

The Applications of the International Conspiracy Theory: NATO's Intervention in Libya

Dr. Milad ELHARTHI*

Gelisim Istanbul University, Turkey

**Corresponding Author:* Dr. Milad ELHARTHI, Gelisim Istanbul University, Turkey. Email: melharthi@gelisim.edu.tr (or) Milad.moftah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The international response to the crisis in Libya has been remarkably quick and decisive. Where many other cases of mass atrocity crimes have failed to generate sufficient and timely political will to protect civilians at risk, the early response to Libya in 2011 has shown that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is able to give effect to the 'responsibility to protect' norm.

While not an implementing party in a legal sense, the Australian government has taken a forward-leaning diplomatic stance in helping to mobilize broad support for addressing this crisis.

In light of the ongoing political controversy over armed humanitarian intervention, the Libyan case shows that state-based advocacy for human rights matters, given the on-going need to bolster the legitimacy of the principle.

A discussion of Canberra's diplomatic activity is a prelude to an examination of the proceedings of the UN Security Council and the two key resolutions, the second of which gave effect to the forcible action.

This article then considers three dimensions of the SC's implementation of the responsibility to protect (the language of the resolutions and the intriguing absence of a textual reference to the international community's responsibility to act; the expansive mandate for civilian protection in (SCR1973; and the first unanimous referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC, with novel support from the USA)

The popular revolt spread rapidly from Tunisia to Egypt, and then from Egypt to Libya, threatening entrenched regimes and the status quo. For example, Libya's revolt turned into a bloody civil war, and spilling over of armaments everywhere in the country. In Tunisia, the Muslim movement (Nahda Party) led the country into social unrest.

This popular revolt has challenged authoritarian rule in the whole region, and highlighted the widespread desire for a responsible government. Libya, in particular, is an evidential and In-exclusion example among other Arab revolts, that NTO played a major powerful militarized intervention in the Libya's revolt.

Keywords: *Upheaval, Turmoil, Uprising, Revolts, NATO, Middle East Revolt, Libya, Status Quo, Authoritarian Regimes, Democracy, Stability, and NATO's Interventionism, Libya's Revolt, Vital interest, Responsibility protect, Humanitarian intervention, self-interest,*

INTRODUCTION

STUDY'S OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the paper based on analyzing the projected questions, as far as the reliable revolt data secured. Debating the NATO's intervention in Libya has not been flourished in the academic institutions in the West and the Arab world, because the sensitivities of its undefined objectives, politically, economically, or election tool, or re-exporting the American and European financial crisis to the rich uprising areas. Yet, the non-NATO state has made the case

openly; instead, its members have gone to great lengths to assert their neutrality.

STUDY'S QUESTIONS

The Middle East and North Africa popular revolt spread rapidly from Tunisia to Egypt, and then from Egypt to Libya, threatening entrenched regimes and the status quo. For instance, in Libya, the revolt changed into bloody confrontation of war and spilling over of armaments everywhere in the country. In Tunisia, the Muslim movement (Nahda Party) led the country into social unrest. In addition, Egypt's revolt, with its goodwill domination,

turned into Christian-Muslim confrontations, as daily practice. Whereas many observers have drawn parallels with the rising of the American control of the International Order and the domination of the Western alliances, and its major leading role in combating terrorism, and the eastward spread of democracy to Eastern Europe, the outcome of the Arab revolts is far from bringing political and social stability in the Arab region.

The method, which will be adopted in the analysis, will be based on exploring the raised debate on the NATO's role in Libya's revolt affairs. The following questions will focus on the analysis of the NATO's interventional role in Libya: What role did the NATO play in supporting Libya's uprising? Why did the NATO take this action, particularly in Libya, and not in Egypt or Tunisia's revolts? Did the NATO have any particular impacts on Libya's revolt? Did the NATO succeed in its campaign in Libya, in order to establish democracy and bringing Social stability in the country? The analysis will endeavor providing succinct answers of each question relevant to the paper's objectivity and secondly, elaborating on the different questions and how each question tends to view the NATO's Libya intervention?

PROS AND CONS ARGUMENTS OF NATO'S INTERVENTIONAL ROLE IN LIBYA'S REVOLT

In the first, the NATO's military campaign might have thrown Kaddafi's regime into an end, but certainly have left many questions unanswered and so many factual and tribe's disputes unsettled: What was the main objective behind the intervention? Were the NATO and its allies in pursuit of their national interests in their quest? Was Libya war critical to the UK, Italy and France's interests? Did the NATO overstretch the ambit of UN Security Council resolution by bombing areas where civilians lived? These questions debated on the ongoing unrest revolts in the Middle East region.

Thirteen months have elapsed since the NATO began its UN-mandated intervention in Libya to protect civilians against attacks by forces loyal to former "Gaddafi". The main objective of the NATO-led military campaign to implement the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1970 and 1973, which were adopted in February and March respectively in favor of the

imposition of a no-fly zone over Libya¹. This popular revolt has challenged authoritarian rule in the whole region, and highlighted the widespread desire for a responsible government. Libya, in particular, is an evidential and exclusion example among other Arab revolts, that the NATO played a major powerful militarized intervention in the Libya's revolt.

Don Roth well, a law professor at the Australian National University, argued that the NATO intervention in Libya is consistent with the doctrine of "responsibility to protect". He stated that this doctrine, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, endorses outside intervention to protect people from genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes carried out by their own government.

Gideon Boas, a former legal officer with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, agreed with Roth well that the "attack on Libya was legal, because it was authorized by the UN Security Council". However, he saw many dangers, including that of the NATO becoming "involved in a ground war".

On the other hand, Jeff Sparrow² opposed the NATO intervention outright. He stated that ideas of "humanitarian intervention" and the "responsibility to protect" are similar to the old idea of the "white man's burden", in that they justify the imperialist powers invading other countries for the supposed benefit of the local people". Sparrow pointed out those similar arguments had been used to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq"³.

The NATO's Military campaign, which began on March 19, culminated in the fall of "Kaddafi's rule", and his subsequent death reported on 20 October in his hometown of Sirte. Now that he is gone, months of relentless fighting among revolutionary forces are still continuing, and the NATO allies finished the task and winding up of the action after conducting more than 26,000 air sorties, involving thousands of missile strikes over Libya, with enriched uranium, as it has been reported in the international media.

¹ Aliya, Hussein, 'Neo-Realism and Humanitarian Action: From Cold War to Our Days', *the Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, 16 May 2011.

² Green left: www.greenleft.com, Jeff Sparrow, the editor of *Overland Magazine* Australia., Green left: www.greenleft.org.au/node/47429

³ IBID,

In order to explore the NATO's Libya intervention further through the prism of the raised questions, one has to be cognizant of the exigency of national self-interest of the various nations attacking Libya. The super powers on international arena assume do not act predicated upon altruist incentives and therefore, state-run humanitarian actions (such as the Libyan case) are likely to remain largely interest dependent⁴. Of all the major powers that supported the NATO's intervention and later on bore the brunt of military assistance.

France exerted the highest political pressure on Libya and went so far as to take the leading role in the intervention. Buffeted by low popularity rates at home, French President Nicholas Sarkozy was very candid and outspoken about the need to remove "Kaddafi" from election looming in France, Sarkozy sought to revamp the French foreign policy toward North Africa and the Arab World as a whole.

In addition, Barack Obama deeply concerned about America's national security interests in NATO, he also strove to strengthen his country's position in leading the Atlantic alliance in an attempt to restore his internal image before 2012 polls. He also urged the European Union (EU) to ratify sanctions against Gaddafi and strongly called for the former dictator to stop killing civilians. Obama was, among world leaders to call for Kaddafi's departure and the powerful Western heads of states to recognize the rebels as Libya's legitimate government (4). His flamboyant rhetoric since the onset of NATO intervention persuaded many international observers to call "the military crusade western war"⁵.

With this in mind, and considering the existence of vast oil reserves in Libya, one can explicate that the NATO's objectives such as "self-interest" and power would provide a reasonable basis as well as an understandable platform for explaining why NATO member states, particularly France and the US decided to militarily intervene in Libya the guise of protecting civilians.

⁴ For further analysis: Bull, Hedley. 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach', *World Politics*, Vol18, No. 3 (April 1966), pp. 361-377.

⁵ Harry Kazianis, 'Intervention in Libya: Example of "R2P" or Classic Realism?' published 6 June 2011, Viewed on 23 October 2011, <<http://www.e-ir.info/?p=9241>>.

Moreover, it is worthwhile to indicate that Libya considered an exciting prospect for the European energy market at a time when the world faces a rapid increase in the global demand for energy because of industrial development and population growth.

Furthermore, the "self-interest" approach serves as a limited analytic instrument that can effectively elucidate the ulterior motives stand behind the NATO intervention in Libya, especially when the existence of such potential lucrative resources taken into considerations. In contrast, revolts in Egypt and Tunisia smashed the idea that the masses of Libya could be liberated only through outside intervention, the arguments "responsibility protect" and "humanitarian intervention" used in relation to Libya. Surreptitiously, they were attempting to resurrect this method in relation to Libya, unfortunately with the assistance of Arab states, which invariably adopt an opportunistic position, particularly on crucial issues such as Libya's revolt.

On the other hand, International Law prohibits violations of human rights and humanitarian law by states against their own citizens. These duties are "owed ergo omnes"⁶ and it is, therefore, incumbent upon all states to respond, individually or collectively and through legal and peaceful means, when these violations occur. However, undertaking military action in order to intervene to end violations being perpetrated against a civilian population is not a straight forward issue". Indeed, the prohibition of the threat or use of force is embedded in article 2(4) of the UN Charter and was re-affirmed in the General Assembly's Declaration of 'Friendly Relations' of 1970 which outlawed in absolute terms, forcible instrument intervention, as a countermeasure to violations. These arguments may lead us to provide further analysis that why the NATO's mission in Libya, not in Egypt or Tunisia?

WHY NATO'S MISSION IN LIBYA, NOT IN EGYPT OR TUNISIA?

Libya is a major exporting oil country in the region, while Tunisia's economy depends on its limited resources, and its economy depends on tourism revenues, and Egypt's economy depends on foreign aid, mainly from the United

⁶ Ashley, Richard K. 'The poverty of Neorealist', *International Organization*, Vol. 38, No. 2, (spring, 1984), pp. 225-286.

States and from international agencies' donors because it is a populated state with diversity of religions.

In fact, Libya holds approximately (46.4 billion) barrels of oil reserves, the largest in Africa and in close proximity to Europe⁷. In 2010, Libya produced an estimated (1.8 million barrels) per day bbl/d of the world's 88m barrels a day of oil of which (1.5 million bbl./d) exported⁸. The ousted regime had planned to up its production to 3 million barrels a day by 2020, and further develop its natural gas sector in an effort to stimulate economic recovery against the backdrop of US and international sanctions during the 1980s and 1990s⁹.

France, Britain, Italy and Spain accounted for nearly (85%) of Libya's oil exports. Of these nations, Italy received over (28%) of its total oil imports from Libya which amount to (370,000 barrels) of oil per day¹⁰. Italy's role was also outstanding as Silvio Berlusconi's government offered the use of seven air and navy bases for the Libyan operation at the early stages of the military operations¹¹.

Regarding France, it receives (17%) of its oil from Libya, along with Britain who receives (8%) of its oil from Libya as well¹². It is also interesting to point out that France, UK and Italy were the first NATO countries that undertook sorties and military logistical assistance across Libya as part of collective efforts to enforce a no-fly zone during the initial phases of the intervention. Furthermore, Libya is, also, awash in natural gas resources with an estimated capacity (of 55 trillion cubic feet) (Tcf) of

proven natural gas reserves. According to estimates by the International Energy Agency prior to the upsurge of popular revolution, Libyan production by 2012 increased by as much as 50 % if planned pipelines and gas-fired power plants been built¹³. The natural resources of Libya attracted the NATO members to organize and lead a major military campaign in the binging of the second decade of this century. Certain advanced questions remained without imperative answers; and how such the NATO's intervention, in supporting Libya's revolt that created a large amount of debatable political and economic impacts on Libya's affairs?

The above arguments could explain why the NATO's intervention happened in Libya, as a theater for testing new weapons and create new markets of arms supply to the region. On the other, Egypt and Tunisia would be less interesting market and not enriched oil supply. Next, it's worthy to dilate the general essential main impacts of the NATO's campaign on Libya.

IMPACTS OF NATO'S INTERVENTION ON LIBYA'S REVOLT

At large, Libya's revolt still carries the outcomes of NATO's campaign, differences among military factions and tribes continued in the biggest cities, and not settled yet. Even the NATO's campaign in Libya and its military role achieved its objectives; it could not be able to bring the Libyans united toward one mutual destination. The filibuster and derangements of reconstructing Libya's infrastructure are an evidential examples. Most of its infrastructures damaged, mainly in the largest cities, such as security building, service facilities.

Economically, all Libya's assets around the world have been solidification and frozen. Embargo and economic sanctions widely used as arms of the NATO's intervention. Market places become open for all uninspected foreign commodities and medicine. Local medical treatments, for fighter's forces personal and citizens, lacked proper medical centers facilities. Bank systems experience shortages of hard currencies and local currency flow.

Prices of essential primary commodities rose five times because the absence of governmental

7 John, R. B. Libya: Continuity and Change. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, England: Rutledge. Joyce, C. (2011, February 25).

8 Kaplan, Robert. 'Libya, Obama and the triumph of realism', *The Financial Times*, 28 August 2011, retrieved on- October 26 2011, from <http://www.cnas.org/node/6891>

9 Nick Meo, 'NATO admits civilians died in Tripoli bombing raid', *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 Jun 2011

10 US Energy Information Administration (US EIA), 'Oil Statistics for Libya', Last updated February 2011.

11 US Energy Information Administration (US EIA), 'Oil Statistics for Libya', Last updated February 2011.

12 '-Libyan oil: Relying on Libya', *The Economist*, 25 February 2011, Retrieved 27 October 2011 from http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/02/libyan_oil.

13 US Energy Information Administration (US EIA), 'Oil Statistics for Libya', Last updated February 2011.

control, and the disappearance of an effective public sectors in general. In addition, Libya is still practicing a sever filibuster and derangements of its education system, health services, and environment protection, and rebuilding its social and political transformations, which will last for several years to be restored.

PRESERVING NATO'S VITAL INTEREST

As the basic foreign policy doctrine, of the "vital interest"¹⁴ proclaims that states should gain as many resources as possible to maximize their national security, it would come as no surprise that international organizations like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization regarded as an alliance seeking to preserve the interests of its member states. By the time the wave of the "Arab Revolts" pierced into the fabrics of the Libyan society, rattled nerves in the US and in particular most European states in proximity of Libya were jangling over the possibility that if Kaddafi's forces won the civil war. Consequently, the country could roll back to terrorism, thus dashing Europe's hopes of gaining access to vital oil and natural resources that power large parts of Europe's economy.

Although Libya agreed in December 2003 to end its weapons of mass destruction program, the stakes were very high for the European countries and the US against the backdrop of mounting global concerns over a relatively small arsenal of chemical weapons still in possession of Kaddafi's regime¹⁵.

These overriding security concerns as well as the morbid desire to pursue one's self-interest and personal gains convinced many observers to conclude that the intervention was primarily a quest for power and security¹⁶.

Under such circumstances, one can come to this conclusion that "Kaddafi" was merely asserting its authority against internal security threats for the sake of his regime's survival. Regarding the NATO's role in Libya, it

Timely hinted to note that throughout contemporary international relations, observers

essentially often regarded as staunch critics of the NATO's foreign policy conduct. Moreover, scholars hold the view that the NATO should engage in interventions if its security and interests are at stake only. States, first, should act in its own self-interest, argued scholars.

Even though it might be perceived that the adventurous attempt in Libya quite ostensibly have paid off in spades with the collapse of the Libyan despot, scholars such as Stephen Walt portray a grim outlook for the future of Libya and further call into question the real motives behind the crusade against Kaddafi¹⁷.

Meanwhile, most of Western leaders tend to label the rebels' victory in Libya as a defeat for democracy¹⁸ because the latter IR theory is about the prevention of war via the maintenance of a balance of power not engaging in a Libya-style intervention.

However, several international observers denounces attacks on as "spurious", arguing that essentially it was the US President Barrack Obama's supportive policy toward Libya that inhibited the administration from taking the leading role in Libya, simply because he was "mindful" that Americans had to save their power at this juncture to overcome more challenging crises. Hence, NATO's action is widely viewed as the first example of the implementation of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine, which indicates that states are individually responsible for protecting their population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity¹⁹. A government's failure to meet its obligations under the R2P doctrine would result in collective action on the part of the international community to use military force to protect the populations of the target country, as it happened in Libya. The NATO's action tends to embrace R2P as the starting point for their justification of the Libyan intervention.

Over the course of the NATO's intervention in Libya, members of NATO have created a zone of Libyan revolt; Some NATO's countries have an intense proclivity in exporting democracy, in order to gain their local support and serving its

¹⁴ Griffiths, Martin. *International Relations Theory for the Twenty-First Century: an introduction*, Rutledge, 2007, PP.67-78.

¹⁵ Rozen, Laura. 'In "Sarkozy's war" in Libya, a not-so-hidden hand', *The Envoy*, published 4 April 2011.

¹⁶ US Energy Information Administration (US EIA), 'Oil Statistics for Libya', Last updated February 2011.

¹⁷ Rozen, Laura. 'In "Sarkozy's war" in Libya, a not-so-hidden hand', *The Envoy*, published 4 April 2011.

¹⁸ Rozen, Laura. 'In "Sarkozy's war" in Libya, a not-so-hidden hand', *The Envoy*, published 4 April 2011.

¹⁹ 16-Rozen, Laura. 'In "Sarkozy's war" in Libya, a not-so-hidden hand', *The Envoy*, published 4 April 2011.

interests, and such values to non-democracies that they find no excuse to use any means to attain this goal²⁰.

Consequently, it is not fair to talk about the NATO's interventionism regarding the Libyan case. Unlike others who argue that security concerns and "self-help" take priority to the value of democracy and such normative issues, the NATO's countries proclaim that the emergence of more democracies through the world would dramatically reduce the likelihood of conflicts. In order to shed more light on the significance of the NATO's role in Libya, one can provide a fair assessment of the NATO's military intervention in Libya.

As far as Libya is concern, it construed that other countries (Cuba, Syria, Venezuela, Iran, etc.) and other Arab traditional rulers, were skeptical and dubious toward the intervention because such military action would essentially contravene the fundamental norms and principles of the international society of states. Therefore, the NATO's role would be illegitimate since the states have no concrete agreement on the universal moral values and the ethical standards such as human rights²¹.

In cases of gross violations of human rights, scholars argue that humanitarian intervention is legitimate and justifiable provided that it has the unanimous backing of all members of the international community, and if it is implemented collectively. In contrast, NATO's intervention often argued that the use of force is legitimate since it authorized by the UNSC resolution 1973 in favor of protecting civilians and that the failure to end the human suffering could jeopardize the international and regional peace and security.

As a result, did such NATO intervention achieve its undefined "vital interest" in Libya? Then one should argue that who will pay the overall expenses, is it Libyan money or the NATO's countries through their taxpayers?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this Assessment argues that the bipolar world political system provides a powerful insight into the NATO's Libya intervention, as it highlights the importance of a number of key elements such as "self-interest" and the desire to maximize security and power

that without question, has influenced world's politics and the Middle East region. Just as the pro-wars and intervention, politics tend to justify intervention as a foreign policy apparatus by claiming that it serves the national interests. It could be tenable to suggest that, under the veneer of humanitarian aid, the intervening powers had an intention to change Kaddafi's regime to fulfill their 'national self-interests', such as gaining access to Libya's oil and its state reconstructions plan and rebuilding of what NATO, already, bombed and destroyed it.

Apart from the importance of an easier access to vast oil riches in Libya, if pro-Kaddafi elements were to win the civil war, the country might have relapsed into "terrorism" amid concerns over the stockpiles of chemical weapons at the hands of the toppled regime. In fact, Libya today still under milicias control mainly in the eastern part of Libya. This could a serious threat to the regional peace and security, particularly for the European countries close to Libya. Realistically speaking, the mission in Libya viewed as more of a quest for a regime change than pure altruism.

To provide a reason for this claim, it noted that the NATO openly went beyond the UN resolution (1973) when the coalition's fighter jets attempted to destroy civilian places by cruise missiles. The changing of the tone and tenor of some European leaders like Sarkozy, who called for Kaddafi's ouster bore testimony to ulterior motives sought by the NATO in Libya. Had it been for pure humanitarian concerns, the UN Security Council should have authorized the use of force in Yemen or Syria and in Bahrain, where the Fifth and the Sixth Fleets of the US Navy are stationed and civilians are being killed in larger number than in Libya.

At this stage, the NATO mission in Libya might have developed an appetite for toppling despots using its smart power. However, the question would be whether the hitherto vague outcome of NATO's adventure could turn into a Pyrrhic victory for the NATO countries since concerns are running high that NATO's export of democracy, Libya's oil resources for sole-problem, might fall into the hands of unaccepted player to the west in Libya. For that reasons, as far as NATO and exporting democracy to Libya, re-institutionalization and democratic transformation in Libya, remains a difficult and long-far term course reached. This due to the kind of international conspiracy which

²⁰ <http://www.france24.com>

²¹ <http://www.e-ir.info>

attempting, in the name democracy, to use conspiracy theory in order to produce democracy but this hypothesis proved far goal reached.

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