



# Stability in a Post-Gaddafi Libya

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Comprehensive Information on Complex Crises

Melodee M. Baines

Mediterranean Basin Knowledge Manager  
[melodee.baines@cimicweb.org](mailto:melodee.baines@cimicweb.org)

*This document examines lessons learned in Libya after the end of NATO's Operation Unified Protector. Related information is available at [www.cimicweb.org](http://www.cimicweb.org). Hyperlinks to source material are highlighted in blue and underlined in the text. A list of references for this report is available at the [CimicWeb](http://www.cimicweb.org).*

Even before the capture and death of Moammar Gaddafi on 20 October 2011 and the official end of the NATO mission [Operation Unified Protector](#) on 31 October, scholars and practitioners were discussing 'lessons learned' from Western intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq, Rwanda and Somalia that could apply to post-revolution Libya. As early as August, Gordon Lubold addressed [lessons](#) for Libya in his United States Institute for Peace (USIP) article, "What's Next for the New Libya" and Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Institution wrote "Lessons of the Libya [Intervention](#)". In September 2011, Thomas Carothers, the vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discussed lessons [learned](#) drawing upon the United States experience in Iraq. Other examples followed immediately after Gaddafi's death in October. Chatham House released an article titled "Libya's [New Era](#): Lessons from Iraq". Even now, experts are discussing the lessons learned from the Libyan context that might be applicable to the unrest in Syria and Yemen.

The Arab Spring uprisings were not "a [monolithic](#) phenomenon", according to Eugene Rogan, Director of the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. While there are some similarities to which a '[lessons-learned](#)' approach can be applied, there is much about the Libyan revolution that is unique, according to Laith Kubba, Senior Director of the Middle East and North Africa programme at the National Endowment for Democracy. Kubba points out that the uprising in Libya largely mirrored the Tunisia and Egypt uprisings; however, Gaddafi, and what he was capable of inflicting, was very different from any other leader in the region. In response to what looked to be a significant humanitarian crisis, the United Nation Resolution ([1973](#)) to intervene in Libya violated sovereignty, even as lives were saved.

As reconstruction begins, there are serious [obstacles](#) that may require immediate and sustained attention within Libya in order to achieve stability and maintain peace. This report examines three broad areas for lessons within Libya: 1) governance and stability; 2) development; and 3) international implications. Additionally the report engages in meaningful discussion of ways forward that support the development of a vibrant and stable Libyan society.

## Governance and Stability

### Include Ousted Actors

According to an interview titled, "Building a New Libya", Carothers states that it is important to [include](#) actors from the ousted regime to avoid marginalising them or encouraging the possible creation of new rebel factions. Carothers refers to what he calls the "sweet spot between persecuting and prosecuting", which was not achieved in Iraq and resulted in tremendous challenges to stability. Michael Semple, writing in *Foreign Affairs* magazine agrees, states that once the NATO operation [concluded](#), "The revolutionary authorities will now have to launch

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the inclusive political process Libyans are waiting for and get on with delivering on the hopes of the revolution.” However, Manal Omar, Director of Iraq, Iran, and North Africa Programs at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), cautions that [reconciliation](#) with the people of Sirte and Bani Walid may not be possible. Bani Walid and Sirte were the last two Gaddafi strongholds with significant support for the ousted leader. Complicating reconciliation efforts are the people of Benghazi who wish to see a trial for General Younes’ death.<sup>1</sup> Omar predicts that the absence of a trial could lead to tension if the people of Benghazi continue to be marginalised.

#### Governance & Stability:

##### *Lessons Learned*

- Include ousted actors
- Maintain on-going negotiation
- Unify disparate political groups
- Delay elections
- Include marginalised groups

#### **Maintain On-Going Negotiation**

Carothers suggests that one lesson from the conflict in Iraq is to maintain an on-going [negotiation process](#). In other words, Libya will require a transitional, caretaker government whose role will be to facilitate negotiation supporting the construction of a new political system based on consensus. This requirement, states Carothers, is *sine qua non* for successfully building a new state. However, according to Laith Kubba, [negotiation](#) is a new concept in Libya. Individuals and political organisations or institutions that have the capability to negotiate may not exist. Thus, there is a need for the ruling authority and new government to engage in efforts that will facilitate negotiation training and processes.

#### **Unify Disparate Political Groups**

*Politico* contributor Marco Vicenzino believes that building a new [national consensus](#) will be the most difficult part of moving forward for the new nation. Indeed, there is significant [infigting](#) among the members of the National Transitional Council (NTC), according to the Council on Foreign Relations article “In Qaddafi’s End, New NATO Challenges” by Ed Husain. According to Manal Omar of USIP, national consensus is complicated by the fact that, the NTC does not have a [mandate](#) for nation-building,<sup>2</sup> just for transition. Indeed, Omar questions whether the NTC can fulfil the condition of the [Libya Contact Group](#).

Gaddafi’s death complicates the path to unity and consensus. His death signals the end to the new leadership’s unified [hatred](#) of the dictator, according to *Foreign Policy* magazine. However in the same article, Manal Omar of USIP finds encouragement by what she sees as potential for the NTC forces to unite around “a considerable willingness to overcome” tribal divisions in Libya.

In his piece for [Chatham House](#) called “Libya’s New Era: Lessons from Iraq”, Dr Gareth Stansfield states that the [lessons](#) from Iraq “have not been learned very well”. Dr Stansfield points out that as was the case with the new Iraqi government, Libya’s National Transition Council (NTC) has not been capable of unifying the militias across the country. The failure in Iraq to address the excesses of militias contributed to their devastating civil war. According to Stansfield, “the evidence of Iraq suggests that Libya’s trials may only just be beginning as the lessons of state-building in post-conflict situations are still being learned the hard way.”

Stansfield points out that, despite the lack of sectarian strife, Libyan leadership must unify a [range](#) of political groupings, some of which are regionally based. These political groupings include militias and fighting forces from various regions across Libya, who will likely expect to have a voice in the government of the new Libya. According to *al Arabiya*, fighters from across Libya take [credit](#) for liberating the country, and revenge attacks

<sup>1</sup> On 28 July, General Abdel Fattah Younes was shot and killed while en route to Benghazi to appear before a panel of judges. General Younes formerly served as the interior minister for the Gaddafi government since the coup of 1969 when Gaddafi came to power. Despite his many years of service in the Gaddafi administration, General Younes defected and joined the Libyan rebels in their uprising in February 2011. Little is known about why the general was pulled from the front lines of fighting and summoned to Benghazi for questioning. Source: CFC Mediterranean Basin Review, [02 Aug 2011](#).

<sup>2</sup> The first meeting of the [Libya Contact Group](#) took place in Doha on 13 April 2011. According to British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, “the 21 states that attended agreed that Qadhafi’s regime had lost all legitimacy; that the National Transitional Council should be offered further support; and the UN Special Envoy should take forward an inclusive political process.”



were common in the weeks before and after Gaddafi's death. As of 23 November, [revenge](#) attacks are still being reported, according to *al Ahrām*.

Other [organisations](#) included in the range of political groups, according to Stansfield, include Islamist groups such as the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change (formerly known as Muqatilah or Libyan Islamic Fighting Group ([LIFG](#))). These groups emerged from conflict that was “very much a localized and fragmented affair, breeding a new class of [powerful militia](#) commanders” such as Abd al-Hakim Belhaj (former LIFG leader) and Fawzi Bukatif (leader of the 17 February Brigade who refused to integrate into a Libyan national army).

### **Delay Elections**

Elections, cautions Carothers, ought to follow only after stakeholders and decision-makers have reached [consensus](#) surrounding the timing and ground rules for elections, and this process should not be rushed. Together, consensus and agreed upon rules serve as the blueprint for holding elections and maintaining an open political space where a plurality of political actors is able to participate. Vicenzino also points out that Libya's [transformation](#) will likely require time, and elections are not the only important factor. According to his article, Libyan citizens must feel that their government is transparent and accountable. Jason Gluck and Manal Omar of USIP concur, stating that [delaying elections](#) could be very positive for the NTC and Libya. A delay will allow time for adequate organisation and a more level playing field that will encourage a plurality of participants, according to the article. Furthermore, delaying elections may lead to an atmosphere where negotiation “is more likely because political leaders will not yet be entrenched”. Manal Omar of USIP goes further by asserting that [elections](#) that occur too early could fuel divisions.

### **Include Marginalised Groups: Addressing racial, regional and tribal tensions**

The transition in Libya has revealed potential [problems](#) for Chad, according to the International Crisis Group ([ICG](#)). While sectarian conflict is not an issue in Libya as it is in Iraq, there are post-conflict implications for non-Arab, dark-skinned Libyans, as well as for the people of Chad and other black African migrants in Libya. According to Chatham House, “there is no ideological, regional or religious [basis](#) for continued fighting” in Libya; however, the ICG points out that the lingering resentment resulting from unsubstantiated rumours that emerged during the conflict about black African [mercenaries](#) fighting for Gaddafi remains a genuine concern for dark-skinned Libyans and other migrants in Libya. In November 2011, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon published a report criticising the NTC for illegal and inhuman [detention](#) of over 7,000 people because of their dark skin, according to the *Voice of Russia*. The report also mentions that some of the detainees were tortured.

On 12 December, the *Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN)* reported that “continued harassment and [revenge attacks](#) on [the Tawergha<sup>3</sup>] minority threaten to re-ignite conflict” in Libya. The process of reconciliation and integration of thousands of Tawergha people “is the most extreme test of national reconciliation” for the new government of Libya. *IRIN* reports that the Tawergha are accused of killing and raping residents of the Libyan city of Misrata at the behest of former dictator Moammar Gaddafi during the conflict. However, the article continues that “no one really knows what and how much happened in Misrata”, and there are cultural taboos that prevent investigations. Meanwhile, approximately 8,000 of the 35,000 Tawergha people remain unaccounted for and displaced, as they have been prohibited from returning to their hometown of Tawergha, just south of Misrata. The remaining 27,000 Tawergha people are displaced at sites around Libya, waiting for their living conditions to improve, according to the article.

The complex network of [tribes](#) throughout Libya is another complication that challenges efforts to unify Libyans, according to Husain. Early stages of the conflict saw the powerful [Warfalla tribe](#) defect to the anti-Gaddafi fighters and now they play an important role in the NTC, according to *Foreign Policy* magazine. In addition, the [Tuareg](#), who “have huge influence in the vast, empty desert expanses” of southern Libya and the Sahel, continue to face [criticism](#) and accusations of backing Gaddafi until late into the conflict, according to *Reuters*. On 09 November 2011, Niger's army killed 14 people in a [Tuareg](#) convoy entering the country at Arlit, a Nigerian town

<sup>3</sup> The *IRIN* reports that Tawergha people are a dark-skinned minority of “former slaves brought to Libya in the [18th and 19th centuries](#)” who resided in the town of Tawergha before the outbreak of the conflict.



just south of the border with Libya, reports a separate article by *Reuters*. The article alleges that the Tuaregs in the convoy were loyal to Gaddafi, and it is unclear which side initiated the clash. Nonetheless, the lingering question of [loyalties](#) to Gaddafi remains a concern, as reported by the *Algemeiner*. However, [Libya expert](#) Vincent Cornell of Emory University “says that observers make too much of the tribal factor” in Libya. Nonetheless, USIP’s Manal Omar points out that continued marginalisation of tribes by the NTC could propel the tribes into a political role.

### **Include Marginalised Groups: Addressing women and youth**

According to Omar, the international community continues to encourage the NTC to honour [international norms](#) and influence leaders to assure the inclusion of marginalised groups such as women and youth. Despite these urgings, Omar predicts that women and youth will be marginalised in the new Libya even though there are Libyan women with the skills and experience to competently serve in high-level government positions. To date, women are lacking representation in top level decision-making positions. Women are currently working within lower- and mid-level politics. However, there are Libyan women with the skills and experience to serve in higher-level politics. According to Omar, however, creating opportunities for women to serve as representatives on a national level effectively means that the woman’s tribe has no representation. This is because in Libya women are not seen as appropriate or being capable of serving as “caretakers” or representatives of the tribe. Therefore, if a woman occupies a political position, the tribe feels deprived of an opportunity to be represented. Omar adds that a [focus](#) on women’s liberation may be less effective than simply focusing on the inclusion of women in the current Libyan context.

Youth in Libya are manifesting a [sophisticated](#) level of interest in how the NTC is running the government. The youth are watching to determine if the transitional governing body is accountable, according to Lubold, writing for USIP. The article continues stating, “The most important thing is that the transitional government be as inclusive as possible”, according to Jason Gluck of USIP. “Libya should not learn the painful lessons of other countries, such as Iraq, where entire groups were pushed aside and the seeds for civil war were planted.”

## **Development**

### **Facilitate Robust Civil Society**

Libya is not the first state to emerge from conflict lacking [institutions](#), Carothers reminds us. Other countries have faced similar challenges and have managed to build states. According to Carothers, a lack of institutions is a big challenge, but not a unique or insurmountable one. Liberia is an example of a state that emerged from conflict lacking institutions, yet successfully managed to build a stable government.

There is reason to believe that Libya will be able to overcome the obstacle of devastated institutions. For Vicenzino, building civic [institutions](#) is an important process in the birth of a new society and political culture, and according to Laith Kubba, legitimate political and social [structures](#) will not emerge immediately. Manal Omar of USIP points out that the emergence of civil society is very strong in Libya. Ted Piccone, Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution, says

that Libya can draw from the transitional experiences of other new democracies, which have more to share and can serve as examples to learn from in regard to developing a vibrant civil society. In addition, European Union instruments (such as trade agreements) can assist in applying positive pressure in this regard. For example, as the European Union engages Libya’s government in trade agreements and other international accords, positive pressure will increase to encourage Libya to continue building civic institutions.

#### **Development:**

##### ***Lessons Learned***

- Facilitate robust civil society
- Manage expectations for special privileges
- Rehabilitate energy output
- Release assets



### Manage Expectations for Special Privileges

Carothers addresses the [role](#) of the United States in post-Gaddafi Libya, pointing out that the United States' future involvement will not be at the same level as in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to Vicenzino, the [involvement](#) of the West in post-Gaddafi Libya must be subtle and avoid direct intervention. Also, it is important for the West to recognise that the new Libya may not be characterised by a secular regime based on democratic pluralism in the same style found in Europe or North America. Instead, “there is unlikely to be a clear-cut divide between the state and religion” in the new Libya. According to George Joffe of Cambridge University, nations that participated in the NATO operation in Libya may expect special [privileges](#) in terms of access to contracts and other benefits, but the Libyan people have been empowered and emboldened by their revolution and might not be willing to honour these assumptions from other countries.

### Rehabilitate Energy Output

After liberation, Tripoli reported that [infrastructure damage](#) was limited, and anti-Gaddafi militia forces were able to establish basic security in a short period of time. After the liberation, normality was evident relatively quickly, according to Michael Semple writing for *Foreign Affairs* magazine. This is among the differences between Libya and Afghanistan that Semple observed in the [aftermath](#) of the Libyan revolution.

One factor that is expected to hasten Libya's [reconstruction](#) is the resumption of Libya's pre-conflict energy output, according to Vicenzino's *Politico* article. Estimates as of December 2011 project that Libya's [crude output](#) will resume in the second half of 2012, according to Libya's Oil Minister Abdulrahman Ben Yazza as reported by *Bloomberg*. Joffe asserts that [rehabilitating](#) the Libyan energy industry is the first task to face the provisional government and a timeline of three years to reach pre-conflict levels of energy output. The fact that the Libyan energy industry was never fully nationalised means foreign companies have experience in Libya and are ready to participate in what is certain to be an expensive effort to resume energy production, Joffe asserts.<sup>4</sup>

### Release Assets

According to Dean Pittman, United Nations Security Council [Resolution 2009](#), which concerns [releasing assets](#) in Libya, is important because establishing the economy, access to and distribution of resources, structures of government and human rights requires funds and are critical for reconstruction in Libya. According to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, high levels of growth and job-creation will [positively support](#) political transition in Libya and elsewhere in the region. Increased economic prosperity will also contribute to protecting against “regression into new forms of authoritarianism, reduce migration into Europe, and strengthen south-north interests and relations”.

On 16 December 2011, the United States lifted some of the [sanctions](#) on Libya's government, releasing more than USD 30 billion in assets, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The *Telegraph* reports that on the same day, the United Nations Sanctions Committee lifted sanctions against the Central Bank of Libya and its subsidiary, the Libyan Foreign bank, freeing USD 40 billion in Libyan assets.

### International Implications

#### Understand the application of “Responsibility to Protect”

In their article in *Foreign Affairs* titled “Humanitarian Intervention Comes of Age”, Jon Western and Joshua S. Goldstein discuss [lessons](#) learned from the 1990s (such as the case of Somalia) to 2011. The article declares that “the international community has learned its lessons” about using

#### International Implications:

##### Lessons Learned

- Understand the application of “Responsibility to Protect”
- Encourage regional IO support
- Recognise new methods of intervention
- Act in response to UN mandate(s)
- Follow the lead of an international alliance

<sup>4</sup> More in-depth information on the state of the oil industry in Libya is available in the Civil-Military Fusion Centre (CFC) Special Report, “[Libyan Oil](#) - Before and After Moammar Gaddafi”.



militaries to save lives since the “ugly missions of the 1990s”, referring to humanitarian intervention in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia. According to the article, previous humanitarian intervention operations were debacles or disastrous engagements. The Libya engagement is an example of a successful humanitarian intervention.

The responsibility to protect ([RtoP](#)) is an international norm codified in the UN [Resolution](#) of 14 September 2009. On 18 March 2011, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called upon member states to take action in “affirmation of the global community’s [responsibility to protect](#) people from their own government’s violence”. Ironically RtoP requires the use of violence to end violence. In other words, RtoP relies upon the use of violence in international intervention. RtoP is applied when the international community intervenes in cases where national governments fail to protect populations from violence such as “war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide”. Political scientist Taylor Seybold found that the most successful way to hasten the end of an intrastate conflict is through “aggressive operations legitimized by firm UN Security Council resolutions”. Despite the inherent contradiction that humanitarian intervention requires the use of “violence in order to control violence”, the mission in Libya affirms that intervention can mitigate violence against civilians because it forces the aggressors’ attention away from attacking civilians and toward self-preservation.

However, according to *Foreign Policy* magazine, ‘Responsibility to Protect’ is not [international law](#) and is not embodied in a binding treaty. *Foreign Affairs* magazine points out that “the concept of state [sovereignty](#) has been made conditional on a state’s responsible behavior”. Additionally, *Foreign Policy* magazine states that, as an [international norm](#), the application of ‘RtoP’ has been selectively applied within the international community. The article continues, “It is possible, indeed likely, that if countries had complied with international law, and the U.S. government had complied with domestic law, Qaddafi would still be in power, while thousands of Libyan civilians would be in torture chambers or graves.” According to Ted Piccone, the politics of [protection](#) is among the lessons learned in Libya.

### **Encourage Regional International Organisational Support**

The Libya mission showed that [regional organisations](#) are relevant actors, perhaps more than in the past. In the case of Libya, organisations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council ([GCC](#)), the African Union ([AU](#)) and the [Arab League](#) supported intervention based upon the responsibility to protect. The collusion of these regional actors was an essential aspect of the success of the mission. According to Dean Pittman, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, the lesson for other African states is that they can be more influential through engagement in regional institutions like the AU.

### **Recognise New Methods of Intervention**

According to the *New York Times* (*NYT*), the execution of NATO Operation Unified Protector overwhelmingly [relied](#) on equipment and technology from the United States while at the same time non-American member states carried out 75% of sorties and 100% of sea-based enforcement of the arms embargo. *Voice of America* reports that as the operation concluded, “the Obama administration is reviewing the [formula](#), hoping to transfer it to other countries.” Anthony Cordesman, a military specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies ([CSIS](#)), told *NYT* that a clear [lesson](#) from the NATO operation is that “the United States does not have to be out in front every time, it can let the allies take the lead”.

Throughout the operation, the United States [led](#) from behind, and according to the *NYT*, the operation represents “the new American way of war” in which money is spent and no lives are lost. The *National Interest* characterises the United States’ position in the mission as a [role reversal](#) with Europe in comparison to previous missions in the Balkans. Hafed Al-Ghwell of the Libya Outreach Group suggests that the United States can [support](#) the transition in Libya with the provision of technical expertise, by emphasising human rights as a public issue for the future government and by encouraging strong private sector development. Indeed, according to former Secretary of Defence Robert Gates speaking to the press in March 2011, “Going forward, the US military will provide the



capabilities that others cannot provide either in kind or in scale—such as electronic attack, aerial refueling, lift, search and rescue, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support”.<sup>5</sup>

One of the takeaways of this [new warfare](#) style is that speed kills. Rapidly delivered attacks represent the element of surprise for the enemy. The NATO mission began ten days after the alliance agreed to launch operations. This is in contrast to the 11 months that passed between the UN decision and the actual launch of the no-fly zone over Kosovo in the 1990s. According to US Navy Admiral James Stavridis speaking to *Voice of America (VOA)*, the [first lesson](#) of Operation Unified Protector is that NATO functions well and with “alacrity”, including in support of UN Security Council resolutions.

Paddy Ashdown, former European Union High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, declared that the “[Libyan model](#)” of intervention is now the model to follow as opposed to the “Iraqi model” of invasion, according to Pierre Lévy writing for the *Monthly Review*. On the other hand, Shashank Joshi of the Conservative Middle East Council does not consider the case of Libya to represent a [new military](#) model. Instead, Joshi concludes that the “Afghan Model” used in the Libyan theatre explains the success of the operation. Joshi defines the “Afghan Model” as “the injection of special forces, enabling close air support to indigenous ground forces, in addition to the equipping and training of rebels”.

### Act in Response to UN Mandate(s)

Dean Pittman said that the operation in Libya is a real example of why the UN is an [important organisation](#), which has a critical and unique role to play in the global community. The example of Libya demonstrates why the UN should to participate in multilateral efforts of humanitarian intervention. Libya was the first unanimous referral from the UNSC to the International Criminal Court. The work in multilateral systems has been critical to the success of the mission. The mission exemplifies many pieces working together well. According to Dean Pittman, a huge humanitarian crisis did not unfold because all actors moved quickly with an international, coordinated, burden-sharing response.

### Follow the Lead of an International Alliance

France and the UK are the most [militarized](#) nations in the European Union, according to the *Associated Press (AP)*. The decisive actions of these two states in the NATO-led mission in Libya have helped to change Europeans’ reputation as being weak and anti-war. The NATO operation in Libya showcased a new [continuity](#) of action, according to the *National Interest*. France and the UK championed the political campaign in the UN and remained at the forefront as it continued to seek support for action in the NATO forum. The article calls this “a new opening for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation”. US Navy Admiral James Stavridis recognized that NATO has its challenges, but was pleased with the effective launch and execution of Operation Unified Protector. Stavridis told *VOA* that there was not an “[existential threat](#) posed by Libya, but in fact, the alliance stepped up, undertook this [Libya]. I think that’s a good example of the alliance being willing to take on missions that are beyond existential”.

### Concluding Remarks

The ground forces that toppled the Gaddafi regime were Libyans, albeit acting with assistance and advice from other government and international organisations. According to Chatham House’s Sir Richard Dalton, Associate Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme, it was “a Libyan revolution and the new rulers will not be

**Future Conflicts:**

#### ***Lessons Learned***

International consensus regarding:

Civilian Protection  
vs.  
Respecting Sovereignty

<sup>5</sup> Refer to the document by the unclassified Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA). “Libya: Operation ODYSSEY DAWN (OOD) Executive Summary”. September 2011. Available upon request from JCOA.



[tainted](#) by association with a foreign military occupation”. Indeed, the revolution might be better characterised as a [counter-revolution](#), according to Pierre Lévy writing for the *Monthly Review*. There have not been widespread social demands, and the interim leadership even reverted to the pre-Gaddafi flag of King Idris I.

According to Dean Pittman, Libya must lead in its own [reconstruction](#). Laith Kubba states that democracy-building must be demand-driven and the international community must follow the lead of the Libyan people. Ultimately, according to Dean Pittman, every country must be taken for itself; there can be no cookie-cutter approach. Christopher Blanchard, Middle East Policy Analyst in the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division of the Congressional Research Service agrees “that the [vital decisions](#) about security, cease fire, terms of justice, etc. will be made by Libyans, not outside powers”, though there is a space for the United States and external actors to assist in the process.

*Time* magazine cautions to not “[over-learn](#) whatever lessons there are” to be learned from Libya, while at the same time we should not be reluctant to explore whatever lessons there may be. In closing, *Foreign Affairs* succinctly summarises that “Recent scholarship on post-conflict state building suggests that the [best approach](#) may be a hybrid approach in which outsiders and domestic leaders rely on local customs, politics, and practices to establish new institutions that can move over time toward international norms of accountable, legitimate, and democratic governance.” There is certainly a [lesson](#) from Libya and the Arab Spring for the remaining authoritarians and semi-authoritarians in the region that “leaders who stay too long are likely to depart on terms considerably less favorable” than in the past, according to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies.



### Recommended Reading

Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS). "Africa and the Arab Spring: A New Era of Democratic Expectations." ACSS [Special Report](#) No. 1. November 2011

African Development Bank (AfDB). [Economic Brief](#) "Libya: Post-War Challenges". September 2011.

Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). [Policy Brief](#) "Libya: Beyond Regime Change". October 2011.

Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA). "Libya: Operation ODYSSEY DAWN (OOD) A Case Study In Command And Control". October 2011. Available upon request from JCOA.

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Shashank Joshi. [Chapter Four](#) "6 Lessons from Libya" in "The Arab Spring: Implications for British Policy". Conservative Middle East Council. October 2011.

William Lewis. "Libya: Dream versus Reality". Mediterranean Quarterly, 22:3. 2011.

Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). [ACCIDENTAL HEROES](#) Britain, France and the Libya Operation. September 2011.

Ira Straus. "[NATO's Success](#): The Real Lessons of Libya". Atlantic Community. September 2011.