the oil flow unless the government gave up attacking the public. They did not cut off the oil flow, but they supported the resistance. The Misurata tribe, which is effective in Misurata, took control of the city. They have not let Gaddafi's forces take control of the city since March 21, 2011, when the clashes intensified in the city. Gaddafi's forces failed to seize the control of the city in May despite intense attacks. The tribe members also played a primary role in the demonstrations in Darnah and Benghazi. Hussein Sadiq al-Musrati, the former Libyan

ambassador to China (resigned), is a member of this tribe as well. Taking control of the Egyptian-Libyan border, the Awlad Ali tribe in Cyrenaica removed all government forces from the region. The other significant riot support group in this region was the Obeidat tribe in Tobruk, whose prominent leaders—Suleiman Mahmud al-Obeidi, commander of the Tobruk military region, and Major General Abdel Fattah Younis, the former interior minister—participated in the coalition against Gaddafi at the very beginning of the riots. The Awaguire tribe, which is effective in Al-Bayda, has formed a resistance in Al-Bayda since the rebellion started. The Awaguire tribe has also drawn attention not only because they fought against the Ottoman Empire and the Italians, but they also sympathized with the Senussi movement. However, when this conservative group took control of Bayda, the Gaddafi regime claimed that Islamic emirates had been established in Bayda (Lévy, 2011).

Increased conflicts and Gaddafi's use of disproportional force caused the tribes supporting the opposition to capture the eastern cities in a short time. The rebels took control in East Libya in a short time during the clashes, capturing the cities since the second half of February, but they had to retreat in western cities due to the attacks from the regime forces. The intensified battles in Zintan, Misurata, and Zawiya including the capital Tripoli in the very beginning resulted in the opposition forces gaining the upper hand at the beginning of March. In particular, the dissidents took the control in East Libya, expending significant effort in forming an alternative political structure in this region. They arrived at a consensus on a transitional government in a meeting the rebels attended on February 24, 2011. Representatives from different regions of Libya were to participate in the transitional government led by Mustafa Mohammed Abdul Jalil, the former Minister of Justice during Gaddafi's rule and the Secretary of the General People's Committee. In the National Transitional Council, comprising 31 people, included Al Buntan, Al Gubbah, and Benghazi as well as those representing Ajdabiya, Zintan, Misratah, Nalut, and Ghat, who were not disclosed due to security reasons. The distribution of tasks in the council is as follows (Official Wep Page The Interim Transitional National, 2011): Mustafa Mohammed Abdul Jalil, Chairman of the Council; Abdul Hafiz Ghoga, Vice Chairman of the NTC and official spokesman; Othman Suleiman El-Megyrahi, Batnan Area; Ashour Hamed Bourashed, Darna City; Dr. Abdelallah Moussa El-Myehoub, Qouba Area; Zubiari Ahmed El-Sharif, representative of political prisoners; Ahmed Abduraba Al-Abaar, economics; Dr. Fathi Mohamed Baja, political affairs; Fathi Tirbil and Dr. Salwa Fawzi El-Deghali, representatives of youth and women; Mohamed Al-Muntasir, city of Misrata; Omer El-Hariri, representative of the Military Affairs for Safety and Security of Libya; Dr. Mohamed Jebril Ibrahim El-

Werfali and Dr. Aziz Al-Eisawi, representatives of foreign affairs. The chairman of the council stated that the elections would be held within three months. Meanwhile, the opposition decided to form the Libyan National Transitional Council during a meeting on March 5, 2011.

However, criticisms of the National Transitional Council soon emerged, particularly as there was no institutional association amongst the council members and the council did not represent the entire Libyan opposition. According to a report by Abdul Hafiz Ghoga, Vice Chairman of the NTC, the elections that the Chairman of the Council announced and the Benghazi-centered Transitional Government were criticized and they decided to form a transitional political presence. Declaring that their aim is to maintain the unity and the territorial integrity of the country and that a free Libya would be founded after the capture of Tripoli, Ghoga resisted the statements of the Benghazi-centered transitional government (Abbas, 2011). Nevertheless, after Ghoga's declaration, being powerful in Benghazi, Abdul Jalil, the Chairman of the Council, had to claim that they did not aim to form a government, but to generate a structure to coordinate the civil war. Despite the lack of coordination in the council, significant developments in foreign policy emerged in a short time, which is important for the association (Stratfor, 2011). The Council, which wrote a letter to the Arab League and demanded to be recognized officially, achieved great success through the statements from the US and France. The Arab League declared its support of the council's demand for a no-flight zone instead of directly recognizing it after the meeting. United States Secretary of State Hilary Clinton recommended negotiating with the opposition leaders while French President Sarkozy stated after the meeting with the council members on March 10, 2011, that France recognized the Libyan National Council as a legitimate representative of this country and they would open an embassy in Benghazi and that the council would assign an ambassador to France. This served as a big step in official recognition of the council. After France's initiative, many EU countries took action to recognize the Libyan National Council as a legitimate government (Trt News, 2010).

While the National Council was achieving success in foreign affairs, it made decisions to intensify the military operations in order to ensure successful military resistance in Libya and capture Tripoli from Gaddafi's forces. No coordination occurred directly amongst the opposition groups, and every group maintained resistance in their own regions even after the council was formed on March 5. This situation became significant as Gaddafi used the Air Force intensely during the civil war. The fact the rebels could not carry out the military operations outside of city centers led Gaddafi to extend the regions under his military control.

Despite the opposition of the international community, Gaddafi launched intense assaults in the cities under dissident control, including in the west in Zuwara, Zawiyah, Tarhuna, Zintan, Misurata, Gharyan, Ras Lanuf between Sirte and Benghazi, Brega, Ben Jawad, and Ajdabiya, thereby affecting the position of the opposition groups. In the ongoing struggle in these settlements, the regime used Special Forces in the west in Sahban, Hamis, and Kweldi in addition to the Air Force while tribal forces were used in the east. Western countries, particularly France, reacted because Gaddafi continued intensely using military forces despite the sanctions that the UNSC resolution 1970 brought. Gaddafi managed to maintain military control in the west on March 16 and in the settlements between Sirte and Benghazi in the east, except for Misurata. Meanwhile, the Warfallah and the Tarhuna tribes announced their loyalty to the regime through the official TV channel at the same time. "In a call to the Libyan satellite channel the tribes of Tarhuna and Warfalla in Benghazi confirmed their support for the leader" (Karouny, 2011). Thus, on the one hand, Gaddafi moved forward in a military sense in the east Libyan territories; meanwhile, he tried to make the opposition tribes be loyal to the regime once again. This drew attention to the fact that Gaddafi continued moving forward to Benghazi, the center of the opposition during the days when France and England were struggling to make the decision about a no-flight zone for Libya in the UN. Gaddafi had already reached west Benghazi whereas UNSC gathered due to the crisis in Libya on March 17.

UN's Intervention in the Process: International Intervention in the Civil War

The attack attempts by the pro-Gaddafi forces with the contribution of intense air forces brought the issue to the attention of the world public. This was an important step forward to resolve the problem through peaceful methods in terms of the sanctions that the UNSC resolution 1970 brought about on February 26, 2011 (UN S/RES/1970, 2011). The welcomed independent research commission sent by the Human Rights Council to detect the crimes and the bids in Libya in the decision text as well as identify those who interfered in these crimes and the bids, revealing the human rights abuses in terms of the decision dated February 25, 2011, and numbered A/HRC/S-15/2. The UNSC evaluated the systematic and large-scale attacks within the scope of the crimes against humanity and emphasized that the government should take responsibility for the assaults, including forces under the control of the government in Libya. It stated that the International Criminal Court would carry on the investigations according to the terms of the 16th article of the Rome Convention unless the UNSC asks for the contrary. In the same decision, the UNSC called for the immediate

cessation in the ongoing violence and take care of the public demands in accordance with the Section VII of the UN Agreement and its 41th article.

According to the decision recommended by the Libyan authorities, to obey the human rights and international human rights arrangements and cooperate with the International Criminal Court's Chief Prosecutor about the incidents that have happened since February 15, 2011, UN countries cannot trade arms or ammunition, provide Libya with arms, or take part in any circumstances that will cause the arms trade. Moreover, no precautions can be taken against the arms and ammunition trade or its supply. All countries, particularly the neighbors of Libya, were asked to take these stipulations into consideration and not transport materials by air or by shipping from Libya to their country borders in terms of their national laws and the international law, especially in accordance with the maritime law and the international civil transportation regulations. Finally, the UNSC decided to impose travel bans and freeze assets of some high echelons, including Gaddafi and his family.

The Gaddafi regime intensified the strikes to capture the cities under the control of the dissidents, although it took an important step to make the Libyan government stop the civil war and give up using violence against the civilians by means of the UNSC resolution 1970. UNSC members gathered to discuss the issue once again as the conflicts continued even after the UN asked for the immediate ceasefire and sanctions. Claiming that the crisis in Libya became a threat to the international peace and security, UNSC members put the issue on the agenda again within the framework of Section VII, allowing the use of force, of the UN Agreement. Within this scope, the resolution draft prepared by the cooperation of France, Lebanon, and England was revised after they debated the different proposals in the council. With the revisions, the resolution draft proposed the establishment of a no-flight zone to protect civilians, calling for an immediate ceasefire in Libya and intensifying the sanctions toward the regime as well as extending them. The resolution draft passed by 10 votes, although Russia and China—who have veto power in the UNSC—abstained. Although the temporary members—Germany, India, and Brazil—abstained from voting, in addition to the permanent members Russia and China, resolution 1973 allows for both the no-flight zone and the use of military force to protect civilians (UN S/RES/1973:2011). The resolution—same as resolution 1970—states the respect for Libyan sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and national unity and calls for an immediate ceasefire between the parties in Libya and ending the conflicts and all the strikes toward civilians. The preamble of resolution 1973 condemns the Libyan government because of the violence toward the civilians and demanded that the government abandon the use of force immediately. The resolution includes the call for

a no-fly zone by the Islamic Conference Organization on March 8, the African Union on March 10, and the Arab League on March 12 as well as the call for an immediate ceasefire by the Secretary-General on March 16. Thus, resolution 1973 clearly had international support. All UN member countries in cooperation with the UN Secretary-General took all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory. The “establishing no-flight zone” section of the resolution banned all flights in Libyan airspace except those for humanitarian relief and evacuation of foreigners. In this context, the resolution authorized UN member countries to take the necessary measures on their own or act within the framework of the local establishments and regulations, provided that they inform the UN and the Arab League Secretary-General in coordination with them in order to ensure the no-flight zone. Resolution 1973 imposed sanctions once more on seven people in addition to the Gaddafi family, including one of the leaders of the Magariha tribe, Colonel Abdullah al-Sanussi, the Libyan Intelligence Chief, and decided to freeze the assets of the Libyan National Oil Corporation and Libyan Central Bank.

The Military Intervention: Libya’s Gridlock

Despite resolutions 1970 and 1973 of the United Nations Security Council, the ongoing uprising in Libya against the government of Gaddafi was the subject of domestic and international debate about potential international military intervention. After Gaddafi broadened the scope of the military operations to capture Benghazi, France, the US, and many other countries were prompted to take action. After Gaddafi’s forces were poised to attack Benghazi on a large scale, military operations under Odyssey Dawn commenced on March 19, 2011. The U.S. and coalition forces quickly established command of the air over Libya’s major cities, destroying portions of the Libyan air defense network and attacking pro-Gaddafi forces deemed to pose a threat to civilian populations (Gertler, 2011: 7-8).

The coalition forces’ military operations that began after the UNSC resolutions 1970 and 1973 came under the NATO command after the London Conference, which sparked debates about NATO’s mission in Libya. Rasmussen, the Secretary-General of NATO, announced on March 27, 2011, that NATO will undertake all military operations in Libya in order to ensure that UNSC resolutions 1970 and 1973 are fully implemented. After member countries’ negotiations about the Libya mission, NATO took over responsibility on March 31. The NATO announcement on April 1 declared that the Libya mission consisted of three

elements: control of the international arms embargo against Libya, enforcement of the no-fly zone, and protection of civilians against an attack or the threat of an attack (NATO, 2011).

Although neither NATO's statements nor UNSC resolution 1973 allow for directly toppling Gaddafi, some NATO members explicitly announced that the aim of the intervention was to oust Gaddafi (Mangasarian, 2011). UK Prime Minister Cameron and French President Sarkozy stressed that Gaddafi had lost his legitimacy and needed to step down immediately. Interestingly, the two leaders called the pro-Gaddafi elements to stop supporting Gaddafi before it was too late (The Guardian News, 2011).

Furthermore, Turkey initially expressed several times that the mission did not mean that NATO was taking sides in the Libyan Civil War. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu said he was satisfied with NATO's statements to conform to the UNSC resolution and reiterated "Now what is important is to ensure the success of the mission that is based on the UNSC Resolution 1973. No more or less... The mandate is clearly defined as ensuring truce and protecting civilians" (BBC Haber, 2011).

In this context, it is obvious that no clear consensus existed among the NATO members regarding the Libyan mission. In addition, despite Prime Minister Erdoğan's statement that they do not intend to arm the opposition, the US administration stated that it can arm the rebels. Susan Rice, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, reiterated that the US administration considered the option to arm the rebels fighting against Gaddafi. Rice said, "We have not made that decision but we've not certainly ruled that out." US Secretary of State Clinton subsequently declared at the end of the London conference on Libya that UNSC resolution 1973, which authorized military action to protect civilians, had relaxed the arms embargo (Watt, 2011). Despite all these statements, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stressed the importance of respecting the arms embargo. "The UN mandate authorizes the enforcement of an arms embargo," he said. "We are not in Libya to arm people but to protect people" (Newton, 2011).

Although the military intervention was conducted under NATO's responsibility, no diplomatic or political coordination existed among the members. In addition to the arms delivery, France and Italy diplomatically recognized the Transitional Council in Benghazi, while Turkey maintained its relations with the Gaddafi regime for a long time. Thus, although NATO assumed command of the operation, the member countries have different policies towards the Libya crisis. In May 2011, neither the rebels nor the Gaddafi regime could claim superiority over the other. Therefore, NATO's strategy became increasingly important.

In this context, UNSC resolutions 1970 and 1973 put forward the scope of NATO's Libyan mission. NATO defined its mission as ensuring a ceasefire, finding a political solution in accordance with the Libyan people's legitimate demands, controlling the arms embargo and the no-fly zone, and protecting civilians. However, some arguments emerged. First and foremost, it was debated as to how the ouster of Gaddafi, the arms embargo, the no-fly zone, and the protection of civilians would be coordinated. Both the US and EU leaders called on Gaddafi to step down. However, some commentators argued that resolution 1973 bans the call for Gaddafi's resignation as it does not directly imply the ouster of Gaddafi, but rather proposes a sustainable and peaceful solution (Boot, 2011). In addition, the issue of protecting civilians raised questions about who the civilians are. It was further debated as to whether the rebels are civilians or not. It is also obvious that the rebels are well armed and use force to capture cities. Therefore, it should be discussed as to what kind of policy NATO will pursue when the civilians are threatened by the rebels. It is obvious that NATO provides little protection for the civilians that the rebels oppress. NATO's missions of enforcing the no-fly zone and protecting the rebels will cause its future undertakings to be debated. Such a mission will also make it difficult for NATO to find a solution to the Libyan crisis.

Therefore, NATO needs to consider specific proposals for a diplomatic solution to avoid a serious crisis in Libya and discuss it both among the members and with Libya. On March 29, 2011, foreign ministers from 35 countries as well as UN, Arab League, Islamic Conference Organization, and African Union representatives gathered in London and debated the strategy for Libya. However, the London Conference achieved no concrete result except for reiterating that Gaddafi had lost his legitimacy. During the conference, the sides reached a consensus on the protection of civilians, establishing a contact group, holding the Gaddafi regime responsible for the developments, and defining the self-determination of the Libyan people, but defined no common policy on recognizing the rebels as the legitimate government of Libya and providing arms (FCO, 2011).

While the debates on Libya continue, it is interesting that the rebels are allowed to sell oil, and there have been talks about selling arms. After all these developments, NATO carried out strikes that directly targeted Gaddafi, which shows that the limits defined by the UN resolutions were breached. Moreover, NATO did not have clear plans for the post-Gaddafi period (O'Sullivan, 2011). It is also unclear as to how NATO will react if Libya is dragged into a civil war among the tribes. Indeed, countries such as France, Italy, and England declared that they aimed to overthrow Qaddafi and that they had organized aerial attacks in many regions of the country, including the capital Tripoli after March 19. Nevertheless, after

the 2003 Iraq crisis, any international crisis relying on military force to solve the conflicts is not enough, which was confirmed once again in Libya. While finding a solution to the conflicts, both diplomatic and military solutions should be highlighted. If the Western countries do not pursue any diplomatic alternatives with the groups involved in the conflicts, solving the problem becomes more difficult. NATO members should also develop alternative solution options in addition to the security policies while defining the Libyan mission. It would be good to discuss what kind of peaceful settlements have been proposed for the solution of the problem in Libya by many countries, especially Turkey. Therefore, in order to prevent NATO from going through a severe crisis in Libya, member states should also emphasize certain specific proposals for a diplomatic solution, discussing them with both the Libyans and the allies.

The framework of NATO's Libya mission puts forward resolutions 1970 and 1973. In this context, as well as the documents declared by NATO, the fact that the NATO mission was defined as supervising the arms embargo, supervising the no-fly zone, and protecting the civilian people is noteworthy. However, at this point, different arguments are highly possible. The leading argument focuses on the supervision of the arms embargo, how to impose the no-fly zone, and how to protect the civilians. Although the first two elements can be relatively understood, what kind of method will NATO follow in the face of the recent discourses related to arming the opposition? Is NATO going to prevent opponents from acquiring arms in order to ensure the arms embargo? Another question is whether NATO will control the arms entries into Libya via land, outside of the Mediterranean region or not. NATO has not still made any statement as to whether it will control the arms entries from Egypt into Libya. Turning a blind eye to the opponents in terms of the arms flow over Egypt brings up the question as to whether NATO is fully implementing resolution 1973 or not (Ayhan, 2011).

A second issue is the protection of civilians. For instance, no discussion is made as to whether the opponents are civilian or not, which is particularly interesting. However, as can be clearly seen in the media, civilians are also armed and they resorted to military force in order to take control of the provinces under Gaddafi's control. In this context, the protection of the civilians whose lives are in danger in light of attacks from opponents requires a discussion as to what kind of role NATO plays. Thus far, NATO has considerably absented itself from ensuring the protection of the civilian people under the oppression of the opponent forces. NATO's assumption of a mission such as protecting opponents who possess military capacity from aerial attacks and protecting the no-fly zone would make NATO's role in similar crises problematic in the future. Defining such a mission would cause difficulty in

NATO's finding strategies that would bring solution to the Libyan crisis as well (Ayhan, 2011).

Consequently, the military intervention in Libya changed its direction and transformed into an operation that aims for a regime change as it could not achieve its aims in a short time. As the rebels will rule Libya in light of Gaddafi's death, the presence of pro-Gaddafi tribes implies that the instability will continue in the post-Gaddafi period.

Conclusion

Libya's political structure reflects its social structure. It does not seem possible that the military and political structure, which was reconstructed in 1969 within the tribal system, will be disintegrated despite the international intervention. The intervention might only replace the existing administration. Therefore, it would not be realistic to expect that the tribalism in Libya will vanish in a short time. In order to abolish tribalism, a primary condition is that all individuals have the same privileges and access to economic, social, and other resources. However, as of today, tribalism plays a great role in the structure of both the regime and the anti-regime forces.

The initial success of the international intervention that commenced on March 19 was that it forced the forces loyal to Gaddafi to abandon their offensive position near Benghazi, the center of the National Council, and adopt a defensive position—particularly due to France's, England's, and America's initial attacks. In the next phase, the objective will be to force pro-Gaddafi forces to retreat from the other cities in which the rebels are strong. This is a serious point of debate: Despite Gaddafi's call for war and resistance, the regime lacks the military capacity and technology to carry on fighting; therefore, the regime will most likely get weakened and collapse after a while. The attacks need to go on intensely for a while in order for this to happen. Such an outcome might be possible in the short term; nevertheless, pro-Gaddafi tribes will be very important in this process.

However, civilian losses that might occur during the military intervention will spark discussions on the intervention in the international community. Gaddafi's efforts to carry the civilian losses to the agenda are aimed to reduce the public support for the intervention. In this respect, an increase in civilian losses and the duration of war might result in reduced support for the intervention in the Arab and Muslim public.

It is also a serious concern as to what kinds of policies NATO will adopt in the post-intervention period if the tribes are engulfed in a civil war now that Gaddafi has been killed. The Libyan society is divided into two parts with the civil war; in particular, the opposition

groups have a fragmented structure in terms of geographical and societal links. It would not be realistic to assume that the Western and Eastern anti-regime tribes coordinate in every aspect. The sole common point among them is their anti-Gaddafi positions. Therefore, it is questionable as to how NATO will manage potential instability after Gaddafi's death. As NATO declared to end its mission in Libya on October 31, international community understood no common plan exists among NATO members for the post-Gaddafi period.

But another problem, which could come out in the post NATO mission in Libya, is about what kind of regime the tribes, which were subject to the oppression and violence of the Gaddafi regime for years and which had to resist against the killing policy for the last 6 months, would put forward. Even if people recently coming into the power come to terms among themselves, what kind of relation they are going to establish with the pro-Gaddafi groups is uncertain. As is known, vendettas between the Arab tribes sometimes last for hundreds of years. Therefore, after the government changeover, implementing a new revenge, ignoring from the government or discrimination policies against the Gaddafi supporters could lead to major problems in Libya. In case the problems turn into vendetta, bringing stability back in Libya would be considerably difficult. Of course, it is necessary to once more indicate that each of these are only a possibility.

In conclusion, it should be indicated that it is too early, right now, to announce that the conflicts in Libya are over and the victory is gained by NATO interventions. Nevertheless, it should not be ignored that both the U.S. and the other members of the NATO learned important lessons from the recent history. As a matter of fact, the fact that the Western forces did not announce the end of the war early like they did in Afghanistan and Iraq, should be taken into consideration. Following the experiences, which were obtained over the two countries, the U.S. and the NATO forces are expected to launch a more careful structuring process that would comprehend all of the groups in Libya. Otherwise, a pure military-based and ally tribe-based restructuring processes would not bring peace to Libya; it would also cause the instability dynamics to continue. The states taking part in the NATO mission have great responsibility for preventing such initiatives. Otherwise, the transition of the state into democracy may turn into a target attempted to be accomplished only on paper.

END NOTES

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¹<http://countrystudies.us/libya/40.htm>

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