



## **LIBYAN CRISIS AND THE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT AND INSECURITY IN AFRICA**

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### **Abstract**

*On February 15, 2011, anti-government rallies were held in [Benghazi](#) by protesters angered by the arrest of a [human rights](#) lawyer, Fethi Tarbel. The protesters called for Qaddafi to step down and for the release of political prisoners. Libyan security forces used water cannons and rubber bullets against the crowds, resulting in a number of injuries. To counter the demonstrations further, a pro-government rally orchestrated by the Libyan authorities was broadcast on state [television](#). As the protests intensified, with demonstrators taking control of Benghazi and unrest spreading to [Tripoli](#), the Libyan government began using lethal force against demonstrators. Security forces and squads of mercenaries fired live ammunition into crowds of demonstrators. Demonstrators also were attacked with tanks and artillery and from the air with warplanes and helicopter gunships. The regime restricted communications, blocking the Internet and interrupting telephone service throughout the country. On February 21<sup>st</sup> -2011 one of Qaddafi's sons, Sayf Al-Islam, gave a defiant address on state television, blaming outside agitators for the unrest and saying that further demonstrations could lead to civil war in the country. He vowed that the regime would fight "to the last bullet." The paper was of the view that the conflict in Libya was as result of government's sudden escalation of violence against protesters and other civilians drew international condemnation from foreign leaders and human rights organizations. The conflict in Libya has damage the coherence of the regime, causing a number of high-level officials—including the minister of justice and a number of senior Libyan diplomats, including the Libyan ambassador to the [United Nations](#)—to resign in protest or issue statements condemning the regime. A number of Libyan embassies around the world began to fly Libya's pre-Qaddafi flag, signaling support for the*

*uprising. Support for Qaddafi also seemed to waver in some segments of the military; as the Libyan air force carried out attacks against demonstrators; two Libyan fighter pilots flew their jets to [Malta](#), choosing to defect rather than obey orders to bomb Benghazi. The researcher was of the opinion that democracy, justice and good governance must sustain the decorum for African development, unity and progress.*

**Keywords:** *Libyan Crisis, Protest, Demonstration and Violation of Human Rights.*

### **Introduction**

The crisis in Libya seized the attention of the international community and has been labeled a clear case for when timely and decisive response to uphold the face of an imminent threat of mass atrocities should occur. In February 2011, civilians began to [undertake political protests](#) demanding an end to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's 41-year reign, wherein protestors found themselves the target of [mass atrocities](#) at the hands of government armed forces.

The First Libyan Civil War was an armed conflict in 2011 in the [North African](#) country of [Libya](#) fought between forces loyal to Colonel [Muammar Gaddafi](#) and those seeking to oust [his government](#). According to Cockburn, P (2011) has cited the public demonstration was erupted as Libyan Revolution, also known as the 17 February Revolution. The war was preceded by protests in [Zawiya](#) on 8 August 2009 and finally ignited by protests in [Benghazi](#) beginning on Tuesday, 15 February 2011, which led to clashes with security forces that fired on the crowd. The protests escalated into a rebellion that spread across the country, with the forces opposing Gaddafi establishing an interim governing body, the [National Transitional Council](#).

The [United Nations Security Council](#) passed an [initial resolution](#) on 26 February, freezing the assets of Gaddafi and his inner circle and restricting their travel, and referred the matter to the [International Criminal Court](#) for investigation. In early March, Gaddafi's forces rallied, pushed eastwards and re-took several coastal cities before reaching Benghazi. A [further UN resolution](#) authorized member states to establish and enforce a [no-fly zone over Libya](#), and to use "all necessary measures" to prevent attacks on civilians, which turned into a [bombing campaign by the forces of NATO](#)

against military installations and civilian infrastructure of Libya. The [Gaddafi government](#) then announced a ceasefire, but fighting and bombing continued. Throughout the conflict, rebels rejected government offers of a ceasefire and efforts by the [African Union](#) to end the fighting because the plans set forth did not include the removal of Gaddafi. (Chuluv, 2011)

In August, rebel forces [launched an offensive on the government-held coast of Libya](#), backed by a wide-reaching NATO bombing campaign, taking back territory lost months before and ultimately [capturing the capital city of Tripoli](#), while Gaddafi evaded capture and loyalists engaged in a rearguard campaign. On 16 September 2011, the National Transitional Council was recognized by the [United Nations](#) as the legal representative of Libya, replacing the Gaddafi government. Muammar Gaddafi evaded capture until 20 October 2011, when he was [captured and killed in Sirte](#). The National Transitional Council "declared the liberation of Libya" and the official end of the war on 23 October 2011.

In [the aftermath of the civil war](#), a low-level [insurgency](#) by former Gaddafi loyalists continued. There have been various disagreements and strife between local militia and tribes, including fighting on 23 January 2012 in the former Gaddafi stronghold of [Bani Walid](#), leading to an alternative town council being established and later recognized by the National Transitional Council (NTC). As cited by Viscus, G (2011) A much greater issue has been the role of militias which fought in the civil war and their role in the new Libya. Some have refused to disarm, and cooperation with the NTC has been strained, leading to demonstrations against militias and government action to disband such groups or integrate them into the Libyan military. These unresolved issues led directly to a [second civil war in Libya](#).

In witnessing such violence by the Libyan government, the international community and regional and sub-regional bodies [acted](#) to protect the populations through a range of economic, political, and military measures. Protests that began in the capital of Tripoli [spread](#) within weeks across the country to the city of Benghazi, which became the opposition's stronghold and was soon subject to shocking brutality as Gaddafi [dispatched](#) the national army to crush the unrest. The Libyan leader expressed clear intent to continue committing massive human rights violations by announcing to Benghazi residents that his forces would show ["no mercy"](#) to rebels. Gaddafi's cruel objective was clear in his potent [speech](#) broadcasted on 22 February 2011, when he used language reminiscent of the genocide in

Rwanda and stated that he would rather die a martyr than step down. Gaddafi called on his supporters to attack the protesting “cockroaches” and “cleanse Libya house by house” until protestors surrendered. Faced with Gaddafi’s imminent intention to massacre the city’s population, it was clear that international action in response to the Libyan government’s manifest failure to uphold its Responsibility to Protect was needed to halt ongoing crimes and prevent a bloodbath. Civil society, regional and international actors saw the warning signs of mass atrocities. Rather than stand by and risk failing to act while more civilians had been subject to mass violence, these actors urgently took action to prevent these heinous crimes.

### **Research Questions**

The Paper has the following questions to ask:

- i. What are the causes of Conflict in Libya?
- ii. Does conflict in Libya affects African Security frame work?
- iii. What are the ways to consolidate democracy and good governance in Africa?

### **Research Objective**

The paper has the general objectives of analyzing 2011 Libyan crisis and its implication to African insecurity, while the specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To find out the causes of Libyan conflict
- ii. To examine the effects of Libyan conflict on African security frame work
- iii. To evaluate ways on how to consolidate democracy and good governance in Africa.

### **Research Method**

This paper has used the secondary sources of information to review various relevant literatures on the subject matter to investigate the issue of Libyan crisis during Gaddafi regimes in 2011.

### **Definition of Concept** **Gaddafi Leadership**

[Muammar Gaddafi](#) was the head of the Free Officers, a group of Arab nationalists that deposed [King Idris I](#) in 1969 in a "bloodless coup. According to Robbins, J (2007) has cited Gaddafi has abolished the [Libyan Constitution of 1951](#), considering it a neocolonial document. From 1969 until 1975 standards of living, life expectancy and literacy grew rapidly. In 1975 he published his manifesto [The Green Book](#). He officially stepped down from power in 1977, and subsequently claimed to be merely a "symbolic figurehead" until 2011, with the [Libyan government](#) up until then also denying that he held any power.

Under Gaddafi, Libya was theoretically a decentralized, [direct democracy](#) state run according to the philosophy of Gaddafi's *The Green Book*, with Gaddafi retaining a ceremonial position. Libya was officially run by a system of people's committees which served as local governments for the country's subdivisions, an indirectly elected [General People's Congress](#) as the legislature, and the [General People's Committee](#), led by a Secretary-General, as the executive branch. According to [Freedom House](#), however, these structures were often manipulated to ensure the dominance of Gaddafi, who reportedly continued to dominate all aspects of government.

[WikiLeaks'](#) [disclosure of confidential US diplomatic cables](#) revealed US diplomats there speaking of Gaddafi's "mastery of tactical maneuvering". While placing relatives and loyal members of [his tribe](#) in central military and government positions, he skillfully marginalized supporters and rivals, thus maintaining a delicate balance of powers, stability and economic developments. This extended even to his own sons, as he repeatedly changed affections to avoid the rise of a clear successor and rival. Both Gaddafi and the [Libyan Arab Jamahiriya](#), however, officially denied that he held any power, but said that he was merely a symbolic figurehead. While he was popularly seen as a [demagogue](#) in the West, Gaddafi always portrayed himself as a [statesman-philosopher](#) (Bazzi, 2011)

According to several Western media sources, Gaddafi feared a military coup against his government and deliberately kept Libya's military relatively weak. The [Libyan Army](#) consisted of about 50,000 personnel. Its most powerful units were four crack brigades of highly equipped and trained soldiers, composed of members of Gaddafi's tribe or members of other tribes loyal to him. One, the [Khamis Brigade](#), was led by his son [Khamis](#). Local militias and Revolutionary Committees across the country were also kept

well-armed. By contrast, regular military units were poorly armed and trained, and were armed with largely outdated military equipment.

### **Development and corruption Related Issues during Gaddafi Regimes**

By the end of Gaddafi's 42-year rule, Libya's population had a per capita income of \$14,000, though a third was estimated to still live below the national poverty line. Kiapi, E (2011) has cited broadly secular society was imposed. [Child marriage](#) was banned, and women enjoyed equality of equal pay for equal work, equal rights in divorce and access to higher education rose from 8% in 1966 to 43% in 1996, equal to that of men.<sup>[72]</sup> Homelessness was insignificant, with literacy rates estimated at 88%, and average life expectancy rose from 51/54 in 1969 to 74/77. Much of the state's income came from [its oil production](#), which soared in the 1970s. In the 1980s, a large portion of it was spent on arms purchases, and on sponsoring militant groups and independence movements around the world.

According to Global Corruption Index (2010) has puts Libya's economy is structured primarily around the nation's energy sector, which generates about 95% of export earnings, 80% of GDP, and 99% of government income. Libya's GDP per capita (PPP), [human development index](#), and literacy rate were better than in Egypt and Tunisia, whose [Arab Spring](#) revolutions preceded the outbreak of protests in Libya. Libya's [corruption perception index](#) in 2010 was 2.2, ranking 146th out of 178 countries, worse than that of [Egypt](#) (ranked 98th) and [Tunisia](#) (ranked 59<sup>th</sup>). One paper speculated that such a situation created a broader contrast between good education, high demand for democracy, and the government's practices (perceived corruption, political system, supply of democracy)

An estimated 13% of Libyan citizens were unemployed. More than 16% of families had no members earning a stable income, and 43.3% had just one. Despite one of the highest unemployment rates in the region, there was a consistent labor shortage with over a million migrant workers present on the market. These migrant workers were the bulk of the refugees leaving Libya after the beginning of hostilities. Despite this, Libya's [Human Development Index](#) in 2010 was the highest in [Africa](#) and greater than that of [Saudi Arabia](#). Libya had [welfare](#) systems allowing access to [free education](#), [free healthcare](#), and financial assistance for housing, and the [Great Manmade River](#) was built to allow free access to fresh water across large parts of the country (Azad,2011)

Some of the worst economic conditions were in the eastern parts of the state, once a breadbasket of the ancient world, where Gaddafi extracted oil. Except for housing improvements and the Great Manmade River, little infrastructure was developed in this region for many years. For example, the only sewage facility in Benghazi was over 40 years old, and untreated sewage has resulted in environmental problems.

Several foreign governments and analysts have stated that a large share of the business enterprise was controlled by Gaddafi, his family, and the government.<sup>[85]</sup> A leaked US diplomatic cable said that the Libyan economy was "a [kleptocracy](#) in which the government – either the Gaddafi family itself or its close political allies – has a direct stake in anything worth buying, selling or owning". According to US officials, Gaddafi amassed a vast personal fortune during his 42-year leadership. [The New York Times](#) pointed to Gaddafi's relatives adopting lavish lifestyles, including luxurious homes, Hollywood film investments, and private parties with American pop stars (Rinse, 2011)

Gaddafi said that he planned to combat corruption in the state by proposing reforms where oil profits are handed out directly to the country's five million people rather than to government bodies, stating that "as long as money is administered by a government body, there would be theft and corruption. According BBC News (2011) Gaddafi urged a sweeping reform of the government [bureaucracy](#), suggesting that most of the [cabinet](#) system should be dismantled to "free Libyans from red tape" and "protect the state's budget from corruption". According to Western diplomats, this move appeared to be aimed at putting pressure on the government to speed up reforms. In March 2008, Gaddafi proposed plans to dissolve the country's existing administrative structure and disburse oil revenue directly to the people. The plan included abolishing all [ministries](#) except those of defence, internal security, and foreign affairs, and departments implementing strategic projects. He stated that the ministries were failing to manage the country's oil revenues, and that his "dream during all these years was to give power and wealth directly to the people".

A national vote on Gaddafi's plan was held in 2009, where Libya's people's congresses, collectively the country's highest authority, voted to delay implementation. The [General People's Congress](#) announced that, of 468 [Basic People's Congresses](#), 64 chose immediate implementation while 251 endorsed implementation "but asked for (it) to be delayed until appropriate

measures were put in place". Some top government officials opposed the plan, saying that it would "wreak havoc" in the economy by "fanning [inflation](#) and spurring [capital flight](#)". Gaddafi acknowledged that the scheme, which promised up to 30,000 [Libyan dinars](#) (\$23,000) annually to about a million of Libya's poorest, may "cause chaos before it brought about prosperity," but said "do not be afraid to experiment with a new form of government" and that "this plan is to offer a better future for Libya's children".(Freedom Press, 2011)

### **Human rights Issues during Gaddafi Administrations**

In 2009 and 2011, the [Freedom of the Press Index](#) rated Libya the most-censored state in the Middle East and North Africa. In contrast, a January 2011 report of the [United Nations Human Rights Council](#), on which the [Libyan Arab Jamahiriya](#) sat prior to the uprising, released a month before protests began, praised certain aspects of the country's human rights record, including its [treatment of women](#) and improvements in other areas (UN, Report 2011)

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's delegation to the United Nations issued a report about human rights in Libya. The report said that the country was founded on direct people's democracy that guaranteed direct exercise of authority by all citizens through the people's congresses. Citizens were said to be able to express opinions to the congresses on political, economic, social, and cultural issues. In addition, the report stated that there were information platforms such as newspapers and TV channels for people to express their opinions through. Libyan authorities also argued that no one in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya suffered from extreme poverty and hunger, and that the government guaranteed a minimum of food and essential needs to people with low incomes. In 2006, an initiative was adopted for providing people with low incomes investment portfolios amounting to \$30,000 to be deposited with banks and companies. (Mohammed, 2006)

The Revolutionary Committees occasionally kept tight control over internal dissent; reportedly, 10% to 20% of Libyans worked as informants for these committees, with surveillance taking place in the government, in factories, and in the education sector. Vandewale, D (2006) has cited the government sometimes executed dissidents through public hangings and mutilations and re-broadcast them on [public television](#) channels.<sup>[99][100]</sup> Until the mid-1980s,



Libya's [intelligence](#) service conducted assassinations of Libyan dissidents around the world.

In December 2009, Gaddafi reportedly told government officials that Libya would soon experience a "new political period" and would have elections for important positions such as minister-level roles and the National Security Advisor position (a Prime Minister equivalent). He also promised that international monitors would be included to ensure fair elections. His speech was said to have caused a stir. These elections were planned to coincide with the Jamahiriya's usual periodic elections for the Popular Committees, [Basic People's Committees](#), [Basic People's Congresses](#), and [General People's Congresses](#), in 2010.

Dissent was illegal under Law 75 of 1973, and in 1974, Gaddafi asserted that anyone guilty of founding a [political party](#) would be executed. With the establishment of the [Jamahiriya](#) ("state of the masses") system in 1977, he established the [Revolutionary Committees](#) as conduits for raising political consciousness, with the aim of [direct political participation](#) by all Libyans rather than a traditional party-based [representative system](#). In 1979, some of the Revolutionary Committees had eventually evolved into self-appointed, sometimes zealous, enforcers of revolutionary orthodoxy. During the early 1980s, the Revolutionary Committees had considerable power and became a growing source of tension within the Jamahiriya, to the extent that Gaddafi sometimes criticized their effectiveness and excessive repression, until the power of the Revolutionary Committees was eventually restricted in the late 1980s (BBC, News 2011)

[The Green Book](#), which Gaddafi authored in the 1970s, was for years the principal text of political education. BBC cited a Libyan who said that teachers who called it "rubbish" could face [execution](#). According Ibrahim, M (2011) "The Great Green Document on Human Rights treats the right to life as an individual human right and calls for abolition of the [death sentence](#), except in the case of persons whose lives endanger or corrupt society."

In 1988, Gaddafi criticized the "excesses" he blamed on the Revolutionary Councils, stating that "they deviated, harmed, tortured" and that "the true revolutionary does not practise repression." That same year, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya issued the *Great Green Document on Human Rights*, in which Article 5 established laws that allowed greater [freedom of expression](#). Article 8 of The Code on the Promotion of Freedom stated that "each citizen has the right to express his opinions and ideas openly in [People's Congresses](#)

and in all [mass media](#)." A number of restrictions were also allegedly placed on the power of the Revolutionary Committees by the Gaddafi government, leading to resurgence in the Libyan state's popularity by the early 1990s. In 2004, however, Libya posted a \$1 million bounty for journalist and governmental critic Ashur Shamis, under the allegation that he was linked to [Al-Qaeda](#) and terror suspect [Abu Qatada](#) (Gabbat, 2011)

### **Uprising and civil war in Libyan 2011**

The protests, unrest and confrontations began in earnest on 2 February 2011. They were soon nicknamed the Libyan Revolution of Dignity by the protesters and foreign media. Edwards, W (2011) has cited foreign workers and disgruntled minorities protested in the main square of Zawiya, Libya against the local administration. This was succeeded by race riots, which were squashed by the police and pro-Gaddafi loyalists. On the evening of 15 February, between 500 and 600 demonstrators protested in front of Benghazi's police headquarters after the arrest of human rights lawyer [Fathi Terbil](#). Crowds were armed with petrol bombs and threw stones. Marchers hurled [Molotov cocktails](#) in a downtown square in Benghazi, damaging cars, blocking roads, and hurling rocks. Police responded to crowds with tear gas, water cannon, and rubber bullets. 38 people were injured, including 10 security personnel. The novelist [Idris Al-Mesmari](#) was arrested hours after giving an interview with [Al Jazeera](#) about the police reaction to protests.

In a statement released after clashes in Benghazi, a Libyan official warned that the Government "will not allow a group of people to move around at night and play with the security of Libya". The statement added: "The clashes last night were between small groups of people – up to 150. Some outsiders infiltrated that group. They were trying to corrupt the local legal process which has long been in place. We will not permit that at all, and we call on Libyans to voice their issues through existing channels, even if it is to call for the downfall of the government."(Cockburn, 2011)

In [Zawiya](#) and [Zintan](#), hundreds of protesters in each town called for an end to the Gaddafi government and set fire to police and security buildings. In Zintan, the protesters set up tents in the town centre. The armed protests continued the following day in Benghazi, [Derna](#) and Bayda. Libyan security forces allegedly responded with lethal force. Hundreds gathered at [Maydan al-Shajara](#) in Benghazi, and authorities tried to disperse protesters with [water cannons](#).

A "Day of Rage" in Libya and by Libyans in exile was planned for 17 February, 2011. According to Daily Telegraph (2011) The [National Conference for the Libyan Opposition](#) asked that all groups opposed to the Gaddafi government protest on 17 February in memory of demonstrations in Benghazi five years earlier.<sup>[114]</sup> The plans to protest were inspired by the [Tunisian](#) and [Egyptian revolution](#). Protests took place in Benghazi, [Ajdabiya](#), Derna, Zintan, and Bayda. Libyan security forces fired live ammunition into the armed protests. Protesters torched a number of government buildings, including a police station. In [Tripoli](#), television and public radio stations had been sacked, and protesters set fire to security buildings, [Revolutionary Committee](#) offices, the interior [ministry](#) building, and the [People's Hall](#).

On 18 February, police and army personnel later withdrew from Benghazi after being overwhelmed by protesters. Some army personnel also joined the protesters; they then seized the local radio station. In Bayda, unconfirmed reports indicated that the local police force and riot-control units had joined the protesters. On 19 February, witnesses in Libya reported [helicopters](#) firing into crowds of anti-government protesters. The army withdrew from the city of Bayda (Lane, 2011)

### **Composition of rebel forces in Libya**

The rebels primarily included civilians, such as teachers, students, lawyers, and oil workers, but also defected police officers and professional soldiers. Many [Islamists](#) were part of the rebel movement in both eastern and western Libya. Based on BBC, News Reports of 2012 Rebel group primarily initiated from Misrati, Zentan and Derna. In Benghazi "the February 17 Brigade" was a powerful Islamist group composed of 12 different brigades. The Libya Shield was based out of Mistrata and Zaria. There was also the [Libyan Islamic Fighting Group](#) and the Obaida Ibn Jarrah Brigade which has been held responsible for the assassination of top rebel commander General [Abdul Fatah Younis](#).

Gaddafi's administration repeatedly asserted that the rebels included [al-Qaeda](#) fighters. According to Gillis, C (2011) Rebels denied this. NATO's Supreme Allied Commander [James G. Stavridis](#) stated that intelligence reports suggested there were "flickers" of al-Qaeda activity among rebels, but that there was insufficient information to confirm a significant presence of [terrorist](#) groups. Gaddafi's claims are supported by a 2008 secret cable

from the US embassy in Tripoli to the US State Department, and an analysis by the [Combating Terrorism Center](#) at the [US Military Academy](#) at [West Point](#) of a set of documents called the Sinjar Records, purporting to show a statistical study of the al-Qaeda personnel records. The West Point analysis of these documents concluded that Libya provided "far more" foreign fighters in per capita terms than any other country. A disclosed file from 2005 on [WikiLeaks](#) found that rebel leader [Abu Sufian Ibrahim Ahmed Hamuda Bin Qumu](#) was a former [Guantanamo Bay](#) detainee alleged to be a member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, to have joined the [Taliban](#) in 1998, and that he was a "probable member of Al Qaida and a member of the African Extremist Network".

### **State response**

In the days leading up to the conflict, Gaddafi called for a rally against the government that was to be held on 17 February, 2011. The [International Crisis Group](#) believes this to have been political maneuvers to divert attention away from him and the [Jamahiriya](#) political system towards government officials currently in power.

Later in February, Gaddafi stated that the rebels were influenced by [Al-Qaeda](#), [Osama Bin Laden](#), and [hallucinogenic drugs](#) put in drinks and pills. He specifically referred to substances in milk, coffee, and [Nescafé](#), and said that Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda were distributing these hallucinogenic drugs. He also blamed [alcohol](#). Golovnina, M (2011) has cited how Gaddafi later also stated that the revolt against his rule was the result of a colonialist plot by foreign states, particularly blaming France, the US and the UK, to control oil and enslave the Libyan people. He referred to the rebels as "cockroaches" and "rats", and vowed not to step down and to cleanse Libya house by house until the insurrection was crushed. He said that if the rebels laid down their arms, they would not be harmed. He also said that he had been receiving "thousands" of phone calls from Benghazi, from residents who were being held hostage and who wanted to be rescued. Gaddafi said in a speech addressed to Benghazi on 17 March 2011 that the rebels "can run away, they can go to Egypt...Those who would surrender their weapons and would join our side, we are the people of Libya. Those who surrender their weapons and would come without their arms, we would forgive them, and would have amnesty for those who put down their weapons. Anyone who throws his arms away and stays at home would be protected."(BBC, News 2011)

Libya's ambassador in Malta addressed that "many people instigating unrest were arrested. Libya will show that these belonged to Al Qaeda. Some young protestors were also misled. The government is ready to dialogue with them." He cited reports from the Libyan Foreign Ministry that up to 2,500 al-Qaeda foreign operatives have been working in eastern Libya and were mostly responsible for "stirring up trouble." He concluded, "What we saw in Tahrir Square, and in Tunisia, was a clear situation. But in Libya, there is something different" (Golovkina, 2011)

Smith, D (2011) has cited how Gaddafi called himself a "warrior", and vowed to fight on and die a "martyr", and urged his supporters to leave their homes and attack rebels "in their lairs". Gaddafi said that he had not yet ordered the use of force, and threatened that "everything will burn" when he did. Responding to demands that he step down, he stated that he could not step down, as he held a purely symbolic position like [Queen Elizabeth](#), and that the people were in power. The [Swedish](#) peace research institute [SIPRI](#) reported flights between Tripoli and a dedicated military base in [Belarus](#) which only handles stockpiled weaponry and military equipment.

### **Violence**

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, in an interview with ABC on 17 March, 2011 stated that the rebels in Benghazi engaged in terror against the population. He stated, "You know, the armoured militia yesterday, they killed four young boys in Benghazi. Why? Because they were against them. Everybody is terrified because of the armed militia. They live in terror. Nightmare armed people are everywhere. They have their own courts. They execute the people who are against them. No school. No hospital. No money. No banks.

The Libyan governments were reported to have employed snipers, artillery, helicopter gunships, warplanes, anti-aircraft weaponry, and warships against demonstrations and funeral processions. It was also reported that security forces and foreign mercenaries repeatedly used firearms, including assault rifles and machine guns, as well as knives against protesters. [Amnesty International](#) initially reported that writers, intellectuals and other prominent opposition sympathizers disappeared during the early days of the conflict in Gaddafi-controlled cities, and that they may have been subjected to torture or execution. (Smith, 2011)

In a 17 March 2011 interview, shortly before the [military intervention](#), [Muammar Gaddafi](#)'s son and *heir apparent* [Saif al-Islam Gaddafi](#) said that

"armed militia" fighters in [Benghazi](#) were killing children and terrorizing the population.

Amnesty International also reported that security forces targeted paramedics helping injured protesters. In multiple incidents, Gaddafi's forces were documented using ambulances in their attacks. Golovnina, M (2011) Injured demonstrators were sometimes denied access to hospitals and ambulance transport. The government also banned giving blood transfusions to people who had taken part in the demonstrations. Security forces, including members of Gaddafi's Revolutionary Committees, stormed hospitals and removed the dead. Injured protesters were either summarily executed or had their oxygen masks, IV drips, and wires connected to the monitors removed. The dead and injured were piled into vehicles and taken away, possibly for cremation. Doctors were prevented from documenting the numbers of dead and wounded, but an orderly in a Tripoli hospital morgue estimated to the BBC that 600–700 protesters were killed in Green Square in Tripoli on 20 February. The orderly said that ambulances brought in three or four corpses at a time and that after the ice lockers were filled to capacity, bodies were placed on stretchers or the floor, and that "it was in the same at the other hospitals".

In the eastern city of Bayda, anti-government forces hanged two policemen who were involved in trying to disperse demonstrations. In downtown Benghazi, anti-government forces killed the managing director of al-Galaa hospital. The victim's body showed signs of torture.

On 19 February, several days after the conflict began, [Saif al-Islam Gaddafi](#) announced the creation of a commission of inquiry into the violence, chaired by a Libyan judge, as reported on [state television](#). He stated that the commission was intended to be "for members of Libyan and foreign organizations of human rights" and that it will "investigate the circumstances and events that have caused many victims." Later in the month, he went on state television to deny allegations that the government had launched airstrikes against Libyan cities and stated that the number of protesters killed had been exaggerated.

Towards the end of February, 2011 it was reported that the Gaddafi government had suppressed protests in Tripoli by distributing automobiles, money and weapons for hired followers to drive around Tripoli and attack people showing signs of dissent. In Tripoli, "death squads" of mercenaries and Revolutionary Committees members reportedly patrolled the streets and

shot people who tried to take the dead off the streets or gather in groups. The [International Federation for Human Rights](#) concluded on 24 February 2011 that Gaddafi was implementing a [scorched earth](#) strategy. The organization stated that "It is reasonable to fear that he has, in fact, decided to largely eliminate, wherever he still can, Libyan citizens who stood up against his regime and furthermore, to systematically and indiscriminately repress civilians. These acts can be characterized as [crimes against humanity](#), as defined in Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." (Smith, 2011)

In May 2011, [International Criminal Court](#) (ICC) chief prosecutor [Luis Moreno-Ocampo](#) estimated that 500–700 people were killed by security forces in February 2011, before the rebels took up arms. According to Moreno-Ocampo, "shooting at protesters was systematic". During the siege of Misrata in May 2011, Amnesty International reported "horrifying" tactics such as "indiscriminate attacks that have led to massive civilian casualties, including use of heavy artillery, rockets and cluster bombs in civilian areas and sniper fire against residents." Gaddafi's military commanders also reportedly executed soldiers who refused to fire on protesters. The [International Federation for Human Rights](#) reported a case where 130 soldiers were executed. Some of the soldiers executed by their commanders were reportedly burned alive. In June 2011, a more detailed investigation by Amnesty International found that many of the allegations against Gaddafi and the Libyan state turned out to be false or to lack any credible evidence, saying that rebels at times appeared to have knowingly made false claims or manufactured evidence.

In July 2011, [Saif al-Islam Gaddafi](#) had an interview with [Russia Today](#) in which he denied the ICC's allegations that he or his father [Muammar Gaddafi](#) ordered the killing of civilian protesters. He said that he was not a member of the government or the military and therefore had no authority to give such orders. He also said that his father made recorded calls to General [Abdul Fatah Younis](#), who later defected to the rebel forces, in order to request not to use force against protesters, to which he said Fatah Younis responded that protesters were attacking a military site and soldiers were acting in self-defense.

### **Prison sites and torture in Libya**

Gaddafi reportedly imprisoned thousands or tens of thousands of residents in Tripoli, with Red Cross denied access to these hidden prisons. One of the most notorious is a prison which was set up in a tobacco factory in Tripoli where inmates are reported to have been fed just half a loaf of bread and a bottle of water a day (Gardham, 2011)

In late April of 2011, [United States Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice](#) alleged that soldiers loyal to Gaddafi were given Viagra and encouraged to commit rapes in rebel-held or disputed areas. The allegations surfaced in an [Al Jazeera](#) report the previous month from Libya-based doctors, who claimed to have found Viagra in the pockets of government soldiers. Human rights groups and aid workers had previously documented rapes by loyalist fighters during the war. The British aid agency "Save the children" said it got reports that children were raped by unknown perpetrators, but warned that these reports could not be confirmed.

In Misrata, a rebel spokesman said that government soldiers had committed a string of sexual assaults in Benghazi Street before being pushed out by rebels. A doctor said that two young sisters were raped by five Black African mercenaries after their brothers joined the rebels. According to aid workers, four young girls were abducted and held for four days, and were possibly sexually assaulted. Freedom Press (2011) has cited that in a questionnaire 259 refugee women reported that they had been raped by Gaddafi's soldiers; however the accounts of these women could not be independently verified as the psychologist who conducted the questionnaire said that "she had lost contact with them".

The validity of the rape allegations is questioned by [Amnesty International](#), which has not found evidence to back up the claims and said that there are indications that on several occasions the rebels in Benghazi appeared to have knowingly made false claims or manufactured evidence.

### **Mercenaries**

The Libyan government alleged that the armed rebellion was composed of "criminal gangs and mercenaries. According to Lane, N (2011) ‘ A Libyan official reported to Libyan television that security forces arrested Tunisians and Egyptians that were "trained to sow chaos." However, again the Libyan Government authorities, mercenaries from Turkey, Egypt, and Tunisia entered Libya to fight on the side of the rebels. Dozens of them were arrested. Libya's Jamahiriya News Agency reported that the detained men were part



of a "foreign network (and were) trained to damage Libya's stability, the safety of its citizens and national unity."

Military advisors from Qatar participated on the side of the rebels, and were sometimes labelled as "mercenaries" by the media.<sup>[200]</sup> However, Qatar's role was certainly much greater than that. Initially, Qatari Prime Minister [Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani](#) declared that the country was supporting the rebels by sending "defensive weaponry" only.<sup>[201]</sup> A report by Sam Dagher, Charles Levinson, and Margaret Coker published by *The Wall Street Journal* on 17 October 2011 challenged those statements, and posited that "Qatar provided anti-Gadhafi rebels with what Libyan officials now estimate are tens of millions of dollars in aid, military training and more than 20,000 tons of weapons" (Gabbat,2011)

The three columnists reported anonymous sources described as people familiar with the shipments" who confirmed that 18 weapons shipments were delivered to rebel forces between spring and summer 2011, mostly independently from the mediation of the National Transitional Council. In fact, most shipments for which Qatar paid went directly to the rebels.

According to NTC-allied officials interviewed by *The Wall Street Journal*, a few key figures facilitated Qatar's weapons and aid to flow directly to the rebels. Cleric Ali al-Sallabi allegedly served as a primary "conduit for Qatari humanitarian aid, money and arms" and helped to direct more than a dozen of the Qatari shipments. His brother Ismail al-Salabi, leader of the Islamist "February 17 Katiba" rebel faction, was believed to be financially backed from Qatar.

Abdel Hakim Belhaj, the leader of Tripoli Military Council who had previously served as the leader of the 2004 U.S. terrorist-designated [Libyan Islamic Fighting Group](#) (LIFG), was among the privileged recipients of shipments from Qatar. Jalal al-Dugheily, the NTC Defense Minister, was a Libyan army veteran who reportedly favored Islamist militia leaders. According to David Roberts' analysis published by *Foreign Policy*, Belhaj – a "politically radioactive personality" – met with NATO officials at the end of August 2011 "under Qatar auspices." (Cockburn, 2011)

Over ten ammunition shipments sponsored by Qatar were allegedly delivered to anti-Gaddhafi forces via Sudan. Dagher, Levinson, and Coker also wrote that some government officials in Tripoli claimed that Ghaddafi's fall did not cause those shipments to be suspended. Weapons allegedly

continued to be delivered to Islamist groups also in September 2011, after the removal of Libya's government.

Reuters had reported in May 2011 that rebels from eastern Libya – where Ghaddafi's rule had ended in early February – were negotiating with Qatari banks to "facilitate international money transfers in rebel-held areas, a move aimed at recapitalising banks and boosting the economy through trade." The Qatari banks involved in talks with delegates from the National Transitional Council were [Qatar Islamic Bank](#) and [Qatar National Bank](#). According to the Reuters report, Qatar was already marketing crude petroleum from oil fields in the territories controlled by the rebels and had sent "gasoline, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas" in the same areas.

Qatar also provided training to fighters based both in eastern Libya and in the Nafusa Mountains, in the Tripoli area. David Roberts reported that Libyan fighters were even brought back to Doha for special training. Finally, on 24 August 2011, "Qatari special forces" were involved in the final assault on [Bab al-Azizia](#) compound.

After clashes between Government and anti-government forces, allegations arose of the Libyan Gaddafi using foreign mercenaries. The Libyan Government's ambassador to India Ali al-Essawi said that the defections of military units had indeed led to such a decision. Video footage purporting to show this started to leak out of the country. Gaddafi's former Chief of Protocol Nouri Al Mesmari said in an interview with the Al Jazeera that [Nigerien](#), [Malian](#), [Chadian](#) and [Kenyan](#) mercenaries were among foreign soldiers helping fight the uprising on behalf of Gaddafi. Chadian sources repudiated allegations that mercenaries from Chad were involved in the fighting in Libya. The Chadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement said that "Chadians are not sent or recruited in Chad to serve as mercenaries in Libya," and that allegations about Chadian mercenaries were "likely to cause serious physical and material harm to Chadians residing in Libya." (Edwards, 2011)

According to African Union chairman [Jean Ping](#), the "NTC seems to confuse black people with mercenaries,". Ping said that for the rebels, "All blacks are mercenaries. If you do that, it means (that the) one-third of the population of Libya, which is black, is also mercenaries. They are killing people, normal workers, mistreating them." In Mali, members of the Tuareg tribe confirmed that a large number of men, about 5,000, from the tribe went to Libya in late February. Locals in Mali said they were promised €7,500 (\$10,000) upfront

payment and compensation up to €750 (\$1,000) per day. Gaddafi has used Malian Tuaregs in his political projects before, sending them to fight in places like Chad, Sudan and Lebanon and recently they have fought against the Niger government, a war which Gaddafi has reportedly sponsored. Malian government officials told BBC that it is hard to stop the flow of fighters from Mali to Libya. A recruitment center for Malian soldiers leaving to Libya was found in a [Bamako](#) hotel (Daily Telegraph, 2011)

Reports from Ghana state that the men who went to Libya were offered as much as €1950 (\$2,500) per day. Advertisements seeking mercenaries were seen in Nigeria with at least one female Nigerian pro-Gaddafi sniper being caught in late August outside Tripoli. One group of mercenaries from Niger, who had been allegedly recruited from the streets with promises of money, included a soldier of just 13 years old. *The Daily Telegraph* studied the case of a 16-year-old captured Chadian child soldier in Bayda. The boy, who had previously been a [shepherd](#) in Chad, told that a Libyan man had offered him a job and a free flight to Tripoli, but in the end he had been airlifted to shoot opposition members in Eastern Libya. (Telegraph, 2011)

Reports by EU experts stated that Gaddafi's government hired between 300 and 500 European soldiers, including some from EU countries, at high wages. According to Michel Koutouzis, who does research on security issues for the EU institutions, the UN and the French government, "In Libyan society, there is a taboo against killing people from your own tribal group. This is one reason why Gaddafi needs foreign fighters," The Serbian newspaper [Alo!](#) Stated that Serbs were hired to help Gaddafi in the early days of the conflict. Rumors of Serbian pilots participating on the side of Gaddafi appeared early in the conflict. Time magazine interviewed mercenaries from ex-Yugoslavia who fled Gaddafi's forces in August. (BBC, News 2011)

A witness stated that mercenaries were more willing to kill demonstrators than Libyan forces were, and earned a reputation as among the most brutal forces employed by the government. A doctor in Benghazi said of the mercenaries that "they know one thing: to kill who is in front of them. Nothing else, they're killing people in cold blood". On 7 April, 2011 Reuters reported that soldiers loyal to Gaddafi were sent into refugee camps to intimidate and bribe black African migrant workers into fighting for the Libyan state during the war. Some of these "mercenaries" were compelled to fight against their wishes, according to a source inside one of the refugee camps. In June 2011, [Amnesty International](#) said it found no evidence of

foreign mercenaries being used, saying the [black Africans](#) said to be "mercenaries" were in fact "sub-Saharan migrants working in Libya," and described the use of mercenaries as a "myth" that "inflamed public opinion" and led to lynchings and executions of black Africans by rebel forces. [Human Rights Watch](#) has countered that while many foreign migrants were erroneously accused of fighting with Gaddafi, there were also genuine mercenaries from several nations who participated in the conflict.(Vandewale,2011)

In October 2011 it was reported that the [South African government](#) was investigating the possibility that Gaddafi hired [South African](#) mercenaries to help him escape the [besieged](#) city of [Sirte](#), where he was [ultimately caught](#). It is thought that two South African mercenaries died in that operation from a NATO air strike on Gaddafi's convoy. One of the alleged mercenaries speaking from a hospital in North Africa stated that around 19 South Africans had been contracted by different companies for the operation.

### **Foreign military intervention in Libya**

The [Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS Charlottetown](#) was deployed to the Mediterranean off the coast of Libya on 2 March 2011, but did not take immediate action once arrived. Seventeen days later, a multi-state coalition began a military intervention in Libya to implement [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973](#), which was taken in response to events then occurring during the conflict. Those same day, military operations began, with US forces and one British submarine firing cruise missiles with the [Royal Canadian Air Force](#), [French Air Force](#), [United States Air Force](#), and British [Royal Air Force](#) undertaking [sorties](#) across Libya and a naval [blockade](#) by the [Royal Navy](#) (Azad,2011)

From the beginning of the intervention, the coalition of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Qatar, Spain, UK and US expanded to 17 states. Newer states mostly enforced the no-fly zone and naval blockade or provided military logistical assistance. The effort was initially largely led by the [United States](#). [NATO](#) took control of the arms embargo on 23 March, 2011 named [Operation Unified Protector](#). An attempt to unify the military command of the air campaign (while keeping political and strategic control with a small group), first failed due to objections by the French, German, and Turkish governments. On 24 March, NATO agreed to take control of

the no-fly zone, while command of targeting ground units remained with coalition forces.

In May 2011, when Gaddafi's forces were still fighting, and the end result of the civil war was still uncertain, Putin and [Dmitri Medvedev](#)'s Russian government recognized the [National Transitional Council](#) (NTC) of Libya as a legitimate dialogue partner. On 9 June 2011, some negotiators from NTC arrived in [Beijing](#) to have negotiations with the Chinese government (Gardham, 2011)

In June 2011, Muammar Gaddafi and his son [Saif al-Islam](#) announced that they were willing to hold elections and that Gaddafi would step aside if he lost. Saif al-Islam stated that the elections could be held within three months and transparency would be guaranteed through international observers. NATO and the rebels rejected the offer, and NATO soon resumed bombardment of Tripoli.

In July 2011, Saif al-Islam accused NATO of bombing Libyan civilians, including his family members and their children, under the false pretence that their homes were military bases. He also stated that NATO offered to drop the ICC charges against him and his father if they accept a secret deal, an offer they rejected. He thus criticized the ICC as "a fake court" that is controlled by the NATO nations.

### **20 August 2011 rebel offensive**

Heads of the rebellion reported on 21 August that Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, was under arrest and that they had encircled the leader's compound, suggesting that the war had reached its endgame with an imminent rebel victory. By 22 August, rebel fighters had gained entrance into Tripoli and occupied Green Square, which was promptly, renamed [Martyrs' Square](#) in memory of those who had died fighting in the civil war. Early on 23 August, Saif al-Islam appeared at the Gaddafi-controlled [Rixos Hotel](#) in central Tripoli and boasted his father was still in control. Later the same day, rebels blasted open the [Bab al-Azizia](#) compound in Tripoli through its north gates and stormed inside. Despite previous reports suggesting that Muammar Gaddafi may be inside, no members of the Gaddafi family were found (Smith, 2011)

Early the following day, 24 August, Gaddafi broadcast an address from a Tripoli local radio station in which he said the withdrawal from Bab al-Azizia had been a "tactical" move. [The New York Times](#) reported rebel

leaders as saying they believed the only areas still under Gaddafi's control, other than the immediate neighbourhood of Bab al-Azizia, were al-Hadhba and Abu Salim, the latter including the Rixos Hotel where a group of foreign journalists had been trapped for days. However, the report noted the rebels lacked a unified command and that Gaddafi loyalists and snipers remained at large in many areas of Tripoli. Local hospitals and clinics, even in areas considered under rebel control, were reporting hundreds of cases of gunshot wounds and the death toll was impossible to estimate. By late afternoon the journalists trapped at the Rixos Hotel had been released while heavy fighting continued in the Abu Salim region close to Bab al-Azizia and elsewhere. The rebels were reported as estimating 400 people had been killed and a further 2,000 injured in the battle.

### **Impact on the Libya Conflict**

Independent numbers of dead and injured in the conflict have still not been made available. Estimates have been widely varied. On 24 February, Libya's ambassador to Malta said that Gaddafi's government believed the number of dead to be about 300, including civilians, police officers, and soldiers. Sampson, J (2011) has cited the exact same day, the [Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting](#) reported that the [International Criminal Court](#) estimated 10,000 had been killed. The numbers of injured were estimated to be around 4,000 by 22 February, 2011.

On 2 March, 2011 the [World Health Organization](#) estimated approximately 2,000 killed. At the same time, the opposition said that 6,500 people had died. Later, rebel spokesman [Abdul Hafiz Ghoga](#) reported that the death toll reached 8,000. In June 2011, [Amnesty International](#) stated that earlier estimates of the initial clashes in February were exaggerated. It estimated that during the first few days of the conflict, 100 to 110 people were killed in Benghazi and 59 to 64 were killed in [Bayda](#).

On 8 September, 2011 Naji Barakat, the Health Minister of the [National Transitional Council](#), stated that about half of an estimated 30,000 dead were believed to have been pro-Gaddafi fighters. War wounded was estimated as at least 50,000, of which about 20,000 were serious injuries, but this estimate was expected to rise. However, there was no independent verification of the Health Minister's statement and, one month later, the NTC reduced the estimated number of killed to 25,000. (Robbins, 2011)

In January 2013, the new Libyan government, based on figures still being checked, estimated the number of killed to be actually far lower than previous estimates, with 4,700 rebel supporters and a similar number of Gaddafi supporters killed during the conflict. An estimated 2,100 people on both sides were missing. [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project](#), which compiles a database of all reported fatalities due to political violence on the African continent, listed 6,109 fatalities from 15 February to 23 October 2011, of which 1,319 prior to NATO intervention.

The [Uppsala Conflict Data Program](#), a public data resource that includes information on different types of organized violence (e.g. actors involved, casualties, date, location, etc.), reported that between 1,914 and 3,466 people were killed during the 2011 fighting. In addition their data shows that between 152 and 168 civilians were deliberately killed by the pro-Gaddafi forces in 2011. There were no combat casualties amongst the coalition forces, although one RAF airman was killed in an accident in Italy.

### **International reactions on Libya Crisis**

A total of 19 charter flights evacuated Chinese citizens from Libya via [Malta](#). Here a chartered [China Eastern Airlines Airbus A340](#) is seen at [Malta International Airport](#) on 26 February 2011. Many states and [supranational](#) bodies condemned Gaddafi's government over disputed allegations of air attacks on civilian targets within the country. Virtually all Western countries cut off diplomatic relations with Gaddafi's government over disputed reports of an aerial bombing campaign in February and March, and a number of other countries led by [Peru](#) and [Botswana](#) did likewise. [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970](#) was adopted on 26 February, freezing the assets of Gaddafi and ten members of his inner circle and restricting their travel. The resolution also referred the actions of the government to the [International Criminal Court](#) for investigation, and an arrest warrant for Gaddafi was issued on 27 June. This was followed by an arrest warrant issued by [Interpol](#) on 8 September (Sampson, 2011)

The disputed allegations about the Libyan government's use of the [Libyan Air Force](#) to strike civilians led to the adoption of [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973](#) to create a [Libyan no-fly zone](#) on 17 March, though several countries involved in the resolution's enforcement have also carried out regular strike missions to degrade the offensive capacity of the [Libyan Army](#) and destroy the government's [command and control](#) capabilities,

effectively acting in *de facto* support of [anti-Gaddafi forces](#) on the ground. The later British parliament's [Foreign Affairs Select Committee](#) inquiry concluded that by summer 2011 British policy had become one of [regime change](#). China and Russia, originally abstaining on [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973](#) due to the influence of the Arab League, pointed out that the implemented "no-fly-zone" had gone much further out of the originally agreed aims.

100 countries recognized the anti-Gaddafi [National Transitional Council](#) as Libya's legitimate representative, with many of those countries explicitly describing it as the legal interim government of the country due to the perceived loss of legitimacy on the part of Gaddafi's government, though the National Transitional Council never obtained authority and security across all of Libya. (Blomfield, 2011)

According to Ajbali, M (2011) has cited how many states also either issued [travel advisories](#) or attempted evacuations. Some evacuations were successful to [Malta](#) or via land borders to [Egypt](#) or [Tunisia](#); other attempts were hindered by tarmac damage at [Benghazi](#)'s airport or refusals of permission to land in [Tripoli](#). There were also several solidarity protests in other countries that were mostly composed of Libyan [expatriates](#). Financial markets around the world had adverse reactions to the instability, with oil prices rising to a 2 ½-year high.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the defeat of Gaddafi's [loyalists](#), the capture of his last cities and Gaddafi's death, Saif al-Islam, Gaddafi's son and successor, remained hiding in the southern region of Libya until his capture in mid-November, 2011. In addition, some loyalist forces crossed into Niger, though the escape attempts exploded into violence when detected by Nigerien troops. Sporadic clashes between NTC and former loyalists also continued across Libya with low intensity. On 23 November 2011, seven people were killed in clashes at Bani Walid, five of them among the revolutionary forces and one Gaddafi loyalist, fighting broke out on 3 January 2012, at a building used as intelligence headquarters by the Gaddafi government forces. Abdul Jalil, the chairman of NTC, warned Libyans that the country could descend into another civil war if they resort to force to settle their differences. It was reported that five people were killed and at least five injured in the events. Also on 3 January,



Libya's government named a retired general from Misrata, Yousef al-Manquosh, as head of the country's armed forces.

Bani Walid was captured by local tribal fighters on 23 January, 2012 due to the NTC's perceived inability to cooperate with them. The local forces were said to have used heavy weapons and numbered 100–150 men. Eight NTC fighters were killed and at least 25 wounded, with the rest fleeing the city. Clashes were also reported in Benghazi and Tripoli. The NTC has functioned as an interim legislature during the transitional period. In early May 2012, it passed its most sweeping measures to date, granting immunity to former rebel fighters for acts committed during the civil war and ordering that all detainees accused of fighting for Gaddafi should be tried or released by 12 July 2012. It also adopted Law 37, prohibiting the publication of "[propaganda](#)" criticising the revolution, questioning the authority of Libya's governing organs, or praising Muammar Gaddafi, his family, his government, or the ideas of the [Green Book](#).

A September 2013 report by [The Independent](#) shows that Libya had plunged into its worst political and economic crisis since the defeat of Gaddafi. The production of oil had almost completely stopped and the government had lost control of large areas of the country to the militias, while violence increased throughout the country. By May 2014, conflicts between several factions in Libya had descended into a [second civil war](#).

### **Recommendations**

The paper has three major recommendations on how to reduce the effect Libyan conflicts on other African countries insecurity in the continent.

- i. The African countries must adopt policies that would stop the spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons between the African Countries.
- ii. ECOWAS Convention on SALW Proliferation must be observed by all signatories African countries on 2006 ECOWAS on SALW Moratorium
- iii. Leaders in African countries must be democratic elected leaders that operate governance free from corruption and Human Right violations.

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