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**THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBYA:
THE FALL OF THE REGIME AND THE STATE-
BUILDING PROCESS**

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Geopolitical Scenarios and Political Risks

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBYA

Understanding the chaos: the fall of the regime and the State-Building process

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Introduction

Eight years have been passed since the popular uprising resulted in the overthrow and killing of the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, and from that moment the situation in Libya still is at stake. Before that event, the Colonel had ruled the country for more than forty years, governing over a deeply tribal society and its necessary inherent cleavages.

Nowadays the scenario seems to be an “organized chaos”; the huge void left by the dictator has been filled by dozens of tribes and militias lacking a central authority capable of enforcing the law. The debatable NATO intervention¹, with the aim of protecting Libyan population from the regime’s violence, has actually complicated the crisis. It finished only ten days after the death of Gaddafi and left the country without the military armament necessary to stabilize the country. Today, tribes and militias are fundamental actors on the ground. They are fighting for power, for the control of oil plants and for the management of arms and human smuggling.

Moreover, there are two governments on the ground competing for internal and external legitimacy, that is either from the population or the international community. The two governments are based in Tripoli and Tobruk. The Government of National Accord (GNA) is stabilized at the former, firmly supported by the United Nations, while the House of Representatives (“Tobruk Government”) is stabilized at the latter where it has gained independency exercising its power over the eastern part of the country.

The purpose of this work is to analyse the Libyan recent history, its social structure and the current conditions, in the attempt of understanding why the GNA has failed to extend its legitimacy all over the territory. The intention is to find what Libya really needs in this arduous transition. It is essential to redesign a new complex political strategy for the Nation, considering the failure of the reconciliation process and the clashes still going on both for territorial control and economic purpose.

¹ Initially the military attack against the forces loyal to the regime was carried out by the countries individually. On March 25th 2011 the intervention was unified under the NATO framework with the **Unified Protection Operation**.

A transition to democracy?

Surely Libya badly needs a government. The question is how and when this would be possible in the future.

Methodology

To elaborate my thesis, I have started from two main questions: which were the historical, political and social causes that led to the fall of the Gaddafi regime? After the revolution, what are the dynamics occurred in the power vacuum the NATO mission and the death of the dictator?

I started from a brief historical explanation about the last century in the country: it is fundamental to understand what happened before the revolution and the reign of King Idris, in order to get the big picture of the context and get an overall knowledge of the riots and actual situation.

From the historical reconstruction I moved onto a more sociological analysis of the peculiar Libyan society, characterized by a tribal and fragmented structure: this deep investigation is necessary in order to understand why the power after the riots was divided into so many different actors. The uprising days are then reported, with a special focus on the negotiations within the UN and the two most important Resolutions reached, which were decisive in determining winners and losers in the conflict. Without the intervention of individual countries first, and of the NATO coalition later, the Libya of our days would have been different, and the victory of the rioters would not have been so certain. The story of the negotiations and the subsequent military intervention is functional to grasp a better understanding of the interests carried on by each actor involved in the Libyan scenario. At this point, we can understand which countries were more involved in the specific geopolitical area and the overthrow of the regime. Afterwards, the work encompasses the long transition period generated by the first civil war, and the strategic issues the fragile Libyan institutions had to face right after the conflict.

A case-by-case investigation related to the involvement of specific countries is then put in place, with a special attention on their direct and indirect engagement, the faction and government supported, and the repercussions produced. It would be inconvenient not to mention the foreign powers, as they had and still have a decisive influence in the country. The work goes on reporting facts about the Libyan economy: the country is renowned for its massive resources, fundamental for the country's income and increasingly

fundamental in the balance of power. Furthermore, I recalled the importance Libya had in the migration crisis during the post-conflict years: the emergency has put a strain on the reception and distribution mechanisms of migrants among the European Union, and which brought to light the serious inadequacies of the Union in terms of cooperation in the fields of foreign relations and security, indeed. Finally, the last chapter analyses the current state and the great challenge Libya faces in the coming years. The state-building process is struggling to materialize, and the situation remains extremely unstable. This is why I have tried to outline the fundamental steps to follow, aiming at gathering the nation, putting an end to the split of power currently underway.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Since the fall of the Gaddafi regime, Libya has become one of the most endangered geopolitical scenarios in the international contest. This for a number of different reasons including its strategic geographical position, its function as a filter of migratory flows from almost all the sub-Saharan Africa, its huge oil/gas resources and the interests of so many States in the region. The speed with which the first phase of the revolution ended had astonished many analysts, misleading themselves on the possibility of a near end of hostility and on a smooth stabilization of the country. Nothing could be further from the present reality. The current chaos, despite the efforts of the international community, does not seem to give room for a definitive solution to the crisis. In order to properly analyze the situation, it is essential to reconstruct the peculiar historical context that characterizes Libya, emphasizing the most important events and the crucial elements of its recent history.

Libya has never been a democracy and has never been a truly unitary state. Its geographical position, various dominations, social structure and history have always prevented the formation of a consistent national identity.² In no more than a century and a half, four attempts were made to centralize the state administration in order to achieve greater efficiency and effective control over the territory. The Ottomans before, the Italians, King Idris and Gaddafi tried with different methods to govern the Country, obtaining different results and modifying each time the structure of the State and sometimes even some characteristics of the society itself.

Libyan history started in 1000 B.C. when there was the first colonization by the Phoenicians. The Cyrenaica was conquered first by the Greeks and then by Alexander the Great. The Tripolitania was instead first of the Numidi in order then to become Roman province. Then followed the Byzantine, Spanish and Turkish domination. But the real modernization comes with the conquest by the Ottomans. They governed this territory since the mid-sixteenth century until

² *Helen Chapin Metz, 1987, A country study, Federal Research Division*

1911. Here too there was no real centralization of power. The sultans were satisfied with the collection of taxes and loyalties from the local powers and were not interested in making a real change in the way people lived or in their way of organizing society. They certainly created administrative, bureaucratic and military structures, but never really pervasive and never really exercising effective control over the territory, nor absolutely favoring the formation of a national identity.³

Libya became a strategic country for the colonial powers already at the end of the nineteenth century. But it is at the beginning of the twentieth century that the first colonization of a European power arrives, Italy. In 1911, after a brief war with the decadent Ottoman Empire, Italy colonized Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.⁴ But it is only with **fascism** that these regions were united under the name of Libya. The regime implemented a violent repressive policy and marked itself with atrocious crimes. It was also the moment of the first great transformation of the country and of the great economic development. The first important road and port infrastructures were built, and a great development impulse was given to the country, especially in coastal areas. With World War II and the defeat of Italy, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica came under British provisional control and Fezzan went to France. In 1949 the United Nations declared Libyan independence. Muhammad Idris al-Mahdi al-Sanusi was appointed King. This appointment was a compromise. Decolonization was not a simple process, as Libya had never managed to build its own strong identity, always resulting extremely fragmented. The only strong element of cohesion was Islam. After the declaration of independence, the State reconstruction process started. With the knowledge exchange that took place with the European countries during colonization, the country would have had to start a more modern construction of its institutions and its constitution, according to an European model. However, two opposing factions came into conflict, the old elites marginalized by the European powers and the new elites, more ready and open to modernity. For

³ Al-Hamzeh Al-Shadeedi and Nancy Ezzeddine, 2019, *Libyan tribes in the shadows of war and peace*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations

⁴ COI service, 2011, *Libya: country of origin information report*, UK Border Agency

this reason, the appointment of King Idris was a compromise, an ancient and pre-colonial leadership in a context of new institutions. His leadership continually tried to build a national identity, relying mainly on Islam⁵, consecrating it as the state religion even in the constitution. He based himself on the power and legitimacy attributed to him by the notables of Cyrenaica, but never obtained the necessary consent to carry out real transformations in the country, with a Tripolitania always hostile to a power perceived far and not entirely legitimate. The attempt to act in a highly conservative institutional context was always very difficult, given the social fragmentation with hundreds of tribes and the unstoppable modernization, driven with great force by the discovery of the first deposits in 1960.⁶



Figure 1: Libya, Geographical and political map Source: Limes

⁵ Antonio Morono, 2017, *Idrīs' Libya and the Role of Islam: International Confrontation and Social Transformation*, Università di Pavia

⁶ Rosan Smith, Floor Jansen, Ivan Briscoe, Terry Beswick, 2013, *Revolution and its discontents: state, factions and violence in the new Libya*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations

1.2 TRIBALISM

To completely understand the Libyan scenario, it is essential to analyze the structure of its society, and in particular its most peculiar characteristic, tribalism⁷. It is impossible to understand such a society without deepening such a crucial issue. But what does tribal society really mean? And what does it mean in the specific case of Libya? There is a need to analyze politically and sociologically how this has affected Libyan history and how decisive it is in the current scenario and possible future scenarios, preventing the resolution of the ongoing conflict and the stabilization of the situation.

Libya has been constructed around a tribal and regional scheme⁸. Thus, the tribe plays a primary role in loyalty and affiliation formation. Indeed, tribal structures have persisted throughout the process of state-building by the colonizing forces (Italy, France, and Britain), then under King Sanusi's transitory monarchy, and lastly under Gaddafi's government. It is important to underline that the colonialist powers in Libya changed far less than they did in other countries, and this could be considered as another index of how pervasive and resistant tribalism is in the Libyan society. Nowadays they play a more significant role than ever in Libyans' daily life.

During his regime, Gaddafi even supported the tribal system, trying to use it in his favor. His alliance design (supporting some rather than others and favoring those faithful to him), which had endured for forty years, has shown itself in all its imbalances in the 2011 uprising. It should not be forgotten that today tribes, apart from sharing power on the ground taking advantages of the vacuum left by the international community, are fundamental entities of control and administration of competences that normally are managed by the State, such as justice, allocation of resources and security.

⁷ Faraj Najem, 2004, *Tribe, Islam and state in Libya: analytical study of the roots of the Libyan tribal society and interaction up to the Qaramanli rule (1711-1835)*, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Languages

⁸ Al-Hamzeh Al-Shadeedi & Nancy Ezzeddine, February 2019, *Libyan tribes in the shadows of war and peace*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations

Tribalism may be defined as the maintenance by a tribal society of its organization, ways, and autonomy in the face of change. But tribalism may be defined differently when a tribe's claim of identity has less to do with its primitivism or indigeneity than with its ethnic discreteness and cultural distinctiveness for gaining material or political advantages (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences).

The Libyan tribal system is a complex system inextricably linked to the State throughout its all history. It has accompanied practically every historical phase, and above all in its modern history has assumed an even greater value than the past. Over the centuries, through migrations of Arab tribes and clans, the tribes already present in the territory have mingled with others, creating important connections and ties with neighboring countries. It has to be considered that a person in Libya identifies himself with his tribe, his city, his ancestors. This mechanism of identification is fundamental to understand the relationships within society, the reason for some conflicts and the rules that really govern within the various groups. It is a system of social and cognitive reference that explains relationships of force, positions of privilege, influences, cleavages. The individual feels part of a system in which he recognizes himself and in which his tribe is the frame of his action. In the context of the public administration, the tribe can be considered as a lobby necessary to obtain roles and positions of power.⁹

In this manner, belonging to a main group (asabiyya) is a key component of the life of most Libyan whether ethnic, tribal, regional or local. It describes their identity but also ensures their security in moments of crisis, as shown in the conflict of 2011. It should be emphasized that belonging to a tribe is not incompatible with belonging to the national community. It can be said that tribalism is associated with the idea of different groups of people linked by a blood relationship. The case of Libya is even more complex because during the centuries through migrations, conflicts, marriages, some tribes have mixed

⁹ Mohammed ben Lamma, 2017, *The Tribal Structure in Libya: Factor for fragmentation or cohesion?* in *Foundation pour la recherche strategique*

together giving life to new entities, while other tribes have remained unchanged over time. It is important to note that these groups have become over time and under different foreign dominations real political actors, capable of influencing the politics and life of entire Libyan regions. Looking at the history of the country it is clear that the role of the tribes has always been central to the political life of the state. Difficult to establish whether they were a factor of fragmentation or cohesion.¹⁰ In this case there is a need for an analysis on two different levels. In a first case, by analysing all State Building attempts, in a macro perspective, the tribes have always proved to be an adverse factor in the building process of a strong unitary state. Every time the central institutions tried to expand their power over the whole territory, including the most peripheral regions, they met with the opposition of the so-called notables, the tribal leaders. They, eager to maintain their power, have always tried to hinder the penetration of state power, placing themselves rather as mediators and central figures in the decision-making process. On the contrary, in a micro perspective, in the various regions tribes acted as a social glue, the only real structure able to create an effective organization, which although not totally efficient and transparent, was able to last for centuries.¹¹

1.3 GHADDAFI APPROACH TO TRIBAL SYSTEM

On September 1, 1969, a group of young officers under the leadership of Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi deposed with a coup King Idris and took power. The coup had fertile ground for a number of reasons, including the low popularity of the monarchy. Over the years King Idris had lost support, having exacerbated tribal conflicts within society. The widespread discontent was due above all to the widespread corruption and the lack of transparent redistribution of state wealth, if it is considered that Libya had totally changed since the discovery of the oil settlements, becoming a rentier state with a significant amount of wealth.

¹⁰ *ibidem*

¹¹ *Stephen Kurczy and Drew Hinshaw, 2014, Libya tribes: Who's Who?, Reuters*

Thus, Gaddafi established the free and democratic Arab republic, placing himself at the head of the Council of the Revolution Command (formed by 12 soldiers). The regime change was radical. The Colonel immediately tried to totally change the State, its institutions, and even the society itself.¹² It must be remembered that Libya had always been a territory strongly divided into the three regions of Fezzan, Tripolitania, and Cyrenaica. The Fezzan region, which has always been inhabited by the Tuareg tribe, was strongly linked to Sudan and the surrounding regions. Cyrenaica in turn was strongly influenced by Egypt, Tripolitania by Tunisia. In short, Libya is a huge desert, sparsely populated but difficult to govern if it is considered that each region is in turn divided into dozens of tribes, not always in agreement with each other. During the monarchy of King Idris Cyrenaica was the favoured region, with Gaddafi the exact opposite. He immediately tried to subvert the existing balance of power between the tribes, trying to submit them to his control. An important work of modernization of the country began, according to a socialist and pan-Arab doctrine inspired by Nasserism.

The construction of important infrastructures, schools, bridges, roads, hospitals, which change the face of the country, began. Companies were nationalized, foreign companies expelled or confiscated. This is the evidence of the domestic power of the Ghaddafi regime. The state became the architect of every major economic initiative. The groups of foreigners still present on the territory, the Italians for example, were hunted. All national politics was oriented towards nationalism and anti-Western countries sentiment. Relations with Western nations were interrupted and teaching in schools of every foreign language was prohibited.

Regarding the Colonel's approach to the tribal system, he immediately understood the importance of knowing how to govern the dynamics of power within the framework of that predefined scheme.¹³ The approach changed over time and can be divided into different phases. Considering the first phase of his regime, he tried to marginalize all the tribes that had formed the heart of the

¹² Mansouria Mokhefi, 2011, *Gaddafi's regime in relation to the Libyan tribes*, Al Jazeera Centre of Studies

¹³ Peter Cole with Fiona Mangan, 2014, *Tribe, Security, Justice, and peace in Libya today*, United States Institute of Peace

power of King Idris, in particular those located in Cyrenaica. He was convinced that he could not trust those who had been faithful to the old regime. And if it is analysed the revolt of 2011 it can be understood that he was right in some way. The idea was to favour his own tribe and those affiliated to it, trying to constitute a real “magic circle” of power, capable of lasting over time and guaranteeing security and maintaining power. A rational idea that over time has clashed with reality. He soon realized that it was not possible to exclude all the senior officials of the previous regime, particularly in the bureaucracy and in the army. This could have led to a revolt or even collapse of the institutions. For this reason, his approach entered the second phase. He began, with a policy that can be defined as “stick and carrot”, modifying the pattern of alliances on the need, always trying to keep close to him members of the tribes loyal to him.¹⁴ It should be remembered, however, that only about thirty tribes out of 140 present in Libya were in his scheme. Those who showed loyalty were able to obtain benefits and privileges, while opponents met the harsh repression of the regime, often violent and indiscriminate.

1.4 THE UPRISING

The Ghaddafi regime, starting in the 1990s, had started a series of changes, trying to modernize the country and change the hostile approach towards Western countries, particularly the United States. Thus, in 2003, the project to build weapons of mass destruction was abandoned, a sign of relaxation that was obviously greatly appreciated by the international community. For the first time, some NGOs had been allowed to enter Libyan territory to ascertain the conditions in which the population lived and in particular the prisoners. The start of a series of institutional reforms led to believe in a change in the face of the regime. The bureaucracy had led to a decrease in state employees, who had been fired and had received an incentive to open their own business. Ghaddafi's idea was to try to reduce Libya's dependence on its energy resources. He had even admitted his commitment to reducing corruption, proposing to abolish the

¹⁴ *ibidem*

administrative structures that distributed pensions to citizens, trying to distribute them directly.

Regarding the population's sentiment towards the regime, the protests were significant following a football match between two teams, one of which belonged to the Ghaddafi family. The protests were obviously directed at him, at his hegemony. From the year 2000 the international context changes, and he tries once again to promote changes that keep the power firmly in his hands. He tries to reform society, but continues to shape it with all the means at his disposal. The regime wanted to change face only to survive. The monopoly of the media is no longer enough. The explosion of internet and new methods for sharing information is yet another step forward in human history that the regime cannot repress. And in the meantime, something begins to move in every country of the Maghreb and beyond. In Tunisia and Egypt, after violent protests the regimes collapsed. These are the so-called Arab Springs, the prelude to what will soon happen also in Libya.

On December 17, 2010, the Tunisian citizen Mohamed Buazizi, exasperated by the police's constant mistreatment, set himself on fire in protest. His sensational gesture began a series of protests that from Tunisia will spread throughout northern Africa and some Middle Eastern countries, giving life to the so-called Arab Springs. What these revolutions have in common are the general reasons that led to the fall of the regime or the change of government: widespread discontent and enormous inequalities caused by decades of anti-democratic power. In Libya a few months later something similar happens to what had happened in Tunisia. The arrest of a lawyer who fought for human rights also provoked a chain reaction, gathering a crowd of Protestants in the major Libyan cities, particularly Benghazi, as early as February 16th.¹⁵ The regime's reaction was furious. To try to prevent the revolt from spreading, Gaddafi relied on the army. The first clashes caused 6 deaths and dozens of wounded. The news of the victims fomented indignation and anger and caused the opening of a frontal clash between Protestants and the Regime. In a few days we went from a simple

¹⁵ Frederic Wehrey, 2014, *Ending Libya's Civil War, Reconciling Politics, Rebuilding Security*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

protest to a civil war. It is important to underline that for the first time the protesters had a fundamental tool to organize themselves and to exchange news: social media. Sharing videos and photos of the atrocious acts committed by forces loyal to the regime was essential to increase the feeling of anger towards the regime and unify the front of the rioters.

February 16 was the beginning of the end. In the following days the regime tried to stop the revolt by any means. On TV there were multiple appeals to try to control the situation. But the revolt had started. Ghaddafi tried to hold together a country that in a few days turned it around completely. Benghazi was the first city to come out of the regime's control almost completely, the first “liberated” city. The government reacted with the brutal force of the army and initially seemed to even manage to control the revolt.¹⁶ The first frontal clashes led to the first deaths and the international community immediately began to demand that the regime had to respect human rights and stop violence against civilians. The regime's response was in a TV interview with Gaddafi's son Sayf Al-Islam, who said they would fight “to the last bullet”. It is February 21st and the situation was already falling. The first defections began in the army, a sign that the government front was splitting.

The first city in which the rioters expelled Gaddafi's troops was Benghazi, and soon the Colonel was forced to gather his troops in Tripoli, attempting the last defence move. The regime's violence against the population led the United Nations to approve the 1970 Resolution, which indicated a series of sanctions against the country, the arms embargo and the freezing of many assets of the Gaddafi's family. The faction opposed to the regime was taking more and more strength and the National Transitional Council (TNC) was created with the aims of coordinate the revolt and guide the post-regime transition towards a democratic government.¹⁷ The situation continued to degenerate, with increasingly violent clashes and the exponential increase of people fleeing the country. In a few days, Libya became a chaotic battleground between troops loyal to the regime and rioters. The forces of Gaddafi were better organized and armed with more powerful weapons, including tanks and airplanes, and day

¹⁶ Bruce St John, 2011, *Libyan Myths and Realities*, Institute for Strategy

¹⁷ Emin Poljarevic, 2012, *Libya's Violent Revolution*, European University Institute

after day the regime managed to regain important outposts to reach Benghazi again and put down the revolt. The loyalists regained the area of the Gulf of Sirte and continued to advance, above all thanks to air strikes. But at the international level something was beginning to move. France and Great Britain were among the first to affirm their support for revolutionary forces. France recognizes the TNC as a legitimate government. With the resolution UN 1973 the no-fly zone was established over the Country. It was the turning point of the conflict. On March 17, the United Nations authorized military operations to protect civilians, increasingly endangered by the brutal actions of the army loyal to the Rais.¹⁸ Gaddafi said it was a new attempt to colonize Libya, but it was too late to stop the rebels. The bombing began with France airplanes. In a few hours, even NATO decided to intervene after a strong debate within its members. The bombings destroyed the regime's weapons depots, the air fleet and the main logistic bases in just a few weeks. On March 27, NATO definitively took control of military operations. Attacks on government troops continued with the aim of supporting the advance of the rebels. Meanwhile Britain, France and Italy announced the dispatch of military advisers to organize and promote a unified rebel strategy. In August the revolutionary forces succeeded in taking control of some areas of the Capital. On September 15, UN recognized the TNC as the legitimate government of the Country. The clashes continued in Bani Walid and Sirte, where Gaddafi was found on October 20 and killed. Here began the difficult post-regime transition phase.

¹⁸ Peter Kwame Womber, Ella Petrini, *Libya: Civil War and the Fall of Qaddafi, Conflict and Conflict Management in Africa*

1.5 THE UNITED NATIONS' RESOLUTION

In the days following the beginning of the revolt against the regime, the international community immediately found itself facing a very high-risk geopolitical scenario. UN in particular was the main actor called to express its opinion and to influence the affair. It is important to remember that maintaining peace is the fundamental goal of this organization and that over the years the protection of civilians has become increasingly important.

In the Chapter VI the methods and procedures for peaceful resolutions are listed.

The **Chapter VII** instead concerns: ACTION WITH RESPECT TO THREATS TO THE PEACE, BREACHES OF THE PEACE, AND ACTS OF AGGRESSION.

In this Chapter the articles 39, 41 and 42 are essential to understand the intervention in Libya.

Article 39

“The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.”

Article 41

“The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.”

Article 42

“Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations”

In addition to these articles, the "**Responsibility to Protect**" principle should be mentioned. It has developed over the years into international legal doctrine and is considered by many experts to be the concept that would legitimize military intervention by International Community in the case of serious violations of human rights by a sovereign State. This principle has always aroused great debates and is still discussed. Can the sovereignty of a state be violated in exceptional cases? The answer, observing the two resolutions on Libya would seem to be yes. After the Second World War the States, and in particular the United Nations, established the prohibition of the use of force as a threat or aggression by a State against another one. Struck by the atrocities of the two World Wars, States have over time adhered to a series of treaties necessary for the maintenance of peace. But the development of human rights and the increasing attention to them has forced reflection on what is permissible to defend the rights themselves. For this reason, it has come to the doctrine "Responsibility to Protect", necessary to legitimize the military intervention in the case in which within a State there are clear violations of human rights, massacres or even genocides are taking place.

1.5.1. RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (RtoP)

The 90s were the bloodiest decade of the second half of the twentieth century. Among others, the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda, the Srebrenica genocide and the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo can be mentioned. These violent cases brought the problem of protecting civilians during conflicts back to the centre of the debate in the international community. Until then, countries were witnessing these events with few operational tools available, with peacekeeping missions aimed at helping the population in difficulty but not incisive enough. The

principle of responsibility to protect arises in a report by ICISS, which proposed it as a political basis for intervention in scenarios in which human rights are violated. The principle was later taken up in 2005 in Resolution 60/1 by the United Nations, which made it its own. The concept is aimed primarily at states rather than organizations such as the UN, which can intervene in support when the state does not have the capacity or the strength to perform its functions alone. Other States does not have a binding legal obligation, but they have a responsibility to implement the necessary measures to stop violence against the population, even if the violence are taking place inside another sovereign state.

The responsibility to protect contains three other responsibilities:

- The responsibility to prevent, or to implement precautionary measures aimed at preventing such violence
- The responsibility to react, that is the heart of the RtoP, the imperative to react with adequate measures to the ongoing violence
- The responsibility to rebuild, that is the responsibility to assist the population in the normalization and reconstruction process following hostilities, until returning to the pre-conflict situation (the latter concept is not present in United Nations Resolution 60/1)

The latter aspect is in fact one of the most discussed, and precisely the Libyan case represents its failure to implement. NATO forces engaged in the mission left the country immediately after Gaddafi's death and the end of the regime, leaving the country still into chaos. Without functioning institutions and a defined central power, the country fell into the hands of armed militias who exercised their power through violence. The fundamental legal concept underlying the Responsibility to Protect is the evolution of the principle of state sovereignty. Historically, sovereignty has been linked to the control of the territory and the exclusivity of the use of force on that territory. The state is the one who enacts the laws and through the security forces and other bodies has the responsibility that these laws are respected. With RtoP the concept of sovereignty evolves, going from being an absolute concept to a relative one. The state is responsible for protecting the rights and interests of its citizens in

front of the international community, and if it fails to fulfil those interests and rights, it can be partially replaced by other states. This does not have a strong legal basis, since obviously the use of armed force against another state would violate its sovereignty. But with the approval of the intervention by the UN Security Council and in the presence of ascertained violence against the population by the State itself, the military intervention would seem legitimate. The ICISS report specified that States belonging to the international community must have a role commensurate with the situation, and must take concrete measures and react promptly, leaving armed intervention as a last option. In the event of a crisis, the first approach must be diplomatic, trying to mediate between the parties involved in the conflict. Subsequently, once it is understood that the diplomatic path is not effective, more incisive measures can be adopted, such as economic sanctions. Another measure with an even stronger impact is that of the arms embargo which can be decisive in the presence of an armed confrontation. The biggest step forward has been the transition from the right to intervene to the responsibility to intervene.

1.5.2 THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS IN THE UN FRAMEWORK

The NATO intervention in Libya, which ended with the victory of the western coalition, cannot be considered a total success. As happened other times in history, the apparent military success was not followed by a real solution to the situation on the ground. And this is not the only reason for discussion about this matter. The intervention was discussed from every point of view, by the conflict of the actors involved in the same coalition, the methods of action, the real intentions of the countries involved, the future consequences, the legitimacy of the mission itself. For these reasons, there is ample room for a deep and detailed analysis of the facts.

At the outbreak of the protests against the Rais' regime, no one had imagined such an escalation of events. After all, protests in the neighbouring countries had not become violent (at least not on a large scale), and the States had moved on the path of regime change, institutional, or at least substantial reforms to repress the impressive popular revolts. Something very similar could have

happened and was believed to have happened in Libya. This resulted from an in-depth analysis of the radical differences between countries and political leaders of that region. Gaddafi was obviously unique in the African landscape in personal, political and government history. Furthermore, Libya immediately presented itself as a highly fragmented chessboard, composed of different entities (the tribes) certainly having some common demands and instances towards the regime, but each having their own identity and non-general interests.

With the escalation of the protests and the drift towards the civil war, the apprehension of the international community had grown immediately, reminded other cases in which, remaining immobile and not reacting promptly, it had failed to prevent terrible atrocities carried out on the civilian population by part of rulers and militia (remember the case of Rwanda and the genocide of the Tuzi).

For this reason and for others the attention was maximum, considering also the strategic importance of Libya from a geopolitical and economic point of view (its geographical position and its role as a filter for migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa and its huge energy resources). For this reason many European states and not only them looked at Libya with particular interest. Because, while remaining far from baseless theories and conspiracy fantasies, one cannot fail to underline the enormous economic and political interests, not secondary to the prerogative of the international community to protect civilians from their own regime.

As the clashes continued and the first civilian deaths began, we immediately started talking about an intervention. But what type of involvement? Here too, recent conflicts have acted as a strong conditioning in political and military choices. The failures of Iraq and Syria were there to remind that military intervention cannot be enough to solve such complex situations, indeed, sometimes it can aggravate the situation and exponentially increase the number of innocent victims. Today Syria, like Iraq years ago, is a large powder keg, a bloody and opaque battlefield in which a myriad of interests are mixed up and no concrete solution to the conflict is seen despite the economic and military efforts of different actors. It is clear that, faced with enormous risk scenarios

such as the cases mentioned, the international community exercises or should exercise a key leadership role. Unfortunately, however, too often it acts in a disunited and conflicting way, not really fulfilling its mission.

As for Libya, France and its president Sarkozy immediately declared themselves ready to intervene and pressured the UN to authorize the use of force. In the complexity of the international legal system, however controversial, only an authorization from the UN Security Council can legitimize the use of force against a sovereign state. The new doctrine that has given strength to this vision in recent years is the aforementioned Responsibility to Protect.

France seeks to broaden the interventionists' front, while believing that it can act even without the support of other states. The United States, as usual needle of the balance, were divided internally on the subject, with the Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice at the head of the interventionist front. But in addition to France, the most important actor especially in the first phase of negotiations was Great Britain.¹⁹ Leaders in establishing the legal framework thanks to globally recognized international law experts, British diplomats and their staff were the first in the United Nations to move towards the drafting of the 1970 Resolution. On the basis of the RtoP, they sought to involve China and Russia, obviously the most opposed to the intervention, and managed to establish themselves as the most influential and expert on the Libyan question. Together with their French colleagues, they were the real authors of the action strategy. They immediately began to influence the media on the issue, arguing for the need to intervene in the Libyan scenario to protect civilians from the regime's reprisals. One of the key moves was to exploit the Libyan diplomat Ibrahim Dabbashi, who was asked to write a letter asking for a meeting as soon as possible on the Libyan case.

This request was used by French and English diplomats to argue that the Libyan people themselves asked for foreign intervention. The direct contact between British and Lebanese diplomacy was very useful. Lebanon in fact exercised

¹⁹ Rebecca Adler-Nissen, Denmark Vincent Pouliot, 2014, *Power in practice: Negotiating the international intervention in Libya*, *European Journal of International Relations*

great influence conditioning the Arab world to support the intervention. What was really interesting was the negotiation strategy implemented by France and Great Britain to obtain consensus on the two resolutions. The first resolution was used to create the "momentum" necessary to propose and approve the second one. Indeed, it is with the second resolution (Resolution 1973) that "every necessary measure" is authorized to counter the violence of the regime and protect the population. Fundamental to the second resolution was the request that arrived from the Arab League on March 13 for a no-fly zone over the country. This happened once again thanks to the diplomatic influence of Lebanon and served as a starting point for Great Britain to propose a further, more incisive resolution to take concrete action at a military level. The sense of urgency that was felt at the negotiating tables certainly facilitates the task of the three supporting actors of the intervention (France, Great Britain, USA). They were extremely effective in posing themselves as bearers of a high moral duty, the protection of civilians. This led to the approval of resolution 1973, with the abstention of five important members among the 15 members of the CS (Germany, China, Russia, Brazil and India), unable however to influence the negotiation process in a decisive way and above all to propose an alternative way.

1.5.3 UN RESOLUTION 1970

On 26 February 2011, the UN Security Council approved the 1970 Resolution on Libya. This is the first act of the international community. With the Resolution a series of measures were taken to try to stop the ongoing conflict and contain the regime's violence on the population.

It was established that:

“Considering that the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity, (...)

ICC referral 4.

Decides to refer the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya since 15 February 2011 to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court; (...)

Arms embargo 9.

Decides that all Member States shall immediately take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from or through their territories or by their nationals, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, and technical assistance, training, financial or other assistance, related to military activities or the provision, maintenance or use of any arms and related materiel, including the provision of armed mercenary personnel whether or not originating in their territories, (...)

Travel ban 15.

Decides that all Member States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of individuals listed in Annex I of this resolution or designated by the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 24 below, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall oblige a State to refuse its own nationals entry into its territory; (...)

Asset freeze 17.

Decides that all Member States shall freeze without delay all funds, other financial assets and economic resources which are on their territories, which are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the individuals or entities listed in annex II of this resolution or designated by the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 24 below, or by individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or by entities owned or controlled by them, and decides further that all Member States shall ensure that any funds, financial assets or economic resources are prevented from being made available by their nationals or by any individuals or entities within their territories, to or for the benefit of the individuals or entities listed in Annex II of this resolution or individuals designated by the Committee; (...)

Humanitarian assistance 26.

Calls upon all Member States, working together and acting in cooperation with the Secretary General, to facilitate and support the return of humanitarian agencies and make available humanitarian and related assistance in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and requests the States concerned to keep the Security Council regularly informed on the progress of actions undertaken pursuant to this paragraph, and expresses its readiness to consider taking additional appropriate measures, as necessary, to achieve this; (...) ”²⁰

These are the first measures taken after the first days of clashes between government forces and the Libyan population. In a few days it was realized that these were not enough to stop the atrocities of the regime against civilians.

1.5.4. RESOLUTION 1973

“Recalling its Resolution 1970 (2011) of 26 February 2011, (...)”, on 17 March 2011, the Security Council approved another resolution on Libya. “Recalling paragraph 26 of resolution 1970 (2011) in which the Council expressed its readiness to consider taking additional appropriate measures, as necessary, to facilitate and support the return of humanitarian agencies and make available humanitarian and related assistance in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, (...)”

This resolution totally changed the conflict. In fact it established the no-fly zone necessary to block the regime's air strikes against rebel forces and civilians, but above all:

“Protection of civilians 4.

Authorizes Member States that have notified the Secretary-General, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, and acting in cooperation with the Secretary-General, to take all necessary measures, notwithstanding paragraph 9 of resolution 1970 (2011), to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

²⁰ Resolution 1970, Adopted by the Security Council at its 6491st meeting, on 26 February 2011

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/s/res/1970>

including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory, and requests the Member States concerned to inform the Secretary-General immediately of the measures they take pursuant to the authorization conferred by this paragraph which shall be immediately reported to the Security Council; ”²¹

This part of the text is fundamental because it authorized the use of force by States against the Gaddafi forces. An act that changed the balance of power on the ground, bringing in a few months the end of the regime and the victory of the rioters. This resolution was later harshly criticized because no measures to be taken are specified in the text. With the phrase "all the necessary measures", a great freedom of choice is left to the States.

1.6 THE DEBATED NATO MILITARY INTERVENTION: OPERATION UNIFIED PROTECTOR

NATO’ mission, Operation Unified Protector, began on March 21st with a series of attacks led by France, Great Britain and the United States, which immediately destroyed part of Gaddafi's armaments.²² The intervention, implicitly authorized by United Nations Resolution 1973 containing the phrase "all necessary measures", was intended to protect civilians, a fully-fledged humanitarian mission. The reality was quite different. The military operations, which led to the dictator's death and regime change, stopped right after these events, leaving open the hypothesis that the real intent of the coalition of States was precisely to oust the Libyan leader and start the country in a new direction. It is difficult for this reason to establish whether NATO exceeded the use of force, leaving the mandate implicitly assigned to it by the resolution. Indeed, the resolution itself is vague on the actual implementation of the measures it affirms.

²¹ *Adopted by the Security Council at its 6498th meeting, on 17 March 2011*

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/s/res/1973>

²² *Peter Kwame Womber, Ella Petrini, Libya: Civil War and the Fall of Qaddafi, Conflict and Conflict Management in Africa*

In a few months, the rebels, supported by NATO air raids, managed to take control of the major Libyan cities. The revolt, which started from the east, had spread throughout almost all Libyan territory, leaving very little room for manoeuvre for the loyalists of the regime, trapped in an increasingly tight grip. During the entire operation, Western forces made over 10,000 sorties by dropping around 5,500 bombs.²³ An impressive number if it is considered the initial "exclusively" humanitarian intent. During the mission, despite the arms embargo, supplies of weapons were fundamental for the rebels from France and Qatar, another element much discussed as in open violation of UN resolutions. Although a good part of the sorties were to be attributed to the United States (at least a quarter of the operations and the total destruction of the regime's air fleet) their role was rather behind the scenes, with logistical, intelligence and armaments supply support and ammunition. More than a quarter of the operations were conducted by France and Great Britain, with the first led by Sarkozy, in the front row in supporting the need for intervention, eager to establish a leading role for France.

Regarding the legitimacy of the intervention, the doctrine of the RtoP would seem to support the involvement of foreigners coalition in the conflict. The three main conditions of the RtoP would seem to be widely respected:

- 1- the state has the responsibility to protect its population from mass atrocities;
- 2- if the state fails then the international community has a responsibility to assist the state in protecting the population;
- 3- if the state fails to protect its citizens from mass atrocities after peaceful measures have failed, the international community has the responsibility to intervene through coercive methods such as economic sanctions. Military intervention should be the last resort.

It should also be remembered the famous "no mercy speech" by Gaddafi, who invited the Libyan people to respond by force to a defined aggression of a neo-colonial nature and to clean up the city of Benghazi from traitors. Despite these

²³ *Nicholas Idris Erameh α & Enemaku Umar Idachaba, 2017, Nato Intervention in Libya and its Consequences on Global Security, Global Journal of HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE*

elements, critics of the NATO operation argue that the organization has gone far beyond its mandate. The idea behind it is that it was right to intervene to stop the regime's violence, but that subverting the regime was not legitimate. Furthermore, the harshest criticism concerns the continuation of the crisis after the fall of the regime. The commitment of the international community is considered by many experts to be too small, almost absent. The IC is accused of having left the Libyans alone in a phase of instability and fundamental transition in defining their future.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 THE TRANSITION AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

After Gaddafi's death Libya would have had to start a transition period that would have led to the formation of a democratic government through new elections. The National Transitional Council, born during the revolution with the aim of guiding the rebel forces until the defeat of the dictator, immediately tried to take the lead of the phase following the end of the civil war. The situation appeared calm without evident clashes on the ground, and this convinced the western powers to believe that the deployment of military forces on the ground was not necessary to guarantee security and the reconstruction process. The reality in the following months, however, was very different from this scenario. After declaring the liberation of Libya, the NTC had planned a series of steps necessary to the formation of a new government and State's apparatus.²⁴ Elections were the first fundamental step. They were planned for June 12th, 2012 but took place without the minimum democratic requirements. In a still unstable and confused situation, elections did not take place in compliance with the law and were therefore strongly contested.²⁵ In the elections, the General National Council (in which Jirbil Mahmoud obtained the leadership with a coalition of liberal parties) was elected: 200 parliamentarians in a provisional parliament which, once approved the new constitution within 18 months, would have to let the House of Representatives rule; the latter would have been elected in June 2014. This was not what happened. There was an underestimation of the difficulties that Libya would face in the pacification process, as the country was afflicted by internal conflicts. In fact, there were several factions on the ground, two of which were very strong and influential.

The two sides that confronted each other, which are still at the basis of the difficulties in the conciliation process were the Islamists, located in Tripoli, and the Secularist (anti-Islamists), located in Tobruk. Both had launched a military

²⁴ Rosan Smits Floor Janssen Ivan Briscoe Terri Beswick, 2013, *Revolution and its discontents: state, factions and violence in the new Libya*, Netherland Institute of International Relations

²⁵ Emin Poljarevic, 2012, *Lybia's Violent Revolution*, European University Institute

operation with the intention of extending their control over Libyan territory. The former with the Libya Dawn operation, supported by Turkey Qatar and Sudan, the latter, led by General Haftar, launched Operation Libya Dignity, supported by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

The Islamist coalition, dissatisfied with the election results, managed to take control of most of Tripoli with the use of force and forced the newly elected House of Representatives to flee to Tobruk in August 2014. After that they restored the GNC, creating a new government and doubling the Libyan hub of power. The major rift that occurred in the elections of June 26, 2014 is still irreparable. The Islamist factions had refused them by reconstituting the GNC and in fact forming a government body parallel to the House of Representatives, who moved to Tobruk to benefit from the security guaranteed by the Haftar army (this action contributed to amplify the fragmentation in the Libyan people, considering the geographical position of the new headquarters in the heart of Cyrenaica). This is why the House of Representatives appointed Haftar as head of the Libyan army. A further clash arrived a few months later: on November 6, 2014 the Supreme Court of Tripoli declared the elections illegal and effectively de-legitimized the House of Representatives; in turn, the latter rejected the verdict, claiming that it had been determined by the threat of the Islamists.

2.1.1 THE GOVERNMENT OF AL-SERRAJ AND THE CONCILIATION ATTEMPT

During 2015 there was an attempt to relaunch the negotiations between the two parliaments. United Nations Special Envoy Bernardino Leon announced the start of the formation of a new government of national unity led by Al-Serraj, a government that should later receive the trust of both parliaments and reunite Libyan institutions. A peace conference met on 13 December 2015 in Rome. The first step of the subsequent peace conference took place in Morocco in which the Skhirat Agreement was signed. This agreement, the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), was supported by several countries and signed by the

delegations of the two Libyan assemblies, but was opposed by the two presidents of the assemblies and therefore did not get a favourable vote.²⁶

Al-Serraj was placed at the head of the Presidential Council with a 30-day mandate to form the government, openly supported by the United Nations who recognized him unanimously on December 23rd, 2015. The first list of 32 members proposed by Al-Serraj did not get the vote of confidence from the House of Representatives, which asked for a less numerous cabinet. The following proposal was of 18 members. The HoR also approved the LPA but rejected the article that attributed military powers to the Presidential Council (avoiding a possible ousting of Haftar). The National Accord Government took off with enormous difficulties. The new government asked the United Nations to stop relations with the other two parliaments and on March 30th 2016 Al-Serraj arrived in the port of Tripoli and took office.

Meanwhile, the Tripoli Islamist government announced its dissolution (despite the denial of Prime Minister Ghwell) and over 60 members of the GNC approved the LPA. The agreement also provided for the dissolution of the GNC and the formation of the Council of State (upper house) in which the members of the GNC would come together. But the Tobruk House of Representatives (which should have been a lower house according to the agreements) continued to refuse the vote of confidence to the new government.²⁷

In 2016, clashes continued in almost all of Libya, confirming the country's total instability. ISIS took advantage from the situation, which managed to conquer important parts of the territory including the strategic city of Sirte. The Petroleum Facilities Guards (PFG) together with the Misurata Brigades counterattacked the Caliphate forces, managing with British and US support to recapture almost all territories under the control of the Islamic State. This demonstrated a probable overestimation of Daesh's strength in Libya, of its real radicalization on the territory and of the number of its armed soldiers. The operation also confirmed the effectiveness of Libyan militias when logistically

²⁶ ABEBE TIGIRE JALU, 2017, *LIBYA: RELAPSE IN TO CRISIS AFTER MUAMMAR GADDAFI (SINCE 2011)*, Department of Philosophy, Dire Dawa University, Dire Dawa Institute of Technology (DDIT)

²⁷ ABEBE TIGIRE JALU, 2017, *LIBYA: RELAPSE IN TO CRISIS AFTER MUAMMAR GADDAFI (SINCE 2011)*, Department of Philosophy, Dire Dawa University, Dire Dawa Institute of Technology (DDIT)

supported by foreign powers. Clashes between Haftar's LNA and the Benghazi Defense Brigades (BDB) continued in June of the same year. The GNA with the help of the BDB reconquered Sirte, thanks also to the US bombing, causing the strong irritation of Haftar and a further deterioration of relations between the two governments. Meanwhile Haftar continued his expansion strategy by placing the cities of Ras Lanuf, Sidra and Brega under his control, among the largest oil fields in the country. The PFG tried the counterattack but were rejected by the LNA. Subsequently, with an agreement with the National Oil Company, oil exports from Ras Lanuf restarted, after the interruption in 2014.

In March 2017, the situation reversed again, with the BDB and PFG regaining control of Ras Lanuf and Sidra, putting out the LNA. The collaboration between GNA and BDB led the HoR to totally rejected the GNA and stop peace talks. Haftar believed that the BDBs were linked to terrorist groups headed by Al-Qaeda. The bombings of the LNA, despite the no-fly zone on the oil crescent, led to a further reversal of the front, with yet another recapture of the cities by Haftar.²⁸

With the liberation of Benghazi, the role of Haftar grew even more, so much that President Macron invited him to a peace conference in June with Prime Minister al-Serraj, placing the two on the same level. Meanwhile, the decision of UN to send a new mediator, Gassan Salamè, seemed to be an attempt to accelerate the negotiations ahead of the elections. In Paris it was established that the elections should have taken place in December 2018, but the clashes in Tripoli caused by the VII Brigade imposed a postponement. In February 2019, an agreement was signed in Abu Dhabi between the two governments to hold new elections.

²⁸ JONATHAN M. WINER, 2019, *ORIGINS OF THE LIBYAN CONFLICT AND OPTIONS FOR ITS RESOLUTION*, Middle East Institute

2.1.2 THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY AFTER THE CRISIS

To pacify the situation and build a strong unitary state it is essential to deal with the armed groups, the militias, the paramilitaries linked to the hundreds of tribes. A progressive process of disarmament will have to start to try to decrease the presence of weapons in the country, a census aimed at knowing in depth the state of diffusion of these units, and possibly a process of integration into the police force of the State. Nowadays the situation is still extremely complicated: the situations in Tobruk and Bani Walid can be cited as an example.

The most influential tribe in Tobruk is al-Ubaidat which has over 300,000 affiliates. Historically at the top of military services, it had been assigned with the task of protecting the religious order of the Sanusi. Even under Idris and Gaddafi it had been at the top of the LNA. It has over 15 clans within and it is present in most of the city's security institutions. It is important to emphasize that in most cases tribes do not turn to judicial bodies to resolve disputes, but they resolve issues within them. In most cases, two tribes request the intervention of a third tribe who acts as mediator of the dispute. It can even detain the accused until the end of the "trial". Tribal notables who have a legal background tend to apply Libyan criminal law, although very often penalties can vary according to the circumstances and status of the convicted person. When notables do not have this type of knowledge, custom law apply. The population, especially in Tobruk, accepts and agrees about the role played by tribes in the field of security and justice. This reaffirms the absolute importance of tribal entities within Libyan society.²⁹

The situation is different in the city of Bani Walid. It is mainly inhabited by the most populous Libyan tribe, the Warfalla, which takes its name from the territory in which the city extends. Occupied by the revolutionaries during the post-revolutionary phases and accused of being one of Gaddafi's last outposts, it was later freed by the town's Notables. In 2012 they formed the Warfalla Social Council, a body necessary to manage political issues and justice. The inhabitants did not recognize any post-revolutionary institution, refusing to

²⁹ Peter Cole with Fiona Mangan, 2014, *Tribe, Security, Justice, and peace in Libya today*, United States Institute of Peace

recognize LNA and the General Security Directorate of the Libyan National Police. Most of those who are part of the WSC occupied senior positions during Gaddafi's regime and now refuse to submit to the new institutions.

The security question remains a key issue for several reasons. There is the need for three conditions to create a safe environment: first of all, being able to control the regime's arsenal. Libya is full of military bases and weapons depots, which were attacked during the riots. These weapons depots are among the main responsible for the arms supplies of the militias that are currently raging in the area. The government's top priority should be to intercept these weapons, seize them and place them under its control. Another condition will be the securing of borders, an indispensable barrier for a unitary State that exercises effective control over the territory. The third condition will be to reintegrate the militias into the official security forces by totally reforming this sector.

2.1.3 THE PROBLEM OF WEAPONS AND BORDERS

For nice years, Libya has been the scene of clashes and it is a country where the huge spread of weapons remains a crucial problem. The armaments problem had been posed already during the revolt, before the fall of the regime. During these years, many foreign countries have financed the various factions and supported the militias with arms supplies. Among these, Qatar and France are among the countries that have most played this role. Above all, the spread of anti-tank missiles and MANPADS has worried the international community, leading the United States to take charge of the operation to requisition these armaments (over 20,000). We must also consider the spread of small arms and assault rifles. It is estimated that the Libyan national army owned between 300,000 and 600,000 assault rifles. Millions of tons of weapons are estimated to have ended up in the hands of hundreds of factions on the ground. And today in Libya, possessing weapons means having enormous power, considering the almost total absence of the State, and the possibility of making violent gestures to try to be legitimize to the negotiating table.

Another issue related to arms but also to all type of smuggling is that of borders. Obviously during the Gaddafi regime, the situation was totally different. The borders with Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria were sufficiently stable, the Rais had had to manage the difficult control of the southern border with Niger, Chad and Sudan. The Fezzan region and southern Cyrenaica together cover 2700 km of border with three different states. Many tribes live between borders and it is difficult to control them. Gaddafi managed to control these territories thanks to the agreements with neighbouring states and thanks to the negotiation with the tribes of the region, the only ones that have a deep knowledge of those areas difficult even to cross, and the only ones to have effective control. This situation changed totally during and after the revolution, when tribes, which previously received large sums of money from the State, began to finance themselves with illegal trafficking and began to fight each other in a new-found instability and vacuum of power.

2.1.4 THE NEED FOR SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

The security issue is a central issue from 2011 until today. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrive at a total reform of this sector. After years of regime in which Gaddafi had used the police force to maintain his power and silence any dissent, the Libyans would have wanted a reform that would put military institutions under civilian control. This is a crucial step for a country that wants to try to become democratic and to avoid past mistakes. A too independent military and police apparatus is dangerous for the functioning of all the other institutions and for the political and social life of a country. In the context of a top-down reform of the sector, this is one of the necessary conditions. After the riots it was difficult to implement this type of change for multiple reasons. It must be remembered the weakness of Libyan institutions even before 2011. Gaddafi had concentrated a great amount of power in his own hands and in his associates, weakening institutions, especially military ones. He feared more than anything else that he could be the victim of a coup. He continually changed officers at the highest levels to prevent them from gaining too much power and he had even abolished the Ministry of Defense, placing the army under the control of the Chief of Staff. Even the Ministry of the Interior was not at all

efficient even before the revolution, and this led to a worsening of its effectiveness after the riots. The administration departments were not prepared at all, and they lacked the strategic and analytical capacity necessary to try to control the situation. Another factor that had deteriorated the various institutions during the regime had been the phenomenon of clientelism and the almost total absence of meritocracy, with roles of absolute importance assigned on the basis of the level of loyalty to the Rais' family. He tried in every way to protect himself from a coup by weakening cohesion in his own armies. Cohesion is a fundamental factor in a military institution that has common values and the same goals. It is evident in the actions on the ground and in general in the structure and hierarchy that an army needs. Gaddafi tried to weaken it, turning away figures hostile to him or who might have too much strength and influence. He assigned promotions based on ethnicity, loyalty to the regime, in an exchange system of favour aimed at neutralizing possible riots. In numerical terms, the army grew enormously in the years of the regime and was equipped with better armaments, more technologically advanced, but in reality, it was weakened. The regime often relied on parallel structures to ensure security and the continued rotation of the top ranks led to a lack of leadership and unity.

With such a situation and such a weakness of the security institutions, the attempt to pacify the situation after the revolution has failed. The UNSMIL mission, which was supposed to try to solve the conflict and mediate between the parties involved, struggled to carry out its task, not being supported on the ground by a UN military contingent. Many States offered their contributions and sent experts to support the administrative, political, and security sector, but the collaboration with ministries is struggling to be concrete and efficient. In this context, the commissions for reintegrating militias have not achieved the expected results. The Disarm Disband Rehabilitate militias had strived to reintegrate militias into institutions. The idea was to offer wages and above all legitimacy to these groups of fighters. However, they often opposed individual integration, wanting to be integrated as a group, maintaining unity and therefore more strength. Eventually most of the militias were gathered in the Libyan Shield Force and the Supreme Security Committee, two transitional security forces that were supposed to support regular security forces. In reality, these units enjoyed great autonomy, and they attempted to pursue their own

objectives, often being highly politicized. The Warriors Affair Commission, born in the first year after the revolt under the NTC, also had the goal of reintegrating the militias and censoring them, but it was not very successful.

Furthermore, the highest levels of these security forces are dominated by Islamists, which causes strong dissent. The combatants do not have big incentives that push them to "institutionalize" themselves, and they fear that given their little technical preparation they risk ending up in the low rank of the army. In addition, the internal splits between the militias must be considered, with some who want to oust generals linked to the old regime, others that follow a series of goals of Islamist origin, others who aim at mere economic interests. In this chaos, the rise of Haftar can be read in two different and complementary ways: on the one hand, the instability and the jeopardization of the clashes between the militias had provided again the alibi for the intervention of a strong person, with military skills, which can stabilize the situation. On the other hand, the domination of Islamists in numerous militias leads the secularists headed by Haftar to fight trying to avoid the spread of their power all over the Country.

2.2 EXTERNAL ACTORS

The Libyan chaos that shows no signs of stabilizing from 2011 to today, with little progress, obviously worries many neighbouring states and beyond. In a regional context of the "enlarged Mediterranean" Libya is a threat to several countries, a risk scenario to be kept under control and in some cases to intervene. For neighbouring states with Libya, it is clearly a central point on the government's agenda, as for Egypt and Tunisia, and also for others more or less far from the country. It has to be considered for instance the case of Europe and in particular of those States of the South, or some Middle Eastern countries that fear the victory of Islamic fundamentalists and the spread of terrorist groups throughout the region. It will be important for this to analyse the different points of view on a case by case basis.

The political and security order that had been established in North Africa after the Second World War and which had persisted until the 1970s has been lost in

recent decades. The reason for this loss is attributable to individual states that have preferred to adapt their regional policies to their own interests, trying to safeguard themselves.³⁰ Politicians and authoritarianisms have certainly not contributed to stability, if we consider, for example, the case of dictators and leaders who were actually alone in command and who have implemented sometimes contradictory and eccentric policies. In these situations, the interests of the European powers have accentuated fragmentation by placing their claims and their geopolitical and economic interests in an already fragile scenario. They preferred a bilateral relationship with each state, implementing a foreign policy that often accentuated already existing conflicts and tensions.

2.2.1. EGYPT AND UAE

The Libyan case is certainly a top priority on the agenda of Egyptian President Al-Sisi. The long border between the two countries, the theatre of the war between Gaddafi and Al-Sadat in 1977, is the cause of great concern for Egypt, which is strongly frightened by Libyan instability and the possible failure of the State.³¹ Since the coup of 2013, which deposed President Muhammed Morsi, the country has internal problems and tries to contain the advance of the Muslim Brotherhood. For the same reason, it is feared that Libya will fall into the hands of Islamist forces or that it will be dominated by terrorist groups of the same origin. For these reasons, the country has supported Cyrenaica's strongman Haftar from the first moment, initially with political support and subsequently providing logistical support for the general's operations. In the fighting in Derna in 2014 Al-Sisi even authorized some aerial strikes, exposing himself directly in the conflict to support Haftar. The Egyptian concern is the same as that of United Arab Emirates, which contributed with air strikes and arms supplies to Operation Dignity.

³⁰ Mikael Eriksson, 2015, *A Fratricidal Libya and its Second Civil War Harvesting Decades of Qaddafi's 'Divide and Rule'*, FOI

³¹ Mikael Eriksson, 2015, *A Fratricidal Libya and its Second Civil War Harvesting Decades of Qaddafi's 'Divide and Rule'*, FOI

2.2.2. RUSSIA

Russia is also supporting the Tobruk government and Haftar. Historically the first bilateral agreement between Russia and Libya was in 1963, but when there was a change of regime, Russia immediately recognized Gaddafi's government, becoming one of the first supporters and maintaining important political and economic relations with the country over the years. During the regime, the Kremlin had provided the Rais with most of its armaments and their relations were based on the issue of weapons and energy. After Putin's visit Libya in 2008, a trade agreements for over \$ 10 billion had been signed. As for armaments, Gaddafi's army had 500 Russian-made tanks and hundreds of other war vehicles available, as well as thousands of weapons. It is estimated that with the fall of the regime, Russia has lost 4 billion in missing arms supplies.

Russia's interests in the area are various, and its role had been put in a bad light by its support for all those governments that fell with the Arab spring. Furthermore, Putin was concerned about the interference in the country of the western coalition, especially considering the country's huge energy resources and a possible expansion of NATO influence in the region. For this reason, Russia immediately sided with Tobruk and General Haftar, guaranteeing him fundamental support to carry on his battles, as opposed to the government of Tripoli.

2.2.3 TURKEY

Turkey is a very active player in the region and has taken a central role in the crisis in recent months. Together with Russia it seems to have taken the situation under its control. At the meeting on January 9, 2020, Turkish President Erdogan and Russian President Putin agreed on a ceasefire agreement. This was immediately accepted by Al-Serraj and rejected by Haftar. A few days earlier, the Turkish parliament had approved sending military personnel to support the GNA. Turkey's dispatch of armaments, drones and military equipment is part of

the agreements that have led to redefining maritime borders and exclusive economic areas between the two countries. This means that Turkey is increasingly spread its influence in the region, and it is trying to achieve several goals. These operations, which apparently do not conflict with the objectives of the EU, actually marginalize the role of the Union in the Libyan crisis, and this would be leading the scenario towards a division into two areas of influence: that of Ankara and that of Moscow. This would also affect the EastMed gas pipeline project, which should link Israel and Egypt with Europe. If the construction area falls under Turkish control, the project would be stopped, with serious damage to the countries involved. Turkey also supports the GNA on an ideological political issue. In fact, it supports all the organizations belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood, opposed in Libya (based in Tripoli) to the coalition of Haftar that would like to expel them.

2.2.4 FRANCE

France is among the most important players in the Libyan context and it has one of the least clear positions in the region. In theory, it is a supporter of the Al-Serraj government, as a result of the 2015 agreements in Skhirat. The government is the only one recognized by the international community and the United Nations. But France has also close contact with General Haftar. He managed to conquer almost all of Cyrenaica and most of Fezzan, and since April he has been targeting Tripoli to establish his control over the country. For this reason, he is the most important interlocutor in this moment. France does not want to isolate the General and would seem to play a game on both fields. This is one of the reasons for the strong contrast with Italy which instead strongly supports the GNA and it is convinced that only an expansion of the government of Al-Serraj influence can lead to the pacification of the country. Obviously, France does its own interests and is driven by several objectives. It must be remembered that it was the then French President Sarkozy who anticipated everyone and attacked Gaddafi's troops. Since then, the French have moved with great pragmatism. The economic interests are enormous, considering the investments of the giant Total in the country, and instability also

worries for two further reasons: the danger of contagion of neighbouring countries and in particular Tunisia and Algeria, historically and economically close to France, and the migration issue, which has important effects on Europe and France itself.

2.2.5. ITALY

Italy has always had a special relationship with Libya. For this reason, the outbreak of the uprising in 2011 immediately assumed central importance for the Italian government and the public opinion. Historically, the country had been strongly connected to Italy, as the latter tried to colonize the African country. Only in 1912 Italy managed to establish its role in North Africa among the European powers, but colonization was immediately difficult. They found themselves in front of a huge desert territory, hardly practicable and controllable, scattered with hundreds of tribes. At the beginning, a negotiation process has been attempted through the financing of the tribes and the search for a compromise. In a short time, however, it became clear that it was impossible to govern peacefully, and Italy changed its attitude by starting an internal war and gaining control of the territory through the use of force. With the advent of Fascism, after the last liberal governments, the situation did not change. On the contrary, Fascism made the repressive measures and the occupation harder, exasperating the local population with all kinds of atrocities and violence. After World War II ended with the defeat of Axis forces, in 1951 Libya was declared independent and King Al-Senusi took power. Libya began a new phase of negotiations with Italy demanding great compensation for the occupation and war crimes.

It was difficult to find an economic agreement between the two parties and in the treaty in 1956 Italy agreed to compensate only a part of its crimes. However, there was a new phase of bilateral relationship. In the following years tens of thousands of Italians living in the country were forced to return to Italy because of the discontent of the Libyans who believed their presence to be a colonial heritage.

With Colonel Gaddafi taking power, relationships changed again. Under the political point of view, the relationship between the two countries have always had ups and downs, between tension and détente; on the economic side, trades grew enormously. In fact, in Libya some of the most important oil and gas reserves in the world were discovered, and this was an opportunity not to be missed for Italy. The most important step in this direction was the joint venture between Eni and the National Oil Corporation, with the construction of several extraction plants and the supply of war material by the Italian government. To intensify these relations even more, in the mid-seventies the most important Italian industry, FIAT, was going through a period of profound crisis due to the exhausting struggles with the Unions and a radical corporate restructuring. This led the Agnelli family to accept the investment of the Libyan leader, who acquired 10% of the company, a huge amount for the time. Considering the renewed economic relations between the two countries, an attempt was made with the Andreotti government to stabilize diplomatic relations, which however did not take place. In those years Libya lived in diplomatic isolationism with most of the countries of the international community, which accused it of supporting several terrorist groups. The United States even went so far as to put Libya on the list of "rogue states". This certainly did not facilitate relations with Italy, although the country was a strategic economic partner for Libya.

However, it must be considered that Italy was firmly anchored in the alliance with the United States, promoters and financiers of the post-war rebirth and essential protectors with the Atlantic Alliance of almost all western countries (in the Cold War context). After a deterioration of diplomatic relations with the United States in the 90s and the consequent embargo, since 1998 the situation seemed to normalize again with Italy which resumed weaving relations with its special partner, laying the foundations for the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation of 2008. With this treaty a new chapter of the relationship between the two countries opened, and Italy committed to financing and building important infrastructures including a highway that would connect Egypt and Tunisia. The agreement also provided the supply by Italy of boats to the Libyan navy and tools necessary to control the coasts, to prevent the departure of irregular migrants. In the context of these negotiations and the economic ones of Eni, the Italian company assumed an increasingly central role

in the Libyan context, to the detriment of other groups of foreign companies and of the French Total, displeasing the Elysée.

With these premises, at the outbreak of the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi's regime, Italy found itself in an extremely complex position. On the one hand, it was the regime's privileged partner, the most exposed in terms of economic investments in the country and the most at risk on a geopolitical level if the country had fallen into the civil war. On the other hand, the news of the atrocities committed by the regime to quell the revolt (the 200 deaths of the first days of clashes, and the images relaunched by the media around the world on what was happening in the country) forced the international community and Italy itself to speak out strongly against the regime. The discussions on the response that Italy should have given to the violence were intense. On the one hand, Prime Minister Berlusconi and his close staff attempted direct contact with the Rais, trying to make him give up on the direct confrontation and trying to convince him to negotiate. There was a line of dialogue given the excellent relationships Berlusconi had with the Colonel and the personal friendship between them. Quirinale's position was different, with the President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano more inclined to approach the UN position and the imposition of an immediate ceasefire.

At the beginning of the uprising, Italy found itself having to decide how to position itself in the international context with respect to the crisis. France led by Sarkozy was the most inclined to intervene alongside the rebels and in fact it was the first Country to intervene, before the authorization of the United Nations. The French were convinced that by doing so they would gain a privileged position in the post-conflict phase and in economic negotiations regarding oil extraction. Furthermore, they believed they could strengthen their influence in the region. This irritated Italy and its Premier Berlusconi was not late in expressing his doubts about an intervention alongside the rebels. He threatened to leave the coalition and not to make the Italian military bases available, trying to acquire greater decision-making power in the negotiation. The United States was divided internally between interventionists and non-interventionists, but in the end the former prevailed and the US bombings began on strategic targets. They would have immediately preferred a NATO-led

mission, which was not accomplished until later. Italy initially remained in an intermediate position, aware of the need to keep up with the other powers but also of the relations that had been established with the regime. When the French sent humanitarian aid and a delegation of the intelligence and representatives of Total, Airbus and other multinationals, France's intention to expand its influence became clear.

Meanwhile, Italy stated through the government that its contribution to support the coalition (Unified Protector) would have had greater operational flexibility, suggesting that the country's commitment would become more effective. In this way, an operational agreement was established with France on the Libya issue. This happened in April 2011. In the following weeks, a meeting with representatives of the National Transitional Council confirmed that the support of the rebels would also be fundamental in the perspective of future relations. In short, Italy had to be there and exercise its role³².

2.2.6. EUROPEAN UNION

The Libyan revolution of 2011 was the first crisis that the European Union faced after the approval of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009. The Treaty had established an intergovernmental approach in the areas of external relations and security. Precisely this choice was one of the causes of the lack of readiness and decision-making capacity found in facing the crisis. The treaty that should have allowed the Union to speak forcefully to the world and with one voice has not resolved one of the most important questions, namely the effectiveness of EU policies on external relations and security. Because of this, at the outbreak of the crisis, Europe struggled to act with unity, and the Anglo-French axis prevailed, with the diplomacies of the two countries at the forefront in setting the agenda although with the fundamental support of US and NATO. In fact, the CSDP³³, Common and Security Defence Policy established by the Lisbon Treaty, is based on soft law, with an inter-governmental cooperative approach that is unsuitable for handling issues concerning, for example, security and military missions. In

³² Aldo Liga, 2018, *Playing with molecules: the Italian approach in Libya*, IFRI

³³ Common Security and Defence Policy. It was established by the Lisbon Treaty

Lisbon it was established that binding legislation for States was excluded in certain matters, and rather the principle of voluntary cooperation was affirmed.³⁴

At the outbreak of the crisis, the EU Members were very cautious on the issue, and HR Lady Ashton declared herself worried about the situation and she condemned the ongoing violence. Germany was the first country to criticize the actions against civilians of the regime, while the other European powers including France, Great Britain and Italy were divided on the response to be given to the Libyan scenario. The first two pushed hard for an armed intervention, while Italy was more cautious and tried to stall. These internal divisions and the unclear situation led to the HR declaring itself concerned about a possible intervention. France harshly criticized the EU leaders, arguing that the approach was too timorous, and that Gaddafi had now lost all legitimacy. For this reason, the Country recognized the National Transitional Council, insisting on its strategy to delegitimize Gaddafi, and leading other countries to join, while the EU recognized the NTC as an interlocutor. In the context of the CSDP, the EU only approves one humanitarian mission, EUFOR Libya, aimed at supporting civilians with humanitarian aid and logistical support. In practice, over the months, the role of the Union was important, but it concerned humanitarian aid rather than operational military missions, playing a useful but not decisive role.

2.3 RENTIER STATE AND OIL ECONOMY

To understand the Libyan economy and the recent crisis, it is necessary to start from an analysis of the causes that led to the current conditions, and the failure to reform the economic system before and during the Gaddafi regime. It will thus be possible to demonstrate that today's difficulties in managing economic and energy resources are not attributable only to the political and military crisis that has persisted since 2011, but also because over time it has not been possible to build truly functioning financial institutions, the management of power it has

³⁴ Sergio Fabbrini, 2014, *The European Union and the Libyan crisis*, School of Government, Political Sciences and International Relations, Luiss Guido Carli

remained poorly transparent, and the country continues to rely on the redistribution of oil export rents.

Libya has never had an economic system based on market economy and liberalization. Before the discovery of energy resources, the country was among the poorest in the world, and its livelihood was guaranteed only by small businesses, a little agricultural sector and external financing. In practice, the country was extremely backward, with a territory that for the most part was not fertile and desert, lacking the infrastructure necessary for development. The Italian occupation had not brought that impulse to economic progress that other European powers had given to other North African countries. Italy had built some infrastructures, not sufficient for an overall development of the country, and reorganized the agricultural sector in a more productive way, but Libya still remained without an institutional, health, educational, infrastructural organization necessary for development.

The situation totally changed when the oil resources were discovered. Under the reign of King Idris, searches were started by foreign companies and huge energy resources were discovered. From that moment Libya's GDP grew enormously and at great speed, driven by oil exports. The country, poor in an institutional and administrative structure capable of managing these huge revenues, struggled to manage the situation. Libya lacked a political and financial ruling class able to address resources to the progress of the country: at the end of the 1970s, the Nation turned into an authentic Rentier State, as the country only exported oil, which contributing 60% of its GDP.

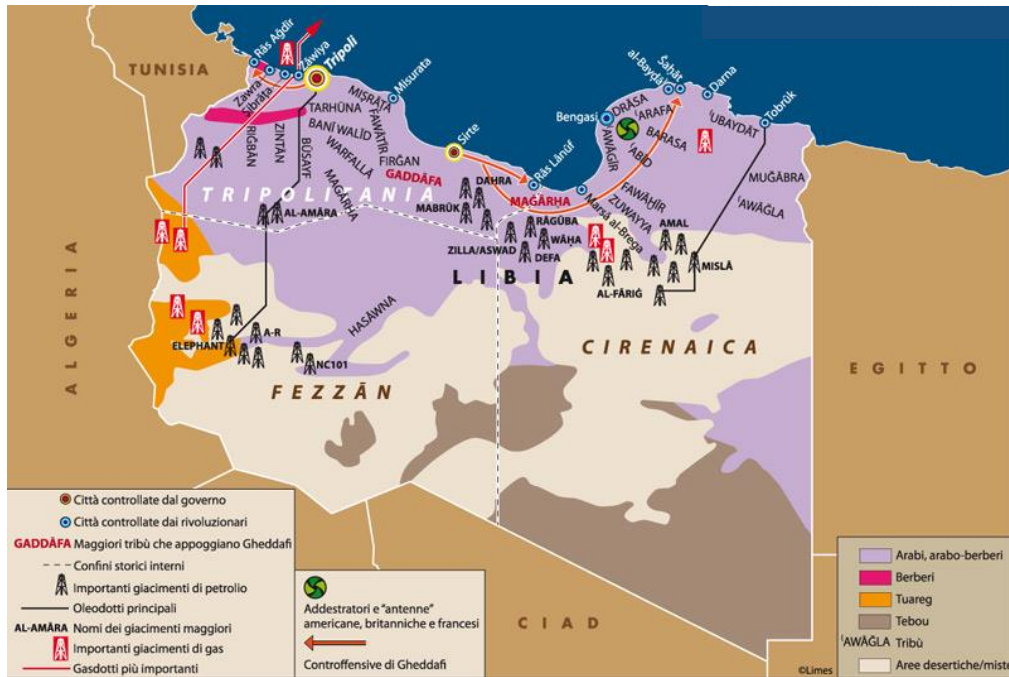


Figure 2: Extraction plants, tribes. Source: Limes

With the 1969 coup d'état and Gaddafi's seizure of power, the country changes again. He attempted to transform Libya by following his "Third Way", an ideology alternative to communism and capitalism. He started the nationalization of the economy and managed to renegotiate the agreements with foreign oil companies in a more advantageous way, obtaining additional revenues to be invested in the healthcare, infrastructure, and agricultural sectors. In fact, the private sector disappeared, to the detriment of the middle class running small enterprises: with foreign trade, they struggled to deal with the stagnation of the internal market. Gaddafi invested in heavy industry and in the services sector, with an exponential growth in public employees. To weigh on public finances there were also a series of subsidies that the government guaranteed to the population. In a short time, the Colonel realized that the country needed to decrease its dependence on energy resources, diversifying the economy and investments and opening up to some necessary liberalization. But Ghaddafi's foreign policy, sometimes clumsy and aggressive, provoked the country's almost total isolation on an international level, leading in a decade to the decrease in exported oil and production, also due to the poor maintenance of the plants.

After twenty years of unsustainable policies in the long run, the Rais realized the need to initiate some reforms. The need to lighten the State budget and decrease its dependence on extractions led him to change his mind and attempt a tenuous liberalization process with the aim of revitalizing the middle class and the private sector. However, the situation appeared irreversible. The State tried to reduce its expenditures, laying off many employees and ceasing financing for unproductive enterprises. Some laws partially liberalized the private sector, allowing free businesses although under State control and the State was forced to open up to foreign investment. This was not enough. Over the years, the discontent of the population had grown, and these changes launched by the regime deteriorate relations even with most of the elite loyal to the Colonel, fearful of losing the privileged position acquired in the years of monopoly and nationalization.

This first phase of reform failed, also due to the boycott of countries like the United States, which also punished Libya with the oil embargo. This did not stop the exchanges, despite US pressure, with other countries including Italy, which would have been too damaged by the closure of relations with the Rais. But the first attempt at economic reform was still a failure, mainly due to the inability of the regime to set up structured and transparent bodies for financial and resource control, and for failing to contain the informal economy, linked to the power of the tribe and all the tribal context.³⁵

In the late 1990s and 2000s Libya again found itself facing an economic crisis. Discontent was growing in the country due to growing inequalities, reduced income, lack of liberalization. The Islamist opposition to the Rais was growing stronger and the problem of promoting reforms of the economic system was again raised with the aim of boosting growth. This once again only happened partially. On the one hand, the colonel tries to normalize diplomatic relations with foreign powers, collaborating with the US and European secret services, distancing himself from terrorist groups and abandoning projects of weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, economic reforms seemed impractical, aimed more at improving Libya's international image rather than making a

³⁵ D. VANDEWALLE, *A History of Modern Libya*

decisive impact. If from one side the reformist wing had grown in the General People's Committee, the opposition to such reforms had also grown, with a conservative elite always ready to slow down or block the progress and change of the country. Libya has therefore failed to abandon the Rentier economy, and above all the "Rentier mentality".

It is precisely this type of mentality that has curbed the country's economic development and growth. As in other similar cases, the State did not commit itself to create the necessary conditions for the development of an economic and productive sector independent from the public one. Citizens, supported by a series of subsidies, have acquired a mentality that is not prone to resourcefulness and instead preferred to accept the compromise of a regime that supported them economically. This system has become so deeply entrenched in society that it is the main brake on change. In addition, the State has failed to provide a clear regulatory framework with efficient control institutions. Rather, corruption and clientelism has spread, with the elite³⁶ in command always ready to donate sums of money to appease discontent and disagreements. The tribal system has been fertile ground for this type of system. The fragmented society helped feed a vicious circle of favours and rewards aimed at maintaining the status quo. The huge cultural and economic gap between the various social classes has also contributed to this, with a Libyan population who is poorly educated and unable to organize themselves to promote concrete protest initiatives.

This happened until 2011. And the revolt itself is the result of an ancient discontent, of a system that eventually collapsed on itself under the pressure of various internal and external factors. And the chaos that followed the uprising exacerbated the fractures and tensions within society. The fall of the regime has left a huge power vacuum, which too many actors have tried to fill with the sole purpose of grabbing a privileged situation. The violent struggles for the control of extraction plants are the result of this race for power, primarily economic.

³⁶ A. BRAHIMI, 2011, *Libya's Revolution*, in *Journal of North African Studies*, Routledge

2.3.1 THE FAILURE TO FIND ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AFTER THE CRISIS

Initially, the economic wealth of Libya seemed a factor that could have determined the stabilization after the 2011 revolution. In fact, thanks to its important resources, the country would not have needed large external financing and the proceeds of oil exports could have supported the political transition. This has not been the case and its great resources have been the cause of further clashes and internal struggles. In fact, as analysed in the previous paragraph, the lack of a clear redistribution of profits due to weak, sometimes even absent institutions, and the division of power in two competing Governments have contributed to sharpening the differences and brought the economic situation into a phase of crisis. In addition, the protracted violence and the lack of security worsened the country's conditions, with foreign investors frightened by the trend of the crisis and the extraction processes slowed down by internal disputes.

If after the revolution, the extraction levels remained high, after 18 months the situation would have collapsed and never returned to normal pre-crisis levels.³⁷ Oil resources are a positive and, in some ways, negative aspect for the country. On the one hand these assets make Libya more independent from external investments and from other countries, on the other the international community has one less lever to use to condition the country's policy and guide its transition. Fortunately, after a drop so low in production levels, it returned to 1.6 million barrels per day (close to the pre-crisis production of 1.77). This was possible also thanks to the little damage to the economic structures caused by the conflict, with the NATO operations which aimed rather at strategic military objectives. When in 2013 some plants were taken over by armed militias, daily production collapsed again, and since then it is difficult to stabilize the situation and establish a road map to plan investments and contracts with foreign companies. The NOC³⁸ will be a key player in the state building process because most of the state's revenue passes through it. It must be able to retain a

³⁷ L. S. TALAMI, *Arab Spring in the Global Political Economy*

³⁸ *The National Oil Company (NOC) controls most of the extraction plants.*

part of the revenue to be reinvested in the modernization of the plants and in the expansion of them.

2.4 THE MIGRATION ISSUE

In the enlarged Mediterranean area, countries are extremely interconnected, and an upheaval in one of them can lead to unexpected consequences throughout the region. The Libyan revolt in some respects was unexpected. In the context of the Arab springs, Tunisia and Egypt had shown that something was changing in North Africa and that civil society, historically not very active and prone to revolt, had decided to try to take the situation in hand with democratic demands and renewal of the ruling class. Going deeper into the situations, it can be seen that the change was even more complex. Modernity and the sharing of information through social media had provided new channels for the populations of those countries to build a renewed awareness of the wrongs and abuses they had been suffering for decades. Libya, however, could be considered a different case. In other countries in the Maghreb area, civil society had received more external stimuli and had been able to exchange ideas and projects with greater intensity with its European neighbours, in Libya the situation was different. Historically, the country was more isolated, with purely economic ties and a relationship with Italy that had not been a strong enough impulse for the development of an active civil society. Furthermore, it presented itself as one of the richest countries in the region thanks to its energy resources, and this had guaranteed the State huge resources to finance a vast system of subsidies. The rentier mentality had guaranteed the regime a certain stability, and despite the discontent of the population in relation to the very high rate of corruption and clientelism, the country presented itself at the outbreak of the Arab springs in a state of apparent stability.

Gaddafi's regime was in some ways useful to foreign powers, especially European ones. The stability of the internal situation in fact guaranteed the economic interests of foreign oil companies, and the discreetly effective control of borders by the Rais had avoided the outbreak of a migration crisis, given the growing pressure of the populations of Sub-Saharan Africa, eager to migrate to

north trying to reach Europe. At the outbreak of the riots in 2011, Europe found itself facing a totally new and unexpected scenario. The country, which found itself without a central authority, has become a porous terrain in which the trafficking of weapons, drugs, and in particular migrants has been favoured by chaos and perpetual instability. If on the one hand the regime had been a barrier to migrations to Europe, especially in the 90s it had opened up to migrations from the south necessary for the strategic productive sectors of the country. The Libyans were not satisfied with the wages offered and often preferred to live thank to subsidies given by the State. For this reason, foreign workers were necessary for the functioning of the country's economic system. Libya thus became a hub for migrants, who were challenged with the outbreak of the revolt to face a double migration, the first to Libya, the second fleeing the civil war towards Europe.

Europe thus found itself facing a serious migration crisis, which it had already tried to manage through the outsourcing of asylum in previous years. In practice, agreements with Gaddafi had established hot-spots on Libyan territory and reception camps where migrants applied for asylum and started the bureaucratic procedures to be admitted to Europe. Precisely these agreements and the role that Libya had assumed led the Rais during the revolt to threaten European countries, claiming that there were millions of Africans ready to cross the Mediterranean and reach Europe, and for this reason the defence of the regime was necessary to prevent this from happening. Europe had always had an ambiguous attitude on the issue, supporting Gaddafi's containment policies and indirectly accepting his violent and repressive practices towards migrants. By blocking migrants in Libya, Europe would thus have avoided breaking the principle of non-refoulement, according to which a persecuted migrant from a country where his security is not guaranteed cannot be repatriated to the country of origin. This Kantian-inspired principle was sanctioned by the 1951 Geneva Convention. At the outbreak of the riots, Italy asked for support from the European Border Control Agency (Frontex), to start a review of the procedures for recognizing the asylum and trying to obtain community management of the identification and expulsion centres (CIE). In addition, Italy declared a state of emergency, and a European initiative to patrol the Libyan coast was launched (Hermes 2011).

The situation created in Libya after the 2011 revolution made the situation worse from every point of view. The country had to face a further influx of migrants without owning the institutions necessary to manage such a situation. For migrants the situation has deteriorated. Nowadays in Libya there are real prisons for migrants where all types of abuse occur. Border police and armed militias saw migrants as a new way of making a profit, and forced migrants to pay to cross borders or to be freed from the camps. Human traffickers enriched the chaos and took advantage of the situation to establish illegal routes to Europe, with boats often inadequate to cross the Mediterranean Sea and which often sank along the way, causing thousands of victims.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SKHIRAT AGREEMENT

With the Skhirat agreements and the subsequent establishment of the government of Al-Serraj in Tripoli, everyone believed in a decisive step forward in the resolution of the transition started in 2011. The reality was that the agreement did not actually achieve the desired objectives, exacerbating the situation on the territory and resulting in fact a failed attempt to pacification. Observing the effective areas of influence in the Libyan scenario, today the GNA has control over a very small part of Tripolitania, while most of the territory is dominated by General Haftar, with the Fezzan in the hands of autonomous militias, difficult to dominate. Good intentions were not enough to reunite the country under one central government and the reasons for this are several. Certainly, the idea of the United Nations to establish a negotiation between the opposing factions on the ground was right, but the agreement was signed by representatives who do not exercise great influence on the territory, and for this reason its legitimacy was immediately questioned. In the future, it will be necessary to think about changing the agreements, and to involve truly influential and relevant actors. A complete revision of the peace process, which is still far from achieving stability, would be desirable. The country today is totally different from the past, and it still struggles to find its own identity and a solid structure. The military intervention of foreign forces and NATO in 2011 destroyed a large part of the strategic political and military buildings, as well as most of its armaments, leaving the country not only in the political-institutional void, but also without the security forces necessary to govern the transition process following the fall of the regime. In the first attempt to transition, many mistakes were made.

The country was still shaken by the clashes that just took place, and the 2012 elections were held without the minimum conditions of democracy.³⁹ But the low turnout was not the only problem. The electoral system with the one round

³⁹ Sergei Boeke Jeanine de Roy van Zuijdewijn, 2016, *Transitioning from military interventions to long-term counter-terrorism policy The case of Libya (2011–2016)*, University of Leiden

nominal ballot was a wrong choice. It favoured individualistic tendencies of candidates leading to a further fragmentation of the political scenario and not resulting in the actual representation of forces on the ground. The natural consequence, was the subsequent political turmoil with the refusal by the parliament of two lists of different ministers. As already described in the previous paragraphs, the 2014 election of the House of Representatives was not successful: with a disputed result and the outbreak of clashes in several cities, with the parliament itself forced to move from Tripoli to Tobruk for security reasons. It was the beginning of the split of state power in Libya. After sending two special representatives (Ian Martin and Tarek Mitri), UN tried to relaunch negotiations through the diplomatic mission of Bernardino Leon, who was entrusted with the goal of reaching a minimum agreement to reconcile the two parliaments and reactivate the dialogue. Leon's effort was huge, and he was one of the advocates of the preparation and signing of the Skhirat Agreement. He attempted with great mediation ability to bring together the two conflicting forces (Tripoli Islamists and Tobruk Republicans), but the attempt was a new failure because of the Islamists who refused to acknowledge the existence of the internationally recognized Parliament of Tobruk.

Leon's strategy had been to keep himself as neutral as possible, considering the two factions as equal. He was replaced by Martin Kobler, who shortly afterwards was accused by the different factions of having acquired too much political power. In January 2014 a new phase of talks begins in Geneva, in which an agreement could be reached. A new attempt follows in Algiers and then Skhirat in Morocco. Here, after three refused drafts, an agreement was reached on the fourth proposed document. The agreement included the maintenance of the House of Representatives in Tobruk, the creation of the High Council of State and the formation of the Government of National Accord, which would finally bring together power into one government. The agreement which should have been the fundamental step towards pacification has achieved very limited results.

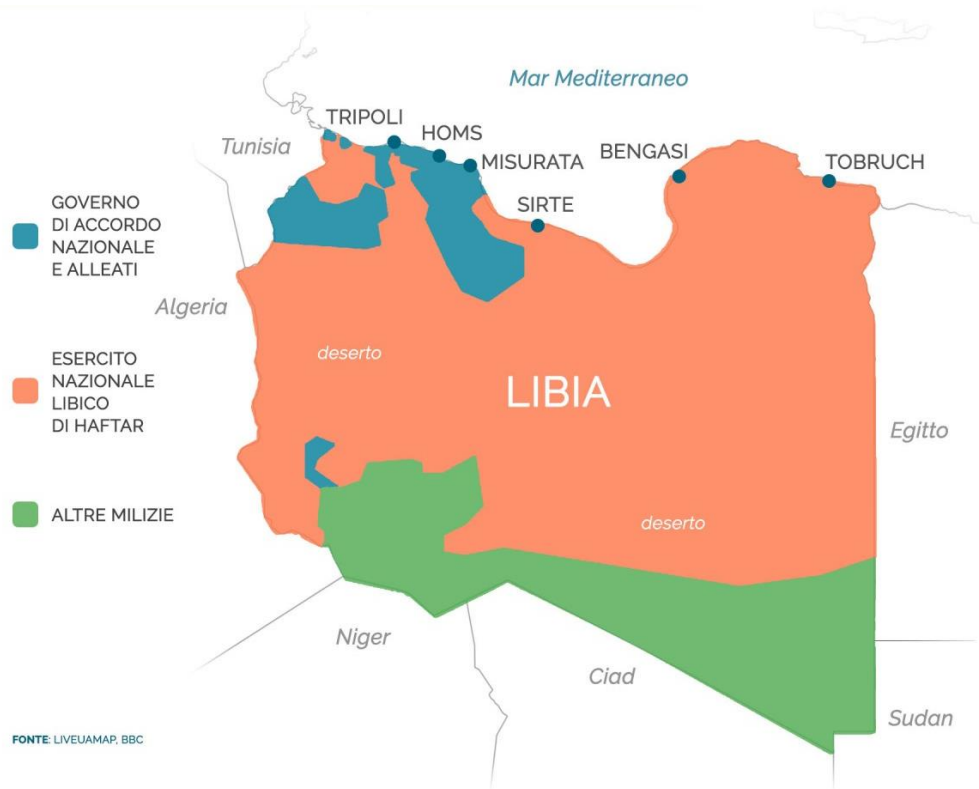


Figure 3: Actors involved in the crisis. Source: ISPI

The reasons are manifold. The first problem was representativeness. The agreement was attended by several politicians from the two parliaments and other representatives of civil society. Who were they representing? Which were the criteria by which the participants were chosen? The issue is crucial: the most the extension of representativeness, the easier it would have been to extend GNA control over the territory. The results show that the negotiation was effective but probably the choice of the participants was not as precise. Another problem was the agenda necessary for the implementation of the agreement and the priority scale set. It referred to the creation of a stable government which has to extend control over the whole territory, but on what basis? The country was still into chaos, torn by internal conflicts and with enormous problems regarding security, the functioning of the institutions, the presence of the Islamic State on the territory. How to achieve these goals? Democracy makes sense in a state where institutions manage to govern internal processes and where security apparatus have the monopoly of force. A scenario too far from the Libyan one. Another problem is posed by the confused leadership that the treaty establishes

and by the difficult hypothetical relations between the High Council of State and the House of Representatives.

The role of the head of state, commander of the armed forces, representative of the country in external relations and president of the Council of Ministers is defined in the treaty. In practice he performs both the functions of Head of State and Premier. However, the system seemed designed in the direction of a parliamentary system. And here there is another difficulty. For example, regarding the appointments of the heads of state bodies, the House of Representatives has the obligation to seek the opinion of the High Council of State. This would lead to further divisions and slowdowns in state functioning.

3.2 RESTART NEGOTIATIONS FROM LOCALITIES

While trying to contain the situation and in the United Nations mediation effort, the local dimension of the country has been underestimated. Reconsidering taking actions starting from the local dimension is riskier, but it is also an opportunity for wider and more solid negotiation⁴⁰. Municipalities are in fact one of the few institutional actors that partially work today and are the only ones to be democratically elected. Their role should be considered as the pivot of a new mediation with the Libyan population and its instances. Over ninety of them work, and two thirds of them remained neutral between the two governments in the area. To imagine a total ceasefire on the ground, it is essential to relaunch these entities, which have also been a barrier for the expansion of ISIS in Libya. A central factor for successful state-level negotiation, is the knowledge of the territory and the internal micro-fractures spread in it. A state is something more than the sum of all these Municipalities, but it is obvious that without their support and without the pacification of each theatre of war the State itself will struggle to function.

What the community should implement the most is a training program for officials of these apparatuses, which are too poorly trained and professionalized,

⁴⁰ Asif Majid, 2015, *Is There a Center to Hold? The Problem of Transition in Post-Qaddafi Libya*, GeorgeTown University Press

yet. Supporting and relaunching relations between International Organizations and these entities could guarantee several advantages. Libya has received enormous aid of all kinds since the beginning of the crisis through population support programs. The municipalities in this case could guarantee greater aid effectiveness and greater involvement of the population. The distance between the people and the decisions made in the negotiations is one of the most important gaps to be closed. Furthermore, support should be guaranteed in the administrative and legislative sectors. This would ensure an improvement in decision-making processes. Another key area in which it is important to provide support is the one of expenditure and budget. Of course, it is often the lack of resources that creates insurmountable difficulties and limits in the functioning of the Municipalities. But very often it is the lack of adequate managers and the absence of a vision on how the budget should be managed and where the expenses should be addressed. Other fundamental sectors in which help should be guaranteed are health and education.

It will also be crucial for pacification to support local ceasefires. In this context, municipalities can make their contribution. Municipalities can play their role in the security sector, as the ceasefire has so far been sanctioned with agreements between non-institutional figures such as militia leaders. Intervention by United Nations into agreements between militias and armed groups are really difficult: local Councils could, in the future, play a role of mediation and observation of the situation. These ceasefire agreements are based on trust between the two conflicting parties, which is why the room for manoeuvre of external mediators is really limited. In the security sector, these entities may also be useful for another reason: they are responsible for many direct services to the population. The lack of such services has so far contributed to the spread of the power of the militias, which have replaced government institutions by playing a para-state role and giving money and other goods to the population. It is precisely by acting in these sectors by strengthening the territorial presence of the municipalities that the influence of the militias can be reduced.

3.3 A DIFFERENT INVOLVEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Over time, the Libyan crisis has become global due to the various external stakeholder involved. In fact, the two governments still present on the ground continue to be supported by foreign powers in conflict with each other, albeit indirectly. The interests in Libya are enormous. Its huge energy resources and its pivotal position in the Mediterranean make it a crucial scenario for a multitude of foreign governments. In these conditions it is very difficult, but fundamental, to rethink the involvement of the international community in the Libyan scenario. The perplexities about the mission that brought to the change of regime today are totally confirmed by the facts. The country no longer exists and for 9 years it has been a land of continuous clashes, that shows no sign of abating. What is more difficult to reconcile is the interest of various countries in stabilizing with the various interests they hold in the region. The most realistic solution seems more and more a direct military intervention, but lead by who? And with which consequences on the stability of the entire North African region?

Meanwhile, for eight months General Haftar has continued his siege on the city of Tripoli in an attempt to reunite "all Libya" under his control. He, who had appeared as the strong man able to unify the country, today seems to be in clear advantage but still in difficulty. Having conquered a large part of Libyan territory may seem the prelude to victory, but in the reality the siege has lasted for months and does not seem to have the expected success. Furthermore, the general seems increasingly under pressure by power dynamics within his coalition. In fact, he is the head of the LNA, but his action is supported by dozens of foreign militias and fighters who push him to continue the siege at any cost. Stopping and signing the ceasefire would mean for him the huge risk of having to declare the failure of his mission and the possibility to be dismissed. In addition, his advancing raises the growing concern of other foreign powers, and its possible victory has armed several countries; Turkey, as an example, is ready to deploy ground forces if Tripoli will be about to fall. Haftar, for his part, continues to be supported by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Russia: the latter supplies Egypt with most of the armaments, which are then

transferred to the General. In all this generalized chaos the lack of clarity of some players only makes the situation worse. In the years following the uprising, France played an ambiguous role in negotiations and in approaching the crisis.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, France should have supported the GNA exclusively and on the front line, but in reality, the country also continues to support Haftar, with a support that over time is increasingly difficult to accept by other states. French pragmatism in fact influences the dynamics of the conflict. As already mentioned, a permanent member of the UN, France is also one of the countries that in Europe has more weight at a political and military level, and this has severely limited the operation and strength of the European action. Furthermore, its attitude generated tension with another important stakeholder in the region, Italy, which immediately supported the GNA with a weak but long-term project for Libya. The "clash" between the two countries on the nearby African State has political and economic reasons, given their interests in the energy and extraction sectors in Libya. With such an ongoing situation it is difficult to think that in the future Europe will be able to speak in the crisis with a clear and stronger voice. The European Union, in terms of importance, values, interests and geographical position, should be one of the determining actors in the conflict.

CONCLUSIONS

The study of the Libyan scenario and of a possible solution to the crisis leads to two fundamental evidences: there is a need for a more in-depth analysis of the tribal society and a different involvement of the international community in the pacification process trying to align as many interests as possible.

At the outbreak of the revolution in 2011, the international community was afraid that the mission could be a new failure after those of Afghanistan and Iraq, to name just two of the last ones. In the two countries, external powers acted following the great military commitment of the United States, and especially in the early stages the cultural factor of those territories was underestimated. A very serious mistake whose consequences are still visible today. Invading a country with massive military intervention is a huge risk and involves a series of chain reactions in the territory where the operations take place and in neighbouring States. The world is divided into very different macro areas, and the Middle East as well as North Africa are among the most fragile scenarios in which to intervene. Afghanistan and Iraq were two missions from which to draw important lessons. US and allied intelligence initially underestimated the social, cultural and local dimension of those States, finding themselves faced with difficulties in understanding the reality of those countries and their deep internal dynamics. These choices compromised the effectiveness of the missions, with slow and complex attempts to pacification that were not suited for the Arab reality and its characteristics.

Libya is a unique scenario, difficult to compare to others. The tribal dimension of the society is one of a kind, combined with the country's rentier mentality and recent history. The concept of nation is always being questioned. A strong and well-defined national identity has not developed in its history, and this is a factor that complicates the pacification and state-building process. As I had the opportunity to discuss with Mr. Arturo Varvelli (Scholar of International Relations and particularly the case of Libya), the process that should have taken place after the revolution had to be the *Nation-Building* process. Even before the State-Building process, it is necessary to understand who the Libyans are, what

the dominant values are and only after, what do they want for themselves. France was in the front-line⁴¹ in the intervention and NATO completed the work with a mission that led to regime change. Today it can be said that the mission as it was, was a mistake. Before the uprising, the country was stable, and action could have been taken in other ways to stop the regime's violent reaction to the riots. Here is not the thing. Once the international community intervened, it should not have left the country alone. This is another mistake that underlines Mr. Varvelli, who believes that it was a mistake to conclude the NATO military mission a few days after Gaddafi's death. There was a need to sustain a difficult transition phase, blocking the trafficking of arms and migrants and safeguarding what left of the old institutions. This did not happen and to date it is not possible to understand how the GNA will win the battle for the control of Libya. Some aspects of the UN mission and negotiations need to be clarified. Greater attention will have to be given to the local dimension. The error in the selection of the legitimate actors in the conferences did not guarantee a real legitimacy of the agreements on the territory. It will be necessary to start from the criteria of inclusiveness, starting from the actors that exercise a tangible influence on the territory.

It is always very difficult making a negotiated peace between warring parties. This is particularly the case of Libya where there are too many actors⁴² on the ground, internal and external ones, and many interests that collide. Considering the number of players still present in Libya scenario, it seems to be necessary a *multi-track* negotiation, with the involvement of entities engaging in peace-making activities at a different level of society (inclusive solution). According to recent studies in the process of negotiation it is important the strong participation of the civil society, in contrast to the selective or systematic exclusion so often practiced by international diplomats. This is particularly important in Libya and it is a road to follow necessarily considering the fact that there are, among other, more than one government with partially control over

⁴¹ Arturo Varvelli, 2011, *La crisi libica: guerra umanitaria o guerra di Sarkò?*, ISPI

⁴² Igor Cherstich, 2014, *When Tribesmen do not act Tribal: Libyan Tribalism as Ideology (not as Schizophrenia)*, Routledge

the territory. The extreme fragmentation of the Libyan politics and society is one of the greatest problems to resolve, and it is inconceivable to not involve in peace talks the most influential tribes and militias.

Analysing the reasons for which the GNA has not been able to unify the territory under its control, it is needed to understand the feeling of marginalization of most of the Libyan tribes, not truly involved in the making process of the Government of National Accord by the United Nation. This can be the turning point of this reflection. In fact, according to consolidated research, the feeling of marginalization can stimulate aggressiveness. It is easy to realize the connection with the processes of negotiation and peace talking in the current situation in Libya. Obviously, the tribes that feel more excluded by the transition and decision process are less prone to dialogue.

While considering who to include in the negotiation process, two opposing needs arise: the need to produce negotiations that include the minimum number of factions required to get agreement, and the need to create the broadest possible support among the population and political parties for a peace process. In Libya this is particularly difficult to do. Indeed, there are two circumstances to be underlined. From one side the fragmentation and the division in so many tribes it is an element of difficulty⁴³. The numerous Non State Actors still active on the ground (tribes and militias) could be seen as a factor of division and tension (and in a lot of cases they are), but from another point of view, the strong tribal organization of the society could be seen also as an opportunity during peace talks. With a political philosophy approach in mind, tolerant with the moderates and intolerant with the dissidents, a good mediation could start from the approach of the nearest positions, trying to create the widest and solid common position. This could be the starting point that, once consolidated, could be set as the centre of a more inclusive policy realized through the participation of the widest share of the population. It would be one of the best ways to exploit at the most the condition of the current scenario.

The problem in Libya, however, is the difficulty of isolating and disarming the violent. It is underlined, in this case, the mistake of not having considered a military security mission in the transition period. If the non-state actors are not

⁴³ Mohamed Ben Lamma, 2017, *The Tribal Structure in Libya: Factor for fragmentation or cohesion?*, *Observatoire du monde arabo-musulman et du Sahel*

disarmed, negotiating is arduous and concrete changes on the territory struggle to materialize. The security issue is the first priority. It will be necessary to be able to prevent the arrival of weapons in Libya, to secure borders⁴⁴ and try to diminish the influence of external actors in the country. In this direction the role of the UN and the EU will be relaunched with support missions necessary to pacify the scenario. It will also be essential to consolidate economic institutions and strengthen the entities that manage the resources deriving from oil extraction. The battle for Libya is played mainly on energy resources. Strong institutions that manage economic revenue will discourage external actors from attempting to support one of the two factions on the field, to gain greater economic influence. There will be a need to try to make the conflict inconvenient to the external actors involved, trying to make the United Nations line prevail.

ANNEX 1

Interview to Mr. Arturo Varvelli, ECFR, ISPI

In the conclusion of my paper on Libya, I believed the contribution of an expert on the topic could be important. For this reason, I looked for the figure that could further complete my final reflections and deepen some aspects. For this reason I chose to interview the scholar Arturo Varvelli, who, as described on the

⁴⁴ Shivit Bakrania, 2014, *Libya: Border security and regional cooperation Rapid literature review January*, GSDRC

website of the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI) is "the Head of the Rome Office and Senior Policy Fellow for the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), and a Senior Associate Fellow at ISPI. He also works as a scholar on topics such as Italian-Libyan relations, Libyan domestic and foreign politics, Italian foreign policy in the Middle East and Mediterranean region, Jihadist groups in North Africa, having published both books and articles on these subjects ".

Here I report the interview and the exchange of ideas we had on the Libyan scenario.

- What do you think were the main errors of the international coalition in promoting the GNA? Why has the pacification and state-building process never taken off?

The errors of the international community have been manifold. The first big mistake was believing that Libya could make it on its own after the revolution, particularly in the period between 2011 and 2014. During this period, it was believed that Libyans could organize themselves, support themselves and create new institutions. It must be considered that when the Gaddafi regime fell, not only did a regime fall but substantially all the state apparatus that was already particularly weak in Libya fell. Libya was in fact a country built around Gaddafi's leadership. This was allowed by the fact that it was a rentier-state. The characteristics of a rentier-state are, in addition to deriving its wealth from the production of hydrocarbons, it creates a sort of social pact within the political context in which Gaddafi basically granted money donations and redistributed the money deriving from the oil revenue within the country's population, and this created a strong affiliation. It was a system that was structured partly on these subsidies, partly on family and tribal alliances that Gaddafi has always played on. He also had always avoided the formation of institutions, and in the last phase he had even zeroed the ministers because he believed that in the future, they could be opposed to him. He also believed that ministers were unnecessary because he required that the funds to be distributed to citizens pass directly to his hands.

In such a context, institutions do not almost exist, and they are very weak. When Gaddafi falls, this system falls. For this reason, it would probably have been necessary to do Nation-building rather than State-building, rebuilding a national spirit, there had to be a close confrontation between the Libyans to decide themselves what they wanted to be, what form of government they wanted to give themselves. This process should have been accompanied more by the international community. We must not forget that the country was and still is full of weapons. With these premises, the GNA was formed very late. The United Nations intervened with greater decision only since 2014 when it was realized that Libya was splitting in two governments. Since then, attempts have been made to reconstruct a somewhat forced negotiation process with the Skhirat agreements, which were immediately ostracized and denied by many spoiler actors, first of all General Haftar.

For these reasons, I repeat that Libya would have needed to be much more accompanied in the transition process by the international community. Instead, the international community has acted separately, each State with different thrusts, each in an attempt to create a closer, friendly Libya, with continuous interference that led to the current conflict. To date, we are in a sort of proxywar, a *proxy war* of various countries within a single context.

- Could the idea of putting the political process before the real stabilization of the country have contributed to the current situation?

Absolutely yes. First you have to establish the rules and then you have to promote an electoral competition. It was mistakenly thought that the elections could make up for everything else. This is not the case because if a clear context is not established beforehand in which the rules of the game are established, whoever wins the elections believes he will take the whole country and whoever loses is condemned to take up arms, and that is exactly what happened in Libya . Democracy is not only a simple election. To build a stable and democratic country it takes a whole series of *check and balances* that must be built before the electoral round

- The elections were in fact unsuccessful and were not a solution to the situation. Who do you think will be the decisive stakeholders in the coming months / years, in light of the renewed and important involvement of Ankara and Moscow in the Libyan question?

I believe that the role of Turkey and Russia in the Libyan scenario has been overstated. Both countries have tried to fill a gap, and both have been good. Russia's goal is to play a central role in the region and would like every peace treaty to pass through Moscow. I don't think Putin's interests are as important as the one he has in Syria. Essentially, he wants a leadership role in mediation and this is a goal he has already achieved. Turkey has intervened where Europe, the United States and Italy have left the void. If we remember, the GNA is a construction of the international community but supported by Italy and the United States. The problem is that Italy has not gone all the way in supporting the government. When Al-Sarraj asked for effective support from Italy, Italy did not respond with decisive support. Basically, the country has abandoned the prime minister to itself. In this context, Ankara has started to give concrete support to the GNA by sending weapons and militarily supporting it, a necessary support for the survival of the government and the resistance to the siege of Tripoli. There are many players at stake, and I would suggest focusing more attention on the Gulf, and in particular on the United Arab Emirates and Egypt because I believe these two countries are more important in the Libyan crisis than Russia.

- Egypt has the Libyan issue among its priorities, first of all for its geographical proximity and the very long border between the two countries. But how important is the ideological question and the attempt to contain Islamists for countries like Egypt and UAE?

Certainly, the ideological conflict it is very important. Indeed, these countries perceive the Muslim Brotherhood as an existential threat. This mainly derives from the form of government that these countries have, with an investiture that comes from above, from God to the monarch, while the Muslim Brotherhood declares that the *umma* is substantially legitimate to govern. From this point of

view the contrast is strong and irreconcilable. Strategic interests also matter a lot. The Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are looking heavily at North Africa as an area of strategic expansion, also trying to chase what China is doing in the same region.

- Still with regard to the external players, which we underline are decisive in the conflict, I found in my studies about the Libyan case great ambiguity in the position of France. An unclear position which is difficult to understand. What is your opinion about it?

I totally agree in defining France's position ambiguous. The vision of France is very different from that of Italy. First of all, French interests are mainly in Cyrenaica. The country has long established an axis with both Egypt and Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in a much clearer way than Italian foreign policy. It has interests in the Sahel area, and it is very careful to issues of security and counter-terrorism and Haftar has placed himself as leader of this position. This brought France closer to the general. Although with the passage of time the French have been less assertive with Haftar, especially when he was assigned politically by President Macron bringing him to conference tables trying to transform him from a military man to a politician, and in this attempt Macron has totally failed.

- I believe that France's economic interests in hydrocarbons are also very important, linked to the giant Total and beyond. As you recalled in a previous passage, the idea that I have of the Libyan scenario is that all the foreign powers involved fear the victory of the faction that they did not support in the conflict or that they supported less (as in the case of France). They do not want to be in the difficult position of renegotiate oil contracts with a government they have not supported or opposed. Is it something adherent to reality?

Yes, that's exactly how you say it.

- And the role of Italy?

I believe that Italy had done fairly well until 2015, that is, up to the Skhirat agreements. Italy was accused of being too close to the Tripoli Islamist government, but in reality, it fought for the formation of a legitimate government supported by the international community. Much of the construction of the agreements is of Italian origin. Italy is particularly interested in the Tripolitania and Fezzan regions, where most migrants who attempt to reach the south of the country pass through, and where most of the investments in hydrocarbons are concentrated. Until the establishment of the GNA, Italy did well, but subsequently did not support it enough and opened too much to General Haftar, who had too much weight in the Palermo conference. There, the country remained halfway, not building a sufficient relationship of trust with the general and losing a little the priority relationship established with Al-Serraj.

- In light of today's situation in the country, what do you think are the fundamental steps from which to start again?

I believe there is a need to relaunch an international mission. It was proposed a strengthening of the Sofia Mission, born in 2015 to control the trafficking of migrants following the numerous tragedies that occurred in the Mediterranean. This is necessary from my point of view. However, the mission will include not only patrolling the Libyan coast, but the commitment has to be for a total border control to avoid arms trafficking. We must start from the security issue, necessary for political stabilization. I believe that the Berlin conference was a small step forward in which we tried to bring together European points of view with a relaunch of the role of Germany. The idea of re-proposing a new government of international initiative, more inclusive both as regards the forces on the ground and as regards foreign support, is an interesting but difficult path to follow. Haftar remains convinced at the moment of being able to conquer the whole country and also considering his age, he does not have time for years of long negotiations. In all likelihood, he will continue to try everything to conquer the country and it will be difficult to establish a new government of national unity.

In this context, I believe that the role that Europe will have to play it will be to try to avoid external influences by maintaining a position of *active neutrality*. It

would be useful to create a monitoring mechanism for military support and aid actions that are illegally given, through satellite and aerial monitoring. This is the role that Europe can play, and that Italy can accompany. After 2015 Italy has lost dynamism, and requests for help to the United States have had little success. The Trump administration has had a wavering and fluctuating approach on the subject and is more interested in maintaining good relations with Egypt and the Emirate countries rather than with Europe, avoiding intervening too actively in the scenario. Europe will have to measure itself through its weaknesses and try to find a common position.

- Is military intervention a possibility?

I do not think about a military intervention. The only ones in favour of an interposition force were Turks and Russians, who believed through the military presence to stabilize the situation in their favour. I do not think Europeans want to send troops on the ground. I believe that the only possibility of progress in the transition is that of extensive monitoring by Europe and an attempt by it, with Italy in the front line, to mediate with Turkey for the redefinition of territorial waters. This issue has become very important and may be a problem for subsequent developments. A sort of moratorium on the Turkish-Libyan agreement could be attempted in exchange for greater support from Europe to the GNA. To conclude, I continue to underline that the security issue is a priority for political stabilization.

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Summary

Eight years have been passed since the popular uprising resulted in the overthrow and killing of the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, and from that moment the situation in Libya still is at stake. Before that event, the Colonel had ruled the country for more than forty years, governing over a deeply tribal society and its necessary inherent cleavages.

Nowadays the scenario seems to be an “organized chaos”; the huge void left by the dictator has been filled by dozens of tribes and militias lacking a central authority capable of enforcing the law. The debatable NATO intervention, with the aim of protecting Libyan population from the regime’s violence, has actually complicated the crisis. It finished only ten days after the death of Gaddafi and left the country without the military armament necessary to stabilize the country. Today, tribes and militias are fundamental actors on the ground. They are fighting for power, for the control of oil plants and for the management of arms and human smuggling.

Moreover, there are two governments on the ground competing for internal and external legitimacy, that is either from the population or the international community. The two governments are based in Tripoli and Tobruk. The Government of National Accord (GNA) is stabilized at the former, firmly supported by the United Nations, while the House of Representatives (“Tobruk Government”) is stabilized at the latter where it has gained independency exercising its power over the eastern part of the country.

The purpose of this work is to analyse the Libyan recent history, its social structure and the current conditions, in the attempt of understanding why the GNA has failed to extend its legitimacy all over the territory. The intention is to find what Libya really needs in this arduous transition. It is essential to redesign a new complex political strategy for the Nation, considering the failure of the reconciliation process and the clashes still going on both for territorial control and economic purpose. A transition to democracy? Surely Libya badly needs a government. The question is how and when this would be possible in the future.

To elaborate my thesis, I have started from two main questions: which were the historical, political and social causes that led to the fall of the Gaddafi regime? After the revolution, what are the dynamics occurred in the power vacuum the NATO mission and the death of the dictator?

I started from a brief historical explanation about the last century in the country: it is fundamental to understand what happened before the revolution and the reign of King Idris, in order to get the big picture of the context and get an overall knowledge of the riots and actual situation.

From the historical reconstruction I moved onto a more sociological analysis of the peculiar Libyan society, characterized by a tribal and fragmented structure: this deep investigation is necessary in order to understand why the power after the riots was divided into so many different actors. The uprising days are then reported, with a special focus on the negotiations within the UN and the two most important Resolutions reached, which were decisive in determining winners and losers in the conflict. Without the intervention of individual countries first, and of the NATO coalition later, the Libya of our days would have been different, and the victory of the rioters would not have been so certain. The story of the negotiations and the subsequent military intervention is functional to grasp a better understanding of the interests carried on by each actor involved in the Libyan scenario. At this point, we can understand which countries were more involved in the specific geopolitical area and the overthrow of the regime. Afterwards, the work encompasses the long transition period generated by the first civil war, and the strategic issues the fragile Libyan institutions had to face right after the conflict.

A case-by-case investigation related to the involvement of specific countries is then put in place, with a special attention on their direct and indirect engagement, the faction and government supported, and the repercussions produced. It would be inconvenient not to mention the foreign powers, as they had and still have a decisive influence in the country. The work goes on reporting facts about the Libyan economy: the country is renowned for its massive resources, fundamental for the country's income and increasingly fundamental in the balance of power. Furthermore, I recalled the importance Libya had in the migration crisis during the post-conflict years: the emergency

has put a strain on the reception and distribution mechanisms of migrants among the European Union, and which brought to light the serious inadequacies of the Union in terms of cooperation in the fields of foreign relations and security, indeed. Finally, the last chapter analyses the current state and the great challenge Libya faces in the coming years. The state-building process is struggling to materialize, and the situation remains extremely unstable. This is why I have tried to outline the fundamental steps to follow, aiming at gathering the nation, putting an end to the split of power currently underway.

The Ghaddafi regime, starting in the 1990s, had started a series of changes, trying to modernize the country and change the hostile approach towards Western countries, particularly the United States. Thus, in 2003, the project to build weapons of mass destruction was abandoned, a sign of relaxation that was obviously greatly appreciated by the international community. For the first time, some NGOs had been allowed to enter Libyan territory to ascertain the conditions in which the population lived and in particular the prisoners. The start of a series of institutional reforms led to believe in a change in the face of the regime. The bureaucracy had led to a decrease in state employees, who had been fired and had received an incentive to open their own business. Ghaddafi's idea was to try to reduce Libya's dependence on its energy resources. He had even admitted his commitment to reducing corruption, proposing to abolish the administrative structures that distributed pensions to citizens, trying to distribute them directly.

Regarding the population's sentiment towards the regime, the protests were significant following a football match between two teams, one of which belonged to the Ghaddafi family. The protests were obviously directed at him, at his hegemony. From the year 2000 the international context changes, and he tries once again to promote changes that keep the power firmly in his hands. He tries to reform society, but continues to shape it with all the means at his disposal. The regime wanted to change face only to survive. The monopoly of the media is no longer enough. The explosion of internet and new methods for sharing information is yet another step forward in human history that the regime cannot repress. And in the meantime, something begins to move in every country of the Maghreb and beyond. In Tunisia and Egypt, after violent protests

the regimes collapsed. These are the so-called Arab Springs, the prelude to what will soon happen also in Libya.

On December 17, 2010, the Tunisian citizen Mohamed Buazizi, exasperated by the police's constant mistreatment, set himself on fire in protest. His sensational gesture began a series of protests that from Tunisia will spread throughout northern Africa and some Middle Eastern countries, giving life to the so-called Arab Springs. What these revolutions have in common are the general reasons that led to the fall of the regime or the change of government: widespread discontent and enormous inequalities caused by decades of anti-democratic power. In Libya a few months later something similar happens to what had happened in Tunisia. The arrest of a lawyer who fought for human rights also provoked a chain reaction, gathering a crowd of Protestants in the major Libyan cities, particularly Benghazi, as early as February 16th. The regime's reaction was furious. To try to prevent the revolt from spreading, Gaddafi relied on the army. The first clashes caused 6 deaths and dozens of wounded. The news of the victims fomented indignation and anger and caused the opening of a frontal clash between Protestants and the Regime. In a few days we went from a simple protest to a civil war. It is important to underline that for the first time the protesters had a fundamental tool to organize themselves and to exchange news: social media. Sharing videos and photos of the atrocious acts committed by forces loyal to the regime was essential to increase the feeling of anger towards the regime and unify the front of the rioters.

February 16 was the beginning of the end. In the following days the regime tried to stop the revolt by any means. On TV there were multiple appeals to try to control the situation. But the revolt had started. Ghaddafi tried to hold together a country that in a few days turned it around completely. Benghazi was the first city to come out of the regime's control almost completely, the first "liberated" city. The government reacted with the brutal force of the army and initially seemed to even manage to control the revolt. The first frontal clashes led to the first deaths and the international community immediately began to demand that the regime had to respect human rights and stop violence against civilians. The regime's response was in a TV interview with Gaddafi's son Sayf Al-Islam, who

said they would fight “to the last bullet”. It is February 21st and the situation was already falling. The first defections began in the army, a sign that the government front was splitting.

The first city in which the rioters expelled Gaddafi's troops was Benghazi, and soon the Colonel was forced to gather his troops in Tripoli, attempting the last defence move. The regime's violence against the population led the United Nations to approve the 1970 Resolution, which indicated a series of sanctions against the country, the arms embargo and the freezing of many assets of the Gaddafi's family. The faction opposed to the regime was taking more and more strength and the National Transitional Council (TNC) was created with the aims of coordinate the revolt and guide the post-regime transition towards a democratic government. The situation continued to degenerate, with increasingly violent clashes and the exponential increase of people fleeing the country. In a few days, Libya became a chaotic battleground between troops loyal to the regime and rioters. The forces of Gaddafi were better organized and armed with more powerful weapons, including tanks and airplanes, and day after day the regime managed to regain important outposts to reach Benghazi again and put down the revolt. The loyalists regained the area of the Gulf of Sirte and continued to advance, above all thanks to air strikes. But at the international level something was beginning to move. France and Great Britain were among the first to affirm their support for revolutionary forces. France recognizes the TNC as a legitimate government. With the resolution UN 1973 the no-fly zone was established over the Country. It was the turning point of the conflict. On March 17, the United Nations authorized military operations to protect civilians, increasingly endangered by the brutal actions of the army loyal to the Rais. Gaddafi said it was a new attempt to colonize Libya, but it was too late to stop the rebels. The bombing began with France airplanes. In a few hours, even NATO decided to intervene after a strong debate within its members. The bombings destroyed the regime's weapons depots, the air fleet and the main logistic bases in just a few weeks. On March 27, NATO definitively took control of military operations. Attacks on government troops continued with the aim of supporting the advance of the rebels. Meanwhile Britain, France and Italy announced the dispatch of military advisers to organize and promote a unified rebel strategy. In August the revolutionary forces

succeeded in taking control of some areas of the Capital. On September 15, UN recognized the TNC as the legitimate government of the Country. The clashes continued in Bani Walid and Sirte, where Gaddafi was found on October 20 and killed. Here began the difficult post-regime transition phase.

During 2015 there was an attempt to relaunch the negotiations between the two parliaments. United Nations Special Envoy Bernardino Leon announced the start of the formation of a new government of national unity led by Al-Serraj, a government that should later receive the trust of both parliaments and reunite Libyan institutions. A peace conference met on 13 December 2015 in Rome. The first step of the subsequent peace conference took place in Morocco in which the Skhirat Agreement was signed. This agreement, the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), was supported by several countries and signed by the delegations of the two Libyan assemblies, but was opposed by the two presidents of the assemblies and therefore did not get a favourable vote.

Al-Serraj was placed at the head of the Presidential Council with a 30-day mandate to form the government, openly supported by the United Nations who recognized him unanimously on December 23rd, 2015. The first list of 32 members proposed by Al-Serraj did not get the vote of confidence from the House of Representatives, which asked for a less numerous cabinet. The following proposal was of 18 members. The HoR also approved the LPA but rejected the article that attributed military powers to the Presidential Council (avoiding a possible ousting of Haftar). The National Accord Government took off with enormous difficulties. The new government asked the United Nations to stop relations with the other two parliaments and on March 30th 2016 Al-Serraj arrived in the port of Tripoli and took office.

Meanwhile, the Tripoli Islamist government announced its dissolution (despite the denial of Prime Minister Ghwell) and over 60 members of the GNC approved the LPA. The agreement also provided for the dissolution of the GNC and the formation of the Council of State (upper house) in which the members of the GNC would come together. But the Tobruk House of Representatives (which should have been a lower house according to the agreements) continued to refuse the vote of confidence to the new government.

In 2016, clashes continued in almost all of Libya, confirming the country's total instability. ISIS took advantage from the situation, which managed to conquer important parts of the territory including the strategic city of Sirte. The Petroleum Facilities Guards (PFG) together with the Misurata Brigades counterattacked the Caliphate forces, managing with British and US support to recapture almost all territories under the control of the Islamic State. This demonstrated a probable overestimation of Daesh's strength in Libya, of its real radicalization on the territory and of the number of its armed soldiers. The operation also confirmed the effectiveness of Libyan militias when logistically supported by foreign powers. Clashes between Haftar's LNA and the Benghazi Defense Brigades (BDB) continued in June of the same year. The GNA with the help of the BDB reconquered Sirte, thanks also to the US bombing, causing the strong irritation of Haftar and a further deterioration of relations between the two governments. Meanwhile Haftar continued his expansion strategy by placing the cities of Ras Lanuf, Sidra and Brega under his control, among the largest oil fields in the country. The PFG tried the counterattack but were rejected by the LNA. Subsequently, with an agreement with the National Oil Company, oil exports from Ras Lanuf restarted, after the interruption in 2014.

In March 2017, the situation reversed again, with the BDB and PFG regaining control of Ras Lanuf and Sidra, putting out the LNA. The collaboration between GNA and BDB led the HoR to totally rejected the GNA and stop peace talks. Haftar believed that the BDBs were linked to terrorist groups headed by Al-Qaeda. The bombings of the LNA, despite the no-fly zone on the oil crescent, led to a further reversal of the front, with yet another recapture of the cities by Haftar.

With the liberation of Benghazi, the role of Haftar grew even more, so much that President Macron invited him to a peace conference in June with Prime Minister al-Serraj, placing the two on the same level. Meanwhile, the decision of UN to send a new mediator, Gassan Salamè, seemed to be an attempt to accelerate the negotiations ahead of the elections. In Paris it was established that the elections should have taken place in December 2018, but the clashes in Tripoli caused by the VII Brigade imposed a postponement. In February 2019,

an agreement was signed in Abu Dhabi between the two governments to hold new elections.

The study of the Libyan scenario and of a possible solution to the crisis leads to two fundamental evidences: there is a need for a more in-depth analysis of the tribal society and a different involvement of the international community in the pacification process trying to align as many interests as possible.

At the outbreak of the revolution in 2011, the international community was afraid that the mission could be a new failure after those of Afghanistan and Iraq, to name just two of the last ones. In the two countries, external powers acted following the great military commitment of the United States, and especially in the early stages the cultural factor of those territories was underestimated. A very serious mistake whose consequences are still visible today. Invading a country with massive military intervention is a huge risk and involves a series of chain reactions in the territory where the operations take place and in neighbouring States. The world is divided into very different macro areas, and the Middle East as well as North Africa are among the most fragile scenarios in which to intervene. Afghanistan and Iraq were two missions from which to draw important lessons. US and allied intelligence initially underestimated the social, cultural and local dimension of those States, finding themselves faced with difficulties in understanding the reality of those countries and their deep internal dynamics. These choices compromised the effectiveness of the missions, with slow and complex attempts to pacification that were not suited for the Arab reality and its characteristics.

Libya is a unique scenario, difficult to compare to others. The tribal dimension of the society is one of a kind, combined with the country's rentier mentality and recent history. The concept of nation is always being questioned. A strong and well-defined national identity has not developed in its history, and this is a factor that complicates the pacification and state-building process. As I had the opportunity to discuss with Mr. Arturo Varvelli (Scholar of International Relations and particularly the case of Libya), the process that should have taken place after the revolution had to be the *Nation-Building* process. Even before the State-Building process, it is necessary to understand who the Libyans are, what

the dominant values are and only after, what do they want for themselves. France was in the front-line in the intervention and NATO completed the work with a mission that led to regime change. Today it can be said that the mission as it was, was a mistake. Before the uprising, the country was stable, and action could have been taken in other ways to stop the regime's violent reaction to the riots. Here is not the thing. Once the international community intervened, it should not have left the country alone. This is another mistake that underlines Mr. Varvelli, who believes that it was a mistake to conclude the NATO military mission a few days after Gaddafi's death. There was a need to sustain a difficult transition phase, blocking the trafficking of arms and migrants and safeguarding what left of the old institutions. This did not happen and to date it is not possible to understand how the GNA will win the battle for the control of Libya. Some aspects of the UN mission and negotiations need to be clarified. Greater attention will have to be given to the local dimension. The error in the selection of the legitimate actors in the conferences did not guarantee a real legitimacy of the agreements on the territory. It will be necessary to start from the criteria of inclusiveness, starting from the actors that exercise a tangible influence on the territory.

It is always very difficult making a negotiated peace between warring parties. This is particularly the case of Libya where there are too many actors on the ground, internal and external ones, and many interests that collide. Considering the number of players still present in Libya scenario, it seems to be necessary a *multi-track* negotiation, with the involvement of entities engaging in peace-making activities at a different level of society (inclusive solution). According to recent studies in the process of negotiation it is important the strong participation of the civil society, in contrast to the selective or systematic exclusion so often practiced by international diplomats. This is particularly important in Libya and it is a road to follow necessarily considering the fact that there are, among other, more than one government with partially control over the territory. The extreme fragmentation of the Libyan politics and society is one of the greatest problems to resolve, and it is inconceivable to not involve in peace talks the most influential tribes and militias.

Analysing the reasons for which the GNA has not been able to unify the territory under its control, it is needed to understand the feeling of marginalization of most of the Libyan tribes, not truly involved in the making process of the Government of National Accord by the United Nation. This can be the turning point of this reflection. In fact, according to consolidated research, the feeling of marginalization can stimulate aggressiveness. It is easy to realize the connection with the processes of negotiation and peace talking in the current situation in Libya. Obviously, the tribes that feel more excluded by the transition and decision process are less prone to dialogue.

While considering who to include in the negotiation process, two opposing needs arise: the need to produce negotiations that include the minimum number of factions required to get agreement, and the need to create the broadest possible support among the population and political parties for a peace process.

In Libya this is particularly difficult to do. Indeed, there are two circumstances to be underlined. From one side the fragmentation and the division in so many tribes it is an element of difficulty. The numerous Non State Actors still active on the ground (tribes and militias) could be seen as a factor of division and tension (and in a lot of cases they are), but from another point of view, the strong tribal organization of the society could be seen also as an opportunity during peace talks. With a political philosophy approach in mind, tolerant with the moderates and intolerant with the dissidents, a good mediation could start from the approach of the nearest positions, trying to create the widest and solid common position. This could be the starting point that, once consolidated, could be set as the centre of a more inclusive policy realized through the participation of the widest share of the population. It would be one of the best ways to exploit at the most the condition of the current scenario.

The problem in Libya, however, is the difficulty of isolating and disarming the violent. It is underlined, in this case, the mistake of not having considered a military security mission in the transition period. If the non-state actors are not disarmed, negotiating is arduous and concrete changes on the territory struggle to materialize. The security issue is the first priority. It will be necessary to be able to prevent the arrival of weapons in Libya, to secure borders and try to diminish the influence of external actors in the country. In this direction the role of the UN and the EU will be relaunched with support missions necessary to

pacify the scenario. It will also be essential to consolidate economic institutions and strengthen the entities that manage the resources deriving from oil extraction. The battle for Libya is played mainly on energy resources. Strong institutions that manage economic revenue will discourage external actors from attempting to support one of the two factions on the field, to gain greater economic influence. There will be a need to try to make the conflict inconvenient to the external actors involved, trying to make the United Nations line prevail.