



# Libya: Unrest and U.S. Policy

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## Summary

Muammar al Qadhafi's 40 years of authoritarian rule in Libya have effectively come to an end. The armed uprising that began in February 2011 has reached a turning point, and opposition forces now control the capital city, Tripoli, in addition to the eastern and western areas of the country. Most observers doubt the rebel gains are reversible. However, the coastal city of Sirte and some parts of central and southern Libya remain contested, and, isolated groups of pro-Qadhafi forces remain capable of armed resistance. The U.S. military continues to participate in Operation Unified Protector, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military operation to enforce United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, which authorizes "all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians. As of September 9, Muammar al Qadhafi had not been located or detained, and opposition Transitional National Council (TNC) leaders are urging their forces to exercise restraint and caution so that Qadhafi, his family members, and key regime officials may be captured alive, formally charged, and put to trial.

The Libyan people, their interim Transitional National Council, and the international community are shifting their attention from the immediate struggle with the remnants of Qadhafi's regime to the longer-term challenges of establishing and maintaining security, preventing criminality and reprisals, restarting Libya's economy, and beginning a political transition. The TNC has issued orders concerning security in Tripoli and established a high security council to coordinate its forces. A TNC stabilization team is leading efforts to deliver services, assess Libya's reconstruction needs, and reform Libyan ministries. TNC officials have discussed interim security advisory missions with the United Nations Secretary General but made no firm public commitments. The Obama Administration has reiterated that it has no intention of deploying U.S. military forces on the ground in Libya. U.S. officials express confidence that nuclear materials and chemical weapons components that are stored in Libya remain secure and state that remote monitoring of relevant facilities will continue. The proliferation of military weaponry from Libyan stockpiles, including small arms, explosives, and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, remains a serious concern, amid continuing press reports on unsecured weapons depots.

The shift in momentum and rebel success has led to an expansion of political recognition and offers of international financial support for the TNC. Over 70 countries now have recognized the TNC as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people. Resolution 1973 calls for the transfer of seized Libyan government assets for the benefit of the Libyan people "as soon as possible," and the U.S. government successfully secured U.N. authorization for an initial transfer of \$1.5 billion to support humanitarian, fuel, and salary needs. Billions more in other asset transfers and new pledges of financial support have come from European and Middle Eastern governments. Members of the intergovernmental Libya Contact Group and others met in Paris, France to discuss transition arrangements and support for the TNC on September 1, and further consultations are expected in conjunction with the United Nations General Assembly meetings in New York during late September.

Libya's citizens, transitional authorities, and rebel fighters now face the task of overcoming Libya's history of weak government institutions, potentially divisive political dynamics, and the effects of the fight to overthrow Qadhafi. Security challenges, significant reconstruction needs, and political uncertainty are likely to characterize events in Libya over the coming months. Congress may consider and debate means for assisting Libya's transitional authorities or supporting international security efforts.

## Contents

Background.....	1
Status as of September 9, 2011 .....	3
U.S. Military Operations and Costs .....	4
Congressional Action and Legislation.....	4
Assessment and Key Issues .....	5
Conventional Weapons and Chemical and Nuclear Materials .....	7
Military Support and Disarmament.....	8
Libyan Assets, TNC Funding, and Oil Exports.....	9
Humanitarian Conditions and Relief.....	10
International Criminal Court and United Nations Human Rights Council Investigations.....	10
Prospects and Challenges for U.S. Policy.....	12
Possible Scenarios .....	12
Possible Questions.....	13
Libyan Political Dynamics and Profiles .....	13
Political Dynamics.....	13
Interim Transitional National Council (TNC).....	15
Prominent TNC Figures .....	16
Opposition Military Forces .....	17
Exiles and Al Sanusi Monarchy Figures .....	19
The Muslim Brotherhood.....	20
Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)/Libyan Islamic Movement for Change (LIMC).....	21
Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM/AQIM).....	23

## Figures

Figure 1. Political Map of Libya.....	2
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## Contacts

Author Contact Information.....	24
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## Background

For a summary of recent events and conflict assessment, see “Status as of September 9, 2011.”

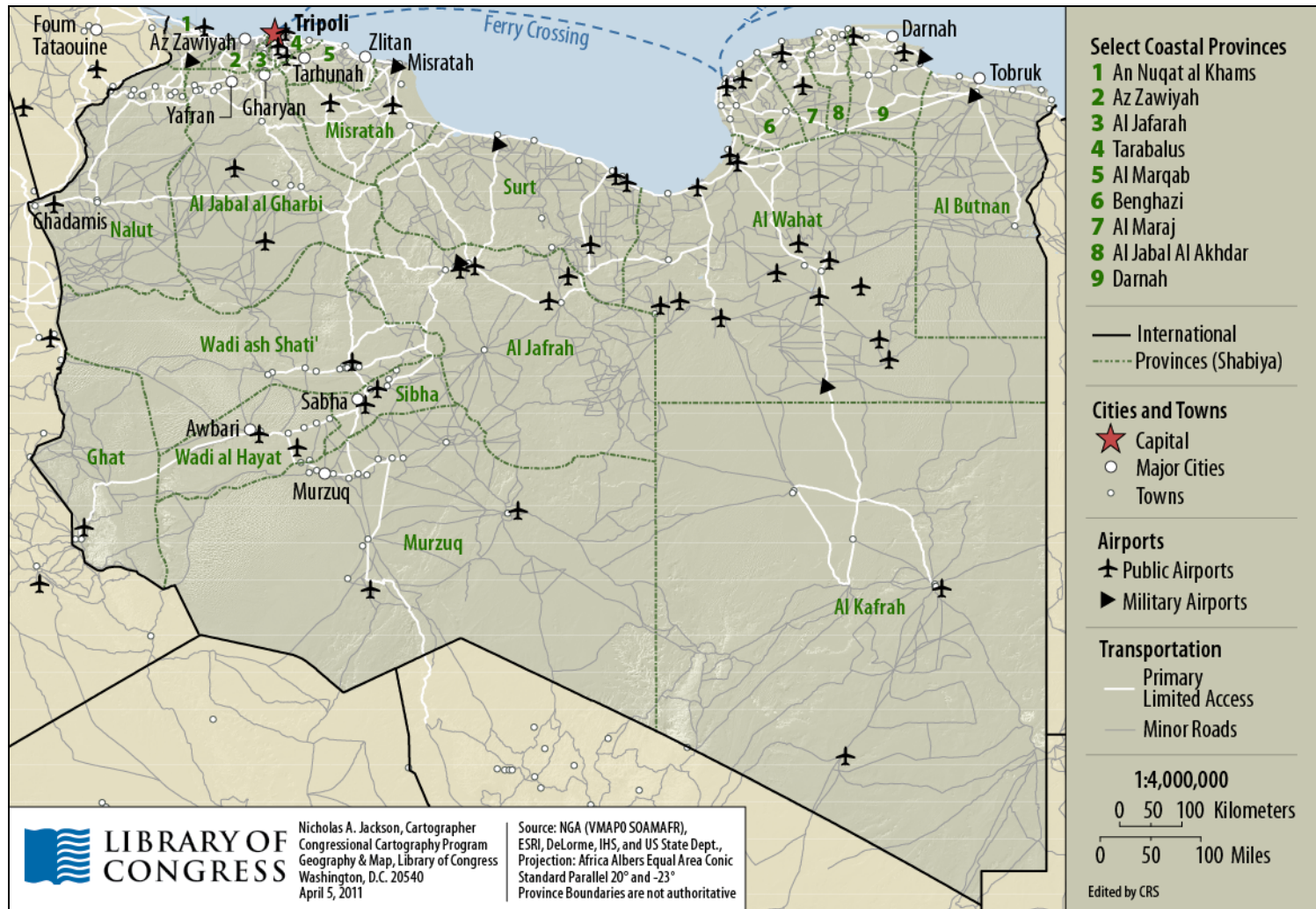
Political change in neighboring Tunisia and Egypt helped bring long-simmering Libyan reform debates to the boiling point in January and early February 2011. In recent years, leading Libyans had staked out a broad range of positions about the necessary scope and pace of reform, while competing for influence and opportunity under the watchful eye of hard-liners aligned with the enigmatic leader of Libya’s 1969 revolution, Muammar al Qadhafi. Qadhafi had long insisted that he held no formal government position, but by all accounts he maintained his 40-plus-year hold on ultimate authority until recently as the “reference point” for Libya’s byzantine political system. Ironically, that system cited “popular authority” as its foundational principle and organizing concept, but it denied Libyans the most basic political rights. Tribal relations and regional dynamics, particularly eastern regional resentments, also influence Libyan politics (see “Political Dynamics” below).

Qadhafi government policy reversals on WMD and terrorism led to the lifting of most international sanctions in 2003 and 2004, followed by economic liberalization, oil sales, and international investment that brought new wealth to some in Libya. U.S. business gradually reengaged amid continuing U.S.-Libyan tension over terrorism concerns that were finally resolved in 2008. During this period of international reengagement, political change in Libya remained elusive and illusory. Some observers argued that Qadhafi supporters’ suppression of opposition had softened, as Libya’s international rehabilitation coincided with steps by some pragmatists to maneuver within so-called “red lines.” The shifting course of those red lines had been increasingly entangling reformers in the run-up to the outbreak of unrest in February 2011. Government reconciliation with imprisoned Islamist militants and the return of some exiled opposition figures were welcomed by some observers. Ultimately, inaction on the part of the government to calls for guarantees of basic political rights and for the drafting of a constitution suggested a lack of consensus, if not outright opposition to meaningful reform, among leaders.

The current crisis was triggered in mid-February 2011 by a chain of events in Benghazi and other eastern cities that quickly spiraled out of Qadhafi’s control. Although Libyan opposition groups had called for a so-called “day of rage” on February 17 to commemorate protests that had occurred five years earlier, localized violence erupted prior to the planned national protests. On February 15 and 16, Libyan authorities used force to contain small protests demanding that police release a legal advocate for victims of a previous crackdown who had been arrested. Several protestors were killed. Confrontations surrounding their funerals and other protest gatherings escalated severely when government officers reportedly fired live ammunition. In the resulting chaos, Libyan security forces are alleged to have opened fire with heavy weaponry on protestors, as opposition groups confronted armed personnel and overran a number of security facilities.

Popular control over key eastern cities became apparent, and broader unrest emerged in other regions. A number of military officers, their units, and civilian officials abandoned Qadhafi for the cause of the then-disorganized and amorphous opposition. Qadhafi and his supporters denounced their opponents as drug-fueled traitors, foreign agents, and Al Qaeda supporters. Until August, Qadhafi maintained control over the capital, Tripoli, and other cities with the help of family-led security forces and regime supporters. The cumulative effects of attrition by NATO airstrikes against military targets and a coordinated offensive by rebels in Tripoli and from across western Libya turned the tide, sending Qadhafi and his supporters into retreat and exile.

Figure I. Political Map of Libya



Sources: Congressional Cartography Program, Library of Congress, edited by CRS.

## Status as of September 9, 2011

Amid continuing NATO-led military operations to enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973, Libyan rebels have succeeded in ousting Muammar al Qadhafi's government from power through a coordinated offensive against the capital city, Tripoli. A planned uprising within the city, paired with the defection of prominent regime figures and a multi-front attack, succeeded in swiftly breaking the defenses of pro-Qadhafi forces over the weekend of August 20-22.

Continued fighting between rebel forces and pro-Qadhafi elements continued in areas of the city for days, although the capture of the Qadhafi military compound at Bab al Aziziyah in the capital signaled the symbolic end of Qadhafi's reign. Qadhafi's hometown of Sirte on the central coast and areas of southern Libya have yet to be secured by rebel forces.<sup>1</sup> As of September 9, Qadhafi had not been located and detained, and he has issued calls for a guerilla warfare campaign and vowed to resist surrender indefinitely. The prospect of a prolonged irregular warfare campaign by Qadhafi supporters exists, even as organized pro-Qadhafi forces falter and in some cases flee to neighboring countries.

The opposition Interim Transitional National Council (TNC) has asserted control over developments in Tripoli and has begun the task of coordinating the diverse collection of armed groups that made the rebel capture of the city possible. A "high security council" serves as a coordinating mechanism for disparate rebel groups and former regime security force personnel, including armed rebel factions from communities like Zintan and Misuratah and those led by Islamist figures, such as former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group commander Abdelhakim Belhajj (see "Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)/Libyan Islamic Movement for Change (LIMC)" below).<sup>2</sup> TNC figures have issued repeated calls for armed groups and citizens to avoid destruction of public property, looting, and reprisals, in a conscious effort to avoid some of the immediate security problems that plagued Iraq in the wake of the collapse of Saddam Hussein's government. The TNC has signaled its intention to take an inclusive approach with regard to government personnel not known to have been involved in severe human rights violations or public corruption. The success of the TNC initiatives and the acceptability of this approach among Libyans remains to be seen. TNC officials remain concerned about their ability to provide services and maintain security, although the resumption of water service in Tripoli, deliveries of fuel, and infusions of seized assets have improved their position.

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<sup>1</sup> On September 6, NATO Spokesperson for the Operation Unified Protector Colonel Roland Lavoie stated that "a significantly improved security situation is gradually allowing Libyans to start rebuilding their country." He also warned that "pro-Qadhafi forces are still present in varying degrees in the areas of Bani Walid, Sirte, near the Al Jufrah oasis and surrounding communities and the region of Sebha. Of course, Qadhafi forces cannot reverse the momentum. Their capabilities are degraded, mercenaries are fleeing and many former regime leaders and military commanders are abandoning their followers. Yet, Qadhafi is still issuing threats, calling for acts of aggression and commanding remaining military assets in a senseless attempt to maintain control over populated areas." Operation Unified Protector Press Conference, September 6, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> As of September 8, rebels from Zintan under the command of the Madani clan claimed to have 5,000 armed men in Tripoli. Fighters from Misuratah reportedly shifted toward the pursuit of pro-Qadhafi forces in Sirte and Bani Walid and their numbers in Tripoli had declined to 1,500. Belhajj claims to have taken a leading role in the Tripoli operations. He was released from prison by the Qadhafi government in 2010 as part of a reconciliation agreement with LIFG fighters in exchange for their renunciation of violence. See Adrien Jaulmes, "The Fragile Patchwork of the Libyan Rebels," *Le Figaro* (Paris), September 8, 2011, and U.S. Open Source Center (OSC) Report GMP20110824715001, "Rebel Commander Balhaj Urges Al-Qadhafi Brigades To 'Abandon' Regime," August 20, 2011; and OSC Report GMP20100323950045, "Three leaders of Libyan Fighting Group freed – paper," March 23, 2010.

NATO member state officials and partner country representatives had previously agreed to extend military operations through September 30, and recent statements from NATO officials indicate that operations will continue consistent with the civilian protection and other mandates established by Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973. NATO air operations and strike sorties have continued during the recent opposition offensive at a slightly higher rate.<sup>3</sup> This rate may rapidly decline as remaining pro-Qadhafi forces surrender or are disarmed. Strikes now focus on remaining pro-Qadhafi military assets in and around Sirte, Bani Walid, Hun, Al Jufrah, and Sebha. NATO officials indicate that any future role for the alliance in Libya would be contingent on authorization and a request by Libyan officials.

## **U.S. Military Operations and Costs**

U.S. military forces continue to support all three elements of the NATO mission: maritime arms embargo enforcement, no-fly zone patrol, and civilian protection. However, the bulk of U.S. air operations has shifted from air strikes against Libyan ground targets toward refueling; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); electronic warfare; and suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) for NATO aircraft performing no-fly zone patrol missions.<sup>4</sup> Manned U.S. aircraft carry out these missions. The United States has made armed drone aircraft available for NATO use, and U.S. drones have carried out over 100 strike missions as part of the NATO civilian protection operation. Manned U.S. aircraft also remain “on call” to potentially participate in civilian protection strike missions. However, U.S. participation requires the prior approval of the Secretary of Defense.

Through July 31, U.S. military operations had cost an estimated \$896 million. As of June 3, over \$398 million of the U.S. costs were for munitions, many of which were used by U.S. forces during the Operation Odyssey Dawn period to dismantle Libya’s air defense network preceding the transfer of command to NATO for Operation Unified Protector. Through September 30, 2011, the Administration had predicted that U.S. military operations in support of NATO in Libya, if sustained at the tempo and balance prevailing in June, would have cost up to \$1 billion, although that total may not be reached in light of recent events.

## **Congressional Action and Legislation**

Many Members of Congress have welcomed the opposition’s success in Tripoli, while expressing concern about security in the country, the potential proliferation of Libyan weapons, and the prospects for a smooth political transition. The Obama Administration has not immediately signaled its intention to seek additional assistance funding for Libya, but has begun transferring \$1.5 billion in frozen Libyan assets for the benefit of the Libyan people and the TNC. According to the State Department, the \$1.5 billion was identified in consultation with the TNC for the following purposes:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> As of August 24, NATO had flown over 20,262 sorties, including 7,635 strike sorties.

<sup>4</sup> Through August 22, 2011, U.S. aircraft had flown 5,316 sorties, of which 1,210 were strike sorties. Of those strike sorties, 262 dropped ordnance on targets. In addition, 101 Predator drone strikes had taken place. Reuters, “Factbox: Pentagon says U.S. stepped up pace of Libya air strikes,” August 22, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> State Department, Office of the Spokesperson, Unfreezing Assets to Meet the Critical Humanitarian Needs of the Libyan People, Washington, DC, August 25, 2011.

- Transfers to International Humanitarian Organizations - up to \$120 million for pending United Nations Appeal requests and up to \$380 million more for any revised UN Appeals for Libya and other humanitarian needs.
- Transfers to suppliers for fuel and other goods for strictly civilian purposes: Up to \$500 million to pay for fuel costs for strictly civilian needs (e.g., hospitals, electricity and desalinization) and for other humanitarian purchases.
- Transfers to the Temporary Financial Mechanism established by the Libya Contact Group: Up to \$400 million for providing “key social services, including education and health” and up to \$100 million for “food and other humanitarian needs.”

U.S. military operations to prevent remaining pro-Qadhafi forces from targeting civilians may continue, although the prospect of a sustained military campaign requiring extended U.S. investment and force deployments now appears less likely. As such, debate between Congress and the Obama Administration about the authorization and cost of U.S. military operations in Libya may diminish. Some Members of Congress have sought a clearer definition of U.S. objectives, costs, and operations, and, in June and July, some Members of Congress became increasingly assertive in their efforts to force President Barack Obama to seek congressional authorization for continued U.S. military involvement. A number of proposed resolutions and amendments to appropriations and authorization bills sought to require reporting on U.S. strategy and operations or to proscribe limits on the authorization or funding for continued U.S. military operations in Libya. Others have sought to authorize the continued use of U.S. Armed Forces in support of NATO operations, short of the use of ground troops.

On June 3, the House adopted H.Res. 292 (Roll no. 411), which directed the Administration to provide documents on consultation with Congress and a report “describing in detail United States security interests and objectives, and the activities of United States Armed Forces, in Libya since March 19, 2011.” The Administration submitted the report on June 15, 2011.<sup>6</sup> The House of Representatives rejected a series of other resolutions seeking to authorize or de-authorize continuing U.S. participation in Operation Unified Protector. H.Con.Res. 75 would state the sense of Congress that:

“the funds of the regime of Muammar Qaddafi that have been frozen by the United States should be returned to the people of Libya for their benefit, including humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, and the President should explore the possibility with the Transitional National Council of using some of such funds to reimburse NATO countries for expenses incurred in Operation Odyssey Dawn and Operation Unified Protector.”

## **Assessment and Key Issues**

The Obama Administration’s stated policy objectives in Libya have been to protect civilians and to secure a democratic political transition, including the departure of Muammar al Qadhafi from power and the selection of a new government by the Libyan people. In pursuit of U.S. objectives, the Administration is supporting military, financial, and diplomatic efforts to enforce United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, both of which stop short of calling for Qadhafi’s removal. The Administration argued that sustained U.S. and international military and

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<sup>6</sup> Overview of United States Activities in Libya, June 15, 2011. Available from CRS.



financial pressure would resolve core differences between U.S. and U.N.-endorsed goals by convincing remaining loyalists to withdraw their support for Qadhafi and opening the way for his departure and a settlement of the conflict. Qadhafi's intransigence notwithstanding, the combination of the opposition's military operations and international military and financial pressure appears to have succeeded in convincing many prominent regime figures to defect and ultimately in toppling the Qadhafi regime. The implications of this regime change for Libya, the region, and the United States remain to be seen.

The post-conflict Libyan political order will be complicated by the immediate consequences of the current fighting, the legacies of decades of Qadhafi's patronage- and fear-based rule, and the chronic economic and political challenges that have fueled popular discontent in recent years. Security is the immediate priority, and questions remain about the ability of the TNC to assert control. Prior to the capture of Tripoli, reports from eastern Libya suggested that limited financial resources and latent political rivalries were creating parallel challenges for the TNC as it sought to solidify its base of support among the disparate groups that have risen against Qadhafi. The July 2011 assassination of rebel military commander and prominent regime defector Abdelfattah Younis al Ubaydi cast serious doubt on the unity of TNC-affiliated military forces and led to the resignation of several TNC leadership figures. Various rebel groups have stated their recognition of the TNC's authority as a means of securing the country in the immediate aftermath of Qadhafi's fall. Press reports and interviews suggest that these groups remain wary of each other in some cases.

Paying salaries, purchasing imports, maintaining public utility services, and meeting administrative and military needs reportedly tested the limited financial resources and expertise available to the TNC, although some reports suggest that recent infusions of previously frozen assets have reduced some of the financial pressure.<sup>7</sup> Both financial and administrative challenges have increased now that the TNC is seeking to pay salaries and assert control over Libya's major population center in Tripoli and manage government entities in the rest of the country. Some TNC leaders continue to cite financial constraints in public statements and urge foreign governments to fully release frozen Libyan assets. Some reports from visiting nongovernmental experts and State Department officials suggest that while a lively political atmosphere has emerged in opposition-controlled areas, political support for the TNC among the broader population may be contingent on the council's ability to provide basic services and financial support via salaries and subsidies.<sup>8</sup> Organized armed groups or ad hoc citizen coalitions may choose to challenge the TNC if public hardships increase or if TNC political decisions prove controversial.

Taken together, these factors suggest that securing U.S. interests in Libya will require sustained attention and resources beyond the scope of the current fighting and emergent transition period. The Administration has not publicly disclosed any plans for U.S. participation in post-conflict security, stability, or reconstruction operations in Libya or planned requests for new funding to support such efforts by third-parties, such as the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, or the African Union. United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and his special envoy, Jordanian former foreign minister Abdel Ilah Khatib, are shifting from their pursuit of a cease-fire

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<sup>7</sup> CRS cannot independently verify the state of the opposition's finances, but one opposition source indicated that, as of May, costs had reached \$100 million per day, with gasoline and other fuel imports constituting a particularly critical need. Richard Spencer and Ruth Sherlock, "Libya's Rebels To Run Out of Money 'in Three Weeks,'" *Telegraph* (UK), May 3, 2011; VOA News, *Libya's Rebel Envoy Seeks Frozen Assets*, August 25, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> CRS review of unpublished NGO and unclassified State Department reporting, May 2011.

agreement to discussions with Libyan parties about security monitoring, humanitarian assistance, and the transition. The Secretary General has named UK-born Ian Martin his special adviser for post-conflict and transition issues in Libya. A sector-by-sector post-conflict needs assessment is planned under the auspices of the TNC, the United Nations, the European Union, and the World Bank.

## **Conventional Weapons and Chemical and Nuclear Materials**

The apparent proliferation of small arms, man-portable air defense missile systems (MANPADS), and some heavy weaponry among fighters on both sides of the recent conflict has led some outside counterterrorism and arms trafficking experts to express concern about the conflict's longer-term implications for regional security.<sup>9</sup> Most security experts expect that unexploded ordnance, explosive remnants, and looted weaponry will present a challenge inside Libya for an extended period of time. On May 9, the Administration notified Congress that it had waived normal congressional notification requirements to immediately obligate \$1.5 million in Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) account funding for "urgently needed assistance to collect, destroy, and re-establish control of Libyan munitions and small arms and light weapons" in response to "a substantial risk to human health or welfare."<sup>10</sup> The funding was provided to non-governmental organizations specializing in international demining and ordnance disposal. Those organizations and others are working with the United Nations as part of a Joint Mine Action Coordination Team that issues regular reports on the status of efforts to remove ordnance threats across Libya and related funding needs.<sup>11</sup>

The security of Libya's stockpiles of declared chemical weapons material and its remaining nuclear materials also has been the subject of scrutiny.<sup>12</sup> Libya destroyed the munitions it possessed for dispersing mustard agent in 2004, and since March 2011, U.S. officials have been stating publicly that they believe the remaining sulfur mustard agent and precursor stockpiles are

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<sup>9</sup> For example, these concerns were raised in C. J. Chivers, "Experts Fear Looted Libyan Arms May Find Way to Terrorists," *New York Times*, March 3, 2011. African Union communiqués have expressed concern about regional stability, and some Sahel region governments have specifically warned about Al Qaeda supporters seizing control of specific types of weapons and exploiting the weakness of government forces in Libya to expand their areas of operation and sanctuary. Algerian authorities have reportedly expanded the presence of security forces along their border with Libya and have announced operations to eliminate weapons smugglers and seize smuggled weaponry and explosives.

<sup>10</sup> The notification requirements were waived pursuant to Section 634a of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and Sections 7015(f) and 7015 (e) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), 2010 (Div. F, P.L. 111-117), as carried forward by the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (Div. B, P.L. 112-10). The notification states, "The fighting in Libya and NATO air strikes have left many ammunition storage areas totally unsecured and open to looting. . . . There is little or no perimeter security at the storage sites, and munitions and small arms and light weapons, including thousands of MANPADS, have been looted for weeks. It is critically important not only to the Libyan population, but to counter the threat of proliferation into neighboring regions that work begin immediately to collect, control, and destroy conventional weapons and munitions, and reestablish security at these storage sites. Terrorist groups are exploiting this opportunity and the situation grows more dangerous with each passing day, a situation that directly impacts U.S. national security."

<sup>11</sup> For more information see the United Nations Mine Action Service website at <http://www.mineaction.org/overview.asp?o=3994>.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview of Libya's declared chemical weapons and nuclear materials see U.S. State Department, Condition (10) (C) Report - Compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, August 2011; and, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors, Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, GOV/2008/39, September 12, 2008.

secure.<sup>13</sup> The now non-weaponized nature of the sulfur mustard agent and precursor materials suggests that they pose a smaller threat than otherwise may have been the case.<sup>14</sup> In late 2010, Libya had restarted the long-delayed destruction of its mustard agent and precursor stockpiles, although technical problems and the outbreak of the conflict resulted in Libya missing its May 2011 deadline for the destruction of its mustard agent. In August 2011, the State Department reported that prior to the conflict, Libya had destroyed over 50% of its mustard agent stocks and over 40% of its liquid chemical weapons precursors. The transitional authorities are expected to reengage with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to set a new destruction timetable.

Libya's nuclear materials also have been subject to international and U.S. oversight and joint operations that removed highly enriched uranium and other proliferation-sensitive items. Libya's research reactor east of Tripoli at Tajura was converted with U.S. assistance in 2006 to operate using low-enriched uranium. Libya also possesses a stored stockpile of at least several hundred tons of uranium oxide yellowcake, reportedly stored near the southern contested city of Sebha. Programs to engage Libyan nuclear scientists reportedly have been disrupted by the recent conflict, but may be restarted as the transition unfolds.

## **Military Support and Disarmament**

Throughout the uprising, the United States and its allies debated means for improving the military capabilities and effectiveness of opposition forces while expressing some concern about the identity and intentions of opposition fighters and the proliferation of small arms and heavy weaponry inside Libya and beyond its borders. Some press reports suggest that Qatar provided weaponry to TNC-affiliated forces and that Qatari, British, French, and Jordanian special forces operatives provided military advice to opposition forces and support for NATO airstrikes, including during the final campaign to seize Tripoli. CRS cannot confirm these reports. The United Kingdom, Italy, and France acknowledged that they had sent military advisers to Benghazi to work to improve opposition command and control arrangements and communications, outside of their governments' support for NATO operations.

U.S. officials have argued that the rebels' most pressing needs are command and control, communications, training, organization, and logistics support. These needs are expected to last beyond the current fighting in addition to emerging needs associated with reconstituting a national military for Libya, incorporating opposition fighters and former regime personnel into security forces, demobilizing civilian volunteers, and destroying excess weaponry and unexploded ordnance. The Administration notified Congress of plan to offer up to \$25 million in nonlethal material support to groups in Libya, including the TNC.<sup>15</sup> Deliveries had begun, with roughly half of the authorized amount delivered as of early August 2011.

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<sup>13</sup> The chemical materials are stored at Rabta, southwest of Tripoli and Ruwagha, near the Al Jufrah Air Force Base in central Libya. According to the U.S. State Department, identified mustard and nerve agent precursors present in Libya included pinacolyl alcohol, isopropanol, phosphorus trichloride, 2-chloroethanol, tributylamine, and thionyl chloride. See State Department, Office of the Spokesperson, *Libya: Securing Stockpiles Promotes Security*, Washington, DC, August 26, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> "We believe that it's secure," said Colonel David Lapan, a Pentagon spokesman. "Even if not weaponized, there's still a threat, but it's a smaller threat than if it is weaponized." Agence France Presse, "Libya has mustard gas, lacks delivery systems: monitor," March 10, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Items have been drawn from Defense Department stocks and may include medical first aid kits, stretchers, bandages (continued...)

## Libyan Assets, TNC Funding, and Oil Exports

The United States and others have frozen tens of billions of dollars in Libyan state assets, and the Obama Administration has placed targeted sanctions on Libyan oil companies and other entities in support of Executive Order 13566 and the recent U.N. Security Council resolutions on Libya. The TNC has identified up to \$170 billion in Libyan assets around the world to which it is seeking access. The intergovernmental Libya Contact Group created a “temporary financial mechanism” to support the TNC,<sup>16</sup> and several governments have pledged hundreds of millions of dollars via this channel. In the wake of the capture of Tripoli, Germany, Turkey, and Italy each announced new plans to provide financial assistance to the TNC worth several hundred million dollars, amid warnings from TNC officials that their ability to pay salaries and purchase needed supplies will determine the stability of the country in the immediate transition period. Following the “Friends of Libya” meeting in Paris on September 1, French officials indicated that up to \$15 billion in previously frozen assets had been made available to the TNC and for the benefit of the Libyan people. CRS could not confirm this aggregate.

Libya’s oil production and export infrastructure appears to have survived the civil conflict relatively unscathed, although some facility damage, the departure of large numbers of laborers and skilled technicians, and the lack of maintenance during the conflict may limit the speed with which production and exports can be restarted.<sup>17</sup> Prior to the conflict, Libya was exporting 1.3 million barrels of oil per day; current production is roughly 60,000 barrels per day. Experts differ in their projections about how soon production and exports will return to pre-conflict levels, with optimistic and pessimistic assumptions differing over expected security conditions, changes to sanctions, and the return of foreign laborers. The importance of oil exports for Libya cannot be overstated, as the IMF reported in February 2011 that over 90% of state revenue came from the hydrocarbon sector in 2010. On September 6, new National Oil Company chairman Nuri Berruien gave an “optimistic forecast” that in 15 months, production would resume at the pre-war level of 1.6 million barrels per day.

The U.S. Treasury Department has issued a Statement of Licensing Policy allowing U.S. persons to request from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) “specific authorization to trade in hydrocarbon fuel (*i.e.*, oil, gas, and petroleum products) ... to the extent that such hydrocarbon fuel is exported under the auspices of the Transitional National Council of Libya.”<sup>18</sup> The license further allows U.S. persons to request permission “to engage in transactions related to the

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(...continued)

& dressing, surgical tape, blankets, meals ready to eat, tents, sleeping bags, canteens, uniforms, boots, tactical load-bearing vests, bullet-proof vests, military helmets, maps, binoculars, infrared markers, panel marker, infrared (glint) tape, HESCOS (or sandbags), hand shovels, and 9 volt batteries. CRS communication with State Department, April 29, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Over 20 Contact Group members attended the meeting in Rome including and officials from the Arab League, the African Union, the World Bank, NATO, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Australia, Bahrain, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Jordan, Morocco, Netherland, Poland, Romania, Malta, Canada, Tunisia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, Sudan and the Holy See. Portugal observed the meeting.

<sup>17</sup> The oil terminal at Brega reportedly suffered the most damage, along with support infrastructure elsewhere.

<sup>18</sup> Office of Foreign Assets Control, Statement of Licensing Policy on the Trade in Oil, Gas, and Petroleum Products Exported Under the Auspices of the Transitional National Council of Libya,” (Updated April 26, 2011), available at [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/libya\\_oil\\_gas.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/libya_oil_gas.pdf).

production of oil, gas, and petroleum products in areas controlled by the Transitional National Council of Libya.” That license may change as the transition unfolds.

## **Humanitarian Conditions and Relief**

The capture of Tripoli by opposition forces and the gradual establishment of security and transitional authority control in other areas of the country should facilitate greater international humanitarian access to internally displaced Libyans and communities with humanitarian needs. Those needs are not fully known, but recent assessment visits indicate that the conflict has disrupted the supply of food, medicine, fuel, and other commodities on a nationwide basis. Potential changes to international sanctions on Libya also could mitigate some concerns about the supply of goods and services to the Libyan population.<sup>19</sup> The TNC, the United Nations, and third parties are expected to discuss needs assessment and resource requirements in more detail over the coming weeks.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as of June 14, over 679,000 people had fled the country since the fighting began.<sup>20</sup> Throughout the conflict, the U.S. government and its allies have worked to respond to the repatriation and humanitarian needs of third country nationals who have fled Libya and remain in temporary Tunisian and Egyptian border transit camps. According to U.N. Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), fighting in western Libya displaced over 50,000 Libyan civilians, many of whom fled into Tunisia and some of whom have begun to return in recent weeks. Italy and the European Union have expressed concern about the movements of migrants from Libya by sea, in some cases on ships in unsafe conditions that have been lost at sea. If security and economic conditions improve in Libya, flows of migrants to Europe could slow.

## **International Criminal Court and United Nations Human Rights Council Investigations**

On June 27, 2011, Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for three individuals: Muammar al Qadhafi, his son Sayf al Islam al Qadhafi, and intelligence chief Abdullah al Senussi, for “crimes against humanity committed against civilians” not including “war crimes committed during the armed conflict that started at the end of February.”<sup>21</sup> ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo requested the warrants on May 16. On May 4, Moreno-Ocampo reported to the Security Council pursuant to the referral of the situation in Libya to the ICC by Resolution 1970,<sup>22</sup> and stated that the preliminary investigation conducted by the ICC prosecutor’s office “establishes reasonable grounds to believe that widespread and systematic attacks against the civilian population, including murder and persecution as crimes against humanity, have been and continue to be committed in Libya,” in addition to “war crimes”

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<sup>19</sup> In May, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos reported that “The manner in which the sanctions are implemented and monitored is causing serious delays in the arrival of commercial goods.” U.N. Document S/PV.6530, Provisional Record of the 6530<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council, May 9, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Response to the Libyan Crisis, External Situation Report, September 7, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> ICC Prosecutor’s Office, Public Redacted Version of Prosecutor’s Application Pursuant to Article 58 as to Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar Gaddafi, Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi, and Abdullah Al Senussi,” May 16, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> U.N. Document S/PV.6528, Provisional Record of the 6528<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Security Council, May 4, 2011.

during the ongoing armed conflict. Some observers have argued that the prospect of an ICC trial made it less likely that Qadhafi would have agreed to relinquish power or will now surrender to the opposition.<sup>23</sup> Interpol has issued arrest warrants for all three individuals.

The TNC has been supportive of the ICC efforts to investigate crimes in Libya, but its future plans with regard to the ICC arrest warrants are as yet unclear. TNC officials have pledged to pursue justice for Libyan victims of the recent fighting as well as victims from the Qadhafi era. However, the transfer of individuals to foreign courts could remain politically sensitive for the TNC or its successor. TNC officials informed the ICC of reports that Sayf al Islam al Qadhafi had been detained, although those reports subsequently proved false. TNC officials have issued orders for rebel fighters to avoid reprisals, although some reports suggest that both pro- and anti-Qadhafi forces may have engaged in summary executions during recent fighting in Tripoli.

The U.N. Human Rights Council Commission of Inquiry also has completed a series of interviews and site visits in western and eastern Libya and issued a report on its findings on June 1, 2011.<sup>24</sup> The report characterizes the Libyan conflict as “a civil war” and concludes that “international crimes, and specifically crimes against humanity and war crimes, have been committed in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.” With regard to government forces,

The commission has found that there have been acts constituting murder, imprisonment, other forms of severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, torture, persecution, enforced disappearance and sexual abuse that were committed by Government forces as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population with knowledge of the attack.... The consistent pattern of violations identified creates an inference that they were carried out as a result of policy decisions by Colonel Qadhafi and members of his inner circle. Further investigation is required in relation to making definitive findings with regard to the identity of those responsible for the crimes committed.

With regard to opposition forces, the commission “established that some acts of torture and cruel treatment and some outrages upon personal dignity in particular humiliating and degrading treatment have been committed by opposition armed forces, in particular against persons in detention, migrant workers and those believed to be mercenaries.” These acts constitute war crimes. The commission “is not of the view that the violations committed by the opposition armed forces were part of any ‘widespread or systematic attack’ against a civilian population such as to amount to crimes against humanity.” The commission considers its findings in light of the future transitional justice needs of the Libyan people and recommends that the Human Rights Council establish a mechanism to continue the monitoring and investigation of human rights abuses in Libya for a period of one year.

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<sup>23</sup> For example, see International Crisis Group, “Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (V): Making Sense of Libya,” Middle East/North Africa Report No. 107, June 6, 2011.

<sup>24</sup> The commission members are Cherif Bassiouni of Egypt, Asma Khader of Jordan, and Philippe Kirsch of Canada. See U.N. Document A/HRC/17/44, “Report of the International Commission of Inquiry to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,” June 1, 2011.

## Prospects and Challenges for U.S. Policy

In the wake of the rebel capture of Tripoli, events in Libya remain fluid and fast-moving. Qadhafi's disappearance and increased international recognition of the TNC as Libya's governing authority suggest that the Obama Administration's goal of regime change is secured, in spite of continued sporadic fighting between opposition and pro-regime forces. Yet even as Qadhafi's fortunes appear to whither, rapid consolidation of TNC control over Libya is not guaranteed. A large number of armed groups are now active and their continued unity of purpose and endorsement of proposed TNC transition plans (see "Interim Transitional National Council (TNC)" below) cannot be taken for granted. Since the uprising began, U.S. officials have argued that U.S. policy must remain flexible in order to effectively shape and respond to changing developments. Given these circumstances, Administration officials and Members of Congress may seek to better understand the range of possible outcomes and discuss their potential implications and the authorization for and costs of potential U.S. responses in advance.

### Possible Scenarios

**Consolidation of Opposition Military Successes.** During the conflict, various opposition forces have had difficulty consolidating territorial gains and preventing the emergence of stalemate conditions. However, the opposition's recent sweep into Tripoli, the capture of the important Qadhafi compound at Bab al Aziziyah, and the outpouring of celebration among Libyans suggest that politically, if not militarily, Libya's rebel cause has turned the corner in its struggle to overthrow Qadhafi. Reports suggest that military operations in and around Sirte and Al Jufrah, in southern areas near Sebha, and in western border areas may continue even as security control is consolidated in Tripoli and other urban coastal areas. Continued NATO strikes against military support targets may be necessary to prevent pro-Qadhafi elements from reemerging as an organized national force. In the short term, TNC efforts are expected to focus on coordinating disparate opposition forces, providing for basic security in newly liberated areas, and preventing looting and reprisals. Over the medium term, the TNC or its successor may seek to set more specific terms for the incorporation of rebel factions into national security forces, the disarmament of volunteers, and the elimination of excess small arms and light weapons. In addition to seeking access to frozen Libyan state assets to meet immediate needs, the TNC and its allies may seek international financial and material support for security and reconstruction efforts, including from the United States.

**Competition or Collapse among Opposition Forces.** Some expert observers of Libya's domestic politics have emphasized the general weakness and fractured condition of Libya's political landscape after 40 years of idiosyncratic abuse by Qadhafi and his supporters. Competition among tribal, regional, or political groups that are not now apparent could emerge during any post-conflict negotiations. The political ascendance of nonviolent Islamist opposition forces or the potential intransigence of any of the armed organized factions now active, including armed Islamists, also may create unique challenges. Opposition ranks might split in the short term over differences in opinion about security arrangements or in the long term over the goals and shape of the post-Qadhafi political system. The United States and Europe have expressed concern about violent Islamist groups in Libya and were pursuing counterterrorism cooperation with the Qadhafi government prior to the unrest.

## **Possible Questions**

Possible questions that Members of Congress may wish to consider when assessing the recent developments in Libya and proposals regarding continued U.S. military operations, foreign assistance, or political engagement in Libya include the following:

- Now that Qadhafi's downfall appears certain, what are the goals of U.S. policy in Libya? What U.S. national interests are at stake? What options exist for securing them? How might continued U.S. or multilateral military interventions to protect civilians contribute to or detract from those goals? What regional or international political support and authorization exists for military and civilian operations in Libya?
- How are events in Libya likely to shape developments in the broader Middle East and North Africa? What unintended consequences may result from regime change in Libya? What opportunities does regime change present? What precedents have U.S. or multilateral military intervention in the Libyan conflict set and how might those precedents affect the context in which U.S. decision makers must respond to other regional crises and events?
- When and on what terms should U.N. or U.S. sanctions on Libyan entities be removed? When should the United States transfer Libyan assets to a new Libyan governing authority and for what purposes? Should the United States seek reimbursement for the cost of military operations or humanitarian assistance?
- Who will assume responsibility for assisting Libyans with security, stabilization, and reconstruction in the wake of the conflict? Under what authority and on what terms? What role, if any, will the United States play in a post-conflict setting? What appropriations or authorizations might be required to support such a role?
- Who are likely to be the key political, economic, and security actors in Libya after the fall of Qadhafi's government? What should a future U.S.-Libyan bilateral relationship entail? What limits to engagement, if any, should the United States impose on its dealings with Libyan entities? What type of security relationship, if any, should the United States pursue with a new Libyan government? When should the United States reestablish a regular diplomatic presence?
- How secure are Libyan chemical weapons stockpiles and nuclear materials? What can and should be done to limit the proliferation of conventional weaponry within and beyond Libya?

## **Libyan Political Dynamics and Profiles**

### **Political Dynamics**

Prior to the recent conflict, Libya's political dynamics were characterized by competition among interest groups seeking to influence policy within the confines of the country's authoritarian political system and amid Libya's emergence from international isolation. Economic reforms embraced changes to Libya's former socialist model to meet current needs, even as political reforms languished amid disputes between hard-line political forces and reform advocates. In



general, the legacies of Italian colonial occupation and Libya's struggle for independence in the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century continue to influence Libyan politics. This is reflected in the celebration of the legacy of the anti-colonial figure Omar al Mukhtar during the current uprising. Prior to the recent unrest, rhetorical references to preserving sovereignty and resistance to foreign domination were common in political statements from all parties. Wariness of ground-based foreign intervention and the slogan "Libyans can do it on their own" common among Libyans reflect that sentiment and are likely to persist in a post-Qadhafi environment. Most Libyans accept a prominent role for Islamic tradition in public life, but differ in their personal preferences and interpretations of their faith. Islam is the official religion and the Quran is the nominal basis for the country's law and its "social code."

Tribal relationships have remained socially important, particularly in non-urban settings, and had some political role under Qadhafi with regard to the distribution of leadership positions in government ministries, in some economic relationships between some social groups and families, and in political-military relations. Tribal loyalties reportedly remain strong within and between branches of the armed services, and members of Qadhafi's tribe, the Qadhafa, have held many high-ranking government positions. Some members of larger tribes, such as the Magariha, Misurata, and the Warfalla, sought to advance their broad interests under Qadhafi through control of official positions of influence, although some of their members have opposed the regime on grounds of tribal discrimination.

Competition for influence among Libya's regions characterized the pre-Qadhafi period, and some saw the 1969 Qadhafi-led revolution as having been partly facilitated by western and southern Libyan resentments of the Al Sanusi monarchy based in the eastern Libyan region of Cyrenaica. Contemporary Libyan politics have not been dominated by overt inter-regional tension, although pro-Qadhafi forces accused the organizers and leaders of the current opposition as having, *inter alia*, an eastern regional separatist agenda. The opposition TNC has denied these accusations and is moving quickly to move its representatives and leaders westward to Tripoli. Some reports suggest that federalism is one model being explored by some opposition supporters, although the TNC has not endorsed federalism to date.

Political parties and all opposition groups were banned under Qadhafi. Formal political pluralism was frowned upon by many members of the ruling elite, even as in the period preceding the unrest some regime figures advocated for greater popular participation in existing government institutions. The general lack of widespread experience in formal political organization, competition, and administration is likely to remain a challenge in the immediate post-Qadhafi era. Independent NGO reports suggest ad hoc political organization is ongoing across opposition-held areas and much of it reflects a desire for institution-based, democratic governance rooted in the rule of law. Some nascent political and social groups in liberated areas have sought external training and support to overcome the legacy of decades of restrictions. The continued openness of newly liberated Libyans to outside examples and assistance remains to be determined.

Prior to the 2011 uprising, Libya's opposition movements were often categorized broadly as Islamist, royalist, or secular nationalist in orientation. Their activities and effectiveness had been largely limited by disorganization, rivalry, and ideological differences. New efforts to coordinate opposition activities had begun in response to Libya's reintegration to the international community and the emergence of a broader political reform debate in the Arab world, and gained momentum with the outbreak of region-wide protests and political change in late 2010 and early 2011. The infusion of popular support and regime defectors to the general opposition cause inside Libya was welcomed by many established opposition groups, even if the specific political

demands of newly active opposition supporters and their compatibility with the agendas of the established groups remain unclear.

U.S. policymakers continue to seek more information on the identities and backgrounds of various opposition leaders and groups; the capabilities of armed opposition supporters; and the relative intentions, goals, and legitimacy of opposition elements. Qadhafi and his supporters have accused his opponents, including the TNC, of having an eastern regional separatist agenda and of serving as a front for Al Qaeda. The TNC has denied these accusations, stressing its broad nationalist orientation and denying formal connections to religious militants, while acknowledging that some Islamists, including former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group members, are involved in military operations against pro-Qadhafi forces.

### **Interim Transitional National Council (TNC)**

Opposition groups have formed a 45-member Interim Transitional National Council (TNC) that has worked to gain international recognition as the representative of the Libyan people from its original base in the eastern city of Benghazi. The group has demonstrated some domestic political legitimacy and authority, and its stated aspirations and appeals are addressed to all Libyans. Its claims also have been endorsed by some Libyans abroad, including some Libyan expatriate groups in Europe and the United States. The TNC states that local and regional citizen councils that formed across Libya in the wake of the uprising have endorsed the Council and its agenda. To date, over 40 governments have recognized the TNC as “the legitimate representative of the Libyan people.” The United States government refers to the TNC as “the legitimate interlocutor for the Libyan people during this interim period.”

Limited information is available about the TNC’s relationships with many emergent opposition leaders, particularly in western Libya, whose identities TNC leaders had long claimed needed to remain secret for their protection. The prominent role played by western activists and armed elements in capturing Tripoli creates new urgency for understanding these relationships. In June, the Administration reported to Congress that “The TNC has emphasized the importance of representing all regions and people in Libya and even includes members from regime-controlled areas such as Tripoli and Sebha.” The TNC’s approach to pro-Qadhafi groups in western Libya could prove decisive in negotiating a political solution to any continued fighting. According to the Obama Administration’s reporting to Congress, “the TNC has shown a willingness to work with technocrats from the regime, provided they have not participated in human rights violations.” Some opposition supporters, including the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood, have indicated they will not support the participation of former government officials in any future transitional political arrangement, although their positions may change.

The TNC has laid out key aspects of its political platform and approach to the conflict in a bid to communicate clearly with domestic supporters and potential international sponsors and donors. The TNC also has taken steps to clarify the legislative role of the Council and the role of its “executive authority” and “stabilization team.” The executive authority plays a cabinet function with individuals responsible for discrete portfolios including internal security, foreign relations, social affairs, and Islamic endowments.

The TNC also has spelled out ambitious plans with regard to a potential transition. According to TNC officials and a draft interim national charter, current plans call for local councils to select

representatives to a reconstituted National Transitional Council, which will remain “the supreme authority” in Libya, deriving its legitimacy from “the Revolution of February 17.”<sup>25</sup> After moving to Tripoli and naming an interim government—within 30 days of liberation—the NTC is to choose members by secret ballot for a Constitutional Authority to draft a constitution that would then be subject to a popular referendum. Within 60 days of the approval of a constitution, the NTC will provide electoral laws for U.N.-supervised national elections to be held within six months for a legislature and president. Transitional plans include a series of restrictions on the ability of TNC and executive authority members from holding dual office, benefitting from transactions involving state property, and standing for some future elected positions. The charter states that “Islam is the religion of the state and the principal source of legislation is Islamic jurisprudence (*sharia*).... The State shall guarantee for non-Moslems the freedom of practicing religious rights and shall guarantee respect for their systems of personal status.”

The tone and guarantees in the draft interim national charter reflect prior TNC statements of intent. On March 22, a Council statement said,

The Interim National Council is committed to the ultimate goal of the revolution; namely to build a constitutional democratic civil state based on the rule of law, respect for human rights and the guarantee of equal rights and opportunities for all its citizens including full political participations by all citizens and equal opportunities between men and women and the promotion of women empowerment. Libya will become a state which respects universal core values that are embedded in the rich cultural diversities around the globe which includes justice, freedom, human rights, and non-violence.

On March 29, the Council released a statement on “a vision of a democratic Libya,” which states the Council’s view of its “obligation” to “draft a national constitution” with separation of “legislative, executive and judicial powers” and measures to protect free association, political participation, voting rights, and “freedom of expression through media, peaceful protests, demonstrations and sit-ins and other means of communication, in accordance with the constitution and its laws in a way that protects public security and social peace.”

A March 30 statement on counterterrorism affirmed the Council’s support for United Nations Security Council resolutions on Al Qaeda and the Taliban and U.N. conventions on terrorism. The statement “affirms the Islamic identity of the Libyan People, its commitment to the moderate Islamic values, its full rejection to the extremist ideas and its commitment to combating them in all circumstances, and refuses the allegations aiming to associate al-Qaeda with the revolutionists in Libya.” This built on the Council’s March 29 statement, which said, “The state to which we aspire will denounce violence, terrorism, intolerance and cultural isolation; while respecting human rights, rules and principles of citizenship and the rights of minorities and those most vulnerable.”

### Prominent TNC Figures

- **Mustafa Abdeljalil.** (aka Mustafa Abdeljalil Fadl) Serves as chairman of the Interim Transitional National Council. He served as Libya’s justice minister from 2007 through the onset of the uprising. He is known for having been supportive

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<sup>25</sup> CRS obtained a draft interim national charter from an independent source as well as from a translated version available from the U.S. Open Source Center. Pending the availability of a final official version, this analysis is subject to change.

of some reform initiatives advanced by Sayf al Islam al Qadhafi and for challenging Muammar al Qadhafi and his supporters regarding due process and incarceration of prisoners in some prominent legal cases during 2009 and 2010. He attempted to resign from his position in early 2010.<sup>26</sup> He is a native of Bayda, where he once served as chief judge. He is 59 years old. In February, Abdeljalil claimed to have evidence that Qadhafi ordered the terrorist attack on Pan Am Flight 103.

- **Mahmoud Jibril.** (aka Mahmoud Jibril Ibrahim Al Warfali) Mahmoud Jibril serves as the interim Prime Minister and the foreign affairs representative for the executive bureau of the TNC. He is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, where he earned a masters degree in political science and a Ph.D. in planning in the early 1980s. He is 58 years old, and is described by personal acquaintances and professional contacts as being intelligent, moderate, analytical, detail-oriented, and an articulate English speaker. He worked as an independent consultant prior to serving as the secretary of the Libyan National Planning Council and director-general of the National Economic Development Board (NEDB) from 2007 onward. The NEDB was a government entity affiliated with Muammar al Qadhafi's relatively reform-oriented son Sayf al Islam that was tasked with proposing institutional reform and attracting foreign investment and educational exchange opportunities to Libya. He visited Washington, DC, during the week of May 9 and met with Members of Congress, Senators, and Administration officials.
- **Ali Tarhouni** – Serves as the vice chairman of the TNC executive authority. Returned to Libya from the United States where he has lived since the early 1970s and worked as an economics professor at the University of Washington.
- **Abdel Hafez Ghoga.** Serves as vice-chairman and spokesman for the Council. He is described in the Libyan press as a “human rights lawyer and community organizer.” Reports suggest that Ghoga had been working to organize a national transitional council at the same time as Mustafa Abdeljalil and others were working to form the TNC. The two figures reportedly agreed to cooperate.

## **Opposition Military Forces**

A military council was established in parallel to the TNC to coordinate the efforts of volunteers and defectors, and that body may now be superseded by a Tripoli-based higher security council to coordinate eastern and western rebel groups and former regime security officials. TNC representatives have sought to manage rivalries among leading defectors, former exiles, and volunteers, while remaining vague about the role of military forces who defected in the opposition's efforts to date. Rebel operations do not appear to have featured regular military units, and regular units have not been prominent in international media coverage of opposition forces' activities. Opposition-affiliated forces include the “17 February Forces,” the “Army of Free Libya,” and groups made up of various secular and Islamist volunteers. Consistent coordination among these different elements is not apparent, and key figures Abdelfattah Younis al Ubaydi and Khalifah Belqasim Haftar reportedly competed for leadership of the opposition's overall efforts

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<sup>26</sup> OSC Report GMP20100128950040, “Libyan Minister of Justice Resigns Over ‘Harsh’ Criticism in People's Congress,” January 28, 2010.

prior to Younis's assassination by an unidentified faction.<sup>27</sup> During the conflict, much of the reporting from combat areas regularly described the opposition as mostly untrained, poorly equipped, uncoordinated, and without professional logistics or communications support.<sup>28</sup> The coordinated assault on Tripoli, including the reported intervention by Misuratah-based fighters appeared to belie those descriptions, even as subsequent urban fighting has been chaotic.

Prominent opposition military and security figures include

- **Omar al Hariri.** Serves as the military affairs representative (or “defense minister”) on the TNC. Hariri participated in 1969 anti-monarchy coup alongside Qadhafi, but later was imprisoned and sentenced to death on suspicion of plotting an uprising in 1975. He was moved to Tobruk and placed under house arrest in 1990. He is 67 years old. He has been quoted as calling for “a multi-party system” in the event that Qadhafi is deposed.
- **Abdelfattah Younis al Ubaydi.** Assassinated in July 2011. Participated in the 1969 anti-monarchy coup alongside Qadhafi. Prior to the conflict, he served as minister for public security and a special forces commander, which put him in charge of some internal security forces through the start of the uprising. His resignation and defection came just hours after Muammar al Qadhafi specifically named him as one of his key supporters in a February 22 speech. Human rights concerns prior to and potentially during the beginning of the unrest could have involved forces under his command. He was the TNC-appointed leader of military operations and remained an outspoken advocate for the opposition cause until his death. Subsequent reports suggested that allegations that he misled the opposition about his activities and forces may have contributed to suspicions that he remained a clandestine Qadhafi supporter.
- **Colonel Khalifah Belqasim Haftar.** A veteran of the ill-fated Libyan invasion of Chad during the 1980s, he turned against Qadhafi. Colonel Haftar returned to Libya from exile in the United States after the uprising began.<sup>29</sup> In the past, Haftar has been mentioned as a leader of the Libyan Movement for Change and Reform and the Libyan National Army, an armed opposition group reported to have received support from foreign intelligence agencies and alleged to have been involved in past attempts to overthrow Qadhafi.<sup>30</sup> Press reports suggest

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<sup>27</sup> Kareem Fahim, “Rebel leadership shows signs of strain in Libya,” *New York Times*, April 4, 2011; Kim Sengupta, “Divided and disorganised, Libyan rebel military turn on NATO allies,” *The Independent* (UK), April 7, 2011; and Rod Nordland, “As British Help Libyan Rebels, Aid Goes to a Divided Force,” *New York Times*, April 19, 2011.

<sup>28</sup> One early April account described the opposition forces as follows: “The hard core of the fighters has been the *shabaab*—the young people whose protests in mid-February sparked the uprising. They range from street toughs to university students (many in computer science, engineering, or medicine), and have been joined by unemployed hipsters and middle-aged mechanics, merchants, and storekeepers. There is a contingent of workers for foreign companies: oil and maritime engineers, construction supervisors, translators. There are former soldiers, their gunstocks painted red, green, and black—the suddenly ubiquitous colors of the pre-Qaddafi Libyan flag. And there are a few bearded religious men, more disciplined than the others, who appear intent on fighting at the dangerous tip of the advancing lines.... With professional training and leadership (presumably from abroad), the rebels may eventually turn into something like a proper army. But, for now, they have perhaps only a thousand trained fighters, and are woefully outgunned.” Jon Lee Anderson, “Who are the Rebels?” *The New Yorker*, April 4, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Chris Adams, “Libyan rebel leader spent much of past 20 years in suburban Virginia,” *McClatchy Newspapers*, March 26, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> OSC Report FTS19960821000373, “U.S.-Based Oppositionist Has ‘Secret Meetings’ Near Tripoli,” August 21, (continued...)

Haftar is now contributing to opposition training and command efforts and has either taken or been granted the rank/title of General. Reports also suggest that the TNC may have sought to remove him from a command role, and that Haftar has resisted those efforts.

- **Major Abdelmoneim Al Huni.** An original member of the Revolution Command Council, Al Huni had been serving as Libya's representative to the Arab League and resigned in protest of the use of force against protestors. Regional press accounts from the 1990s describe Al Huni as having coordinated with the opposition efforts of Colonel Haftar and others, before Al Huni reconciled with Qadhafi in 2000.
- **Abdelhakim Belhajj.** Reported to be the commander of a significant contingent of opposition forces involved in the capture of Tripoli, Belhajj is otherwise known as the former commander of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. Belhajj, a veteran of the anti-Soviet period in Afghanistan, fled Afghanistan via Iran and Thailand in the wake of the U.S. invasion in 2001 and was detained and transferred to Libyan detention. He remained imprisoned until 2010, when he was released as part of a reconciliation agreement between the Qadhafi government and the LIFG.<sup>31</sup>

## Exiles and Al Sanusi Monarchy Figures

Complex relationships among former regime figures, competing heirs to the former monarchy, and long-standing opposition leaders may evolve as specific arrangements are made for reconciliation and a new government.

Opposition groups in exile have included the National Alliance, the Libyan National Movement (LNM), the Libyan Movement for Change and Reform, the Islamist Rally, the National Libyan Salvation Front (NLSF), and the Republican Rally for Democracy and Justice. These groups and others held an opposition conference—known as the National Conference for the Libyan Opposition (NCLO)—in July 2005 in London and issued a “national accord,” calling for the removal of Qadhafi from power and the establishment of a transitional government.<sup>32</sup> A follow-up meeting was held in March 2008.<sup>33</sup> The NCLO reportedly helped lead the call for the February 17, 2011, “day of rage” that helped catalyze protests into a full-blown uprising against the Qadhafi regime.

A royalist contingent based on the widely recognized claim to the leadership of the royal family by Mohammed al Rida al Sanusi, the son of the former crown prince, has been based in London.<sup>34</sup>

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(...continued)

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<sup>31</sup> Rod Nordland, “As British Help Libyan Rebels, Aid Goes to a Divided Force,” *New York Times*, April 19, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> May Youssef, “Anti-Gaddafists Rally in London,” *Al Ahrum Weekly (Cairo)*, No. 749, June 30 - July 6, 2005; *Al Jazeera (Doha)*, “Opposition Plans to Oust Al Qadhafi,” June 25, 2005; *Middle East Mirror*, “Libya’s Fractured Opposition,” July 29, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> “Libyan Opposition Groups Meet in London To Reiterate Commitment To Save Libya,” OSC Report GMP20080329825012, March 29, 2008.

<sup>34</sup> His family name also is transliterated as Al Senussi. Immediately prior to his departure for medical treatment in August 1969, the late King Idris signaled his intent to abdicate and pass authority to his crown prince and nephew, Hasan al Rida al Mahdi al Sanusi. Crown Prince Hasan was serving as regent during the Qadhafi coup, and he and his (continued...)

His claim is disputed by a distant relative, whose family members also have given interviews to international media outlets. On April 20, Mohammed al Sanusi met with members of the European Parliament and said, “it is up to the Libyan people to decide whether they go down the road of a constitutional monarchy or that of a republic.” He recently repeated similar sentiments and called on Libyans “to lay the foundations for a democratic state.” The Libyan constitutional monarchy system was overturned by Qadhafi in 1969, and Al Sanusi believes the old constitution, if “suitably updated,” could “form the basis of a new Libya.” He also has pledged to “assist in creating a democratic state for Libyans based on a representative parliament chosen by free and fair elections.”

## **The Muslim Brotherhood**

A statement attributed to the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood in late February 2011 welcomed the formation of the TNC but called for a future, non-tribal government to “be formed by those who actually led the revolution on the ground” and to exclude supporters of the original Qadhafi coup or officials involved in human rights violations.<sup>35</sup> This would seem to implicate some original Qadhafi allies and security officials who have defected to the opposition cause. In the past, the controller general of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood, Suleiman Abdel Qadir, has described the Brotherhood’s objectives as peaceful and policy-focused, and has long called for the cancellation of laws restricting political rights.<sup>36</sup> An individual with unconfirmed Muslim Brotherhood ties, Dr. Ali al Salabi, has been the subject of opposition speculation and controversy regarding negotiations he allegedly carried out with the Qadhafi government during the uprising. In the past, Al Salabi participated in the government’s dialogue with imprisoned Islamists.

Like other political organizations and opposition groups, the Muslim Brotherhood was banned in Libya under Qadhafi. Since the late 1940s, when members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood first entered Libya following a crackdown on their activities, the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood has existed as a semi-official organization. Hundreds of Brotherhood members and activists were jailed in 1973, although the Brotherhood eventually reemerged and operated as a clandestine organization for much of the following two decades. In 1998, a second round of mass arrests took place, and 152 Brotherhood leaders and members were arrested. Several reportedly died in custody, and, following trials in 2001 and 2002, two prominent Brotherhood leaders were sentenced to death and over 70 were sentenced to life in prison.<sup>37</sup> The government announced a

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(...continued)

family were imprisoned and placed under house arrest until being allowed to leave Libya in the late 1980s. Each of King Idris’s potential direct heirs died as children. Upon Prince Hasan’s death in 1992, he passed the title of head of the Al Sanusi royal house to his son, Prince Mohammed al Rida al Sanusi.

<sup>35</sup> OSC Report GMP20110228405001, “Libyan Muslim Brotherhood Group Supports ‘Glorious Revolution,’” February 28, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> In 2007, Abdel Qadir responded to political reform statements by Sayf al Islam al Qadhafi with calls for more inclusive, consultative decision making. In a November 2008 interview, Abdel Qadir noted that reform outreach was taking place under the auspices of the Qadhafi Foundation and not through official state organs, which in his view undermined the significance of the outreach. He also repeated calls for reform and reconciliation aimed at creating a constitution and protecting civil rights for Libyans. See OSC Report GMP20050803550006, “Al Jazirah TV Interviews Libyan Muslim Brotherhood Leader on Current Situation,” August 3, 2005; OSC Report GMP20070830282001, “Libyan MB Concerned Over Sayf al-Islam’s Statements Regarding New Constitution,” August 30, 2007; and, OSC Report GMP20081111635001, “Libyan Muslim Brotherhood Official on Libya’s Foreign, Domestic Politics,” November 10, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> The two were group leaders Dr. Abdullah Ahmed Izzadin and Dr. Salem Mohammed Abu Hanek.

retial for the imprisoned Brotherhood activists in October 2005, and in March 2006, the group's 84 remaining imprisoned members were released.<sup>38</sup>

### **Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)/Libyan Islamic Movement for Change (LIMC)**

Prior to the 2011 uprising that began in eastern Libya, some reports examined whether the region was a stronghold for Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) members and other extremist groups that might pose a threat to Libya's security and potentially to regional security.<sup>39</sup> Some Members of Congress have expressed concern that violent Islamists may seek to exploit the conflict in Libya or any post-conflict transition. On March 29, NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe U.S. Admiral James Stavridis said in Senate testimony that he did not have "detail sufficient to say that there's a significant Al Qaida presence or any other terrorist presence in and among" the Libyan opposition.<sup>40</sup> The full effect of the ongoing unrest on the views, positions, and activities of former-LIFG personnel and other potentially armed Islamist groups has not yet been determined, although some former LIFG members appear to be providing security in opposition held areas and engaging in fighting against pro-Qadhafi forces. Libyan government officials claim that some LIFG members previously released as part of the government-approved reconciliation process participated in violence at the beginning of the recent uprising and the government has accused some individuals of seeking to establish "Islamic emirates" in eastern Libya.<sup>41</sup> Some opposition figures have decried the government accusations as scare tactics, although released figures such as Abdelhakim Belhadj clearly have played a leadership role in some operations.

The LIFG is an Islamist movement that used violence in the past as a means to overthrow the Qadhafi government.<sup>42</sup> In recent years, its then-imprisoned leaders engaged in a dialogue and reconciliation process with the Qadhafi Foundation, and over 200 LIFG members were released, including senior leaders and former commanders (see below).<sup>43</sup> Some Libya-based members of the LIFG responded to the release of leading figures on February 16 by announcing the reorganization of the group as the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change (LIMC). The LIMC demands political change and an end to corruption, and has underscored its decision to "enter a

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<sup>38</sup> Afaf El Geblawi, "Libya Frees All Jailed Muslim Brotherhood Members," *Agence France Presse*, March 3, 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Peraino, "Destination Martyrdom," *Newsweek*, April 19, 2008. For more information on AQIM see CRS Report RS21532, *Algeria: Current Issues*, by Alexis Arieff, and CRS Report R41070, *Al Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence, and Implications for U.S. Policy*, coordinated by John Rollins.

<sup>40</sup> Testimony of Admiral James Stavridis before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 29, 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Libyan authorities specifically named Abdelkarim Ahsadi [a likely misspelling of Abdelhakim Al Hasadi], Khayrallah Barasi, Mohamed Darnawi, and Abou Sofian Ben Guemou, a former U.S. detainee at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who Libyan officials released in September 2010. Libyan government claims have not been independently verified. OSC Report GMP20110223950040, "Senior Libyan Security Official Gives Details on Unrest in Benghazi Tripoli," February 22, 2011.

<sup>42</sup> According to the State Department, the LIFG has attempted to assassinate Qadhafi four times, but "has been largely inactive operationally in Libya since the late 1990s." The August 2011 State Department report on terrorism noted the reconciliation announcements in Libya and stated that, "To date, the November 3, 2007 merger with AQ, which many LIFG members in Europe and Libya did not recognize, has not resulted in a significant increase in LIFG activities within Libya." See U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Organizations: LIFG," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2010*, August 2011.

<sup>43</sup> Prominent prisoners released under the auspices of the reconciliation program include former LIFG leader Abdelhakim al Khuwaylidi Belhadj, former military director Khaled Sharif, and leading LIFG ideologue Sami Sa'idi. OSC Report GMP201100323950045, "Three leaders of Libyan Fighting Group freed – paper," March 23, 2010.



new stage of struggle in which we do not adopt an armed program but a belief in the Libyan people's ability to bring about the change to which we are aspiring."<sup>44</sup> Muammar al Qadhafi has both blamed Al Qaeda and violent Islamists for instigating the uprising, and, on March 15, he threatened to join them if the United States or European countries intervened militarily in the conflict.<sup>45</sup>

### *Al Qaeda Affiliation and Recantations*

The United States froze the LIFG's U.S. assets under Executive Order 13224 in September 2001, and formally designated the LIFG as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in December 2004. In February 2006, the U.S. Department of the Treasury designated five individuals and four entities in the United Kingdom as Specially Designated Global Terrorists for their role in supporting the LIFG.<sup>46</sup> On October 30, 2008, Treasury designated three more LIFG financiers.<sup>47</sup> Some observers characterized the designations as a U.S. gesture of solidarity with the Libyan government and argued that the ability and willingness of the LIFG to mount terror attacks in Libya may have been limited. Others claimed that some LIFG fighters were allied with other violent Islamist groups operating in the trans-Sahara region, and cited evidence of Libyan fighters joining the Iraqi insurgency as an indication of ongoing Islamist militancy in Libya and a harbinger of a possible increase in violence associated with fighters returning from Iraq.<sup>48</sup>

In November 2007, Al Qaeda figures Ayman al Zawahiri and Abu Layth al Libi announced the merger of the LIFG with Al Qaeda, which many terrorism analysts viewed at the time as having political rather than operational relevance.<sup>49</sup> Abu Layth Al Libi was killed in an air strike in Pakistan in February 2008. The group's reported ties with Al Qaeda came under scrutiny in July 2009 after group members based in Britain reportedly renounced the group's affiliation with Al Qaeda, and contrasted the LIFG with others who use indiscriminate bombing and target civilians.<sup>50</sup> The statement warned that the group would "preserve [its] lawful and natural right to oppose the regime if it does not turn its back on its previous policy that has led to tension and deadlock."

The Libyan government and the LIFG reached an agreement in which LIFG leaders renounced violence against the Libyan state, and, later in 2009, the dialogue resulted in the issuance of

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<sup>44</sup> OSC Report GMP20110217825017, "Libya: IFG Elements Establish New Group Aiming for Peaceful Regime Change," February 17, 2011.

<sup>45</sup> OSC Report EUP20110315058001, "'Exclusive' Interview With Al-Qadhafi on Insurgency, Western Ties, US, Al-Qa'ida," March 15, 2011.

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Designates UK-Based Individuals, Entities Financing Al Qaida-Affiliated LIFG," JS-4016, February 8, 2006.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Three LIFG Members Designation for Terrorism," HP-1244, October 30, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Alison Pargeter, "Militant Groups Pose Security Challenge for Libyan Regime," *Janes Intelligence Review*, Vol. 17, No. 8, August 2005, pp. 16-19.

<sup>49</sup> OSC Report FEA20071104393586, "Al-Zawahiri, Al-Libi: Libyan Islamic Fighting Group Joins Al-Qa'ida," November 3, 2007.

<sup>50</sup> In a July 2009 statement, LIFG members in Britain characterized the November 2007 Al Qaeda affiliation announcement from the late Abu Layth Al Libi as "a personal decision that is at variance with the basic status of the group," and sought to "clearly emphasize that the group is not, has never been, and will never be, linked to the Al Qaeda organization." OSC Report GMP20090703825003, "Libyan Islamic Fighting Group Abroad Issues Statement Supporting Regime Dialogue," July 3, 2009.

written “recantations” of the LIFG’s former views on religion and violence.<sup>51</sup> In October 2009, over 40 LIFG prisoners were released, alongside other Islamists. However, Libyan and U.S. concerns about LIFG’s domestic and international activities persisted. Qadhafi announced the release of the final 110 “reconciled” LIFG members at the outset of the 2011 uprising, reportedly including Abdelwahhab Muhammad Qayid, who has been identified in some sources as the brother of prominent Al Qaeda ideologue Abu Yahya al Libi. In March 2011, Abu Yahya Al Libi released a video condemning Qadhafi and calling on Libyans to use arms against Qadhafi supporters, but to refrain from violence or criminality against each other.<sup>52</sup>

### **Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM/AQIM)**

U.S. government officials and their regional counterparts remain focused on the potential for the unrest in Libya to provide opportunities to Al Qaeda’s regional affiliate, Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM/AQIM). Some press reports suggest that AQIM personnel have obtained weaponry from looted Libyan military stockpiles, including surface-to-air missiles. The Algerian and Chadian governments continue to express concern about the potential for instability in Libya to weaken security along Libya’s long borders, which could allow AQIM operatives and criminal networks that provide services to AQIM to move more freely.

While the imprisoned, Libya-based leaders of the LIFG participated in reconciliation with Qadhafi’s government and renounced violence as a domestic political tool, the participation of some of their supporters in efforts to send Libyans abroad to participate in insurgencies and terrorism has raised concerns about the potential for cooperation between AQIM and some Libyan Islamists. Former Guantanamo Bay detainee Abu Sufian Hamuda Bin Qumu has attracted some media attention, and one figure, Abdelhakim Al Hasadi, is leading ad hoc security arrangements in the eastern city of Darnah, which was home to several dozen Libyan recruits who travelled to Iraq to fight U.S. and coalition forces.<sup>53</sup> TNC oversight of his operations is not apparent, although he has indicated his support for the Council’s role. As noted above, the group’s former commander, Abdelhakim Belhajj, is playing a leadership role in some military operations in and around Tripoli. Some Libyan observers have been critical of international media coverage of these individuals and argue they represent an exception and have been given too much attention.

On April 16, London-based pan-Arab newspaper *Al Hayat* published an email interview with a reported spokesman for AQIM named Salah Abu Muhammad, who confirmed reports that AQIM had obtained weaponry from Libyan military stockpiles and claimed that AQIM had cooperative

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<sup>51</sup> “Report on ‘Seething Anger’ in Libya Over Dismantling Al Qaeda-Linked Cells,” OSC Report GMP20080630825001 June 30, 2008; “Libya: Jailed Islamic Group Leaders ‘Preparing’ To Renounce Armed Violence,” OSC Report GMP20080706837002, July 6, 2008; “Libyan Islamic Fighting Group Source Announces Ideology Revision Nearly Complete,” OSC Report GMP20090615825012, June 15, 2009; and OSC Reports, GMP20090911452001, GMP20090911452002, GMP2009091145200, GMP20090910488004, GMP20090911452004, GMP20090915452001, “Libyan Newspaper Publishes Libyan Fighting Group Retractions,” September 2009.

<sup>52</sup> OSC Report GMP20110313479001, “New Abu-Yahya al-Libi Video: ‘To Our People in Libya,’” March 12, 2011.

<sup>53</sup> Kevin Peraino, “Destination Martyrdom,” *Newsweek*, April 19, 2008. Al Hasadi claims to have recruited Libyans to fight in Iraq, but has publicly denied accusations he is affiliated with Al Qaeda or is seeking to establish Islamist rule in Darnah or on a national basis. Al Hasadi appeared on Al Jazeera and read a statement denying the Libyan government’s accusations. See OSC Report GMP20110225648002, “Libya: Former LIFG Leader Denies Plan To Establish ‘Islamic Emirate’ in Darnah,” February 25, 2011; and, OSC Report EUP20110322025008, “Libya: Rebel Leader in Derna Denies Local Presence of Extremists, Al-Qa’ida,” March 22, 2011.

relationships with Al Hasadi and so-called “emirates” in several eastern Libyan cities. A subsequent statement from another reported AQIM source accused Algerian intelligence services of fabricating the Abu Muhammad interview.<sup>54</sup> Neither source could be independently verified.

A March 17 statement attributed to AQIM leader Abdelmalik Droukdel (aka Abu Mus’ab al Wudud) addressed Libyan rebels and sought to associate the Libyan uprising with Al Qaeda’s campaign against Arab and Western governments.<sup>55</sup> The statement advised Libyans to avoid cooperation with the United States and “to rally around the revolutionary leaders who are holding fast to their Islamic faith and whose readiness to make sacrifices has been proven on the battlefield.” Other AQIM figures have sought to explain that their organization is not seeking to direct or claim credit for the Libyan uprising, but that AQIM is supportive of the campaign against Qadhafi. As noted above, U.S. and regional observers continue to monitor statements from and actions by AQIM and Libyan Islamists closely.

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<sup>54</sup> See OSC Report GMP20110416825001, “Al-Qa’ida in Islamic Maghreb Spokesman Says There Are Islamic Amirates in Libya,” April 16, 2011; and, OSC Report AFP20110418950070, “AQIM accuses Al-Hayat newspaper of falsifying interview with spokesman,” April 18, 2011.

<sup>55</sup> Droukdel said “the battle you are fighting now with the tyrant ... It is itself the battle we fought yesterday and are fighting today.” See OSC Report GMP20110318405002, “AQIM Amir’s Audio Message to Libya, ‘The Descendants of Umar al-Mukhtar,’” March 17, 2011.