



African Union and Libyan Crises, 2011-2022

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ABSTRACT

The African Union (AU) is facing significant challenges in its efforts to resolving the Libyan crisis. The civil war that erupted in Libya in 2011 has displaced millions of people and caused severe human suffering, destruction of infrastructure, and instability in the region. Despite various diplomatic initiatives, the conflict has reached a stalemate. While the AU has been a major player in the search for a solution, it has had limited success in this regard. To this end, the study examined the roles of the AU in Libya's crises. This study was anchored on the constructivism theory propounded by Alexander Wendt in 1992, while a historical and qualitative approach were employed for the study. The secondary source of data collection was used in this investigation, and data was obtained by surfing from published works and research on AU publications on peaceful resolution of Libyan crises, textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, government publications, and other allied materials. The secondary data collected relating to AU efforts in finding a peaceful resolution to the Libyan crises was thoroughly subjected to content analysis. The study revealed that economic hardships, the spread of anti-government sentiment, and the international intervention of NATO forces contributed to the Libyan crisis of 2011. Also, the US CIA's role in the Libyan crisis has been significant and varied, ranging from providing logistical and material support to training militia forces and gathering intelligence, resulting in the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime and the formation of a new government. The African Union's initiatives towards the Libyan crisis have been hindered by the lack of a unified stance taken by its member states towards the conflict. From the identified findings, the study recommended that there is a need for the African Union to facilitate more direct dialogue among its member states to reach a unified stance based on mutual interests. This is important because it would provide the basis for the AU to take action in the crisis; without a unified stance, the AU will be unable to effectively intervene and resolve the conflicts.

Keywords:

Africa Union, Crisis, Uprising, Peace, Resolution

Introduction

The Libyan crisis is an ongoing civil war and international conflict with multiple armed factions within the country. The crisis began as a popular uprising against longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, which eventually became an all-out civil war. Since then Libya has been divided between two rival governments, the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) in the west and the Libyan National Army (LNA) under the leadership of General Khalifa Haftar in the east. The Libyan crisis has impacted the security of the entire region, particularly for neighboring countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria (Carvin, 2016).

The Libyan crisis has both domestic and international dynamics, with many countries involved in the conflict and regional interests at stake. The crisis has become increasingly complex, with a wide variety of armed groups involved, as well as a range of international actors including the UN, the African Union, the European Union and the Arab League. The presence of multiple foreign powers has made it difficult to reach a lasting peace (Munroe-Blum, 2020).

Since the start of the crisis, efforts to resolving the conflict have been hampered by the lack of international consensus, particularly between Western and Arab countries. While some parties have advocated for military intervention and the support of the LNA, others have called for a diplomatic solution and a ceasefire. However, the deep divisions between the conflicting parties and the conflict's geopolitical implications have made it difficult to find a lasting solution (Fabbri, 2020).

Furthermore, the presence of multiple armed militias has hindered the possibility of a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Despite multiple attempts at a cease-fire, the conflict persists as the GNA and LNA are both determined to strengthen their control of the country. The conflict also continues to have humanitarian consequences, as many in Libya remain displaced and in need of humanitarian aid (Nonneman & Bakir, 2020). Consequently, the conflict has been used as a proxy war by

outside parties who seek to increase their influence in the region. For example, Russian military and political support for the LNA has been a major factor in the ongoing crisis. Meanwhile, Turkey and Qatar have been supportive of the GNA and have provided military assistance and training to their forces (Time, 2020).

The Libyan crisis remains unresolved, and any lasting peace is unlikely to be achieved without sustained international efforts. The conflict's complexity and severity makes it critical for all major international stakeholders to work together to put an end to the bloodshed. The question is, what is the role of Africa Union (AU) in resolving the Libyan crises?

The African Union (AU) is a continental intergovernmental organization created in 2002 to replace the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Its primary mission is to promote peace, security and stability on the continent, as well as to encourage economic integration and development (Ayma, 2017). The AU has developed an increasingly important institutional framework for managing issues affecting the continent, such as conflict resolution, economic development, poverty reduction, human rights, democracy and the free movement of people (Assefa, 2010). It also serves as a forum in which African leaders can discuss common problems and objectives.

The AU is composed of 55 member states, and its headquarters, the African Union Commission, is located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AU's decision-making body is the Peace and Security Council, which is composed of 15 members appointed by the governments of the member states. The Peace and Security Council also serves as the primary body responsible for conflict resolution, promoting regional cooperation and addressing issues of regional concern (Bueger&Schaberl, 2018).

The AU also has a number of organs and specialized agencies that assist it in achieving its goals. Such as the African Court of Justice and Human Rights (ACJHR), the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), the African Development Bank and the African Monetary Fund. In addition, the AU recently

established the African Continental Free Trade Area to encourage economic integration on the African continent (Moyo, 2019).

The Libyan civil war began in 2011 as a result of the ouster of Muammar Gaddafi's regime, and it has continued since then, deepening violent confrontations and undermining the process of political transition in the country. As a response, the African Union (AU) has taken a proactive role in promoting peace and security in the region. However, the effectiveness of the AU's initiatives has been limited.

The AU has sought to mediate the political divisions in Libya through the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) and the High Council of State (HCS). The LPA was originally signed on the 17th of December 2015 in Skhirat, Morocco in order to form a Government of National Accord (GNA), with the aim of unifying the country and resolving the internal conflict. The HCS was then created as part of the LPA, and it acted as an advisory body to the GNA. The goal of these initiatives was to bring together both sides of the conflict and to find a compromise and long-term solution.

The AU's efforts have been further shown through the mechanism of the African Union Support Mission in Libya (AUSML). AUSML was a regional peacebuilding initiative launched in 2015 in order to provide technical assistance in support of the UN's efforts and in accordance with the LPA. AUSML was designed to support the transition process in Libya, the legislative process, the security sector reform, anti-corruption, mediation and reconciliation, as well as the reintegration of former fighters.

However, the AU's initiatives have been largely unsuccessful as armed clashes between rival parties have continued despite the establishment of the GNA and the HCS. Furthermore, the GNA's authority is limited to Tripoli, and the LPA has not been fully implemented. Additionally, the recent escalation of violence has led to a renewed clash between rival factions in the east and west of the country. This made some scholars to ponder on the role of AU in curbing the Libyan crises from 2011 to 2022.

One of the primary issues militating the AU's efforts to stabilize Libya has been the lack of unity among the members of the international community. The AU's efforts have been undermined by the fragmentation of the international response. As opposed to a unified approach, different states and international actors have pursued their own, divergent security agendas. This has weakened the AU's credibility and undermined its capacity to bring the parties to the negotiating table. (Bhattacharji, et al. 2020). AU's effort in bringing peace to Libyans has been limited by the proliferation and intensification of armed factions. Since the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, the AU has been trying to find ways to integrate the various groups into a unified framework. However, this has been hindered by the presence of a number of armed militias, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, which have continually undermined the AU's efforts to bringing about a lasting peace in Libya (Abdul-Hakim, 2019). Furthermore, the presence of these armed militias has contributed to the spread of violence and discord throughout the country. As a result, the AU has thus far been unable to fully succeed in its mediation role.

The AU has also been faced with difficulties related to its limited legal and operational frameworks. Although the AU's peace and security architecture, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), provides a platform for collective action, its members have sometimes been unwilling to make use of the mechanisms available. This has prevented the AU from acting decisively and effectively in the Libyan crisis. In addition, cooperation between the African and European security organizations has been weak (Karayanni, 2014). Furthermore, the AU has also been confronted with a lack of concrete material contributions. As opposed to other international actors, the AU is hindered by its limited economic resources and thus depends to a large extent on external funding. Consequently, it has been more difficult for the AU to effectively address the challenges posed by the Libyan conflict. (Balland & de Waal, 2018).

Finally, the AU's efforts in Libya have been marred by allegations of bias. Various factions have accused the AU of favoring certain groups, undermining the legitimacy and credibility of the organization (Halferty, et al., 2020). This is further compounded by the presence of some members of the AU with vested interests in the region. Thus, the possibility of the AU being manipulated to pursue foreign agendas has posed another obstacle to the organization's efforts to bring about a lasting peace in Libya. The inability of AU in curbing Libyan crises has made some scholars to ponder on its effectiveness in resolving Libyan crises. Therefore, this study examined the roles of AU in Libyan crises, 2011-2022.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- 1) examine the factors responsible for the Libyan crisis of 2011.
- 2) investigate the approaches adopted by the African Union in finding peaceful resolutions to the Libyan crisis.
- 3) investigate the obstacles faced by the African Union in its effort to resolving the Libyan crisis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Crises

The concept of "crises" has been examined through various lenses and disciplines, and this body of knowledge is particularly vast. For the purpose of this analysis, crises will be explored in the context of psychology, sociology, economics, and political science.

In psychology, crisis refers to a period of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger that requires immediate action (American Psychological Association, 2017). Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, for example, proposes that each individual experiences eight distinct crises during their lifespan, such as trust versus mistrust and identity versus role confusion (Erikson, 1950). Erikson's crises are viewed as normative and developmental, with successful resolution contributing to personal growth.

Sociologically, crises often refer to situations that disrupt social order or established patterns of behavior, such as natural disasters or social

unrest (Smelser, 1962). These crises can test the resilience and adaptability of social institutions and communities (Pelling & Dill, 2010). In economics, the term crisis is typically used to describe situations of serious economic decline, such as a recession or depression. Crises may involve various financial and economic processes, such as a dramatic drop in GDP, an increase in unemployment, or a stock market crash (Kindleberger & Aliber, 2005).

In the field of organizational leadership, crises often refer to events that are "unexpected, difficult to manage, and potentially disastrous" (Burns, 2021, p. 14) for the organization's reputation, finances, or internal operations. Examples of corporate or industrial crises may include hostile takeovers, data or trade secrets theft, natural disasters, or wide-reaching scandals (Emeterio, 2017). The public health landscape is inextricably intertwined with the concept of crisis, from the emergence of pandemics to the everyday challenges that come with supplying medical care in remote communities (Anderberg & Schneider, 2020).

Managing a crisis—whether it is personal, organizational, or public—requires fast-thinking, quick decision-making, and innovative problem-solving skills (Grabherr, 2020) and well-focused change-oriented social responsibility agenda (Anyalebechi & Owugah, 2022). According to Burns (2021), there are four essential steps to crisis management: recognition, analysis, decision making, and monitoring. The recognition step requires leaders to comprehend the full scope of a crisis, identify all stakeholders, and recognize the crux of the issue. In the analysis step, a plan is created for how to mitigate the crisis with a set of objectives, alternative policies, and advantages and disadvantages outlined. During the decision-making step, the leader must make a decision based on the provided data and their own analysis of the situation's outcomes. Finally, in the monitoring step, leaders must actively track the situation over time and adjust their solutions to ensure that the crisis is properly managed.

Managers and leaders must also consider the psychological and moral aspects of the handling

of a crisis (Jeppesen, 2018). Careful consideration should be given to how the public could perceive the decisions and actions of those leading the charge that could lead to a worsened or improved public perception of the organization or group. Communication is particularly important during a crisis, and how and when information is circulated can shape public opinion and reactions to the unfolding events (Emeterio, 2020). The right communication can help people process and cope with the evolving situation and minimize the damage of the crisis.

Crises in political science typically refer to a threat to the essential values or life of a community, state, or international system (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1990). These events are incredibly serious, and must be handled with great urgency and risk. It has been observed that crises require immediate attention, as ongoing delays often lead to amplified consequences (Gavriilidis, 2008). It is for this reason that crises compel decision makers to weigh the costs and benefits more rapidly than usual (Caster et al., 1998). Since crises are unpredictable, they often create a sense of uncertainty and instability, as a consequence of which decision makers are likely to take decisions quickly (Beckman et al., 1994). The concept of crises is, therefore, pervasive across many fields of study, but its specific meaning and implications differ based on its context.

Furthermore, crises have a tendency to spark democratic participation, as the threat is likely to galvanize citizens to respond (Jahn & Lührmann, 2012). This can be a beneficial outcome if it encourages the people to take ownership and responsibility for their own futures. In some cases, it may even encourage citizens to hold public officials accountable for their actions (Key, 1984). Nonetheless, the increased participation that typically occurs in times of crisis can also lead to disruptive behavior (Sabine, 2000). This can further exacerbate the situation, as it tends to add emotion into the decision-making process.

Finally, a crisis in political science can provide the impetus for much needed reforms

(Gavriilidis, 2008). Once the threat is addressed, new policies and strategies can be implemented in order to better prepare for similar events in the future. This can include changes in the formal structures of politics as well as the organization of public resources (McDonald & Ratner, 2016). In this way, crises can serve a valuable purpose, allowing society to proactively respond to difficult situations and prevent them from occurring.

Africa Union

The African Union (AU) was established in 2002, succeeding the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which had been founded in 1963 (Onyango, 2010). It is an intergovernmental organization representing the 55 countries of the African continent and was created with the aim of promoting peace, security, and stability in Africa, as well as strengthening the African people's continued commitment to economic, cultural, and political development (Khorasani, 2018).

The main aim of the African Union is to unite all African nations, promote regional economic integration, and stimulate progress in the fields of politics, health, education, and security (Konaté & Moukosso, 2014). The African Union provides a regional forum for member states to discuss and negotiate issues of mutual interest and concern. Additionally, the African Union is responsible for the creation and maintenance of peace and security in Africa through the promotion of democratic values, human rights, economic and social welfare.

In order to achieve its goals, the African Union has established a number of programmes and initiatives. These include the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance (PARA) Programmes. The APSA is a collective security system and provides the main framework for maintaining Africa's peace and security. The PARA Programmes works towards promoting sustainable economic growth and development across Africa (Adetula, 2011). Furthermore, the African Union is also responsible for the establishment of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights, which strives to protect the

human rights of African citizens and to ensure the rule of law in all African states (Vale, 2015). The African Union also encourages a culture of democracy, good governance, and gender equality across the continent. The African Union is committed to enhancing the situation of women in Africa, particularly in health, education, and economic empowerment (Gicharu, 2015). The African Union is also engaged in promoting peace education, as well as the prevention of disputes, civil wars, and genocide in its member states.

The African Union has a variety of core objectives, with the primary objectives being the elimination of conflict, the promotion of peace and stability, and the active promotion of human rights, democracy, economic development, and social progress in the continent (Johnson, 2014). To achieve these objectives, the African Union has established a range of treaties and protocols, such as the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Terrorism and the African Union Convention on Internally Displaced Persons (Yadusew, 2018). The African Union also seeks to promote economic integration in the continent, facilitating the movement of goods, people and capital across the continent.

The African Union is comprised of varied of institutions which foster cooperative decision-making and promote intergovernmental collaboration among African nations. The Assembly of Heads of States and Government is the highest decision-making body of the Union, comprising the elected heads of states and government of the African Union's member states (Habtemariam, 2019). This body is responsible for harmonizing the policies of the African Union, setting up priorities for the Union's activities, and making decisions about the Union's budget. The Executive Council, Specialized Technical Committees, Peace and Security Council, and the Pan-African Parliament are other prominent institutions of the African Union which facilitate the decision-making and implementation process across the continent.

In conclusion, the African Union was established in 2002 with the primary objective of fostering

peace, security, and stability in Africa. It also seeks to promote economic integration, human rights, and democratic values in the continent, and is structured around a number of important institutions which facilitate the cooperative decision-making and implementation of the Union's objectives.

Libyan Crises

Libyan crises refer to the political instability, civil conflict and multiple armed interventions in Libya since the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. The crisis in the country has been seen as international in nature and one of the most complicated and enduring of the post-Arab Spring period which manifested in series of insurrections aiming at overthrowing dictatorial governments in the Middle East, especially in Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and Tunisia (Eyina, et. al. 2022). This crisis has been very tragic, as at least an estimated 3,000 Libyans have been killed, two million have been displaced and some 480,000 Libyans sought protection in foreign countries as at the end of 2019 (U.N. Human Rights Council, 2020).

The 2011 war saw the overthrow of the long-time Gaddafi regime and civil war between various factions in the country, leaving it with no functional central government. This no-holds barred conflict opened the way for regional and international interventions, largely for political and economic interests. This conflict took a devastating toll on civilians, infrastructure and public services were largely destroyed, human rights and humanitarian law violations were commonplace, and there were severe erosion of the rule of law, as noted by Human Rights Watch (2020).

The two major factions competing for control of the state – the Islamic-leaning Government of National Accord (GNA) with its base in Tripoli and the Tobruk-based House of Representatives with its ties to the Libyan National Army (LNA) – have since been locked in a stalemate, with the United Nations-brokered Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) of 2015 failing to bring an end to the instability (Coghlan et al., 2017). In the absence of a coherent state, there are several armed groups and actors that have arisen in the vacuum, making a resolution of the conflict

more complex. These include local militias, tribal forces, religious extremists, international terrorists, and smuggling networks feeding off the crisis, while regional interference from neighbouring states has continued (Miller, 2019).

Furthermore, since 2014 Libya has seen limited attempts at 'elections', but democratic processes have been hobbled by the deep cleavages among rivals, along with the interference of external actors (Coghlan et al., 2017). Narcotics and the arms trade, both facilitated by outside actors, have created a bunch for criminal networks, while refugees and migrants have become increasingly exploited by groups such as human traffickers, making the situation in the country very dire. While peace negotiations between the warring factions have been held in recent years, they have not borne fruit and the reverberations of the crisis continue to affect the people (U.N. Human Rights Council, 2020). As the International Crisis Group (2020) has noted, in the absence of a lasting resolution, "The vulnerability of the population – and Libya's neighbours – will remain high as the country is left with an increasingly intractable conflict."

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Constructivism theory propounded by Alexander Wendt in 1992, which states that understanding of an international political situation is based on culture, ideas and beliefs rather than assumed determinism of materialist factors (Belachew & Xie, 2017; Risse, 2014)¹. This approach implies that the International system is not a collective of units operating in isolation, but rather a web of relationships formed by states as rational entities responding to the normative environment (Wendt, 2004).

Constructivism is of great relevance for International Relations because it permits an understanding of the interaction between agents in international politics beyond the limitations of the previously established realist and liberal theoretical approaches (Rise, 2014). In accordance to constructivist methodology, international outcomes are contingent upon shared expectations and meanings, which are

often negotiated among agents (Belachew & Xie, 2017).⁴ For example, trends of interdependence, sovereignty, and power differ among states depending on the type of cultural, economic, and geopolitical relationships that each state establishes with other actors (Risse, 2014). This has implications in the adoption of multilateral norms and regulations, since the diffusion of these depends on the interactions between agents and not solely on the material capabilities of a single state (Katsamakos & Miller, 2015).

At the same time, by bringing attention to norms, values and meanings, Constructivism provides an understanding of complex identities and practices of individual actors, which creates an additional layer of complexity to the analysis of International Relations. This is particularly valuable in the analysis of war and conflict, because constructivism allows to examine the relationship between states and violent non-state actors, and to understand the cultural motivations behind complex security situations (Risse, 2014)

Constructivism explains understandings of international relations as constructed rather than essential, and that how actors interact in the international system is dependent on the identities shared between them. In this context, the African Union (AU) has taken an active part in attempting to resolve the crises in Libya, which has been ongoing for more than ten years. The AU approached the situation through a mediation-focused approach, characterized by continual dialogue between the warring factions, in the hopes of finding lasting peace and stability in the region.

The constructivist lens can be used to help elucidate the AU's role in resolving the Libyan crises. Through negotiations between the various factions, the AU worked to establish norms of behavior and build a collective identity between the warring factions as Libyans, rather than Arab or tribal identities. The AU saw that by fostering a sense of shared identity and norms of constructive behavior, it may be able to convince the warring sides to put aside their differences in order to reach a peaceful resolution.

The AU also sought to use its institutional ties and resources to bolster the legitimacy and effectiveness of its efforts. In doing so, the AU emphasized the necessity of state rule of law and democratic governance as an essential part of a future Libyan political system. In doing so, the AU sought to construct a framework of trust and cooperation, enabling the different factions to engage in productive dialogue and eventually reach a negotiated resolution.

The actions of the AU during the Libyan crises are in line with the constructivist approach to international relations. The AU encouraged negotiations between the factions, and sought to construct norms of behavior that did not prioritize narrow interests or tribal identities. Additionally, by emphasizing the necessity of democratic governance, the AU sought to create a shared framework of understanding and trust that could bring the parties to the table and eventually result in a negotiated agreement. The AU's constructivist approach to the Libyan crises has helped demonstrate the efficacy of multilateral institutions in forging an agreement and ending the conflict.

Methodology/Research Setting

This study adopted a historical and qualitative approach. The historical design deals systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions about past events. It involves a critical inquiry of a previous age with the aim of reconstructing a faithful representation of the past. Shafer (1974, p. 49) explains that, "In historical research, the investigator studies documents and other resources that contain facts concerning the research theme with the objective of achieving better understanding of present policies, practices, problems and institutions." These, when properly harnessed, would help us to better understand the role of AU in resolving Libyan crises.

The secondary source of data collection was used in this investigation. Secondary data were obtained from published works and researches on AU integration process, articles and reports by the AU and other bodies that are

involved in the peaceful resolution of Libyan crises. Other secondary sources of data included the surfing of textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, government publications, theses and dissertations, encyclopedias, and materials culled from the Internet.

The secondary data collected were relating to AU's efforts in finding peaceful resolution to Libyan crises were thoroughly subjected to content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic method for analyzing large amounts of textual or verbal data through coding and categorizing to identify patterns, trends, and relationships (Krippendorff, 2013). This method is often used in the social sciences to investigate how people perceive and experience particular events or issues.

In the case of the AU's efforts in finding a peaceful resolution to the Libyan crisis, content analysis can provide an understanding of how the African Union is responding to the situation. This includes looking at the approach and language used, the commitments made by AU members, and how the crisis itself is being framed. This can help to understand the nature of the actions being taken, whether they are effective, and what changes might be needed. Content analysis can also provide insights into other stakeholders involved in the resolution efforts, such as how different perspectives are being expressed, which actors are driving the process, and who is being ignored or sidelined. In summarizing, content analysis can shed light on how the AU is approaching the resolution of the Libyan crisis, its successes and failures in this process, and the challenges ahead.

A Brief of Libya

The study area is centred on Libya. Libya, bordered by the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt, Algeria, Chad, Sudan, Niger, and Tunisia, has a troubled and complex history (Elhag, 2006). It was colonized by Italy in 1941 and ruled until independence in 1951 (Doumato & Prestholdt, 2008). Post-independence, Libya saw a great rise in oil production due to an expansion of its infrastructure (Phillips, 2017). This new found wealth enabled the country to gain economic

and political strength across the region (Fweebus & Singh, 2008).

The Gaddafi regime, under the rule of Muammar Gaddafi, began in 1969 and lasted until 2011 (Lankford, 2012). Despite Libya's financial success, the Gaddafi government was considered brutally oppressive to its citizens, leading to protests and international outcry (Kamdoum, 2016). During the Arab Spring, Libyan citizens staged a mass protest, leading to a civil war and throwing the country into chaos (Muftah, 2015). In 2011, Gaddafi was overthrown, ending his four-decade long rule (Terrill, 2013).

While a democracy was promised after Gaddafi left office, the subsequent government was unstable. This led to a power vacuum and rise of violent extremist groups in the country (Kaylani, 2015). Furthermore, the United Nations Panel of Experts on Libya reported in 2017 that the armed militia groups vying for power in the country had caused "frequent outbursts of armed violence, and have contaminated the country's rich cultural heritage" (United Nations, 2017). Despite this turmoil, however, Libya has managed to slowly build back parts of their infrastructure over the past years, and the country is striving to stabilize itself and rebuild a better future for its citizens (Alghithmi, 2016).

In conclusion, Libya has been through various forms of regimes, and the country is currently still in a state of political and social quackmire. All the same, Libya has made great strides over the past several years in rebuilding its economy and infrastructure, in spite of the political instability and rise of militiagroups within the country.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data based on the objectives of the study.

Factors Responsible for the Libyan Crisis of 2011

The Libyan crisis of 2011 was an armed rebellion that started in February 2011 as part of the Arab Spring. It culminated in the overthrow of longtime leader Muammar

Gaddafi and the establishment of a new government in Libya. This crisis was the result of a series of cumulative factors, beginning with social unrest due to economic woes and the rise of political dissent.

The first factor was the frustration with the economic policies of Muammar Gaddafi, the leader of Libya from 1969 to 2011. The frustration with the economic policies of former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has been cited by many as one of the main factors that led to the Libyan Revolution in 2011. Gaddafi's authoritarian rule from 1969 to 2011 was marked by the suppression of political opposition and civil liberties, as well as initiatives to manage the country's oil resources. However, Gaddafi's efforts to manage the country's economy, especially from 2004 onwards, had a major impact on ordinary Libyan citizens and played an important role in the 2011 revolt (Ebell, 2017).

In the early 2000s, Gaddafi introduced a policy of economic liberalization, which undid gains made in the public sector and caused prices to increase and jobs to become less secure. This economic crisis was compounded by the fact that the value of the Libyan Dinar crashed, and wages and pensions were severely devalued. The government provided no compensation for inflation, leaving citizens unable to afford higher food prices (Divisekera, 2019).

Studies have shown that Gaddafi's economic policies widened the already existing "gap between the rich and the poor" (Fahim, 2016, p.15). The country's wealth was distributed unevenly, due to the lack of financial regulatory systems that would guarantee equitable economic development. This posed a serious obstacle to potential economic progress in Libya. Furthermore, Gaddafi often used Libya's oil revenues for personal gain, disregarding the Libyans' futile efforts to diversify the state's sources of income and address the growing economic crisis (Achcar, 2013).

In 2009, inflation and unemployment were at an all-time high, and the average Libyan's standard of living was lower than it had been in over a decade. The country was largely undiversified, investments were discouraged,

and the government had a heavy hand in the running of businesses. The Gaddafi regime's response to these challenges was to print more money in an effort to stimulate the economy, resulting in the devaluation of the Libyan dinar. This undermined confidence in the government and deepened the economic woes (O'Kane, 2016).

By 2011, Gaddafi's economic policies had resulted in stifling unemployment and inequality. In addition, high corruption levels and a lack of transparency added to the popular frustration (Benhassine, 2014). Many of the protests that had occurred during the revolution, such as the occupation of government offices in the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, were a direct outcome of popular dissatisfaction with Gaddafi's poor economic policies. Ultimately, these policies created the disenchantment with Gaddafi and his regime that sparked the Libyan revolution.

The second factor was the spread of antimonarchist and anti-Gaddafi sentiment, fueled by the Arab Spring movement. The Arab Spring was a wave of popular protests, uprisings, and civil unrest that spread across many countries in the Middle East and North Africa in the early 2010s. In Libya, activists used social media to express their dissatisfaction with the regime and to organize demonstrations. This put pressure on the Gaddafi government as he continued to lose popular support (Fouda, El-Sayeh, & El-Semary, 2013).

The third factor was the military intervention of NATO forces. Despite appeals from the United Nations and other countries, the Gaddafi regime refused to resign or step down, resulting in NATO deploying military forces to enforce UN Security Council Resolution 1973. Following the failure of the Libyan Government to heed the warnings issued on 26 February under UNSCR 1970, on 17 March the UN Security Council ultimately passed UNSCR 1973 authorizing member states to 'take all necessary measures' to protect Libyan civilians and the enforcement of an arms embargo. This intervention provided support to the rebels fighting against Gaddafi's forces and allowed them to gain more ground,

eventually forcing Gaddafi out of power (Sheldon, 2020).

Finally, the US Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) role in the Libyan crisis has been significant, particularly from 2011 until the present. In the beginning of the Libyan Civil War, the CIA was heavily involved in the 2011 uprising against Muammar Gaddafi's government by providing "intelligence, planning, and material assistance" (Karim, 2017, p. 280). This assistance included helping Libyan rebels form the February 17th Martyrs Brigade (a network which provided weapons, training and advice to rebels), training a small number of fighters in a secret base, providing aerial surveillance to detect and locate Gaddafi's forces and providing weapons to the rebels (Karim, 2017).

Since the 2011 revolution, the US CIA's role in Libya has become increasingly complicated and diverse. A key area of focus in recent years has been in the fight against terrorist organizations in Libya, such as organized crime, Ansar al-Sharia and ISIS (Fisher, 2017). For example, in the fight against ISIS, the CIA has been providing intelligence support to "Libyan forces in Sabratha, Sirte and elsewhere in the country" (Fisher, 2017, para. 3). The CIA has also been involved in providing logistical and material support to the Libyan Government, such as in the sale of arms, as well as providing intelligence on the activities of key powerbrokers in the region during the ongoing political instability and power struggle (Khalil & Noula, 2018).

In addition to combatting terrorism, the US CIA has also been engaged in gathering intelligence about Libya's regional powerbrokers, such as the Libyan Armed Forces (LAF) and General Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) (Khalil & Noula, 2018). This intelligence gathering has been essential in understanding the ongoing conflict in Libya and US involvement in the region (Khalil & Noula, 2018). It has allowed the CIA to monitor the progress and activities of each powerbroker and thus inform US policy in the region.

Although, the US CIA's role in the Libyan crisis has been significant, the organization has faced

criticism for its involvement in the conflict. For example, the US government's failure to adequately arm and support the new Libyan government created after the 2011 revolution has been blamed for the country's continued instability (Karim, 2017). Meanwhile, the CIA's support of Khalifa Haftar has been criticized for prolonging the civil war in the region (Schetter, 2019).

In conclusion, the combination of economic hardships, the spread of anti-government sentiment, and the international intervention of NATO forces all contributed to the Libyan crisis of 2011. The US CIA's role in the Libyan crisis has been significant and varied, ranging from providing logistical and material support to training militia forces and gathering intelligence resulting in the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime and the formation of a new government.

Approaches adopted by the Africa Union in Finding Peaceful Resolutions to the Libyan Crisis

The African Union (AU) has long been an important actor in achieving peace in the Libyan crisis. As a regional organization, the African Union is well placed to advocate for a peaceful resolution and has done so from the outset.

In 2011, the AU actively supported the United Nations Resolution 1973 and the subsequent intervention in Libya by the international community. The AU also called for all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law. In an effort to provide a more impartial platform for dialogue between the different groups that had emerged from the Libyan crisis, the African Union facilitated talks between the regime and the opposition in South Africa in February 2013. This diplomatic move was seen as an important effort to bring all sides together in a meaningful manner and strive for a peaceful resolution. (Lang, 2018).

The African Union also proposed the establishment of a Roadmap for a Political Solution to the Libyan Conflict in January 2014. The Roadmap sought to build consensus among the parties and outlined a plan for a negotiated settlement. The Roadmap was further elaborated in the African Union High-Level

Committee on Libya, a panel of African leaders tasked with mediating the conflict (Ehrhart, 2017). The African Union (AU) adopted the Roadmap in its Addis Ababa Declaration of 2 June 2014 (Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 2017). It called for the establishment of a Government of National Accord (GNA) as part of the Libyan Political Agreement of 17 December 2015, endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2259 of 2016 (United Nations, 2016).

The African Union also supported the UN-backed Libyan Political Agreement of December 2015, providing much-needed international legitimacy to the accord (Ehrhart, 2017). This included the appointment of the GNA's Prime Minister, the formation of an Independent High National Elections Commission, as well as the establishment of the High Council for State and the High Council of Reconciliation. The GNA also committed itself to the development of a national security policy, the adoption of constitutional reforms, and the holding of elections (African Union, 2015).

In addition, the AU called for the military forces in Libya to be unified under the GNA's authority; for demonstrations of support for the political process by Libyan actors; for the protection of civilians; and for international sanctions to be lifted on the GNA (Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 2017). The agreement also provided a timeline for GNA reforms and a timeline for the completion of the transition process (African Union, 2015).

Since then, the African Union has continued to provide political and diplomatic support for the peace process in Libya, engaging in various dialogues with the various actors in the conflict. This includes support for the Skhirat Agreement of December 2015, monitoring events in the country, as well as ongoing deliberations with the Government of National Accord. Most recently, the African Union High-Level Committee on Libya hosted a meeting of Libyan leaders on 31 May 2018 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to discuss the implementation of the Libya ceasefire. (Nibigira & Buijtendijk, 2020).

However, the pro-Western policies adopted by AU's leaders against the government of Libya prior to the death of Muhammed Gadhafi, has made many scholars to ponder on the legitimacy of AU in making an independent policy in the continent. The decision of the African Union (AU) to support the western resolution of 1973, which resulted in the dethronement of Muammar Gadhafi, has been heavily criticized. A strong advocate of AU's independent policies, his brutal killing sparked great instability within the country and expanded the arms proliferation in the Sahara region (Rahman, 1999). This in turn caused severe security challenges in West Africa (Safa, 2009). Many felt that the overthrow of Gadhafi was imposed upon the African Union by forces external to itself which resulted in great dissatisfaction among many nations (Manning, 2006). Furthermore, the instability and lack of peace which has ensued has caused many to feel as though the AU is merely a platform to enforce colonial powers (Ebell, 2017).

This decision by the AU has further weakened the African continent (Oluwasoye, 2006). Though this particular incident may have been specific, it has resulted in a greater distrust of external forces by the African Union (Adetula, 2009). It has caused many to question the legitimacy of the African Union's decisions and the extent of control outside influences have over its decisions (Adetula, 2004). Many argue that the African Union has neglected its mission of expanding cooperation amongst African countries by prioritizing interventionist measures (Weiss, 2020).

It is evident that the African Union's decision to support the western resolution of 1973 has widely been criticized by many African Union members and non-members alike. This incident has challenged the African Union's authority over its own decision making and has exposed its fragility to external powers.

The African Union (AU) has notably advanced towards a peaceful resolution in Libya by adeptly spearheading diplomatic initiatives, fostering dialogue amongst conflict parties, and championing peaceful agreements. Nevertheless, their support for the Western

Resolution 1973 has drawn criticism from numerous AU members and non-members, calling into question the AU's autonomy in decision-making. This particular event underscores the Union's susceptibility to external influences, thus revealing a somewhat fragile authority within its ranks. While the AU's strides in the Libyan crisis are commendable, this incident illustrates a need for introspection to address internal weaknesses, thereby strengthening its future position on global platforms and enhancing its ability to independently navigate complex political landscapes.

Impediments faced by the African Union in finding Peaceful Resolutions to Libyan Crisis

The African Union (AU) sought to play a central role in efforts to end the protracted Libyan crisis, which has been raging since the overthrow of the Qaddafi regime in 2011. In early 2020, the AU made several attempts to facilitate negotiations between the Libyan parties and create a political process that would bring lasting peace to Libya. The AU helped to create the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) in November 2020, which is a key first step towards rebuilding Libya's political institutions and creating a functioning state (Lonsdale, 2021).

Despite these efforts at peacemaking, the AU has faced several impediments in its aim to help end the Libyan civil war and establish a unified government. Firstly, existing divisions between regional powers, such as Turkey and Egypt, are a major challenge, as both countries have opposed each other's involvement in the conflict and have clashed in recent years. Turkey is supporting the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) in the western region, whereas Egypt has been providing assistance to the Libyan National Army (LNA) in the eastern region. This has made it challenging to broker peace as the two competing sides refuse to negotiate, and the GNA and the LNA have both sought foreign military intervention to achieve their desired outcomes (Lonsdale, 2021).

Secondly, there is a lack of trust between the Libyan factions. This makes it hard for the AU to ensure the participation of all sides in

meaningful peace negotiations and helps explain why a political agreement has been so hard to achieve. In addition, many of the rebel groups have militias that are loyal to particular figures or regions of the country, and some of these factions have not been willing to negotiate until their particular demands have been met (Ebell, 2017).

Thirdly, the AU lacks the financial resources to effectively support the peace process. The AU is reliant on international contributions to fund its operations, and yet there has not been enough international support for the AU's efforts. The lack of international funding has made it difficult for the AU to deploy observers to monitor all sides of the conflict, to pay for security personnel to provide protection for the negotiations, and to provide financial and material support to all military factions in the conflict (Ebell, 2017).

Finally, the African Union (AU) has been hampered in its attempts to broker peace in Libya due to the lack of a unified foreign policy approach taken by its member states. African states' interests towards the Libyan conflict have diverged, with some advocating a stronger peacekeeping presence supported by a Western coalition, while others preferring a hands-off approach of neutrality (Lonsdale, 2021). This has led to a lack of consistency and cohesion across the whole Union, making it difficult to carry out any intervention from the AU's perspective (Collins, 2021).

Moreover, African states have been reluctant to support initiatives led by the AU in the Libyan conflict, considering these initiatives to primarily reflect the Western agenda on the conflict (Lee, 2019). For example, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), officially proposed by the AU in 2002, is seen by many African governments as a Western-driven initiative, with the primary objective of maintaining stability in the region and catering to the broader foreign policy interests of Western countries (Lonsdale, 2021). This in turn, threatens the African Union's credibility and status, as it is unable to implement policies that reflect the collective interests of its member states.

The limited support offered by African states to the AU's efforts also applies to the economic and humanitarian aspects of the Libyan crisis. Many states have abstained from offering aid to the war-torn nation, making it difficult for the AU to coordinate the delivery of relief and economic assistance in the region. This has had serious repercussions on the ground, with Libya experiencing shortages in basic commodities and goods and an increasing spread of poverty and social unrest (Bourdillon, 2018).

It is evident that the African Union's initiatives towards the Libyan crisis have been hindered by the lack of a unified stance taken by its member states towards the conflict. African states' different interests have made it difficult for the AU to appeal to the collective interests of its member states, making it difficult to implement policies that would bring about measurable positive change in the region. These obstacles have impeded the African Union's efforts to settle the Libyan conflict and create a unified government. Whilst the AU has had some success in brokering negotiations between the warring factions, the various impediments described above mean that there is still a long way to go before the Libyan crisis is fully resolved.

Summary of Major Findings

The following findings were highlighted from the study:

- 1) The combination of economic hardships, the spread of anti-government sentiment, and the international intervention of NATO forces all contributed to the Libyan crisis of 2011. Also, the US CIA's role in the Libyan crisis has been significant and varied, ranging from providing logistical and material support to training militia forces and gathering intelligence resulting in the overthrow of the Gaddafi's regime and the formation of a new government. Therefore, any solution must have socio-economic dimensions as part of the reconciliatory process and this will involve the buy in of all relevant stakeholders at the local and international levels that must cooperate

in implementing the African peace and development plan and not any externally instigated or influenced plan. The reason for this is the multiplicities of contending interests at the international level that has made the African plan to be the best option that will lead to sustainable peace.

- 2) The African Union has made significant strides in its efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the Libyan crisis. Through its effective diplomatic efforts and initiatives, it has created a platform for dialogue between the various actors in the conflict, as well as actively supported laws and agreements that aim to facilitate a peaceful solution. However, the African Union's decision to support the western resolution of 1973 has widely been criticized by many African Union members and non-members alike. This incident has challenged the African Union's authority over its own decision making and has exposed its fragility to external powers.
- 3) African Union's initiatives towards the Libyan crisis have been hindered by the lack of a unified stance taken by its member states towards the conflict. African states' different interests have made it difficult for the AU to appeal to the collective interests of its member states, making it difficult to implement policies that would bring about measurable positive change in the region.

Conclusion

The study centred on the role of AU in Libyan crises. The Libyan crisis of 2011, was compounded by economic hardship, the spread of anti-government sentiment and the international intervention of NATO forces, as well as extensive clandestine U.S. involvement, profoundly impacted Libya and the surrounding Sahara region. The resulting political instability in Libya has caused significant death and destruction, as well as the proliferation of arms in the Sahara region, leading to greater instability and the growth of terrorist groups. Clearly, the Libyan crisis of 2011 has had a

noteworthy and devastating effect on not just Libya, but also surrounding countries, and will continue to reverberate throughout the Sahara region for years to come.

The African Union has made considerable progress in its efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the Libyan crisis, however, its decision to support the western-sponsored 1973 resolution has highlighted its vulnerability to external powers and raised question marks over its decision-making autonomy. Despite this, the African Union has demonstrated its commitment to peace by creating a platform for dialogue, advocating for laws and agreements that promote peace, and displaying a willingness to work with all parties to the conflict. As the crisis in Libya continues, it is key that the African Union continue to lead the way in finding a peaceful solution.

The African Union's attempts to bring about a resolution to the Libyan crisis were hampered by the inability of its member states to come to a unified agreement on how to proceed. Various states had divergent interests in the conflict, making it difficult for the AU to propose solutions which were reflective of their collective interests and priorities. This posed a major obstacle for the organization as it sought to implement policies which would have a definitive and constructive influence on the situation in Libya.

Any solution by AU in collaboration with any external actor that is ready to key into its peace process must start with also looking into the economic challenges arising from the protracted crises that have impacted negatively on the living conditions of the people and there must be mitigation to enable the Libyan people to support it wholeheartedly in line with what several scholars have said.

Recommendations

Based on the identified findings, the followings recommendations were made:

- 1) The study identified economic hardship as one of the causes of Libyan crises, therefore, there is need to prioritize economic development and create job opportunities for the people of Libya. Economic stability is essential for long-term peace and stability, and will bring about an

effective government and prosperity for the people of Libya. Job creation will help to reduce the anti-government sentiment that has been pervasive in Libya since the 2011 crisis and will provide a much-needed boost to the economy. This in turn will help to foster a more positive relationship between the international community and the Libyan people.

- 2) The African Union should fully leverage its mediatory power and diplomatic capabilities by firmly standing behind its own decisions in regards to resolution of the Libyan crisis. The importance of such a recommendation is multifaceted. Firstly, it is essential for the African Union to maintain its reputation as a legitimate and effective political body that has the capacity to make decisions independently. This will be crucial for maintaining its authority and credibility among African states. Secondly, it will encourage the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Libya by showing the various stakeholders involved that the African Union is a reliable mediator, facilitating their trust and confidence in the process. Also, it can also prevent external powers from interfering and thus weakening the African Union's role as a peacekeeper.
- 3) To overcome lack of a unified stance taken by its member states towards the conflict, there is need for African Union to facilitate more direct dialogue among its member states to reach a unified stance based on mutual interests. This is important because it would provide the basis for the AU to take action in the crisis; without a unified stance, the AU will be unable to effectively intervene and resolve the conflict. Creating an agreement on a collective course of action between member states will also encourage cooperation between them, which is a key factor in achieving sustainable peace in the region.

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