



**The Contradictions and Ambiguity of  
U.S. Policy in Libya since 2011**

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## The Contradictions and Ambiguity of U.S. Policy in Libya since 2011

Long before 2011, Libya had tensed relations with the United States due to the Libyan agents' terrorist attacks that bombed American airliner, which led to U.S. economic sanctions and military retaliation. However, Gaddafi repudiated terrorism and ended his missile and nuclear programs in a deal with the U.S. and Europe, compounded with flourished U.S-Libyan relations. Later, in 2011, the Arab Spring engulfed Libya, where the people protested against Gaddafi's rule. Force was used to re-establish control in the country and to disarm militants. However, Western regimes advocated for an intervention under the United Nations auspices to prevent a massacre against civilians waged by Gaddafi.

Washington intervention in Libya marked the third time in a decade that U.S. embraced regime change and then fails to plan for the post conflict consequences. In 2001, U.S. toppled the Taliban in Afghanistan but failed to stabilize the country. Two years later, in 2003, U.S. failed again to stabilize the post conflict situation in Iraq, as U.S. wanted to avoid the prolonged process of nation-building. The Bush administration led to the collapse of Iraqi institutions.

President Obama fell into the same trap, the intervention in Libya aimed to protect the civilians threatened by the Libyan government forces; however, the objective of the intervention expanded, resulting in a lengthy war where thousands of civilians died. The Obama administration failed to adopt measures to reconstruct the Libyan nation so did Trump who was unwilling to plan for the re-construction of Libya. The Trump administration was guided by "America First" doctrine which was driven by a clear realist approach that aimed to maintain U.S. national interests and carve U.S. involvement in the Middle East. With the 2021 new American leadership, U.S. will probably reassert its influence through diplomatic efforts to address Russia's entrenched influence in the international system.

With the contemporary developments and progress toward the establishment of a unified government in Libya after a decade of prevailed insecurity and civil war, the Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue issues a report to focus on U.S. policies toward disrupted Libya, which relatively focused on countering terrorism. The report demonstrates the arc of U.S. policy in Libya over the past decade, where it sheds the light on the situation of Libya in order to understand the context in which the U.S. administrations conducted their policies.

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The report begins with Obama's administration constrained approach to Libya, which was marked by confusion and reluctance as a result of both the 2012 Benghazi attack and the setbacks in Libya's government transition.

The report then demonstrates the ambiguity of Trump administration's policy, which prevented the U.S. from playing a constructive role in Libya. The report also highlights the Biden administration diplomatic efforts to promote a stable Libya by cooperating with international partners and engaging in mediation efforts.

The report identifies the U.S. stance on Turkey as a warring international actor in Libya particularly as it caused resentment in the U.S. administration and infuriated international criticisms. The report finally sheds the light on the current situation in Libya, where a new unity government was established.

### **Obama's Administration Reluctancy**

With the Arab Spring rapid developments and spread among Arab countries, the Libyan people revolted against Qaddafi's government, inspired by the Arab Spring protests. The U.S. was initially unable to react to the developments of the Arab Spring revolts. However, the U.S. quickly focused on its commitment to spread democratic values and supported the Libyan uprising. The administration justified its intervention through the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Obama said "We knew that if we waited one more day, Benghazi...could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world." The Russian and Chinese governments have also authorized the resolution to take the necessary measures to protect the civilians.

On March 19, 2011, President Obama launched an air campaign against Libya. The NATO led by the U.S. bombed the Libyan government forces, installed and backed insurgents. The intervention alternated to a lengthy, costly, regime change war at the expense of the Libyan people.

U.S. policy focused on the electoral process rather than the nation building process. The Libyan transitional government (TNC) held general elections to handle power as a result of its failure to establish effective democratic institutions. Likewise, the U.S. and EU countries supported the 2012

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election process which was supported by the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UMSMIL). The 2012 elections resulted in the development of the new interim government, General National Congress (GNC). However, the U.S. ignored the fact that the GNC lacked the instruments of governance; where the government authority was undermined by the militias who filled the void.

In September 11th, 2012, militants raided the United States embassy in Benghazi, leading to the death of U.S. Ambassador Stevens, and 3 American officials. The 2012 Benghazi attack was a turning point in U.S. policy toward Libya. What's striking is the fact that Clinton said that "the U.S. will not turn its back on the Libyan transition to a free and democratic nation"; yet the administration policy implemented the exact opposite.

In the aftermath of the 2012 attack, the U.S. constrained its policy toward Libya by limiting its involvement. United States State Department advised American citizens to leave the country and placed Libya on a level 4 travel advisory due to high levels of crime, terrorism, civil unrest and armed conflict. The warning is still in place as of April 2021 due to continuity of the unstable situation in Libya, terrorism, violence, and high level of Covid-19.

In 2014, Libya held parliamentary elections for the House of Representatives. Power has been split between rival groups in Tripoli and Tobruk, with the latter recognized by the international community.

With power division and rise of rival governments, Libya experienced its worst wave of violence, where militias and terrorist groups increased their power and sustained their control by creating chaos and refusing to disarm. The competition led to the formation of two nation-wide militia coalitions in July 2014, Operation Dignity, to evict Islamist militia from Eastern Libya formed by General Haftar and Libya Dawn, formed by armed groups from Misrata and other Islamist militias.

Despite the deteriorating situation in Libya, U.S. refrained from intervening. The U.S. initially failed to articulate a policy to reverse the situation in Libya, and has further distanced itself following the 2012 Benghazi attack. With the increasing violence and rivalry among Libyan factions, the U.S. had taken a further noticeable step back as Libya began to unravel in 2014. The U.S. removed its embassy due to security concerns, a Special Forces operation which was detained, and rendering the suspect of the 2012 embassy attack to the U.S.

The U.S. has also designated Ansar al Sharia in Benghazi and Ansar al Sharia in Darnah as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs). The U.S. asserted that both groups have been involved in

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conducting terrorist attacks against civilians and was responsible for the 2012 Benghazi attack against the U.S. Special Mission.

However, in September 2014, Libya came back into U.S. agenda in order to counter the infiltrated militia groups affiliated to ISIS, leading the U.S. to bomb ISIS targets in the port city of Derna and rallied for international support to counter the threat posed by ISIS. It was difficult for the U.S. to neglect and dismiss the emergence of ISIS in Libya, which is less than 500 kilometers away from Europe.

In U.S. fight against ISIS, the measures to build democratic institutions and accounts for human rights violations have been abandoned. The U.S. Agency for International Development has limited its human rights activities, and worked toward supporting municipality projects and private sector to strengthen a more unified Libya.

In the need of attaining stability, and to secure its international image as an advocate for democracy, the U.S and international actors gave primacy to talk between the rival governments facilitated by the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), resulting in Libya Political Agreement 2015. The 2015 UN-led peace process in in Skhirat, Morocco, helped establish the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Serraj.

Libya had two recognized power centers, an international recognized government based in Tripoli and an international recognized parliament in the Eastern part of the country, where the latter appointed a government in the City of Beyda under the authority of General Khalifa Haftar.

In the final years of Obama administration, U.S changed its passive course toward Libya by heavily engaging. The U.S. pursued a counter terrorism policy, conducted military strikes, worked toward disarming militants. In 2016, U.S. pursued its counterterrorism policy, after an official request of assistance from the GNA. Between August 2016 and December 2019, the U.S. launched more than 495 airstrikes as part of U.S. military campaign known as “Operation Odyssey Lightning” targeting the Islamic State’s facilities, carried out by The United States Africa Command (AFRICOM).

However, with the rise of ISIS in Libyan city of Sirte in 2015, U.S. sought a stable partner for cooperation to counter terrorism, leading to the rise of congressional divisions on how to deal with General Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army (LNA) who was also fighting Islamists terrorists.

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The U.S further assisted with an aerial campaign in order to limit and curb violence and terrorist activities by ISIS. U.S. has also significantly backed the counterterrorism campaign in Libya in Sirte carried by the GNA-aligned militias from Misrata, which General Haftar was fighting.

Likewise, the Obama administration focused on militants' disarmament, whereby the proliferation of military weapons in unsecured Libya including small arms, explosives and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles (MANPADs) was a serious concern in Libya and for the U.S, fearing to be contained by ISIS. Accordingly, the Obama administration implemented a program in 2017 with Libya to retrieve and disable certain types of weapons including MANPADs and has deployed Quick Reaction Forces to Libyan military units to intercept storage areas and MANPADs systems. Also, the administration secured the nuclear materials and chemical weapons components. The U.S-Libyan efforts to limit the threats posed by the proliferation of weapons among militias were proceeding under a bilateral agreement on weapons abatement signed in late 2011.

The U.S efforts to support Libya post Qaddafi was small in scale, scope, and resources in comparison to U.S efforts in other countries or regions. Obama's reluctance for constant engagement in Libya was compounded by the tension and resentment of September 2012 attacks on Washington's diplomatic and intelligence facilities in Benghazi as well as the prevailed instability and transitional government setbacks. The administration reluctance, and policy failure to both create a stable government and counterterrorism to resolve the Libyan political crisis, have led other international actors to interfere. Obama has later described U.S intervention in Libya as his greatest policy failure. A year later, America's deprioritized policy in Libya has severely worsened under the Trump's administration.

### **Trump's Ambiguous Libyan Policy**

When the Trump administration assumed office, Libya was facing major challenges. The country situation was further deteriorating as ongoing conflicts were increasing. The established Libya Peace Agreement in 2015, which created the GNA, was collapsing. Against this drop, Libya became an arena for international actors' interests, whereas the response of international powers has been marked by ambivalence and divisions. The West, led by the U.S and the UN, and Turkey



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supported the GNA. On the other hand, Egypt, the United Arab of Emirates, and Russia supported the Libyan military commander Khalifa Haftar.

Trump administration had a noninterventionist policy, where he determined to wean the U.S. of the Middle East entanglements and focus on U.S national interests and priorities. Like his policies in Syria, Trump stepped back from involving in Libya's civil war aligning with his policy "America First" that advocated for disengagement from overseas conflict and to only intervene when it is in America's interests, while urging leaders to fend themselves. Donald Trump affirmed his intention to not ramp up U.S. involvement in Libya saying "I do not see a role in Libya. I think the United States has, right now, enough roles". However, like Obama, Trump pursued incoherent and ineffective policy.

Trump National Security Strategy has focused largely on countering terrorism as a primary U.S. national security priority, especially in the Middle East. As the Trump administration has severally declared the intention to end U.S. involvement in the forever wars of the Middle East, and acted toward it, the president instead pursued a double muddled and imprecise approach, like his predecessor, ending up in the empowerment of aggressors and the escalation of tension and violence.

Trump administration had a debate on how to deal with Libya, whether to follow the course of the previous predecessor or to adhere to America first doctrine, resulting in the implementation of a varied policy. The only defined policy implemented by Trump's administration in Libya was countering terrorism, as it was for the national security interest of the United States. "Defeating ISIS and other radical Islamic terror groups will be our highest priority", issued the White House minutes after Donald Trump's inauguration.

In the first two years of Trumps' presidency, the administration continued Obama's policy by backing Fayez Sarraj, the Prime Minister of the GNA and affirmed the U.S. strong partnership with the GNA in countering terrorism. Contrarily, the U.S. had an indeterminate stance on Haftar, marked by the administration division. On one hand, the administration only supported the internationally backed government, the GNA. On the other hand, many U.S. officials saw Hifter actions in countering terrorism resonate with the White House policy toward fighting Islamic terrorism. However, three factors contributed to a temporary shift in the U.S. policy toward the support of General Khalifa Haftar.

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The April 2019 talks between UAE's Mohammed bin Zayed and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who might have pressed Trump to back Hifter, given his recent territorial gains against terrorists. The held meeting between Trump and the Egyptian President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi might have been another contributing factor. U.S need to secure the flow of Libyan oil production due to the recent expiration of wavers on oil sanctions against Iran.

As a result, in April 2019, Trump had a phone call with General Khalifa Haftar and has discussed multiple issues. During the call, Trump had recognized Haftar's efforts in fighting terrorism and in securing the state's oil resources. As said by the White House, the administration discussed the ongoing counterterrorism efforts by both parties to achieve peace and stability in Libya. The White House has also implied that the U.S. and Haftar have "discussed a shared vision for Libya's transition to a stable, democratic political system". The president's support for Haftar has fueled resentment and division in the State Department and the Pentagon.

Before Trump's call to Haftar, the U.S. announced the government opposition to the military operations by Haftar's forces against the Libyan Capital. However, Trump's call to Haftar marked the ambiguity and the lack of a unified clear U.S. policy to Libya. It was expected for Trump to continue the U.S. support to Haftar, but Trump neglectance of Libya has left the U.S. policy in the hands of the state department, leading the administration to support the Tripoli based GNA.

The congress opposition to Trump's policy shift was manifested in the introduction of a bipartisan bill "Libya Stabilization Act", which called for adopting sanctions on individuals inflicting violence in Libya. It also required the U.S. administration to counter the role of the Kremlin played in Libya, which resulted in U.S. increased involvement in Libya as the situation turned into a matter of great power competition.

Conflict erupted once again in 2019, when Haftar leveraged support from Russia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt attempting to seize the capital Tripoli from the GNA. However, Turkey interfered by supporting the GNA forces that led to the withdrawal of the LNA. Trump's administration passivity left the Libyan political scene to regional and international players.

However, following the outbreak of the 2019 conflict between the GNA, the LNA and the explicit intervention of international and regional powers, U.S. policy has alternated to a vigorous engagement policy. U.S. officials met with Libyan antagonists and their foreign backers to support a ceasefire and UN mediation efforts. Along these lines, the U.S. policy sought to build consensus



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on two different levels; pursuing a counter terrorism policy by disarming militias, and fighting terrorists on one hand, and supporting a transparent stable administration on the other hand.

In regards to disarming militias and fighting extremists, a number of strikes have been conducted by the U.S. military against the Islamic State and its affiliates in September and December 2019 in Libya, by using drones and other aircraft. The 2019 U.S. military airstrikes was conducted by the U.S. in cooperation with the GNA.

For supporting a stable government, Ambassador Norland, in June, illustrated U.S. approach to support ceasefire by saying “it’s time for all mercenaries and all foreign forces to begin to de-escalate and depart Libya. If there’s one motto we’re applying to the situation now, it’s “Libya for the Libyans”.

In September, the U.S. launched its third airstrike in Libya in a week, killing 17 Islamic State-aligned terrorists in the country. However, AFRICOM’s director of intelligence, Navy Rear Adm. Heidi Ber said that U.S. campaign against ISIS in Libya inflicted harm on innocent people.

Prior to the 2019 conflict, the U.S. announced Libya’s membership in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) program and has signed a series of agreements for border and airport security programs. As part of the U.S. newly adopted active policy, in November 2019, bilateral talks between the U.S. and GNA officials took place where GNA officials visited Washington to launch a U.S-Libya Security Dialogue.

It’s important to point out that the U.S. sudden increased concern toward Libya was driven by U.S. realistic approach, where the U.S. found Libya a venue for competition with other global powers, and the U.S commitment to counter terrorism was just a guise for U.S to intervene and secure its national interests. In 2018, the Department of Defense has sought 2018 to reorient AFRICOM’s personnel and missions to reflect a global focus on “great power competition”.

In 2020 Trump waded deeper in the Libyan conflict, by backing the UN calls for a cease fire under the UN 5+5 military talks amid the many factions. The second half of 2020 witnessed a further U.S. ramp up engagement in Libya, exposing U.S. diplomatic activity, attempting to break a deal to end the oil blockade caused by Haftar’s forces in order to pressure the warring international forces toward a ceasefire in August 2020. Additionally, the National Security Advisor Robert O’Brien has denounced foreign meddling in Libya to be an undermining factor to the interests of the U.S. and

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its allies in the Mediterranean region. Starting from May 2020, U.S. officials launched campaigns calling Russia to limit its involvement in Libya.

Trump administration's policy toward Libya alternated between three scopes of actions; constraining U.S involvement in Libya, maintaining U.S. interests in Libya by countering terrorism, and competing for power in the international system. The U.S. policy was incoherent, marked by different stances and divisions. Moreover, the Trump administration was replaced by Biden's government which forges political and diplomatic involvement in Libya.

### **The New Biden Administration and Libya**

Like Syria, Libya has become a battlefield for the interests of international actors. Even though Biden has done very little in foreign policy as he has been in office for 5 months, his attitude and the posture of U.S. role in the Middle East and North Africa are obvious in terms of ending Middle East foreign wars. The current democrat administration not only aims to defend democracy and human rights, but also to retain U.S. position in the international system. However, Biden's administration policy in Libya thus far is vague, depending only on diplomatic efforts.

The U.S Department of State under Biden's administration revealed U.S. commitment to ensure a stable Libya. It revealed U.S. will to cooperate with international partners and to end Libya's ongoing conflict through mediation efforts under the UNSMIL.

In January 2021, U.S. called for the immediate withdrawal of Russian and Turkish military forces and mercenaries from Libya after a deadline for them to leave was ignored. In January, Richard Mills, the head of the U.S. mission to the UN, has criticized the Turkish and Russian intervention policies in Libya at the UN, asking for withdrawal. "We call on all external parties, to include Russia, Turkey, and the UAE, to respect Libyan sovereignty and immediately cease all military intervention in Libya," said Mills. Richard Mills' statements were similar to Mike Pompeo, the Secretary of State under former President Donald Trump, who criticized international powers transfer of military equipment and weapon to mercenaries and militias.

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The Biden administration has also supported the ceasefire in Libya but argued that international powers intervention in Libya was undermining to the peace process due to their military intervention and ignorance of Libyan citizens demands.

Moreover, Ten years after the 2011 uprising that toppled Mummar al Qaddafi, Libya is still making transition arrangements to a stable government, whereby the Biden administration has not yet declared the U.S. stance on the newly established Unity government. The Biden administration neglectance of Libya's current situation decreases U.S. influence in the region and leave room for international and regional actors.

### **U.S-Turkish Relations and the Libyan File**

U.S-Turkish relations deteriorate each year. Turkish foreign interference in Libya raised U.S. concerns and has further marked tensed relations between the two countries. In mid-December 2019, the Turkish parliament has approved an agreement to provide equipment, military training, technical aid, and intelligence to the GNA. In the same month, the parliament approved a legislation to authorize the deployment of combat forces in Libya to support and back up the GNA.

Also, the 2019 agreement between Turkey and Libya's Government of National Accord on Eastern Mediterranean maritime boundaries, has increased tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean countries as well as increased Turkish rivalry with Sunni Arab states. The agreement provoked U.S. and EU countries criticisms and installed sanctions against Turkish individuals to discourage Turkish drilling near Cyprus.

The U.S. under the Trump administration has criticized and warned Turkey against military intervention in Libya. "External military intervention threatened prospects for resolving the conflict," said State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus.

However, as the Trump administration policy was identified with ambiguity as previously illustrated, the capture of a Russian missile marked a turning point in U.S Turkish relations. The allied militias to the GNA in Tripoli captured a Russian built Pantsir missile defence system while striking Khalifa Haftar's air base on May 2020. The capture of the missile resulted in a policy shift, whereby U.S. and Turkey have agreed to share the captured Russian defense system. Cooperation

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started to increase between both states; in 2020 Turkish President Erdogan and Trump have agreed to work more closely on Libya during a phone call. However, U.S. administration was baffled in divisions on creating a clear working relationship policy with Turkey especially after Turkey's assistance to the UN recognized government in Libya as well as the caused divergence that loomed due to the crisis of the S-400s and F-35 program.

The Turkish parliament in December 2020 has approved the extension of the military forces presence in Libya for 18 months. The flow of the Turkish military forces started after Turkey and the GNA interim government signed two agreements for gas exploration and military cooperation in December 2019.

By July 2020, Turkey was subject to international pressure and criticism over its involvement in Libya fueling fears of regional war, leading Trump to engage in multilateral and bilateral talks. The White house has further raised U.S. concerns in regards to Turkey's signature of two memorandums of understanding to define maritime rights, security, and military cooperation between the two countries in November 2019 between Turkey and the GNA. The agreement marked a turning point in the Turkish intervention in Libya, where Turkey increased it military support for the GNA forces and supported them sophisticated weapon systems as well as mercenaries.

The Egyptian president has also raised his concerns to the situation in Libya and whereby both Trump and Al Sisi affirmed the need for immediate ceasefire and proceedings on economic and political negotiations.

Unlike Trump, Biden's policy on Turkey is very clear whereby his administration has severally criticized the Turkish authorities' involvement in Libya. Richard Mills said, "We call on Turkey and Russia to immediately initiate the withdrawal of their forces from the country and the removal of the foreign mercenaries and military proxies that they have recruited, financed, deployed, and supported in Libya".

The U.S. position on the Libyan conflict lacked consistency and clarity, which complicated the U.S. ability to confront and limit international actors' intervention in Libya, and end rivalries between Libyan factions.

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## Steps toward Lasting Peace

10 years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, Libya has not been able to form a stable government due to multiple crises in the form of internal divisions, civil war, terrorism, and a divided country between a UN recognized government of National Accord and a rival administration led by the Libyan National Army (LNA) General, Khalifa Haftar. However, progress towards peace and a unified national government is currently taking place in Libya under a UN-led process, where Abdelhamid Dbeiba is the new interim prime minister.

The endorsement of Abdelhamid Dbeiba's Government of National Unity (GNU) came after the approval of the parliament, House of Representatives on the 10th of March 2021.

International actors that have been backing different sides in Libya have welcomed the new government, and the two previous rival governments have agreed to dissolve and collaborate. The new interim government is due to stay in power till the 24th of December 2021, the date set for presidential and legislative elections.

Dbeibah has been more circumspect about the removal of the 20,000 foreign mercenaries hired by Turkey, Russia, and the UAE. He said "the troops were a dagger in the country's back" but that he needed to act prudently. However, Turkish officials have rejected international calls to withdraw Turkish troops and deployed Syrian mercenaries from Libya, in line with the 2019 signed military agreement.

The formation of the new Libyan government is a breakthrough in overcoming Libya's political divisions. However, the government of National Unity has serious obstacles and challenges ahead ranging from domestic and international issues. On a domestic level, the state is witnessing hardships in forming a cabinet, pressures from interests groups on the government to implement certain projects and policies that only serve their own interests, the probability of passing the 2021 national elections deadline due to the prospect of extending the draft constitutional referendum for six months, and to end violence and terrorism. On an international level, Libya is struggling with international actors to remove their military forces and deployed mercenaries.

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## Concluding Remarks

The report demonstrates the U.S. policies toward Libya since the 2011 U.S. intervention. It has also revealed previous and contemporary dynamics that explain U.S. policy toward Libya. With the Arab-Spring folding among the Arab states, U.S. policy was incoherent, as the Obama administration has been grappling from the beginning with how the U.S. should respond to the uprisings. However, the democrat administration rapidly responded to install its democratic values and supported the uprising in Libya. Accordingly, the Forum for Development and Human Rights observes the following:

The U.S. military operations in Libya were far from the primary declared and outlined reasons for the intervention in Libya in 2011. The initial claims for intervention was to protect the civilians from the outrageous actions of the colonel Muammer el Qaddafi; these claims have been alternated with the objective of toppling the Qaddafi regime, installing democracy, and defeating ISIS while ignoring the conditions that have allowed violent extremism to emerge in the country in the first place.

FDHRD observes that the U.S. lacked a clear policy toward Libya's disastrous situation as the U.S. was infuriated by the 2012 Benghazi attack and dispersed among supporting the electoral process, securing its facilities and personnel, and countering the infiltration of ISIS. U.S. failure in both post-conflict transition and previous attempts for regime change in Iraq and Afghanistan, along with the congressional division on Libya's military intervention was also a contributing factor in U.S. reluctance in Libya.

The report observes that in the final years of Obama's administration, the U.S. countered its passive realist approach toward Libya that has been implemented since 2012 Benghazi attack and adopted a very active counterterrorism policy, as it was in the U.S. interests to counter the Islamic State.

The administration's reluctance, and policy failure to both create a stable government and counter terrorism to resolve the Libyan political crisis, have led other international actors to interfere.

Like Obama, Trump's administration policy toward Libya was marked with ambiguity. Trump administration had a passive approach to Libya, where the administration left the political scene



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to regional and international players. Like Obama, Trump's policies in Libya did not coincide with the interests of the Libyan people; it only reflected the interests of the United States.

The Trump administration had unclear complicated policy that was coupled with unwillingness to intervene as well as the urgency to counter both the rising terrorism threat and Russia's role in Libya. Trump's administration implemented a double muddled and undefined approach in Libya, which led to the escalation of the conflict whereby more international actors interfered in Libya. Like his predecessor, the Trump administration sidetracked from the strategy of non-intervention to obvious active interference in Libya to counter terrorism, as it was in the national security interest for the U.S.

In regards to militias and government factions, Trump lacked a clear defined policy, which was rapidly alternating depending on the international context as well as U.S. constant reassessment of its national interests. The report also observes that the core of U.S. policy under the Trump administration was to call all parties and international actors in Libya to renounce violence and resolve the political fragmented situation through dialogue and participation in democratic process. U.S. sudden policy shift in 2019 was for competition with other powers in Libya under the guise of countering terrorism and supporting a stable government.

Like Trump, Biden administration worked toward not to ramp up U.S. role in the Middle East and Africa. Unlike Obama, and Trump, Biden will not adopt a combative approach. Rather the administration depends on its diplomatic efforts and activities.

The report observes that the Biden administration turns a blind eye to the developments taking place in Libya, by not conveying the U.S. stance on the newly elected government. The report observes that the neglectance of the U.S. administration to Libya will further leave room for other regional and international foreign powers to intervene.

The report observes that the three U.S. administrations, in particular the Obama and Trump administrations' had the ability and the power to dispel foreign actors' intervention and to reverse the disastrous situation in Libya, but the U.S neglected Libya and led from behind.

Moreover, the report observes that Turkish military intervention in Libya was coupled by Turkey's urgency to secure its geopolitical interests. The report identifies that Turkey's intervention in Libya was coupled with other reasons apart from Turkey's initial claim for securing the civilians and supporting the GNA government against the rival Khalifa Haftar.

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Turkey aimed to secure its interests and access to maritime resources in the Mediterranean and to ensure the formation of an allied government to Turkey. Turkey effectively utilized its maritime agreement with Libya and has increased its military forces to counter regional and international actors, as part of competition for power in the region.

In regards to U.S-Turkish relations on Libya, the report observes that the Trump administration policy on Turkey was wavering between criticisms and cooperation based on U.S. constant reassessment of its own interests. On the other hand, Biden's administration adopted a more strict policy toward Turkey, and cooperation between both states will essentially depend on Turkey's respect for U.S. core values, democracy, and human rights.

Finally, Libya's new government marks Libyan efforts for a successful transition post the fall of Qaddafi. Libya needs the attention and the support of the international system to counter state building' challenges that confront Libya caused by the western intervention and terrorists organizations.