NATO-Libya Intervention

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Introduction

Libya is one of independent democratic state. Libya was under Gaddafi’s rule for 42 years. During 42 years, the Libyan people have suffered injustice under the role of Gaddafi, which encouraged them to make a revolution to overthrow the regime. There was popular revolution in 2011 and the events in Libya began a series of demonstration in the street, protests and acts of civil disobedience. Libyan revolution started because people intercept on the lack of political movements and the spread of corruption and lace of freedom of expression under the rule of Muammar Gaddafi. This protests linked with Tunisian and Egypt revolution, which are considered protests of Middle East and North Africa in 2010-2011. Libyans revolution evolved into an armed conflict between forces belonging to Gadafi and the rebels who took control for city of Benghazi and other cities and regions in Libya. This research talks the historical background of Libyan revolution and NATO intervention. After that, it will talks the current situation of Libya. At the end of research it will talks futuristic expectation and solution alternatives.

I. Historical background:
   A. 15 February:

On February 15 Libyans marched in Benghazi demanding the release of political prisoners whom the lawyer Fathi Terbil, who was representing the families of prisoners who were killed in 1996 in a shot inside the Abu Saleem prison in Tripoli because there was no reason for his detention, so that lead to rise in demand and drop to topple the regime of colonel Gadhafi personally, promoting police to use violence against the demonstrators and the demonstrations continued until the next morning. In the next day the demonstration occurred in the west of the country and led to fall the first martyrs of revolution. After that the protests increased in different regions in Libya and fall large number of victims.

   B. 17 February

Libyan people call for a day of rage on the seventeenth of February through Facebook, similar to what happened in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and others, where

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thousands of Libyan demonstrates took to the streets and the biggest clashes was in Benghazi. Moreover, large number of Libyans who are outside of Libya demonstrated in front of embassies as kind of support for their brethren in Libya.

C. 18-28 February

In 18 of February, the protesters largely dominated in Benghazi which is the second largest city in Libya. Then Minister of justice adviser Mustafa AbdulJalil resigned and demonstrators entered the television building and the official radio of Tripoli, and burned a number of government buildings and some news spread in that period that Mummer Gaddafi left the Libyan capital Tripoli. In 22 February, Muammar Gaddafi appeared and gave a speech where he said he is not a president but the commander of revolution and that Libya's image tarnished in front of the world. Then, in 28 February, the EU imposed sanctions on Libya, including a freeze on assets and stop granting visa.

D. 3-18 March

In 3 March, biggest warning came out for US after what Barak Obama has demanded to halt of violence and he said that Muammar Gaddafi has lost the legitimacy of leadership and must leave and he also asked the Ministry of defense and state department to consider options including impose of no-fly zone in Libya to prevent Gaddafi's forces from launching raids on Libyan opposition. In 7th of March military battles continued between Gaddafi’s forces and rebels and pilots military launched air strikes on rebels in Ras Lanuf area. Moreover, France has announced that the Arab League approval of no-fly over Libya and Barak Obama announced that NATO is considering military intervention in Libya. Then, France as first state announced its

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recognition to interim National Council, which defected from the Gaddafi regime. In 18 of March, Security Council approved the UN draft resolution imposing no fly over Libya, the resolution 1973 has been approved which made by France, UK and Arab group by majority of 10 votes and five abstentions, including Russia, Germany and China. Resolution 1973 imposed sanctions on Gaddafi and his family and strongly condemned the repression of protests. On the other hand, Gaddafi condemned the resolution and he considered it null and void. Also, he raises thereon a memorandum to International court of justice.

E. Role of NATO in Libya

In the nineteenth of March both of United States and Britain and France began launched an attack on Libya in implementation of UN resolution, where they fired more than 110 cruise missiles of the type of Tomahawk on some sites in Libya. Gaddafi said in his first reaction to the aerial bombardment, the North Africa and the Mediterranean region has become a "battleground" from now. He said that the interests of the countries of this region have become in danger, adding that he was "open weapons stores to arm the people to resist aggression". Although the issuance of security council resolution 1970 and 1973 in the case of Libya and the content of resolution was to refer the situation in Libya to international criminal court, and arms embargo and travel, freezing of Libyan assets in western countries and no-fly zone in Libyan airspace, The NATO did not intervene until the end of March, a month after crisis began, Where key members began launching air strikes on Gaddafi’s forces. The big focus was on the Benghazi because it is home to 750,000 people and the headquarters of the Libyan Revolution. During the 72 hours have been a no-fly situation in Libya and also were deployed aircraft and warships in implementation of UN resolution. NATO operations began on March 27; this operation was named Unified Protector to protect Libyan civilians.


13 ibid
support, for example Germany did not participate in operation Unified protector although it has a capacity to do so. It abstained on the UN Security Council’s decision to intervene in Libya. Moreover, Poland not been directly involved in Libya, but it was selling advanced munitions to the members of alliance. The participation of NATO in Libya has led the fear of some countries from inability of the alliance to take over in Libya; some Arab countries participated, along with NATO such as Qatar, Morocco, Jordan and United Arab Emirates. These countries have strengthened its relationship with NATO in the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul initiative in order to cooperate with the alliance. This program was launched in 1994 and 2004 in order to expand the alliance’s ability to cooperate with Middle East and Africa. This alliance with other countries which are not members of the alliance demonstrates the great role played by NATO. Because of the limited capacity of the Libyan opposition to defend itself and therefore, the NATO intervention was to minimize harm to civilians. On the other hand, US role in Libya was not marginal. The United States has provided about 97% of the Tomahawk missiles and military aid that has been used to attack Libyan air defenses. As well as, United States has supplied 75% of air fuel that was used in the process. The United States has sold the necessary equipment for NATO. It also has supplied NATO with drone and gave them 75% of surveillance and intelligence and provided them with information that helped them to target areas because when it saw that the alliance had lacks experience. Where NATO Secretary-General said: "The loss of the Europeans to experience makes them in embarrassing matter". Without doubt, NATO has made great efforts in Libya in order to get rid of the Gaddafi regime. On March 30, the Libyan regime announced the killing of Saif al-Arab, son of the Libyan leader, in a raid by NATO on his home in Tripoli. As well as the alliance was able to save a lot of civilians through air operations that has helped to reduce the side effects. The other opinion said, the NATO mission in Libya have exceeded protect Libyans, they have bombed civilian sites and headquarters of government of Libyan president. In the mid-August, the opposition has gained enough strength to attack the strongholds of Gadhafi, and within two months the National Transitional Council was able to control the entire country. About the Gaddafi death, Gaddafi decided to escape from hometown of

14 Isaac, Sally Khalifa. "NATO’s Intervention in Libya: Assessment and Implications." European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012, 121-23.


16 Isaac, Sally Khalifa. "NATO’S Intervention in Libya: Assessment and Implications." European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012, 121-23.

17 ibid, 121-123.

18 Isaac, Sally Khalifa. "NATO’s Intervention in Libya: Assessment and Implications." European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012, 121-23.
Sirte because of the NATO raid, which targeted their convoy which consist of several cars. Thus helped the rebels to arrest him and then kill him in 20 of October. Thus, Operation Unified Protector ended after 222 days of initiated.

F. Statistics on NATO participation in Libya

In the latest statistics of the alliance on November 2, 2011, in terms of participation for example in military forces, there were more than 260 air planes such as: fighter jets, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, drones and attack helicopters, refueling plane. Also, there were 21 Marine Machines such as: supply ships, submarines, destroyers, assault ships and aircrafts carriers. In addition, there were about 8000 troops participate in Libya. About air operation, there were more than 26,500 sorties, including 9,700 sorties aerial bombardment. Also, there were number of sorties to identify targets and did not use the weapon at that time. About the targeting which done by NATO, it destroyed more 5900 target, including military targets and more than 400 artillery rocket launchers and more than 600 tanks.

G. The reasons for NATO intervention in Libya

The question is why NATO intervened in Libya rather than other countries? There are some reasons for that which they are risks of failed state, illegal immigration to European countries, the growing al-Qaida activity in the Maghreb countries and threats to energy security.

1. Risks of failed state:

Failed states pose a challenge to NATO, as stated by the secretary General of NATO and he said there are security challenges and risks faced by the alliance, including failed states, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, piracy, energy

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21 ibid

security”, where the vision of the alliance says that state failure is the stage that precedes collapse. According to this vision, the NATO interest in this kind of nations must be earlier and later of collapse and failure. Intervention in the Libyan crisis, which will not only protect civilians, but will be the alliance's role in building state institutions. Moreover, to a working paper issued by the NATO Defense college, which says after toppling the regime and the rebels received the reins of power, Libya will continue to need international efforts to build a country that has suffered a decades-long lack of structure and institution of governance, Therefore, the abandonment of that country and not to provide the necessary support to build the basic elements that would lead to chaos and political turmoil.

2. Illegal immigration

Illegal immigration is not new issue, however the political changes taking place in the North African countries has led to the growing illegal immigration risk. Where thousands of migrants have fled to Italy, which has granted visa to these immigrants to enter other European countries, which promoting France to threaten the discontinuation of convention on Schengen. The concerns centered on immigrants are gradual transfer of ideas and beliefs from south to Mediterranean north because there is a conflict in values between the two sides. In addition, low educational level lo these immigrants make them to accept of any job, which make pressure on employment opportunities in host countries.

3. The growing al-Qaida activity in the Maghreb

There are two indicators: First, the testimony of admiral James Estarindes, the commander of NATO force, which confirmed in front of US senate in March 2011 about the presence of AL-Qaeda effects and Hezbollah in Libyan opposition. The second indicator, the Chadian president has pointed out that AL-Qaeda in the Maghreb contributes greatly to what is going on Libya.


24 ibid

26 ibid


4. Threats to Energy Security

The Libyan crisis and the consequent disruption in Libyan oil supplies to NATO members and impact on oil prices, has become a direct challenge to the interests of NATO countries, based on what represents the important of Libyan oil to these countries, both in terms of reserves and production. The NATO Secretary-General told the European parliament in May 2006, 30 "NATO will be looking to use force if it threatens energy supplies". Thus, the occurrence of Libyan crisis and rising oil prices, which reached 110$ a barrel in that period led NATO to intervene in Libyan crisis, fearing on loss their own interest.

H. NATO intervention: Success or Failure?

Views on NATO intervention in Libya was different, there are some opinions sayings that the NATO intervention was successful, where the alliance was able to achieve many accomplishments because of the coordination and expertise carried out by the alliance in military operation. Where with the help of NATO when it launched an air strike on Gaddafis's convoy, the rebels managed to arrest him and then kill him. Moreover, without NATO intervention in Libya, it was possible that Libya's position will be similar to what is happening in Syria, because Gaddafi hired mercenaries from other African countries. On the other hand, some opinions said that the NATO intervention in Libya was not the aim of protecting civilians only, but to preserve their interests, where Libyan oil is major importance for European countries. In addition, Libyan situation after the NATO intervention became unstable and thus turned into an internal struggle which led to the emergence of Daash. In fact, the weak phase experienced by Libya after Gaddafi's death and also insecurity and chaos are normal. All these expected results, because the country is in transition and the process of change after they had been living under a bad rule lasted for 42 years.

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30 ibid

31 Isaac, Sally Khalifa. "NATO’s Intervention in Libya: Assessment and Implications." European Institute of the Mediterranean, 2012, 121-23.

32 Ibid, 121-123

II. Current situation

Libya suffered many problems after Gaddafi's death such as: lack of security, deteriorating economic situation and lack of effective government. Since 2011, the major problem facing Libya is lack of security. The lack of security in Libya was due to their failure to disarmament and their inability to demobilize rebel militias after the war. Libyan leadership and international advisors in Libya has stressed the importance of disarmament of the rebels from the beginning but they could not do so, which led to the emergence of armed groups, were able to control large parts of Libya. Without a doubt, that the fall of regime and the lack of security, is opportunity for criminals to exploit the situation in Libya and thus they were active in drug trafficking and weapons and also that lead to increase the number of thieves. All these reasons have led to emergence of Daash in Libya because of the exploitation of the deterioration of the situation, as the same thing that happened in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, Daash took control of Sirte in Libya. It has established training camps for foreign and Libyan fighter in order to control the other areas in Libya. On the other hand, the lack of security in Libya led to increasing the number of Libyan refugee in the other countries, in Egypt the number of Libyan refugee reached to 356,000, while in Tunisia the number was 575,000; in addition there some Libyan refugee went to Algeria, Sudan, Niger, chad and Europe. The situation after Gaddafi's departure has grown worse so, that lead to increase the humanitarian such as food, water, shelter and services and also, increased the number of poor and homeless, there are about 234,000 displaced people in Libya. On the other hand, after the war, oil rebounded to higher levels, but continued insecurity is an obstacle for progress of the economy in Libya. After more a year of negotiations, the Libyan parties signed on Thursday, December 17, 2015 on political agreement in Morocco. The agreement on the formation of national unity government, which would lead to a transition states, in order to hold legislative elections. Also, the expansion of the Presidential Council is made up of nine people who were the president, five deputies and three ministers of states. Now, it has been formed government of national reconciliation in Libya and


37 Ibid, 2-4

transfer to Tripoli, headed Fayez al-Sarraj. Although there are opponents of the agreement but the international community is dealing with the current government.

III. Futuristic Expectation and Solution Alternative

In my opinion, lack of security and stability phase will continue for longer, unless the international community to intervene to disarm militias scattered in Libya and elimination of Daash. As well as the formation of national unity government as it exists now, it could help to control the security situation in Libya. Without a doubt, that the current crisis that world faced which is drop in oil prices will affect Libya because it relies on oil for its economy, thus leading to a decline in its budget. The low budget reduces the state's ability to rebuild the country after the devastation caused by the war. On the hand, that the mistakes committed by NATO in Libya and their lack of experience, and thus led to help from America, where it provided them with aerial refueling and intelligence so, in my opinion, NATO will avoid committing these mistakes in other operations and will increase intelligence, surveillance, while conducting operation. Also, as I read previously, that NATO spends about 1.6 percent of its GDP on their militaries while America spends more than 4% of its GDP on defense. This means that it spend 3 times to defend what is spent by the alliance.

Conclusion:

To conclude, the Libyan people have suffered harsh condition under the rule of Gaddafi, lack of resources, facilities and infrastructure and many others. Libyan people saw what happened in Egypt and Tunisia and their success in toppling the regime and this encouraged Libyans to carry out a revolution on February 17, in order to change the system. But the situation after the fall of the regime has become even worse; they enter into a civil war, the emergence of armed group, and the emergence of Daash in Libya because of the exploitation of bad condition that reached in Libya. That the lack of security and stability in Libya is normal, because the state transition after they have lived in oppression under the rule of Gaddafi. In my opinion, that international intervention in Libya is important in order to assist the Libyan government to get rid of militias and Daash.


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