

## Research Article

# Humanitarian Intervention: Analyzing USA's Interest Through Military Intervention During the Libyan Civil War (2011)

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## ABSTRACT

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The first Libyan Civil War (2011) was a revolutionary movement influenced by the Arab Spring. From a non-violent series of protest, the event somehow revolved into an armed conflict between a group of anti-Qaddafi's and the pro-Qaddafi's. Already worsened by vicious military forces under Qaddafi's command, the turmoil ensued and instantly turned more hostile as international interventions meddled in such as the United States and its allies. United States deployed military forces assists during the conflict namely Operation Odyssey Dawn and Operation Unified Protection with the main goal to save the non combat civilians from the war zone. Using literary review as the method by compiling older readings in order to collect information regarding the the topic, this article attempts to analyze what could possibly be USA's genuine intention as they were notorious for interfering in another state's conflict just to fulfill their national interest and how such action of intervention were justified. The said interests concluded as follow: (1) to monopoly Libya's oil and gas by changing the system, maintaining the price, and to open an oil market; (2) to spread their democracy agenda by encouraging the change in the government system; (3) to imprint their hegemony in Libya and Middle East as a whole.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Arab Spring is known as a wave of pro-democratic based protesting movements which took place in the Middle East and North Africa. Starting off from a protest in a form of self-immolation done by a street vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi towards Tunisia's government in late December 2011, this event immediately created a larger street demonstrations movement namely The Jasmine Revolution (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018). This revolution moved by the prolonged corruption done by the people in the regime, social inequality, authoritarian president, repressing political institutions, and the need for a democratic nation. These demonstrations sparked similar movements in other Arab countries such as Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria (Agustinova, 2015).

In Libya, a wave of protests carried out towards their authoritarian leader, Muammar al-Qaddafi, who has led the regime for more than forty years. There were several factors which divided into several aspects that motivated such protests to occur in Libya. From political aspects, the people of Libya demand for democratic system due to the domineering executive and neglected legislative and judicial. This case brought the people's aspirations to be restricted, such regulations were created to punish anyone who speaks against the government—whether its people or the system. Qaddafi, as the leader in that period, strongly erased the existing political parties so no government institutions could interfere with his long maintained regime, creating a wholesomely authoritarian leadership which limited the people's political rights (Alfani, 2016).

Meanwhile in the economic aspect, though Libya is largely known as a country that is rich in gas and oil, the unceasing corruption and nepotism in its government's body prevents the fair economic distribution to happen among middle to lower class people. The significant fall of Libya's economic state also can not be separated from

Qaddafi's mismanage. He rather allocated the country's income on supporting separatist movements, thus emphasizing the suspicion of him being a supporter of terrorism.

However, the protest soon divided Libya into two parties which resulted in civil war. The first one is none other than Qaddafi's supporters who shared the same sentiments due to still being ambushed in earlier years of the president's bright leadership. These people are named the loyalists, some are feeling genuinely thankful, some others mostly just profiting off of Qaddafi's government infamous nepotism. The second group which was the opposition group, easily motivated by the sparked democratic movements in the Arab Spring, hopped in on the train of revolution and became powerful due to support delivered from the international world.

Many actors were soon included in the conflict in the sake of humanitarian matters due to the devastating impact of the civil war and a call to keep international security sheltered just like how the United Nations and its Security Council has been preached as their mission. The United States, with their powerful military forces, even supposing to only interfere from behind, actually was the one with the biggest contribution. The superpower country itself was already notorious for meddling in other nation's conflict in order to obtain their national interest. The intervention they conducted during the Libyan Civil War was also one of the example of how the help they delivered intended for a rather contentious goal. Either to fulfill the national's needs or just to show their power and influence to the international world.

Thus, for obvious reasons, these intentions are what made the humanitarian intervention gain a lot of criticism during its implementation regarding the genuine and its preciseness. Humanitarian intervention itself essentially was a form of soft diplomacy, meant to be actualized without requiring any slightest harm. However, on its practice during the Libyan Civil War, The United States abuse their military power to such limit and sacrificing not so little amount of cost in order to "help" Libya end the war. This manner of the United States government, their eagerness on imposing military practice, unequivocally violates the essence of humanitarian or even human rights matter itself. Military power is unquestionably a form of hard diplomacy, a firm opposite of how soft diplomacy for humanity matters should be. This article will analyze not only the background of the Libyan Civil War itself, and these interventions conducted by the United States, but also investigate the legality of the said interventions and what could probably be the real motive laid behind the human rights orientation.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This article uses literary review as methodology to deepen a further comprehension regarding this manner. To define, literature review is basically a method of compiling and reviewing preceding works and ideas about specific topic and contexts conducted systematically in order to create or reproduce newer and more advanced ideas (Snyder, 2019). Critical evaluation is a crucial part in literary review as it is the key to identify what earlier works or ideas could possibly be lacking in ("Literature Review," n.d.). This also helps writers to refine the topic they choose and expand their understanding before engaging in the new analysis.

There are different types of reviewing academic writings sorted out as guidelines before someone conducts on the said method, these types such as narrative review, systematic review, meta-analysis. and integrative review. The type of review could differ based on which field the topic is coming from.

To conduct literary review, there are some steps as listed below:

1. determine which topic to be reviewed related to the research
2. compiling relevant older works such as former articles, journal, books that still in line with the topic
3. examine the said works and
4. write down the results of review

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1. Libya under Qaddafi's Regime

Preceding the recent civil war which was driven by the need of better, more egalitarian government, Libya had already experienced much the same protest movement. On 1st September 1969, Muammar Qaddafi, a young 27 years old man whose mind shaped by war and crisis in the Middle East all his life, along with his 69 total of peers called Free Officer Movement performed a coup d'etat on King Idris As-Sanussi's and successfully overthrown his monarchy that has been ruling since 1951 (El-sseid et al., 2021). This movement, known as the al-Fateh Revolution, was an output of Qaddafi's disappointment on King Idris I's tendency to support Israel during The Six Day War. Which eventually caused a clash to ensue in the city of Tripoli and Benghazi (Muninggar, 2013). The King was also known for his

mismanagement by corrupting the income from Libya's oil. The movement also aimed to apply socialism to the government system and build a country based on Islamic rules (Sukarno, 2013).

To perform a coup requires a man to possess such strong will and belief. Qaddafi was not a man strange with radical political conceptions. He grew under an uncertain, uncondusive environment all his life due to the Middle East conflicts and armed wars. Such a sharp and domineering mindset had grown within himself and his keen interest in the military field. Therefore his disappointment towards King Idris more likely aimed for the political motive and his individual presentiment rather than uneasiness about how many casualties the clash was going to bring after. Qaddafi's anti-imperialist attitude was one of his biggest stand points. Moved by his resentment towards the westerners, he viewed the former ruler as a traitor due to his moral support towards Israel. By toppling the King's throne, Qaddafi hoped he would be able to establish a government ingrained by his belief, where he believed the system he chose could bring the nation, even the Arab world, into a better state.

The successful coup d'etat, moreover with a little amount of casualties due to a decent organization, put the life of Muammar Qaddafi "The Brotherly Leader and Guide of The Revolution" on a pedestal and instantly changed his position in the eye of the Libyan masses also the government (Muninggar, 2013). Not only designated as a leader of Libya's revolution, Qaddafi favorably granted himself the highest position in leading Libya's military, politic, and economy. He somewhat became the icon of the Libyan people. Controlling most of their voices by developing mass democracy. Giving him absolute power.

Heavily influenced by socialism, Qaddafi led Libya with the so-called "Islamic Socialism" for 42 years. His political philosophy was stored in his book titled "The Green Book", which became a fundamental stance for him in ruling the country (Yusuf, 2013). His idea of socialism was massively based on religion, precisely Islam. Which later resulted in regulations that secluded Libya away from the western countries. With principles leaning closer to Pan-Arabism.

Under his regime, Libya shifted towards improvement by the significant economic growth due to the oil trade. Libya's oil, which was the only and main resource of the country, profitably entered Europe's market. Accordingly, seeking there was a dependency from Europe regarding Libya's oil, Qaddafi and his family built an oil-centered business named Tamoil. The company could gather a fantastic amount of income, 7,5 billion USD per year, making it certainly a valuable part of Qaddafi's economic policies (Gundersen, 2013).

Despite Libya's oil gathering such massive income, the wealth did not reach the people in the country. Instead, Qaddafi and his family were the only subject prone to luxury. In the body of Libya's government, the authoritarian leader only placed his family, everyone in his bloodline, or his loyalists to fill in the structure. Aside from the scandalous nepotism, collusion, and corruption, Qaddafi's known for spending his wealth on his flashy lifestyles. Leaving Libya regressed with little to none development of the country's infrastructure.

In addition to his corruption and collusion, Qaddafi's tendency to neglect Libya's economic state also made the nation suffer. Economic aspect of the country somehow became the back burner due to his military background. Income from the oil was allocated to support armed resistance movements (or terrorism movements, believed by some), supply those groups weapons and provide resources. Benefited him a contentment in supporting something whose moving in the same lane as him. The said background, furthermore, became his tools regarding political maneuver. He differentiated his way in leading a country apart from any other Arab or African countries by heavily focusing on military policy, knocking his rivals down with his military power.

Qaddafi's different, far from the common textbook, way of leading could also be seen from his initiation of two pillars of the government that did damage to Libyan freedom and rights. He divided the republic into a revolutionary government (also known as revolutionary sector) directly led by him as the leader of revolution, accompanied with The Revolutionary Command Council and Revolutionary Committees, and the Jamahiriya Sector claimed to be a form of direct democracy (U.S. Library of Congress, n.d.). The said form of democracy, restriction of the national press, and his regulation of entirely banning any political party to reside caused harm to the people. Incomes were fully possessed by some certain group, affecting the growth of the economy. The people left abandoned and powerless due to no remaining space for human rights and freedom of speech.

### **3.2. The Libyan Civil War**

The very first protest was performed in the city of Benghazi on February 15th, 2011. A group of protesters stormed by the demand to release imprisoned human rights activist (Atlanticist, 2020). The protest later on turned violent as a result of protestors burning the police station and throwing rocks at security forces who responded by handling the calamitous crowd with the usual procedure such as tear gas and rubber bullets. The pro-Qaddafi group, the loyalists, being enraged also took part therefore leading the protest into clash within a day.

Despite being an authoritarian leader with a repressive regime, some of the people viewed Qaddafi as a charismatic and powerful ruler, who was deemed impactful in bringing Libya into a better economic condition. Their matched mindset and belief about anti-imperialist was also made them heartily fond of the dictator. But we can not separate it from the fact that The Loyalists consisted of those who benefited the most from Qaddafi's regime. The one who lived comfortably enough under the "profitable" leadership of Qaddafi's, hence they were willing to fight, or even to die (stated by Qaddafi himself), to maintain their complacent life amidst the situation that went downhill in Libya.

Accordingly, an organization that has long opposed Qaddafi's overlong regime, dubbed themselves as National Front for the Salvation of Libya, initiated a larger wave of demonstration titled "Day of Rage" on the 17th of February, the following two days after disastrous demonstration that injured thirty eight people consisted of civilian and police officers. Struggling with the same motive of overthrowing Libya's long ruling president, this protest resulted in similar violence such as setting fire on the police headquarters in Benghazi, another exchange of fights with pro Qaddafi's, mass-shooting into crowds done by police.

Such uncoordinated armed movements tainted with violence acts met the disproportional fight from military and police units that had led Libya shortly into what defined as civil war. Another riot from rebel groups spewed across the country, occupying the city of Tripoli on 20th of February, after a violence quell with military forces involving a successful bombing attempt, crushed down an area of Katiba's wall.

On the other side, a stream of support was also shown by the loyalists towards Qaddafi's. Not only they marched along with the president's limousine when it was passing along the way of Tripoli, these loyalists got involved in a set of street dispute with the anti-Qaddafi's. The fights happened on the same day, varied from a little to large scales with different locations like the city of Bani Walid and Sirte. The long ensuing unruliness turmoil in Libya eventually evoked diplomatic pursuits to occur later on, drawing outside interventions to engage in. Many state actors were involved such as the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Belgia, and others. Intervention was also coming from Arabic countries such as Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Even supposing to obtain international security by assisting the United Nations to conduct the resolutions on Libya, each country veritably has their own interest to protect from the damage the civil war might create. Whether it was power or ideology fixated matters, economic or materialistic, or maybe even both.

### **3.3. USA's Intervention through Military Assists**

Albeit affirmed to not being involved as intensely as France was, the United States undoubtedly played a big part in military intervention during the first Libyan Civil War. The superpower country began their role meddling into the conflict as per March, 2011, when they (USA, NATO, and Arab League's countries collaborating in an alliance led by USA) initiated that stronger military force is needed to ease the battles among armed civilians also to attain a more controlled situation (Siebens & Case, 2012).

USA became the first country that sent their soldiers down on a joint task force namely JTF-OD (*Join Task Force Odyssey Dawn*), known more as Operation Odyssey Dawn aiming to rescue and evacuate non-armed civilians from the seat of war. The mission was granted by the president of that time, Barack Obama, as he said, according to the first session of Committee on Armed Services United States Senate's 112 congress, the military mission's main focus is saving lives while pursuing a broader goal to detach Libya from its authoritarian leader. Therefore, it means military intervention made to be clearly justified as the US Army stated that United Nations resolutions provide a space for the military to get involved.

Not only that, intervention also clearly occurred under opposition groups' agreement such as NTC (National Transition Council) led by Mustafa Abdel Jalil (Pramita, 2012). NTC, which declared themselves as a legitimate government that represents the people of Libya internationally, asked for intervention from foreign participants whether it was political or military (Siebens & Case, 2012). The request, greeted positively by the United Nations Security Council, produced resolutions in the form of sanctions on Libya and its leader such as no-fly zone, weapon embargo, liquidated Qaddafi's assets, and refraining the president and every person close to him to travel on or aboard.

The operation was established by USAFRICOM under the United States' government direction. USAFRICOM, also known as United States Africa Command, is one of USA's combatant commands with a mission to counter threats on transnational scale in order to reinforce national interests (*USAFRICOM*, n.d.). On that occasion, the operation was led by Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III of the U.S. Naval Forces Africa with several tasks such as maneuvering civilian evacuation, navigating the Egyptian civilians that were residing in or near the location back to Egypt through Tunisia, supply humanitarian assistance hence the intervention was dubbed as humanitarian intervention (Quartaro Sr. et al., 2012).

Came up with the Joint Task Force term, Operation Odyssey Dawn conducted by more than one party. Prior to operation, USAFRICOM tried to form a coalition with Arab Muslim countries and African nations designed to ease the sentiment regarding USA doing another imperialism attack on muslim country, in this case Libya. However, these said countries unified in the operation could not be involved entirely as they were lacking in facilities and will to assist the United States. Consecutively, after lended a help by USEUCOM (United States European Command) and USCENTCOM (United States Central Command), followed by establishing the area for operation, and establishing command relationships between every parties involved which was 13 countries assisting, the operation finally conducted on 19th March 2011, where two days preceding Qaddafi has threatened to burn Benghazi down (Quartaro Sr. et al., 2012).

On its implementation as military intervention, Operation Odyssey Dawn launched an airstrike towards Libya's missile sites. Freeze their flow of command and communication in order to halt any opportunities for them to maintain the attack so the civilians could be saved by the order of 1973 Resolutions. This operation utilized many costs and assets from the United State's force from the U.S Air Force unit's bombers and aircrafts, a couple of U.S Navy ships, also Naval and Marine Aviation assets which included harriers, helicopters, and even more aircrafts.

Thus, this brought up some form of speculation leading into debates about the United States genuinity in assisting the people of Libya, precisely the anti-Qaddafi's which were classified as the victim in the conflict. The amount that the US has cost for this military intervention was not something counted as little, more like generous. Meanwhile, the superpower country has no business or role in the conflict since they never had any history of directly clashing with Libya. The business whatsoever, more congruent if it was about national interest rather than just to help. There was no urgency for the United States to exhaust its political and military instruments if they were only being genuinely helpful. Many come to the conclusion that there were national interests there in Libya that the United States needed to protect from the damage of war, or maybe from its leader itself, Qaddafi.

#### **3.4. NATO's Humanitarian Intervention**

Subsequently, only five days afterwards NATO took part in the so-called humanitarian intervention by continuing what the United States' force had executed in order to uphold UNSCR 1973 on Operation Odyssey Dawn (Siebens & Case, 2012). NATO's alliance force conducted Operation Unified Protection on March 24th, taking over the command of air and marine operations with the same goal of saving the civilians and avoiding such casualties to occur by protecting the civilians focused area from the aggression of Qaddafi's forces. The operation went under the command of Charles Bouchard, Lieutenant General from Canadian Air Force with three measures, 1) to invoke arms embargo mandated by the United Nations, 2) impose a no-fly zone over Libya territory, and 3) protect the civilians (Gertler, 2012).

Arms embargo launched a day prior, precisely on 23th March. The main task was to monitor the central mediterranean and Libya coast, and reinforce a strike if needed, supposing that some party will violate the embargo. A day after, no-fly zone was activated under the agreement and command of the allies (nations involved in the intervention), and finally on 27th March, NATO carried out their final measure to give protection to civilians from the probability of Qaddafi's forces attack.

This operation claimed to be evenly conducted, judging by the amount of casualties (Elharathi, 2016). However, during its pursuit until its end, NATO showed a lot of reluctance, prone to debates and questions regarding its legality and neutrality. It is to be said that what happened during the operation was something beyond the United Nations' parameter (Gaub, 2013). Especially when the launched strike intended for civilians' protection did more harm than good. OUP was also perceived to likely disregard the UN's resolutions as a way to eliminate Qaddafi, where this concern consequently ended as suspicion towards NATO, the allies involved, foremost United States' fascination in toppling the regime (Wester, 2020).

NATO unshakably denied the allegation aimed towards their motive regarding the intervention by asserting it as humanitarian intervention. Purely helping the civilians as their purpose—the most necessary measure. NATO also denied targeting Qaddafi and his family, saying the operation was not directed to individuals ("Nato Denies Targeting Muammar Gaddafi," 2011). But as the six months operation kept proceeding with the attack and the bombings, as the intervention indirectly paved a way for more clashes and victims, NATO's credibility and transparency were kept on being demanded. Especially on 20th March, where NATO indirectly assisted the anti-Qaddafi's in killing the dictator on his convoy of vehicles to Sirte. The warplane attacked the vehicles, leaving Qaddafi's wounded, much vulnerable in the eyes of the weaponized anti-Qaddafi's (Auken, 2011). He was massacred later in the same day along with his two sons, the loyalists, and his aides. NATO on the other hand kept insisting they were lacking in acknowledgement regarding the circumstances of the massacre (Blitz, James and Carnegie, 2011). Refused to take responsibility.



NATO's attitude and genuinity are even more questioned by the demeanor of the people in the United State's government body, especially The Obama Administration. Meanwhile the president kept on emphasizing on humanitarian matters, goals to protect civilians, a concern regarding the possibilities this civil war could bring to international conscience, Hillary Clinton (who were believed by some as the actor who pushed the president the most in this intervention) showed rather an aloof presence when Qaddafi was killed by NATO with such statement which was, "We came, we saw, he died".

The president also claimed the planning of these interventions were disheveled, especially the aftermath of Qaddafi's death that was not counted on his master plan, stating that the intervention failed and led Libya into an even more unsettled condition. Thus this brought up more questions about the necessity regarding the intervention which utilized military power. How these military interventions, regardless of being dubbed as humanitarian intervention, were justified in the first place and what was the consideration taken before it was conducted because we all know any use of military power on armed civilians, moreover a common civilian could result in rapid death toll and cataclysm.

### **3.5. How these Interventions Justified**

Despite being named as "humanitarian intervention", a state could not just interfere with another's conflict, moreover handing military assists incautiously. The United Nations already regulated basic rules on military force usage on its charter. It stated, on article number 2 (4), performing a threat or force usage on another state is prohibited unless there is a valid relevant reason in the international law perspective (Ogunnowo & Chidozie, 2020). It is also indirectly allowing a state to request military help from another without being counted as a breach to their government security. Thus, this applied to the Libyan Civil War conflict considering the United States' intervention was done with consent given by NTC as Libyan representative. This kind of request is considered as an exception in the UN's charter, categorized as self-defense when an armed and harmful conflict occurs in a state and they have rights to respond with the same force, including asking additional force from another more powerful state.

Quoting R.J. Vincent's statement on a country's legitimation on using military forces to avoid violation on human rights, he stated that it is instantly becoming international society's responsibility to do humanitarian intervention on a country whose government had systematically and profoundly defied the human rights of its people (Indrawan, 2017). Same case happened in Libya, where Qaddafi's repressive regime has harmed Libyan's human rights, thus the said statement justifying United States intervention in the conflict.

Furthermore, humanitarian intervention has its own qualification to note. First, intervention towards a country's conflict needs to be enforced if the emergency situation is highly hazardous. Unless it is not qualified enough to be categorized as dangerous, intervention rather avoidable therefore it leads into point number two; the usage of weapons is the last and the least option. Intervention also needs to fit in the measure of proportionality regarding the power and must require a high probability that the usage of weapons and military power will achieve positive humanity results (Indrawan, 2013).

By the statements above, the United States might give the impression of fulfilling all its requirements to conduct a humanitarian intervention to assist Libya in fighting a repressive government to which extent has become a massacre in the process. As stated by Senator John McCain during the first session of the Committee on Armed Services United States Senate's 1012 congress, related his concern on Qaddafi's power that could possibly threaten the world and Libyan people.

However, there was never any pursuit of intervention which was able to fulfill the said requirements. Instead, in its implementation, failure often occurs due to lack of comprehension of the humanitarian intervention concept itself. National interest of the countries involved in intervention is also worsening the circumstances. The United States and his allies deemed to have failed on interfering the second situation got worse, impacted by heavy military power usage. The superpower country gained plenty of criticism, especially when a lot more people paid more attention to what actually happened politically in Libya with a broader perspective. The truth is, Qaddafi never directly harmed civilians, the exact opposite of what the United States kept on emphasizing on every occasion. The dictator and his military force were only targeting the protesters loaded with arms and weapons. And of course, every armed opposition group that moves without any government measures is considered dangerous for the country. The United States and The Middle East distinctness in viewing and implementing human rights were also believed as something that catalyzed the conflict. The United States portrayed very eager to actualize their human rights promotion since it was a part of their foundation and agenda, dismissing that Libya, with its different form of government, probably has their own conception about human rights. But primarily, what needed to be highlighted the most was The United States' effort in implementing human rights which resulted as human rights violation itself. Performing a dense

military power in order to solve the problem was also deemed as negligence of the essence of humanitarian intervention as a form of soft diplomacy despite the urgency to do such.

Furthermore, regarding of how clear the United States' military goals on intervening in the conflict, the motives remained hazy due to their own national interests on Libya which could possibly laid behind the humanitarian aspiration disguise. The next explanation will observe the United States' evident reason for their interference in the first Libyan civil war.

### ***3.6. United States' Interest on Libya's Oil***

In its application, every matter related to diplomacy or international relations as a whole, mostly based on a nation's sole interest where this interest consists of such devotion to obtain power or just merely to strive economically. Morgenthau asserted that intervention upon a state prevails as an option to preserve national interests (Datta, 2014). He stated, where it has reached the point where an interest requires a state to interfere with another's conflict, an intervention must be conducted with calculation related to the choices of occasions, which interest is going to be involved, and what kind of power is available for usage.

Ever since the Cold War, the United States has been notorious for meddling in the Middle East affairs and matters prompted by the call for oil and gas. The superpower country has been keen on the Middle East's supplies of energy and the flow of their oil resources during the war. But what was more notable is that the United States' imprint on the Middle East was not only to secure those oils for themselves, but to build an open and accessible oil market for another nation such as Japan and Europe (Rubin, 2021). Importing the Middle East oil whilst gaining profits, keeping the price stable and desirable, also eliminating actors perceived as a threat in the process. For instance, some Arab nations they labeled as promoting terrorism like Iraq, or nations who were on nuclear development like Iran.

Thus, Libya on the other hand is notable for their wealth that essentially came from oil production. With only one resource, Libya built and developed a society somewhat rapid in its improvement since the 1969 revolution (Siebens & Case, 2012). Libya is easily dubbed as the most developed country in Africa, excelling in literacy and life expectancy paired with easy access to medical care and sanitation. The United States too has been dependent on Libya's oil ever since the republic was still in the monarchy's grip. Million after million barrels of oil has been imported, one of the sources was from the Kingdom of Libya around the 1960s, to the United States to bolster their performance near the end of World War II (Davidson, 2017).

It has become such an easy pattern to get left unnoticed. Looking back at the United States' history on its intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq in disguise of humanitarian motives, namely confronting terrorism movement. What the US actually intended was to seize their oil by destabilizing the national oil company (NOC) and turning their oil industry to become private and profiting off of it. Not only United States, but its right hand NATO's, intervening Libya with the so called humanitarian intervention, and was actually recognized by some as the effect of Qaddafi's government economic principles (Isthianto Utomo, 2018). Urged by the western countries who were upset by how irritating Qaddafi was towards his trade partners (big international oil companies), NATO took part in dethroning Qaddafi's which eventually killed him in the end (Indrawan, 2017).

Eliminating Qaddafi, also overthrowing his regime, was obviously the plan of the so-called superpower country in order to secure their oil supply let alone maintain the price. The dictator and his regulations regarding oil trade were deemed problematic by the eyes of the west. Qaddafi's strong view on Islamic socialism and his apparent hatred towards western countries created an uneasy environment for the United States and their allies to conduct oil transactions due to the dictator refraining to trade with them.

Driven by the interest and what Libya economically has on their store, the United States became very outspoken regarding Libya's strive to democracy. Offering the torn republic a help labeled as an act moved by humanitarian substance. The US itself too already showcased their pine enthusiasm in strengthening their economic ties with North Africa, Libya included (Mafiroh, n.d.). These attempt to interfere in the conflict, viewed as an effort of the United States to pave their way in for the said economic ties.

### ***3.7. Humanitarian Intervention: A Strive for Power?***

The United States is well-known for their democracy promotion agenda since the early 1900's as a part of their foreign policy along with military intervention and economic encouragement. Therefore the said promotion could not be detached from military intervention, notably when NATO exists with the same vision (Hannah, 2019). The democracy promotion was introduced as some formula to attain a nation's political stability. Moreover making it an enticing solution for any country whose government system is at stake due to conflict or war.

In relation to the United State's intervention in the first Libyan Civil War, asserted by president at that time Barack Obama, was to eradicate the power of dictatorship with democracy as the resolution. Showing a sheer inclination of new government installment despite other statements following still emphasize on the humanitarian purpose (Gartenstein-Ross, 2015). There was a probability of the United States taking over Libya's government and transforming its system into what the superpower country and their conception believe fits better. If not subtle enough, to conquer the resources after establishing a new system.

The democracy promotion, if applicable enough, was anticipated to make oil trade easier for the United States considering the need for a more liberal system in order to open the international market for the said oil trades (Putri Kartika, 2021). Back to oil as their main interest, the democracy agenda was an extended part of their intervention motives.

Weapon trading was also believed as a part of their actual intention. The United States is infamously known for their arms trade and their military power. They seek opportunities from unstable nations involved in a conflict, especially the Middle East with their state of geopolitic, to hunt customers by providing help such as weapons support.

Just like how international relations are basically the struggle for power, the United States' encouragement in Libya's political system transformation was an attempt to imprint their hegemony. By helping the people overthrow such dictators like Qaddafi, the capitalist hegemony expected to take place after the transition, establishing their power in international policy. Not only that, by persevere a good and healthy diplomatic affairs with Libya by assisting them in their conflict, the United States expected better relationships with other North African states and hoped for the Middle East to decrease the tension prior. Their involvement in the Libyan revolution was intended to be a turning point for the United States relationship with Arab. Once again sustain their remark on the contingent.

This civil war, which is also a struggle to retrieve democratic nations, was viewed by the US as a prospect to pave their way into democratization and liberation in Libya (Agbaenyi et al., 2018). Which, if successfully maintained long enough, could breach their way to acquire the Middle East whether it is the region or especially; its resources.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The wave of massive revolution in the Middle East root of government infamously known as the Arab Spring was something that escalated from a personal protest into a series of weapons equipped conflicts. Starting off from a single protest in a form of self-immolation conducted by a street vendor in Tunisia later turned bigger into a demonstration called The Jasmine Revolution. This movement spread strong influence into other Arab countries that had for long struggle for democracy including Libya where its authoritarian leader, Muammar Qaddafi, has led for forty years and becoming more and more incompetent and dictatorial.

From a peaceful demonstration, the protest voiced towards Gaddafi's government somehow escalated to a hazardous extent where many civilians became casualties. Many factors led this to happen and develop, from the significant increase in demonstrators which consequently forced Qaddafi—as a leader in urge to protect his regime—to promptly use his power to move the military to confront the massive wave of demonstrators. Not only abusing military power on civilians, Qaddafi's also restricted the space for demonstrators to assert their voice and opinion by censoring and suspending the communication route.

Apart from Qaddafi's attempt to maintain his power in Libya that created such damage for the civilians, the clash between pro-Qaddafi and anti-Qaddafi, and the surge of emerging violent protests done by the opposition organizations handled rather vigorously by military power also took part causing the chaos to prolong. Which to certain extent turned the condition into a heated and damaging civil war.

By such urgency, international intervention instantly became crucial. In this case, the United States with its right hand NATO, though asserted they were not as outspoken as the French in interfering the already blazing clashes, still took an important part in the Libyan Civil War. Attempted to justify their intervention as a humanitarian based decision and under NTC's request as Libya representative, the United States deployed military assists as a form of intervention under joint task forces such as Operation Odyssey Dawn and NATO's Operation Unified Protection.

Nevertheless, there is no diplomacy or any international affairs bound without a state's interest including United States interest in interfering with Libya's conflict. From the need for cheap oil and gas to geopolitical aspects like promoting democracy and forming a hegemony in North Africa and the Middle East, many interests lay behind the United State's humanitarian aspiration. The humanitarian intervention too on its practice and discourse is still considered contentious.



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