

2014 Libyan Civil War (CRISIS)
LakeMUN 2021



Historical Context

After World War 2, and the period of decolonization began in Africa, the Kingdom of Libya declared their independence from the United Kingdom on the 24 of December, 1951. The Kingdom of Libya established a constitutional and hereditary monarchy under King Idris. In 1959, significant oil reserves were discovered, enabling Libya to go from one of the poorest nations in the world, to the richest in under a decade. However, this period of prosperity would not last as unrest began to build due to the increased concentration of the nation's wealth ending up in the hands of King Idris. On the 1st of September, 1969, a group of military officers under the command of Muammar Gaddafi, launched a coup against King Idris called the Al Fateh Revolution.

Gaining power, Gaddafi moved swiftly to reform Libya by firstly removing all Italian influence. In October of 1970, all Italian owned assets were seized by Libya and the 12,000 Italian community were removed from the country. This day became a national holiday called "Vengeance Day". There was also an increase in internal political repression, and the idea of political dissent was made illegal under Law 75 of 1973. With these reforms, Gaddafi also wanted to enact some preogressive reforms for Libya. He established the Revolutionary Women's Formation and in 1970, a law was introduced affirming equality of the sexes. In 1972, a law was passed that criminalized the marriage of any females under the age of 16 and ensured that a women's consent is a prerequisite for marriage. On the 25th of October, 1975, an unsuccessful coup was launched by 20 military officers. This resulted in the arrests and executions of the coup plotters. On March 2nd, 1977, Libya changed its title to the "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya", with Gaddafi officially passing power to the General People's Committees, and claiming the title of a "symbolic figurehead".

In February of 1977, Libya began supplying the People's Armed Forces in Chad. These forces were considered rebels by the Chad government and conflict eventually began between Chad and Libya when Libya's support of the rebels escalated into an invasion by Libya. This war would be waged for almost 10 years, which eventually resulted in a Chadian victory and Libya losing control of the Aouzou Strip. Later in 1977, a 4 day border conflict was waged between Libya and Egypt that resulted in a ceasefire that was moderated by then Algerian President, Houari Boumeniene.

From 1977 to the present day, per capita income in Libya rose to more than US \$11,000, while the HDI (Human Development Index) in Libya became the highest in Africa. This was achieved because Libya did not borrow any loans remaining debt free. Libya also housed the “Great Manmade River”, which allowed free access to fresh water across the country. There was also financial support for university scholarships and employment programs. However, most of the income coming from Libya’s oil supply was used on arm purchases and sponsoring dozens of paramilitary and terrorist groups across the world. ¹

The 2011 Civil War

In 2011, 42 years into Gaddafi’s rule, Libya had a per capita income of USD \$14,000, however, it was estimated that a third of the country was living under the poverty line. What Gaddafi had fought so hard to get rid of, he was now the main culprit. A large share of the business enterprise was controlled by Gaddafi and his family. In 2009 and 2011, the Freedom of the Press Index rated Libya as the most censored state in the Middle East and North Africa. It was illegal to create new political parties under Law 75, and anyone caught doing so would be executed. The group that contributed most to the silencing of political opinion was the Revolutionary Committees. During the 1980s, the Committee had gained a considerable amount of power, until Gaddafi had to restrict the power of the committee.

In early January of 2011, upset over the lack of infrastructure, and political corruption protests in Bayda, Derna, Benghazi, and other cities began to break into government housing buildings and occupied them. In Bayda, protestors clashed with police as well as attacking government offices. Inspired by the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, more and more people began to attend protests. Social media played a central role in organizing the opposition to Gaddafi’s government, with a social media website declaring an alternative government. The protests and unrest really took off on February 2nd, 2011, with protestors calling it the “Libyan Revolution of Dignity”. Protests turned into riots, as police and pro-Gaddafi loyalists began to squash the gatherings of protestors. On the 15 of February, 500 to 600 demonstrators protested in front of Benghazi's police station. Protestors armed with stones, petrol, and molotov cocktails damaging cars, buildings, and roads. Police shot tear gas and rubber bullets into the crowds, injuring 38. On the 16 of February in Beyida, Zawiya and Zintan

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libya>

called for an end to Gaddafi's government and set fire to police and security buildings. On the 18 of February, police and army personnel withdrew from Benghazi after being overwhelmed by protestors. Some of these personnel joined the protests in seizing the local radio station. In Tripoli, television and public radio stations had been sacked and protestors set fire to security buildings, Revolutionary Committee Offices, and the interior ministry building.

Many in the opposition called for a return to the 1952 constitution that allowed for a multi-party democracy. Those who had joined the protests from the military started to form fighting units that consisted of volunteers and military personnel, to defend against attacks from pro-government forces and "liberate" cities under Gaddafi's control. In Tobruk, volunteers turned a former government building into a center that helped protestors, volunteers also began guarding ports, local banks, and oil terminals to keep oil flowing, and teachers and engineers set up a committee to collect weapons. The National Transitional Council was established on the 27th of February to consolidate efforts for the change in rule of Libya. This government said they would hold free elections and draft a national constitution.

In the early weeks of the war, Benghazi, Tobruk, Misrata, Bayda, Zawiya, Zuwara, Sabratha, and Sorman had all fallen into rebel hands. By the end of February, Gaddafi's government had lost control over a significant part of Libya including the harbours of Ra's Lanuf and Brega. In early March, however, Gaddafi's forces began to push back the rebels and eventually even reached Benghazi and Misrata. In March, a multi-state coalition led by the United States, began a military intervention against Gaddafi's government under the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973. The same day the resolution was passed, military operations began with cruise missiles and airstrikes striking military installations across the country. NATO also enforced an arms embargo and established a no-fly zone and naval blockade, isolating Libya. In May of 2011, the Russian government officially recognized the National Transitional Council as a legitimate dialogue partner. In June, Gaddafi said they were willing to hold elections and Gaddafi would step down if he was not elected. NATO rejected the offer and aerial bombardments resumed.

On the 20th of August, there was a rebel offensive that pushed Gaddafi's forces all the way to the entrance of Tripoli. They occupied Green Square, renaming it "Martyrs Square". Street fighting was heavy in Tripoli as Gaddafi loyalists tried to hold the city. While rebels had thought Gaddafi was in Tripoli, once they took the city he was no longer there. The city would not be officially

under rebel control until around the 1st of September. When this happened, Russia recognized the NTC as the only legal regime in the country and on the 12th of September, China followed suit.

With the defeat of the Loyalists and the death of Gaddafi, loyalists began to flee the country or hide within. Sporadic clashes between the NTC and loyalists continued but with low intensity. During the transitional period, the NTC functioned as an interim legislature. In early May of 2012, it passed measures that granted immunity to former rebel fighters for acts committed during the civil war, and ordered that all detainees accused of fighting for Gaddafi should be tried or released by the 12th of July, 2012. It also adopted Law 37, prohibiting the publication of propaganda criticising the revolution, questioning the authority of Liya's governing organs, or praising Muammar Gaddafi, his family, government, or ideas.²

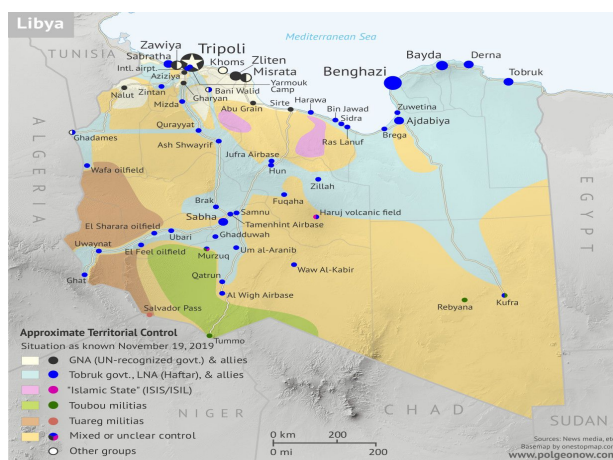
The Current Situation

In 2012, the newly established General National Congress, won the national popular vote in the 2012 elections. The GNC was made up of two major parties, the National Forces Alliance and the Justice and Construction Party. These two groups failed to reach any compromise on issues that the GNC faced. The GNC could not deliver any progress to Libya due to political deadlock and only increased the division in the already fragmented country. Over the course of the two year ruling period the GNC had established, the country saw the suppression of women's rights, expansion of armed groups, and the banning of anyone who was in Gaddafi's government from holding office in the GNC. The boiling point was reached when on December 23rd, 2012, the GNC voted unanimously to extend its power for at least one more year. Failing to stand down from power, widespread protests occurred, rejecting the GNC's extension plan and demanding the resignation of congress. On the 14th of February, 2014, General Khalifa Haftar ordered the GNC to dissolve and called for the formation of a caretaker government committee to oversee new elections. The GNC laughed at Haftar and called the action an "attempted coup".

On the 25th of May, 2014, Haftar started his Operation Dignity offensive against the General National Congress. Haftar called his faction the "House of Representatives", and held elections on the 25th of June. These elections had only an 18% turnout in which the Islamists were defeated. They accused the

² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libyan_Civil_War_\(2011\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libyan_Civil_War_(2011))

house to be dominated by pro-Gaddafi officials and declared support for the GNC. On the 13th of July, Tripoli Islamists and militias seized Tripoli International Airport. The GNC reconvened and voted themselves as the replacement to the newly elected House of Representatives, with Tripoli as their capital, Nouri Abusahmain as president and Omar al-Hasi as prime minister. The House of Representatives then relocated to Tobruk, aligning themselves with Haftar and declaring him their army chief. As of now the GNC is based in Tripoli with control over Misrata, and the House of Representatives, with Abdullah al-Thani's government and its parliament in Tobruk. Benghazi remains contested between pro-Haftar forces and radical Islamists.³



GNC is also GNA, Government of National Accord

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libyan_Civil_War_\(2014%E2%80%932020\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libyan_Civil_War_(2014%E2%80%932020))

Character List

Aguila Saleh Issa - President of Libyan House of Representatives who was elected as the parliamentary speaker in the 2014 Libyan Parliament election.

Abdullah al-Thani - Prime Minister of the Libyan House of Representatives. He negotiated the reopening of 2 out of 4 oil ports seized by rebels and demanded he be put in as interim Prime Minister for the House of Representatives, allowing him greater power in the fight against the GNA.

Field Marshall Khalifa Haftar - High Commander of the Libyan National Army. Took part in the original 1969 coup with Muammar Gaddafi that brought him to power. He was captured by Chadian forces in the war against Chad, a major embarrassment for Gaddafi at the time. While in prison, Haftar and others came up with plans to overthrow Gaddafi, but he was released in a deal with the United States and spent nearly two decades in Virginia. Haftar is the main culprit for starting the opposition to the GNC and launching a campaign to overthrow the GNA government.

Abdulrazek al-Nadoori - Chief of the General Staff of the Libyan National Army. Loyal to the House of Representatives and Field Marshal Haftar, Nadoori not only serves as Chief of the General Staff but also serves as the military governor of Eastern Libya.

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi - Libyan Political Figure and Son of Muammar al-Gaddafi. Part of his father's inner circle, he performed in public relations and diplomatic roles on his behalf. He publicly turned down his father's offer of the country's second highest post and held no official government position. As of now he has been imprisoned by pro GNA militia, but still holds influence on Pro-gaddafi supporters, and is being watched closely by the House of Representatives.

Fayez al-Sarraj - Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord. His father, Mostafa al-Sarraj was a minister during the Libyan Monarchy. Before the overthrow of Gaddafi, he served under the Housing Ministry. In 2014, he served as the Minister of Housing and Utilities in the Maiteeq Cabinet of the GNC.

Fathi Bashagha - Minister of the Interior for the Government of National Accord. After the 1st civil war in 2011, he joined the Military Council as Head of the Information and Coordinates Department, then as spokesperson for the Misrata Military Council. Bashagha was elected to the House of Representatives for the city of Misrata in 2014, but he decided to boycott the House of Representatives within a group of Misrata deputies.

Salah Eddine al-Namrush - Minister of Defense for the Government of National Accord.

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi - Egyptian President elected in 2014. Egypt has long been very concerned over the conflict in Libya, due to the spread of Jihadist ideas and actions spreading to Egypt. There have been numerous attacks on Egypt's trade interests in Libya which were rampant prior to Haftar's offensive, especially with the kidnapping of truck drivers and sometimes workers were murdered. Due to this, government in Egypt had many reasons to support Haftar's rebellion

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - The President of Turkey. Turkey has been one of the most vocal critics of the civil war, mostly aimed against the Eastern Government led by Khalifa Haftar. Turkey has been found supporting the GNA by sending arms and other materials.

Mohammed bin Zayed - Crown Prince of the United Arab Emirates who is seen as the driving force behind the UAE's interventionist foreign policy and is a leader of a campaign against Islamist movements in the Arab World. The UAE has been identified as a strong supporter of Khalifa Haftar and the LNA, which saw the Libyan general and his forces as the best bulwark to contain and combat various Islamist groups in the war torn country. The UN reported that the UAE supplied Haftar's forces with aircraft, over 100 armoured vehicles and over US\$200 million in aid

Ahmed Maiteeq - Deputy Prime Minister of The Government of National Accord. During the 2011 Civil War, he took part in the fighting in Misrata and the liberation of Tripoli. He was a member of the Chamber for the Liberation of Tripoli during the conflict.

Al-Mahdi Al-Barghathi - Minister of Defense of the Government of National Accord. One of the first officers in the military to join the rebels in the 2011 fight against Gaddafi. In 2014 he joined General Khalifa Haftar's Operation Dignity against the Islamists in the General National Congress and commanded the 204 Tank Brigade.

Maj. Gen. Osama Juwaili - Commander of the Western Military Zone, aligned with GNA. Served as Minister of Defense for the GNC. He fought in the 2011 civil war. Immediately prior to his appointment on 22 November 2011, Juwaili's Zintan Brigade, a band of anti-Gaddafi fighters based in Zintan in Libya's Nafusa Mountains, located and captured Saif al-Islam Gaddafi.

Nouri Abusahmain - President of the GNC, or National Salvation Government. After being elected President, he set up an Islamist armed group, the LROR (Libya Revolutionaries Operations Room) , which attempted an Islamist coup in October 2013.

Khalifa al-Ghawil - Prime Minister of the National Salvation Government.

Sadiq Al-Ghariani - Grand Mufti of the National Salvation Government. As is natural in Muslim countries Sheikh Ghariani has been to have advising the Libyan public over the years since after the February 17th revolution calling for peace and unity in the country and warning the public about issues that affect their religious rights and freedoms. He is also a notable supporter of well known hardline Islamist Operation Libya Dawn.

Wissam Ben Hamid - Libya Shield Commander as well as leader of the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries. In 2011 he was one of the rebels who revolted against Muammar Qaddafi and became the leader of a battalion affiliated to the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya

Salim Derby - Commander of Abu Salim Martyrs Brigade. Brigade is an Islamist militia that advocates for the implementation of Sharia law within Derna, Libya. Affiliated with the National Salvation Government and Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries.

Brig. Gen. Saqr Geroushi - Chief of Staff of the Libyan Air Force, House of Representatives. Has direct authority over orders of the House of Representatives air force.

Gen. Mohammad Ali al-Haddad - Chief of the General Staff of the Libyan Army, GNA. In Command of the military zone in the center of the country.

Gen. Ali Kanna - Commander of the Southern Military Zone, GNA. In charge of offensives and positioning of troops in Southern Libya.

Col. Rida Issa - Commander of Libyan Navy, GNA. Controls any remnants of what is left loyal to the GNA in terms of naval support.

Beji Caid Essebsi - President of Libya. First president elected by Universal Suffrage, the Tunisian government has shown to be sympathetic with Islamists ruling Tripoli (Government of National Accord).

Omar al-Bashir - Sudanese president since 1989, Bashir serves as both president and as a dictator. Sudan armed the rebels that overthrew the Gaddafi government in 2011. Sudan has officially recognized the Government of National Accord and not the House of Representatives.

Numbers

House of Representatives - Army: 25,000, Air Force: 120+ planes and 4700 personal, Navy: 1 Frigate, 1 minesweeper, 1 landing craft.

Government of National Accord - Army: 30,000, Air Force 50+ planes, and 2500 personal, Navy: 1 Frigate, 1 Corvette, 1 Missile Boat, 2 minesweepers, 2 landing crafts

National Salvation Government - Army: 15,000, Air Force: 100+ planes and 3000 personal, no navy.

Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries - Army: 2,000, no air force, no navy.