

## **Committee: GA4 SPECPOL (Special Political and Decolonization)**

**Committee Date: 2 September 2011**

**Agenda Item: Stabilizing the situation in Libya with main focus on foreign involvement and cessation of hostilities.**

**Under Secretary General: Burak Türköz**

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### **Introduction**

In December 2010 protests against the government in Tunisia initiated a wave of anti-government social movements, uprisings and armed rebellions in the Middle East. The term “Arab Spring” was coined to describe the movement. It’s results and effectiveness changed from country to country, ranging from constitutional changes to civil war.

Libya was severely affected by the Arab Spring as the nation descended into civil war, which lasted for 8 months and involved a coalition of foreign nations fighting against the government. The war ended on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October, three days after the defeat and death of it’s dictator Muammar Gaddafi. Although the rebels achieved their goals, Libya’s situation continued to deteriorate as another civil war followed in 2014.

**The date of the committee is set as 2 September 2011.**

The delegates are expected to find solutions to stabilize the situation in Libya. The priority should be the cessation of hostilities in the country, as the war is still going on at the given date. The foreign involvement in the war should also be one of the main discussion topics. The delegates are also encouraged to find short and long term solutions to Libya’s political, economic and humanitarian problems, in order to prevent further civil unrest.

#### **NOTICE**

A new timeline starts when the committee begins in 2 September 2011. The events that normally happened after this date cannot be referred to, as they did not happen in the committee’s timeline yet. These events also do not have to unfold the same way as they did in our current timeline, they are open to change.

## Definition of Key Terms

### No-Fly Zone (NFZ)

A no-fly zone is a designated area which aircraft are prohibited to enter. These are generally enforced on conflict zones, to prevent civilian aircraft casualties and possible operations by the belligerent air forces. Aircraft violating the zone can be shot down, depending on the terms of the no-fly zone. The enforcer of the NFZ can usually carry out air operations in the zone. (e.g. NATO airstrikes in the 2011 Libya NFZ)

## Background Information

### Before the War

As a former Italian colony, Libya gained its independence in 1951 under King Idris al-Sanusi. The country leaned towards the US and the West in this era, granting American oil companies concessions and building pipelines to bring Libyan oil to the Mediterranean. However, this didn't last very long as in 1969 King Idris was deposed in a military coup by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. He pursued a more socialist path for his country, and aimed for a pan-Arabic coalition in the region.

In 1979, the government was divided into two parts to "separate the state from the revolution". The Jamahiriya sector (meaning "state of the masses") and the revolutionary sector. The Jamahiriya was the decision making body of the state, involving the Congress and the People's Committee. The revolutionary sector was an overseeing body, which regulated the actions of the Jamahiriya and had the final say in government affairs. Gaddafi transferred his position as the general secretary of the congress to his prime minister, and became the leader of the revolutionary sector. Therefore Gaddafi held no formal office at the government since 1979, but as the permanent "Leader of the Revolution", had full control over the country.

After the revolution, Libya's relations with the rest of the world generally deteriorated. Confrontations with the US in the 80s resulted in American airstrikes in various Libyan cities. An airliner was blown up over Scotland allegedly by Libyan agents in 1988. UN imposed sanctions four years later.

The tensions eased in mid 2000s, as Libya started rebuilding international ties with its former adversaries. Sanctions were lifted and relations were normalized with the US and the UK.

## The Arab Spring

Started by protests in Tunisia in December 2010, waves of anti-government protests were initiated one by one in Middle Eastern countries. Protesters wanted major structural changes, calling for ending corruption in their governments and some demanded their heads of state to step down. Wage gaps, unemployment, deteriorating economies, human rights abuses, corruption, authoritarianism and other factors were presented as the causes for the protests.

In Libya, Gaddafi was ruling for 42 years when the protests first began in January. The citizens of several cities protested corruption in the construction of governmental housing. These protests rapidly turned into a nation-wide movement against Gaddafi and his autocratic rule over the country.

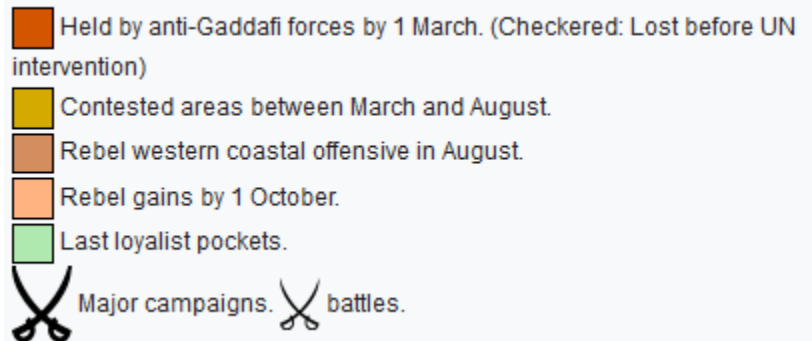
## The Civil War

Protests and demonstrations often ended with violent clashes between the police forces and demonstrators. The death toll continued rising, and in 27 February “National Transitional Council” (NTC) was established with the purpose of “being the political face of the revolution”. The clashes between the loyalists and NTC continued to increase with various offensives and counter offensives being initiated.

The United Nations intervened in 17 March as the UNSC passed a resolution creating a no-fly zone over Libya. The no-fly zone was created in order to prevent attacks on civilian targets. Starting from the 19<sup>th</sup>, foreign military actions begun. A coalition consisting of the US, the UK, France, Italy and several other nations started initiating airstrikes and naval assaults & blockades on government forces. On 31 March NATO took command of Coalition air operations and the no-fly zone, as a part of Operation Unified Protector.



The course of the war.



Foreign aid started to be supplied to rebel forces from various countries such as the UK, US, France, Qatar and Turkey in the form of monetary packages, equipment and advisors.

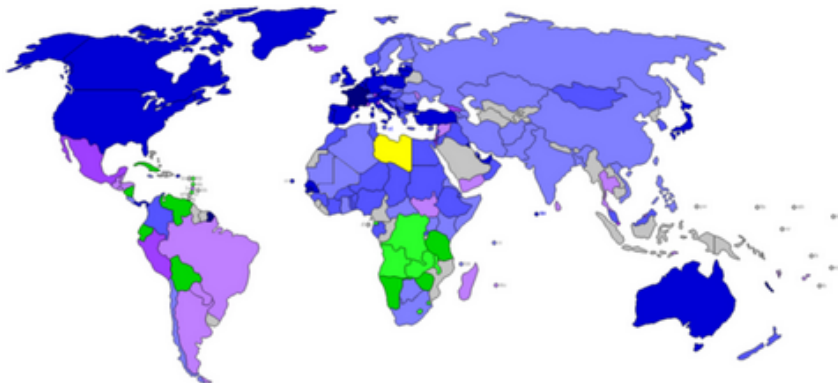
During May, the result of the war was still uncertain as both sides made progress in different parts of the country. The government began making compromises as Gaddafi and his son Saif-al Islam stated they would hold fair elections in three months. NATO rejected the offer and continued the campaign. In July, Saif-al Islam accused NATO of bombing civilians, and

stated they offered to drop his ICC charges if he accepted a secret deal, accusing the ICC of being corrupt.

August 20 saw a major rebel offensive into the city of Tripoli, one of Gaddafi's most important strongholds. Most of the city was under rebel control in a week, and the rebel forces continued to march eastwards towards Sirte, in which Gaddafi himself was located. In September 16<sup>th</sup>, Sirte's airport was captured by the rebels and a major offensive into the city was initiated.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Muammar Gaddafi and other regime figures were caught while trying to flee Sirte, and killed. NTC announced October 23<sup>rd</sup> as the end of the Libyan Civil War.

NATO's Operation Unified Protector was ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October.



Recognition order of the NTC

Yellow	Libya
Dark Blue	Recognised before UNSCR 1973 (17 March 2011)
Medium Blue	Recognised before the Rebel Coastal Offensive (15 August 2011)
Light Blue	Recognised before the end of the Battle of Tripoli (28 August 2011)
Purple	Recognised after 28 August 2011
Magenta	Supported transfer of Libya's UN seat, issued earlier statements of support
Light Purple	Supported transfer of Libya's UN seat, no formal statements on recognition
Green	Opposed transfer of Libya's UN seat, no formal statements on recognition
Dark Green	Opposed transfer of Libya's UN seat, formally opposed the NTC

## Aftermath

Although the majority of the loyalist forces were defeated, the NTC had to fight the remnants of the Gaddafi supporting militias for months after October 23<sup>rd</sup>. This threatened the security of civilians and businesses in the area. Which meant foreign investors were now reluctant to continue their operations in an unstable Libya.

After the defeat of Gaddafi, NTC declared the "liberation" of the country. However, a major problem regarding the NTC was the fact that it was not a homogenous organization of people sharing the same ideologies or opinions about the future of Libya. It was an alliance of

local armed groups with different interests in mind. This prevented the NTC from being an effective decision making mechanism after the war.

The promises made by the NTC to the people included the disarming the remaining militias, implementing a functioning justice system, rebuilding destroyed areas and healthcare services. However very little progress could be made on these.

The major reason was that investors weren't willing to work with the new government, who couldn't make long term agreements with them due to the instability in the country. Coupled with security concerns, this made Libya fall out of favor for foreign investors. This had an enormous impact on the economy. As a predominantly oil based economy, oil production nearly reached zero after the war, drastically harming the biggest sector of Libya's economy. Due to these stagnations the NTC wasn't able to carry out the reforms it promised.

The General National Congress was established in 2012 to function as a governing body, and the first post-war elections were held in 7 July 2012. Two years later, after the elections of 2014 the GNC refused to step down and another civil war started.

## **Foreign Interventions During the War and Controversies**

### **UNSC Resolution 1973**

On 17 March 2011, UN Security Council Resolution 1973 was adopted. It aimed to cease hostilities in the region and authorized the establishment of a no-fly zone. It demanded the immediate signing of a ceasefire and an end to all violence against civilians. The resolution authorized all means necessary to protect civilian-populated areas, except for a foreign invasion force. The deployment of foreign invasion forces- meaning troops on the ground- was forbidden by the resolution. Although special forces troops belonging to several coalition nations were acknowledged to be on the ground, it was argued whether it was a violation of the resolution since the use of them were not prohibited in the document.

Five members of the UNSC (Russia, China, Brazil, Germany and India) abstained in the voting, with none opposed.

### **NATO Operation Unified Protector**

On 19<sup>th</sup> of March, a NATO-led coalition started military operations in Libya. These included arms embargoes, naval blockades and airstrikes in the no-fly zone implemented by UNSC resolution 1973. Initially, all of the separate nations ran operations under different names, led mostly by France, UK and the USA.

From the 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, NATO integrated national operations of the coalition members into “Operation Unified Protector” under NATO command. All military aspects of the UN resolution including the arms embargo and the control of the no fly zone were transferred to NATO on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **International Responses to the Interventions**

Both during and after the war, the foreign intervention to the Libyan crisis was both criticized and praised by different sides. The supporters of the foreign intervention point out that Resolution 1973 has achieved its aim in protecting Libyan civilians, as it helped end a war sooner which could have dragged on without NATO intervention. They also state it has helped protect civilians from further harm that could be inflicted on them by Gaddafi’s forces.

The critics of the intervention argue that the foreign intervention was not a humanitarian effort, but an imperialist one aimed at regime change. They state the military actions taken by NATO forces have harmed civilians, civilian areas and socio-economic infrastructure of the country, therefore hindering post-war development of the country. Critics also point out that Operation Unified Protector was terminated ten days after the death of Gaddafi, while clashes continued between the two sides in the following months, causing further civilian casualties. They present this as the evidence that the intervention was aimed at regime change and was not a humanitarian effort.

## Timeline of Events

<b>1951</b>	<b>Libya officially becomes independent under the rule of King Idris</b>
<b>1969</b>	Muammar Gaddafi organizes a coup d'état and deposes the King.
<b>December 2010</b>	The Arab Spring starts with anti-government protests in Tunisia.
<b>13-16 January 2011</b>	Initial protests start in Libya.
<b>February 2011</b>	Protests turn violent, with fatal clashes between the police and the protestors.
<b>18-19 February 2011</b>	Army and police personnel withdraw from the cities of Benghazi and Bayda.
<b>27 February 2011</b>	National Transitional Council (NTC) officially established.
<b>17 March 2011</b>	UNSC approves Resolution 1973 and imposes a no-fly zone over Libya.
<b>19 March 2011</b>	Coalition strikes begin. Gaddafi's counter offensive into Benghazi is held back by rebel forces with aid from coalition air strikes.
<b>31 March 2011</b>	NATO takes overall command of the joint military operations and the no-fly zone.
<b>June 2011</b>	Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam announces they are willing to hold elections. NATO refuses the offer.
<b>19 June 2011</b>	NATO airstrike kills 9 civilians in Tripoli.
<b>20-24 August 2011</b>	Rebel offensive into the loyalist stronghold Tripoli. Most of the loyalist forces withdraw after the 24 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>27 August 2011</b>	Rebel forces take Bin-Jawad, the last major loyalist city before Sirte.
<b>29 August 2011</b>	Members of the Gaddafi family flee to Algeria.
<b>1 September 2011</b>	Russia recognizes the NTC as the only legitimate regime in Libya.
<b>2 September 2011</b>	<b>The day the committee starts. Events after this date are open to change.</b>
<b>16 September 2011</b>	Rebels take Sirte's airport and launch an offensive into the city.
<b>20 October 2011</b>	Sirte is taken over by the rebels, Gaddafi is found and killed.
<b>23 October 2011</b>	The NTC declares that the war is won.
<b>31 October 2011</b>	Operation Unified Protector ends.

## Possible Solutions

As stated before, the delegates are expected to discuss possible solutions on how to stabilize Libya's situation. Solutions can change depending on their countries' stance on the issue. They may aim to end hostilities with a ceasefire applying to all sides including the coalition forces and follow an anti-foreign intervention policy. Or the delegates may choose to increase the authority of the coalition forces in the area and authorize post-war operations.

The question of rebuilding post-war Libya is also encouraged to be addressed. Again, the delegates may propose a self-deterministic policy for Libya or allow more foreign intervention for social and political security.

## Useful Sources for Further Research

### **2011 Military Intervention in Libya: Prevalence of Realist Principles or Humanist Norms?**

<http://www.openaccess.hacettepe.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11655/2562/557abf9d-6290-4c7d-b912-36c995eb54a2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

### **BBC News Libya- The Fall of Gaddafi**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13860458>

### **Battle For Libya- Key Moments**

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/libya/2011/10/20111020104244706760.html>

### **UNSC Resolution 1973**

[https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_03/20110927\\_110311-UNSCR-1973.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110927_110311-UNSCR-1973.pdf)



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