

## **Regional conflicts; Intervention and Resolution: The United States– Libya Example**

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**Abstract:** United States intervention in regional conflicts under the auspices of the United Nations is most times deemed to be undertaken for humanitarian reasons – checking human rights abuses, strengthening democratic experiments among other laudable objectives. Examples in Africa have shown that such interventions are selective, short lived and most times ambiguous. Rather than resolve conflicts, interventions have escalated the conflicts, and resulted into political instability with far reaching negative consequences to the nation-states. This paper has examined NATO intervention in Libya's crisis of 2011. It is shown that intervention worsened the human rights situation, produced rival militant groups, loss of more lives and chaos that culminated into a bifurcated Libya. NATO intervention enabled regime change without corresponding institutions to maintain order and stability in Libya. Humanitarian intervention should improve the dignity of life, restore happiness and create opportunities where non existed.

**Keywords:** Humanitarian Intervention, Regional Conflicts, Conflict Management, Conflict resolution

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### **INTRODUCTION**

After staging the first successful war of independence from its mother country, Britain, the United States (US) have by 1898 acquired the status of a regional power with the Latin America and the Caribbean as the orbit of its imperial gravitation. America's regional expansionism was boosted by the writings of an American Naval Officer, Alfred Thayer Mahan [1]. By 1904, the "Roosevelt Corollary" empowered the US to act as an "international police power" for the Western hemisphere and by 1905, France and Britain had no choice but recognize the US as a major force in that region [2]. In Africa, US diplomatic romance was delayed until 1945 even though early contacts and relations between the US and Africa of a non-diplomatic type could be traced to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Virginia colony (1607), received African servants to boost the labour force of the large plantation farms of that colony. Between 1789 and 1801, the US launched its first military intervention in the Maghreb region of Africa to checkmate Barbary States of pirates who operated from bases on the Mediterranean Coast of Africa. The harassment of American ships and their sailors coupled with the practice of "buying immunity", by paying tributes to the rulers of Tripoli, Tunis, Morocco and Algiers could not be tolerated by the US especially when the ruler of Tripoli cut down an American flag pole to express his dissatisfaction with American payment. By 1816, the

US succeeded in stopping the practice of "buying immunity" from the Barbary States.

On the low level of concern for Africa until 1945, many reasons have been adduced including the colonial status of Africa before 1960. Rupert Emerson argues that Africa's colonial status before 1960 prevented the US from operating freely in those areas. The US from this viewpoint continued to treat some African countries as the exclusive sphere of influence of their former metropolises and deferred to these powers on matters that concerned their former colonies [3]. Another explanation given for Africa's 'low profile' in US foreign policy is the fact that Africa was not regarded as a "danger zone"; the cold war rivals of the US- the Soviets and the Chinese have not made any significant inroad into the African continent. Africa was therefore, not a major crisis area necessitating a Marshall plan or the Truman's Doctrine. This point becomes clearer when it is recalled that America's pre-occupation with the cold war and the communist rivalry first raised the significance of Africa in the eyes of America. In the bid to checkmate communist expansionism everywhere, the African continent became an attraction in-terms of securing strategic bases, lines of communication, strategic mineral resources and political good will for the US and its European allies. The American mood is captured by Gabriel Kolko (1988), when he noted clearly that: US

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collaboration with Europe's colonial powers was not merely based on Washington's desire to see European economic reconstruction and cooperation with its plans for an integrated international economy, it was also strategic and political involving the desire to rebuild Europe's military power against the USSR, as well as keep communist and the more militant socialist out of power in the NATO states themselves[17].

In other words, US responses to African question is determined by calculation of its national interest viz: military, political and economic security. This response came at no other time than during the cold war. When it responded, policy wavered between vital interest (Republicans), and liberal internationalist view (Democrats), expressed by selective engagements, neglects, denial or covert operations against established democracies which appeared to be ideologically opposed to US brand of democracy. Anti-communism principally guided US –African policy to the 1990s.

The post-cold war era witnessed a neorealist foreign policy posturing, which sort partnership with Africa in many areas of mutual interest including promoting good governance and sustainable democracies, strengthening public health, promote trade and investment, human capacity building and above all peaceful resolution of conflicts. In practical demonstration of commitment, the US can be said to have done well in reintegrating Africa into the global economy as an unequal partner. The African growth and opportunity Act (AGOA) in 1999, the national summit on Africa, Month of Africa initiated by President Bill Clinton, (2000) and the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) signed with Nigeria in (2000), the African Command, all testify to practical demonstrations of US to African issues. It may be noted that these broad based pursuit of African issues as opposed to the earlier selective engagements of the cold war era is championed by the democrats who tend to pursue a more liberal internationalist view buttressed by rhetoric and diplomacy. The creation of African Command (AFRICOM) in 2007 by George Bush Jnr. who had earlier declared in 2000 that "Africa doesn't fit into the national strategic interest of the United states", is one such strategic encounters by the US to protect American interest in the strategic gulf of Guinea. President Bush declared:

I am pleased to announce my decision to create a department of Defense unified combatant command for Africa. African command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development ... [4].

Worrisome however in all of these are in the area of regional conflicts interventions, conflict resolution and conflict management, which have raised doubts about the sincerity and missionary zeal of the US. It would appear that intervention for humanitarian reasons is a cover for spreading and protecting capitalist relations of production. As examples drawn from this paper reveals, regional conflict intervention by the US have left such conflicts unresolved and created more crises resulting into political instability, anarchy, chaos and misery as it is today seen in Libya and Iraq, categorized by the US as "rogue states". This paper attempts to review the Libyan case and NATO intervention; the nature and dynamics of international conflicts and military interventions have also been previewed as a bases for understanding the theoretical framework; post Qaddafi's Libya is shown as the negative consequences of resolving conflicts by military intervention. A conceptual clarification has also been attempted and some lessons drawn from Libya's example. The paper ends with a conclusion.

### **Conceptual Clarification and Theoretical Framework of Analysis.**

Three concepts are central to the understanding of this paper, viz: humanitarian intervention, conflict resolution and conflict management:

Intervention in the affairs of sovereign nation-states was considered a violation; the demise of the cold war resumed the debate on the basis for which any form of intervention in the affairs of another state was allowed. Intervention violated the sovereignty of states and prohibition against the use of force was enshrined in the United Nations (UN), charter. The Security Council is in recent times given more latitude in responding to issues hitherto considered domestic sovereignty of states.

(i) **Humanitarian intervention** has been defined as a state's use of military force against another state when the chief, publicly declared aim of that military action is ending human rights violation being perpetrated by the state against which it is directed. (Wikipedia)

Humanitarian intervention can also be defined as a means to prevent or stop a gross violation of human rights in a state where such a state is either incapable or unwilling to protect its own people, or is actively persecuting them.

Direct military involvement in the internal affairs of another state may be for a number of reasons including humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian interventions, as noted by Haass [5] can either be consensual (unarmed or lightly armed personnel), or imposed (heavily armed troops). Accordingly, the former is

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conducted within a permissive environment where uniformed forces are involved for technical reasons as for example US forces assistance to Rwandan refugees in 1994; the latter, is conducted in a hostile or uncertain environment with narrow aims to either provide food or other life necessities or protect life without seeking to change the overall political authority. Haass noted that “military interventions are classified according to purposes which includes deterrence ... peace keeping, nation building, and humanitarian assistance and so on”(p50). In any case, the rationale for intervention is important and more importantly is whether force should be applied in most cases like the humanitarian intervention. While proponents see humanitarian intervention as imperative in the face of human rights abuses, over the rights of a state sovereignty, opponents view it as a pretext for military intervention ... selectively deployed and achieving only ambiguous ends[18].

- (ii) **Conflict:** Best [6], defines conflict as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. Armed conflict is the resort to the use of force and armed violence in the pursuit of incompatible and particular interest and goals. As noted by Best, conflict has basis in human needs which, if denied could cause resolvable differences to degenerate into violence or armed conflicts. Best has also argued that the conception of conflict, its managements and resolution have led to terms like peace keeping, peacemaking, conflict prevention, third party intervention by mediation and negotiation, preventive diplomacy, peace enforcement and peace building. Crucial to Best’s analysis is that, in determining intervention mechanism, and the management and resolution of conflicts, a critical investigation into the root cause of conflict, (primary and secondary), highlighting the actors, structures and dynamics in conflict situations is important. This very important factor is more often ignored by major powers who in most cases take sides with the actors as their interest dictates. Therefore conflict resolution as defined by Miller in [6], is a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems distinct from management or transformation of conflicts. Mial et al in [6], has noted that by conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behavior is no longer violent, nor attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict have been changed.

- (iii) Lastly, **conflict management**, also referred to as conflict regulation, includes efforts and interventions to limit, contain or regulate conflict. It is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with the parties involved in the conflict.

Theories of conflicts are as many and different as are procedures for conflict resolution. Each theory emphasizes a particular angle of analysis but the theories are not mutually exclusive. A common factor in all the theories is the fact that conflicts have basis in human needs. They include structural conflicts theory, the realist theory, biological theories, frustration aggression theory, systemic theory, economic theory and so on. Procedures of conflicts resolution include inquiry, mediation, conversation, bilateral negotiation and so on. These procedures are necessary steps to conflict resolution as conflicts in themselves can be constructive (positive) and destructive (negative) depending on how they are handled. Writing on international conflicts Assisi Asobi [7], noted:

International conflicts are contest or clashes between or across nation states. The struggle might be between two or more states struggling to monopolize the exploitation of resources in a disputed territory.

Conflicts may not always be a contest over resources as noted above; conflicts can also arise when one or more states intervene in domestic disputes of another state. Asobi has noted that the bone of contention in international conflicts is usually territory, resources or in seldom cases, the welfare of citizens. Asobi reflected deeply that international conflicts are struggles between or among social groups with social classes as the real actors who mobilize and use the apparatuses of the state to achieve their ends. International conflicts, according to this viewpoint are shaped by three critical factors viz: the nature of the prize; the relationship between the social classes who are the real actors in the conflict; and the state of domestic politics in the nation state (p.11).

#### **Background to Libya’s Conflict.**

Maumar Qhaddafi became Libya’s leader on September 1, 1969 after deposing King Idris in a bloodless coup d’e ‘tat. As head of the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which he instituted, Qhaddafi proclaimed the new Libyan African republic with the motto – freedom, socialism and unity. At home Qhaddafi ruled like a despot; he nationalized Libya’s economy that displaced foreign interest and weakened foreign control of its oil resources [8]. Abroad, Qhaddafi’s foreign policies can be said to be anti-imperialism. He supported liberation movements like the African National Congress (ANC), the

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Palestinian Liberation Organization (P.L.O), among others. These and more radical and anti-imperial postures deteriorated Qaddafi's relations with the West and the United State in particular. Between 1973 and 1996, the US leveled several accusations both real and imaginary and adopted aggressive policies towards the Libyan state with the intent to oust Qaddafi. As noted by Allen [7], US aggression on Libya was based on suspicion that Libya financed terrorism and political subversion. "Libya did not refute that it had training grounds for a variety of national liberation movements". Allen has argued that Libya's role in financing liberation movements is small and of no economic-cum-material benefit to Libya as the huge financial and military support which the US doles out to nationals to repress liberation movements. These repressive activities, Allen noted, cause international terrorism more than anything else.

In the context of Arab spring which sparked upon December, 2010 in Tunisia, in 2011, and spread to Egypt and Libya, a violent demonstration by anti-Qaddafi's forces erupted in Tripoli and spread to the country side. Government forces repressed the attacks to the amazement of civil society and other regional and sub-regional groups. Anti-Qaddafi or rebel forces formed the National Transition Council (NTC), which acted as interim authority in rebel control areas demanding immediate resignation of Qaddafi after 41 years of ruler-ship. The NTC was quickly recognized by the West while the African Union (AU) which opted for a political solution to the civil unrest in Libya gave reluctant recognition to the NTC. The AU rejected any external military response and did not support Security Council-sanctioned NATO airstrikes; it equally rejected the arrest warrants for Qaddafi and his henchmen by the International Criminal Court (ICC), on the basis that the warrant complicated efforts to find a political solution to the crisis.

On March, 2011, a multinational coalition led by US intervened, invoking UN resolution 1973 which enforced the no fly zone. NATO intervention escalated the violence to a civil war with NATO exceeding its mandate by supporting the rebels and the NTC to defeat Qaddafi's army and effect regime change. It is recalled that NATO'S original mandate was to protect civilians, incidentally, NATO'S aerial bombardment and indiscriminate use of force caused civilian casualties proportionate to government repressive actions against rebel forces.

The US president Barrack Obama defended military intervention on humanitarian grounds; Obama reiterated his position that

The US and its NATO allies were right to intervene militarily to prevent an imminent massacre of thousands of opposition rebels ...When Qaddafi inevitably leaves or is

forced from power decades of provocation will come to an end, and the transition to a democratic Libya can proceed .... [9].

It is rather curious that the North Africa uprising which started in Tunisia in 2010 and spread to Egypt, did not invite the attention or concern of the Security Council; the Security Council only convened to intervene in the case of Libya to end "decades of provocation". Such selective interventions have been viewed by critics as serving ambiguous ends. This is true of Libya -US relations which has been a relationship of suspicion, distrust and accusation since Qaddafi assumed the leadership of the Libyan State with its anti-imperial posture. It is also recalled that during the bi-polar world system, Libya was ideologically aligned to the Soviet Union; while Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco have been Western allies. US policy in the region has been to shore-up those despots to checkmate Islamic militants as it bankrolls Egypt, its main ally, with one billion dollars annually for the purpose [21]. In the post-cold war era, all former USSR allies are in the security watch list of the US which nicknamed them "rogue states"; they include Libya, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, North Korea, and Cuba. Cuba can now be spared from the list having normalized fifty or more years of cold relations with the US. One can now understand the basis for selective intervention by the US led NATO. It would seem that the US has moved from unilateral engagements to multilateral coalitions to share in the cost and consequences of interventions.

Kuperman [10] noted that Obama "grossly exaggerated the humanitarian threat to justify military action against Libya". He argued that Qaddafi did not perpetrate a blood bath in any of the cities recaptured by his forces before NATO intervention; by NATO'S intervention, Kuperman noted, rebel forces were enabled to resume the attacks which prolonged the war for another seven months and caused at least 7,000 more deaths. The example of Libya can be likened to 2003 US- led intervention in Iraq purported to be a humanitarian concern by Bush's administration to spread the blessings of capitalist democracy. It is now obvious that the invasion of Libya like Iraq was actuated by regime change that would leave Libya to "build their own democracy by spontaneous civic combustion like Eastern European countries after the fall of the Soviet Union" [11]. The aftermath of NATO intervention in Libya is monstrous.

Lyman in [12] has argued that US interest in Africa framed in terms of humanitarian and moral concern over poverty, war, etc is not bad; making it a primary focus of its African policy:

leads US policy down a path of short-term fixes; inconsistent and constantly changing approaches to



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development assistance; and neglect of other traditional ingredients of diplomacy such as presence, intelligence and security (p 50).

The alternative approach according to Lyman, is to frame US policy in Africa on the basis of how Africa relates to the US goals and interest worldwide. This preoccupation with humanitarian issues, Lyman opines, emphasizes Africa as an object of charity. Yearly, Lyman noted, America is confronted with the negatives about Africa; drought, famine, ethnic crisis and so on; little is said about the efforts of leaders in the growth of democracy, economic turn-around and settlement of civil wars in Angola, Mozambique admist others (p.52) Interventions Lyman argues, express a reluctance to accept deeper and long lasting responsibility in Africa and to recognize other equally important interest. Lyman, advocated for a more committed engagement in African affairs especially in security and diplomatic intelligence in the continent for several reasons including energy, trade and terrorism.

#### **Post Qaddafi's Libya and the Folly of NATO Intervention.**

The current crises in Libya after NATO backed assassination of Muammar Qaddafi on October 20, 2011 clearly testify to the folly of resolving conflicts by dropping bombs when other diplomatic and political options have not been exhausted. It will be recalled that the African Union adopted a roadmap for peace but was rejected by the NTC for failing to address human rights violations by Qaddafi's forces. As other options were sought for, the International Criminal Court, described as "a tool of the Western World to prosecute leaders in the Third World", issued an arrest warrant for Gaddafi. Even before NATO intervention, concerned observers, noted kuperman [13], expressed their confidence in Gaddafi's son, Saif, as one who "could play a constructive role as a member of the committee to devise a new government structure or constitution", instead, NATO supported militants, captured and remanded Saif in custody [13]. Saif regretfully remarked:

We are in the process of making broad reforms, and my father gave me the responsibility to see them through. Unfortunately the revolt happened, and both sides made mistakes that are now allowing extreme Islamist groups like Daish (ISIS) to pick up the pieces and turn Libya into an extreme fundamentalist entity.

That all possible diplomatic-cum political options available had not been exhausted when NATO exceeded its mandate to arm rebel groups against Qaddafi clearly reveal the ambiguity of humanitarian intervention in Libya and the familiar menu with which

the United states serves its victims: destabilize them, reduce them to rubble, make them beggarly and therefore amendable to the dictates of the US and its Western allies. It is little wonder therefore that a renegade General Khalifa Hifter who has enjoyed a long friendship and training by the CIA is now receiving enormous support from the US to contend with warring Islamic groups which the US helped to arm during NATO intervention. A Hifter, in the hands of the CIA, spoiling to be the next Libyan dictator is a clear indication of how a puppet regime is to be installed in Libya. If this familiar menu is served, rather than resolve the Libyan crisis, more civil wars will erupt as it is in D.R. Congo many years after Mobutu SeseSeko, a CIA installed puppet in 1965.

Indeed, many agree that the ongoing eruption in Libya is the result of NATO's intervention. As noted by Vijay Prashad [19], after Gaddafi was ousted no one held forth to help manage a transition to something better. NATO'S intervention destroyed infrastructure, collapsing the state and paving the way for a pot-pore of militia groups who now plague Libya. Paul and Parsons [14] noted the existence of "125 rival arm groups" in Libya. Some of them like the Ansar al-Sharia, is an al-Qaeda group armed by the US against Qaddafi during NATO campaign. This group was recently fingered as being responsible for the brutal assassination of US Ambassador Christopher Stevens. Libya, as noted by Paul and parsons, "has become North Africa's most active militant sanctuary", turning Libya into a lawless and where drugs, and the proliferation of illegal arms have become commonplace. Libya has become not only dangerous to itself but also to its immediate neighbors. Arms smuggling out of Libya assisted ethnic Tuareg in Mali after Qaddafi was assassinated, to start their own rebellion which culminated into the declaration of an Islamic state in northern Mali. After futile attempts to dislodge the Tuaregrebels by AU forces, it took the intervention of France to restore fragile peace in the region. In the North Eastern part of Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgents benefiting from the arms bonanza from Libya have become a torn in the flesh of those citizens' thereby constituting security and administrative challenges to the government of President Goodluck Jonathan.

Intervention has bifurcated Libya and created the emergence of Islamic state (ISIS), the same way US invasion of Iraq in 2003 culminated into the rise of ISIS. As militias and weapons drift without control and limited effort is applied to help the Libyan state gain control over the country, the US and its allies have unintended helped turned Libya a into a higher security threat than it was before NATO intervention. In less than four years, Libya has produced seven prime ministers; all proving incapacitated to disarm the menacing militant groups some of who are local, tribal, orregional warlords. The warring groups have by May

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2014, polarized into two factions spoiling for a civil war between the liberals and the Islamist. The result is the emergence of two competing parliaments, each with its own prime minister, and army. The Islamic allied militias have taken the western part of the country with capital in Tripoli; while the anti-Islamist liberals are holding sway to the Eastern part of the country, having been exiled 1,200km away in Tobruk. The liberals with noting to govern are regarded as the “legitimate” government [15]. It is recalled that one of the accusations leveled against Qaddafi is a dismal human rights violation. Kuperman [10], noted that Libya’s human rights situation has grown from bad to worse since NATO intervention. Arbitrary arrest, abductions, rape, assassination and assassination attempts are a recurring decimal. Libya’s women, observed Chengu, [15] suffered dearly from NATO campaign. Women had enjoyed education rights, jobs, property and equal pay. In the new Libya dominated by the Islamic regime gender equality is an abomination which is duly checkmated.

Intervention devastated the oil economy of Libya. Prior to intervention, Libya produced 1.65 million barrels of oil per day. This dropped to zero during the intervention. By the UN human development index, Libya ranks the highest in Africa in standard of living, with a high G.D.P and life expectancy. Incidentally, the West have again, criminally snuffed life out of the lives of the average Libyans who are now displaced and some have turned refugees in neighboring and distant lands. The UN as noted by Kuperman, estimates that 400 thousands Libyans have deserted their homes, with some leaving their country. The death toll increased more than tenfold as a result of intervention. Like Iraq, and now Libya, the so-called humanitarian intervention only succeeded in regime change while destabilizing a whole nation state where “cockroaches and rats” have now taken over. As Paul and Parsons [14] put it, “US and its allies succeeded in their military campaign in Libya but fell short in putting Libya on a path toward democracy and stability”. Humanitarian intervention in Libya is another strategic encounter that was conceived far back during the regime of Ronald Reagan.

Deadly wars from Iraq, Syria and Libya have enriched America military industry and expanded America’s military bases abroad. With more than fifteen military bases in the Middle East and Africa, the independence of these states is helplessly hanging on the goodwill of military commanders and their foreign policy formulators. If as it is posited by Chengu [15] that “perhaps Gaddafi’s greatest crime in the eyes of NATO was his desire to put the interest of local labor above foreign capital and his quest for a strong and truly United States of Africa”, then, the US and its allies have not changed from the imperial foreign policy posturing of the bi-polar world system which

destabilizes states that are set on independent path to prosperity. Chengu added that in August, 2014 president Obama confiscated \$30 billion from Libya’s central bank, which Qaddafi had earmarked for the establishment of the African IMF. If this is so, the AU has a determined role to play in both Libya and the lopsided international system for the overall interest of the continent and posterity.

Kuperman noted that NATO intervened when Libya’s violence was in the verge of ending. Rebels were retreating in loses when their foreign sympathizers raised the alarm of “blood bath” to attract NATO’s intervention which intensified and prolonged the conflict to about eight months. According to Kuperman, in 2009, General William Ward, the head of US-African Command had praised Libya as “a top partner in combating terrorism”; Kuperman added that Qaddafi who faced domestic threat from Al-Qieda, has evolved into a US ally against global terrorism before 9/11. By enlisting to dethrone Qaddafi, Kuperman noted, “the US undercut its own nuclear proliferation objectives”. Other “rouge states” of North Korea and Iran who viewed US action in Libya, learnt not to trust the US which has proved an unfaithful ally by enlisting to dethrone Qaddafi who had earlier halted his nuclear chemical weapons and surrendered his arsenals to the US [13]. The US- allied intervention in Libya masqueraded in humanitarian garb was therefore not a sudden occurrence, it was a programmed intervention made possible by the Arab spring in 2011.

### **Lessons of NATO Intervention in Libya**

NATO intervention in the Libyan crises which culminated into the bifurcation of the once prosperous African State has drawn far reaching lessons to the progressives and weaker nations of the international community. Intervention mandate derived from UN resolution 1973 which imposed no fly zone, essentially aim to protect the civilian population, unfortunately, the US acted beyond the mandate when they armed militant groups who assassinated Qaddafi. Qaddafi was assassinated at a time when he has evolved into an ally in the fight against terrorism as noted earlier. The brutal killing of Qaddafi sent signals to North Korea and Iran among others, not to trust the United States. The duo “rogue states”, have vowed not to destroy their nuclear resources. Little wonder that Iran – US unclear talks have remained stalemated.

Secondly, the readily available option for conflict resolution and management is dropping bombs and destroying cities; this style of conflict resolution has proved counterproductive. Apart from the blowback which the US and the West have received in recent times, military option is draining the financial resources of American tax payers and putting their citizens at risk. The beheading of British and American citizens, and the Egyptian Copts is not unconnected with the

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indiscriminate bombing and destruction of whole cities and people by US air raids; examples in Iraq, Afghanistan and now Libya. Talking about blowback, one of the militant groups which enjoyed the patronage of the US in the fight against Qaddafi, the Ansa al-Sharia was fingered as responsible for the killing of US Ambassador Christopher Steven in Libya. Osama bin Laden claimed inspiration for the attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon from US backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 which brought down “high rise buildings” [15]. To Bin laden, the destruction of cities and Killing of women and children was a “deliberate American policy”. And since this is so, bin laden reminded Americans that for every action there is a reaction; and that their security is in their own hands he declared thus:

Destruction is freedom and democracy while resistance is terrorism and intolerance [15].

Interventions most often do not achieve the intended goal as the case of Libya has shown. Instead the rise of ISIS and the prolongation of conflicts is the resultant outcome of resolving conflicts by military means.

The Libya example has also shown that foreign powers more often take sides in regional conflicts by supporting one faction against the other. The radical Islamic groups for instance, which Qaddafi had suppressed came under NATO airstrikes to perfect their sinister motives. Military intervention on humanitarian grounds as Libya example has shown, results in fueling crises, destabilizing country and endangering the lives of civilians.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has reflected the folly and ambiguity of humanitarian intervention by the US and its allies in Libya. The paper posits that the Libyan intervention is a familiar menu long programmed by the United States, which awaited an opportune moment which came during the Arab Spring. The paper has adduced convincing evidences from the perspectives of many scholars, to buttress NATO intervention in Libya as grossly failed to resolve or manage conflict, but intent on regime change which culminates into converting Libya into a puppet state with foreign capital dictating the direction of market forces, and laying bare the resources of Libya to the pillaging energies of western imperial forces. The paper has traced a relationship of distrust and suspicion between Libya and the West to the commencement of Qaddafi’s regime which was accused of financing international terrorism in the 80s and 90s. Qaddafi has since “evolved into an ally in the war against terrorism”, having been facing domestic threats from Al Qaeda; yet allied forces superintended the assassination of Qaddafi and hurriedly left the scene without erecting institutions that could restore peace, and order and set

the state on a path to democracy. Intervention failed to resolve Libyan crisis which culminated into the bifurcation of Libya, the rise of ISIS, the proliferation of arms, deaths, displacement, misery, chaos, inter-alia. In the future, humanitarian intervention should be seen as humanitarian indeed- usher in peace, restore hope, create opportunities and guarantee happiness and real freedom.

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