



Addressing the Status of the Libyan Civil War

General Assembly 3

Bianca Marcu & Quinten Roseboom, Chair & Deputy Chair





Introduction

The situation in Libya has worsened in the last few years. With the beginning of the Arab Spring, there has been a lot of unrest, fighting and overall chaos. In 2011 the first civil war started, this war was mostly against Qaddafi, who had ruled for more than four decades when he was ousted by a revolt in August 2011. At the end of this war Qaddafi was assassinated and Libya was announced liberated. Even though the goal of the revolution was achieved, the fighting did not stop and the elected government did not have a lot of power. This sparked a series of rallies and acts against the government, resulting in Libya's second civil war. This civil war started out as a conflict between two rival governments. Local militias are fighting and ruling various parts of the country since 2014, while ISIS has risen in Syria, dominating several desert areas and cities. Considering that there is no functional government, Libya is a very fragmented country where fighting still happens every day, making it unsafe for all the civilians that live there. Libyans are suffering, and much of the country has been destroyed.

Definition of Key Terms

Arab spring

The Arab spring is a wave of pro-democracy protests and uprisings that erupted within the Middle East and North Africa. Its beginning was when protests in Tunisia and Egypt toppled their regimes in quick succession, inspiring similar attempts in other Arab countries. The Libyan regime was toppled too and the autocratic rule ended. Protests erupted in response to the governing elites' abuses of human rights and corruption.

Armed rebellion

A rebellion is a violent action organized by a group of people who want to change their country's political system; it usually refers to open hostility to a country's government. People who refuse to obey or follow orders take weapons with them in an armed rebellion, and they frequently utilize them against the state.

ISIS

ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) is a Sunni jihadist group with a particularly violent ideology that calls itself a caliphate and claims religious authority over all Muslims. It was inspired by al-Qaida but later publicly expelled from it.

Militia

The militia is a civilian military group with little military training that may be called upon in an emergency, generally for local defence. Regular military forces, on the other hand, are formations of professional troops maintained by the federal government in both war and peace.

Rebel group



A rebel group is a political group that wants political change or wants to establish or maintain independence and uses an armed conflict to the established government as a means to reach their goals.

General Overview

Royal Libya and the Qaddafi Regime

After being an Italian colony from 1911 to 1943, the Allies drove the Italians out of Libya, which was subsequently partitioned between the French, who runs Fezzan, and the British, who run Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.

King Idris al-Sanusi, the first Libyan king, declared Libya independent on the 24th of December in 1951. Libya began as a monarchy with no political parties and a constitution that established a federal state with independent legislatures for each province. In international issues, the government took a pro-Western stance in general.

Libya discovered large oil reserves in 1959. Libya became an oil-rich monarchy after initially surviving on foreign aid and rent from American and British airbases. The discovery of oil was followed by an increase in all government services, massive construction projects, but also resulted in an increase in the cost of living. In September 1969, a coup was carried out by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi who deposed the king and proclaimed Libya a republic. He was immediately named Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Chairman of the Libyan National Council.

The Qaddafi Regime continued to introduce innovations. In March 1977, the country is renamed "People's Socialist Libyan Arab Jamāhīriyyah". The latter term means "government through the masses" which would imply that the power is transferred to the numerous local committees. In reality, however, the country is still mostly ruled by one man.

By the early 1980s, the demand for oil and its price dropped. As Libya was predominantly dependent on oil, this hindered Qaddafi's efforts to play a strong regional role. His efforts to radically change the economy and society slowed down and signs of domestic discontent began to arise. The result was sporadic attacks against Qaddafi and his supporters coming from opposition movements. These opposition movements were met with arrest and execution.

In the early 1980s the relations between Libya and the US, which had been an important trading partner, deteriorated. This resulted in a US bombing raid of Tripoli and Benghazi, against what are said to be terrorist targets, in 1986 with the claim that Libya was producing chemical warfare materials. Even though among the victims were members of the Qaddafi family, Qaddafi himself narrowly managed to escape.

In the following years, Libya's foreign relationships kept on worsening. The United Nations and the United States imposed economic sanctions on Libya in 1996. However, in 1998 Libya accepted a ruling by the international court in The Hague concerning territorial disputes. This resulted in Libya successfully restoring its foreign

relationships. The diplomatic relations with the UK were restored and the sanctions imposed by the UN were lifted. The diplomatic ties with the US were fully restored by 2006.

In the years thereafter, one of Qaddafi's sons has emerged as a reformer who has assisted Libya in transitioning to attract Western corporations and promote tourism. As a result of this, Libya gradually became more integrated into international society.

Arab Spring and the First Civil War

The Arab Spring began with the revolution in Tunisia which inspired similar attempts in other Arab countries. In February 2011 the anti-government protests began in Libya. The Libyan security forces used water cannons and live fire against the crowds, resulting in numerous casualties. The protests became more violent, and demonstrators took control of Benghazi, spreading the disturbance to Tripoli. Government authorities began to openly employ fatal force against crowds. By blocking the internet and interrupting telephone services the government restricted the communication services. The government's proceeding with violence against civilians drew condemnation from foreign leaders and human rights organizations. Even a number of high-level national officials resigned in protest.

Within days of the first revolt, the uprising had devolved into an armed rebellion, with rioters obtaining guns from abandoned arm stores. In late February most of the pro-Qaddafi groups from the East of Libya had been expelled by the rebellion groups. Qaddafi remained in Tripoli, a city which his supporters continued to hold.

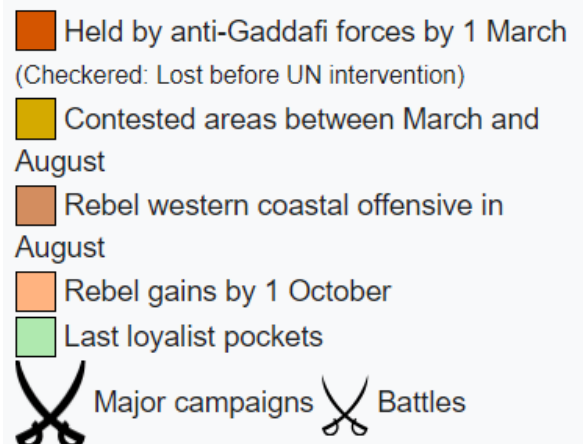
The international pressure on Qaddafi to quit gradually mounted during these measures. The UN Security Council (UNSC) approved a motion on February 26th that contained sanctions against Libya, including travel bans and an arms embargo. Sanctions were also imposed by the European Union and a number of other countries.

The Transitional National Council (TNC) was founded by the rebel groups in early March with the goal of serving as the rebellion's military leadership and the voice of the Libyan opposition, offering services in rebel-held areas, and leading the transition to democracy. The next few weeks saw little change; Qaddafi had enough forces to keep Tripoli, and the battle revolved around the city.

Meanwhile, the international world debated whether to intervene militarily or diplomatically in Libya, but they were split on the



The course of the war





issue. They put pressure on Qaddafi to resign, and some countries acknowledged the TNS as Libya's official government.

Pro-Qaddafi forces attacked the rebels on March 15, seizing Ajdabiya, the last large rebel-held city on the road to Benghazi. The UN Security Council approved military intervention in Libya on March 17, including a no-fly zone to protect civilians. An international coalition commanded by the United States, France, and the United Kingdom commenced air and missile strikes on Libya's air force and air defence infrastructure on the 19th of March. Libyan air forces were defeated within a week, but fierce battle persisted on the ground.

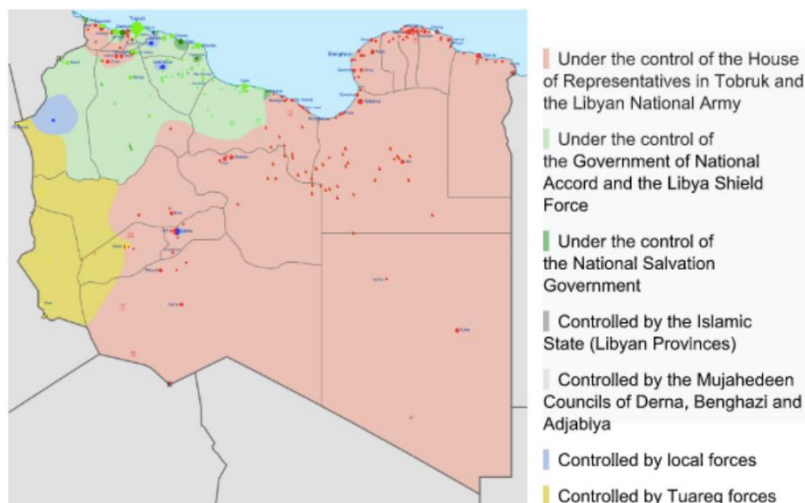
At the end of April, NATO, which had assumed command of the international coalition from the United States, France, and the United Kingdom, began targeting government buildings linked to Qaddafi. In August, the rebels launched an assault on Qaddafi, seizing control of one of Libya's main oil refineries and marching into Tripoli. The TNC moved to Tripoli when the rebels achieved firm control of the city in early September. Qaddafi was arrested and killed on October 20, 2011, during the final battle of the civil war, the Battle of Sirte.

The aftermath of the Libyan Civil War

The TNC declared Libya free on October 23, 2011, promising to set up a transitional government within a month and hold elections for the constituent assembly and parliament within a year. The interim government was founded on November 22nd, but local rebel militias have refused to lay down their arms, so clashes between these groups were widespread.

Elections were held in July 2012, and the TNC was replaced by the General National Congress (GNC). Prime Minister Ali Zeidan has been elected. Within the GNC, disagreements about the assembly's functions and mandate occur frequently, endangering the GNC's existence. The government is unable to manage rebel militias, which are causing an increase in bloodshed as a result of growing divisions among armed organizations. Some parties also attempt to force concessions from the government by disrupting oil production, which is the country's primary source of income.

Protests began after the GNC announced that they would extend their mandate until the end of 2013. A failed attempt to take the parliament building occurred in May 2014. This marked the start of Libya's second civil war.



Second Civil War

Libya held parliamentary elections in June 2014. Due to the violence, however, voter turnout was extremely low. The House of Representatives was founded when liberal and nationalist politicians gained the majority of seats (HoR). The Islamists were soundly defeated. This resulted in riots because Islamic militias conducted a coup d'état in Tripoli to support the defeated parties. The civil war in Libya began primarily as a fight between these two competing regimes. However, conflicts between governments and local militias immediately made things more difficult.

The key players in the conflict and foreign intervention are discussed in the following sections.

The House of Representatives

The House of Representatives (HoR) is a democratically elected administration that is also known as the Tobruk government. The HoR receives the support of the Libyan National Army, as well as Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. The Libyan Supreme Constitutional Court concluded on November 6, 2014, that the elections were unlawful and that the HoR should be dissolved. The HoR, on the other hand, defied the verdict and remained in power in Eastern Libya. The UN proposed in October 2015 that the HoR share power with the opposing GNC government under a compromised prime minister. Both sides rejected the idea since they couldn't agree on the final conditions. However, this resulted in an agreement to create a National Accord Government and hold new elections in two years, on December 17, 2015. This plan also backfired, since the House of Representatives voted against it in the summer of 2016, and cooperation between the two governments entirely broke down in the early months of 2017.

Khalifa Haftar is in charge of the Libyan national army. He is the one who is responsible for the GNA's refusal and the HoR's disintegration. Since 2014, when he started a successful military assault against Islamist organizations and captured four oil export facilities, Haftar has rapidly gained authority in Libya. Unlike the GNA, which has been losing credibility, Haftar has a substantial and growing influence in Libya, primarily in the east. Haftar is one of Libya's most powerful figures, and security



analysts believe that if he does not agree, nothing much will happen. The international community has also acknowledged the significance of Haftar's participation in the formation of a government.

Government of National Accord

The United Nations Security Council unanimously supported the formation of the Government of National Accord (GNA) on December 17, 2015. The House of Representatives and the General National Congress initially supported this government, but the HoR later withdrew its support, leaving the GNA with only a portion of the GNC's backing. Still, this is the government that the UN recognizes as Libya's national government, and on April 5th, the GNC announced that it was suspending operations and handing control over to the GNA. Following their formation, the GNA became the HoR's most powerful rival government. The GNA still lacked popular backing in early 2017. This was attributable to their inability to hold Tripoli due to a weak military force.

ISIS

Following the end of the first Libyan civil war, many rebel militants moved to Syria to fight Bashar al-Assad. The Battar Brigade was formed by a group of Libyans who declared their independence. Later, this organization would pledge allegiance to ISIS. Many Battar Brigade veterans returned to Derna, Libya, in early 2014. They organized a group known as the 'Islamic Youth Shura Council.' They began recruiting fighters from other local rebel organizations in Libya. They declared war on everyone in Derna who resisted them during the next three months, killing a large number of people.

In September 2014, an ISIS delegation came to Libya, and the Islamic Youth Shura Council came together and declared their allegiance to ISIS. ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi established three 'provinces' in Libya in November 2014. Fezzan in the desert south, Cyrenaica in the east, and Tripolitania in the west were the provinces. ISIS claimed to have a presence in al Bayda, Benghazi, Sirte, al-Khums, and Tripoli at first. ISIS attacked oil sites and international hotels in December 2014, carrying out mass murders and attempting to take over more Libyan territory.

ISIS' control over Sirte grew stronger, and the city was utilized as a base to expand their area. They seized control of nearby towns, an airbase, and essential infrastructure. During this time, other sections of Libya experienced losses as a result of rival rebel groups and international bombings. Libyan soldiers retook Sirte from ISIS in December 2016, after a seven-month war. ISIS has retreated to the south. ISIS still has a base in Benghazi, although it now focuses on low-level infrastructure attacks.

Major Parties Involved

European Union

The EU assists Libya significantly with civil society, human rights and free media, democratic governance, health services and COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, youth empowerment, gender equality and migration management. The EU fully



supports all of the UN's actions, and thus the GNA, to restore peace and freedom in Libya.

France

France's stance on Libya was, until recent events, in question. France had, for example, declined an EU statement calling on Khalifa Haftar to halt his assault on Tripoli. GNA Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj accused Macron as a result of backing a "dictator". France is now trying to regain the trust that it lost.

Libya

Libya has been at war with itself in the past decade. It is a result of years of oppression, and mistrust in the government. The people are suffering from the results of the war, and a lot of nations are trying to regain peace in Libya.

Turkey

Turkey is one of the biggest supporting nations for the GNA. The GNA has bought multiple vehicles from Turkey, and Turkey has sent troops to support the GNA against Haftar. President Erdogan spoke on the deployment stating that the mission is "not to fight" but "to support the legitimate government and avoid a humanitarian tragedy".

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is seen as one of the biggest allies of the HoR and Khalifa Haftar and is thus a direct opponent of the GNA and its allies. The UAE has supplied Haftar with advanced weaponry. A UN report has said that Haftar has his hands on a Russian air defence system, given by the UAE.

United States of America

The relationship with the USA has always been very important to Libya. The US has bombed Tripoli and Benghazi in 1989 and held sanctions against Libya several times. The US was also an important state in the creation of the GNA in 2015. The Biden administration has now a far more active role in the situation than the Trump administration had.

Timeline of Key Events

December 24 th 1951	Libya gains independence from Italy
September 1 st 1969	Muammar Al-Qaddafi seized power in Libya
April 14 th 1986	US bombing on Tripoli and Benghazi
December 21 st 1988	Lockerbie Bombing
December 2010	Start of Arab Spring
February 15 th 2011	Start of First Civil War
September 16 th 2011	UNSMIL is sent to Libya
October 20 th 2011	Death of Muammar Al-Qaddafi
October 23 th 2011	Libya declared free by TNC
May 2014	Khalifa Haftar launches military assault



December 17 th 2015	Formation of the GNA
December 6 th 2016	ISIS retreats to South-Libya
October 23 th 2020	Ceasefire signed in Geneva

Previous attempts to resolve the issue

The United Nations Support Mission In Libya (UNSMIL) was established on 16 September 2011 by UN Security Council Resolution 2009 (2011). The political support mission is still active in Libya until at least April 30th 2022. The First Libyan Civil War ended after Muammar Qaddafi was arrested and killed. A new government was formed, but the opposing party did not agree. The UN pushed a new government, the GNA. Both Italy and France have invested heavily in Libya with a stable Libya as goal. Because a stable Libya means a significant reduction in the immigrants crossing the sea to Europe. Turkey has supported the GNA too, with both delivering munition and armoured vehicles. Turkey has also send troops on an official invitation of the GNA. There have been two international conferences in Berlin to discuss the Libyan Civil War. There have been multiple meetings between the leaders of the parties, including the meeting in Geneva where both parties have signed a ceasefire. The UN has also attempted to progress peace talks through the election procedure and they came up with an election procedure after a number of meetings between the two rivals. This gave hope to the people of Libya, for an end to the war. The plans were made for new elections in 2021, but these were postponed to an undecided date.

Possible Solutions

A stable government is the key to make an end to this problem. The elections for a new government should be held, and should be held fairly. The countries have to make sure that everything runs smoothly and that the people of Libya are correctly represented. They should also get financial support, to make sure that Libya recovers safely from the war. A war is not the answer in this conflict and the ceasefire shows that both parties can come to a compromise. It is very important that all of the parties involved should support this new government together, because otherwise there is a chance of a new war breaking out.

Appendix/Appendices

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