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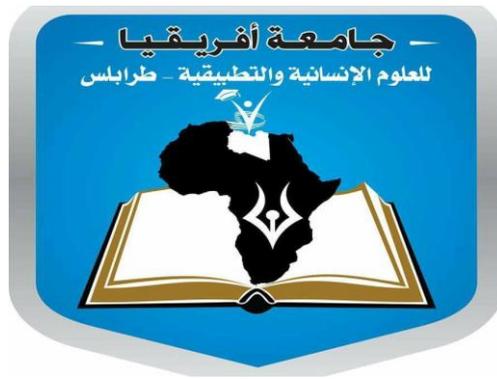
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Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

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Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019

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Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

Content Issue No.7-8

No.	Subject	The Author	Page No.
10	External Factors Affecting Libyan Policy Changes from 1989 to 2004	Fareha Awad Ibrahim	

External Factors Affecting Libyan Policy Changes from 1989 to 2004

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Introduction

This article discusses the main external factors that influenced Libyan foreign policy in the period from 1989 to 2004. The three primary external factors were: the collapse of the Soviet Union; the 1991 Gulf war; and the Lockerbie issue which prompted sanctions by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). These external factors affected Libya's foreign policy primarily by forcing Libya to reshape its foreign policy approach towards both the Arab countries and the West. The change towards the Arab world was most evident when Libyan foreign policy rejected the traditional Arab political orientation and tried increasingly to move towards political and economic integration with Africa. Conversely, while Libya shifted slowly away from an Arab nationalist foreign policy, it sought reconciliation and accommodation with the West, particularly after the end of the Cold War. The interplay of external factors with internal policy and dynamics (including ideological influences and the domestic economic situation), helped create a new era in Libyan foreign policy. This article will try to answer questions: how did external factors, directly or indirectly, give rise to regional and international changes in Libyan foreign policy? Secondly, how did external factors affect Libya's internal policy?

External Variables and their Ramifications

By the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, Libyan foreign policy had begun to display vulnerability and transition in reaction to the changing international environment. This section examines how these variables – the global order and collapse of the

Soviet Union, the 1991 Gulf war, and the Lockerbie issue (which was followed by UN sanctions) – forced Libya to adopt a less belligerent stance towards the West in its foreign policy, and encouraged a rethinking of the traditional poles of Libyan foreign policy, particularly its relations with the Arab World. The realignment of Cold War relations was perhaps the most significant external variable influencing this trend, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Changing of the Global Order: the Collapse of the Soviet Union

The collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in many changes in the international arena. These changes occurred as a result of the Soviet Union having undergone domestic, political, and economic transformation. At the same time, internal changes were taking place in Libya, because of the awareness of the Libyan leadership that the world was changing. Since the Soviet Union was a major diplomatic and military sponsor of Libya, its collapse was bound to have a tremendous impact on Libya's internal and external environments.

Relations between Libya and the Soviet Union

Russian awareness of the peoples of northeast Africa can be traced back to the 17th century. Relations between Libya and the Soviet Union were established four years after Libya gained independence in 1951,¹ by which time Libya had already become an important link in the American network of strategic Mediterranean bases. Had Soviet behaviour at the end of World War II been more cooperative or more skilled, there might have been a chance for the Soviets to gain some foothold in Libya,² but despite the diplomatic recognition of contacts between Libya and the Soviet Union, relations between the two countries did not deepen until al-Qaddafi's revolution in 1969.

¹ Libya established full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1955. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_Libya, 29.12.2007.

² Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, *Monthly Political Report: Libyan-Soviet Union Relations*, (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli-Libya, 13 March 1970

In 1969 Libya was the fourth largest oil exporter in the world. The Soviets immediately recognised al-Qaddafi, praised his programmes, and started negotiations on the expansion of trade and exploration of new oil fields. Soviet enthusiasm for al-Qaddafi was mutual, as evidenced by many of al-Qaddafi's political decisions at the time; such as expelling American and British forces, and providing support for the Palestinians and other resistance movements. All of these moves were in line with Moscow's foreign policy.³

The nature of the relationship between Libya and the Soviet Union was well described by Anatolii Egorin (a Soviet academic), who in 1994 wrote a long and sympathetic article about Libya's foreign policy and its confrontation with the USA. Egorin stressed the importance of Soviet aid to the young Libyan Republic after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1969, which, he maintained, explained the relationship that had existed between Libya and the Soviet Union since the revolution. Relations had been especially important during the 1970s and 1980s, when Libya served as a major diplomatic and political partner of the Soviet Union in Africa.⁴

It was in fact al-Qaddafi's need for arms and the Soviets' eagerness to supply them that cemented the relationship. A Libyan delegation visited Moscow in May 1974, and in May 1975 a Russian delegation visited Libya, while al-Qaddafi paid his first visit to Moscow in December 1976. The result of all this visiting was a heavy flow of Soviet arms, estimated to have been worth a total of US\$1 billion by the end of 1976. Al-Qaddafi offered an overwhelming advantage for Moscow, since Libya was rich with oil money and paid for its arms, thus providing Moscow with a source of foreign exchange.⁵

³ Ibid.

⁴ Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), *the Middle East and North Africa, Monthly Summary and News Analysis of the CIS Press*, Vol. XIX, No. 9-10, 1994, p. 56

⁵ Bennigsen et al., *Soviet Strategy and Islam*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989, pp. 125-126

Al Qaddafi's political ideology was derived partly from the specific background of socialism, although it was different from that of the Soviet Union. On the occasion of al Qaddafi's visit to Moscow in April 1981, President Brezhnev took the opportunity to stress acceptance of the difference: "between us there is a defined difference and ideological order".⁶ In practice, the concept of socialism offered by Libya was totally different from the socialism of the Soviet Union. In Libya, the concept of ideology was based on the Third Universal Theory and the *Green Book*, which presented solutions that were contrary to Soviet Socialism

The Changing Global Order

By the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the world was witnessing significant global changes. In December 1988, the Mediterranean Summit took place between Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush who, at their meeting in Malta, officially declared the end of the Cold war between the East and the West.⁷ The meeting was the beginning of a new and closer relationship between the two countries which allowed the two former enemies to move from confrontational to cooperative dealings.⁸ Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States became based more on a balance of interests than on the balance of power as had been witnessed during the Cold War.⁹

The Soviet Union had seen a steady process of political change. In January 1987 Gorbachev called for democratization through the infusion of democratic elements, such as multi-candidate elections, into the Soviet political process. In June 1988, at the nineteenth Party conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), he

⁶ Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States, op. cit., p. 154

⁷ Spring, D. W., *The Impact of Gorbachev – the First Phase, 1985-1990*, London: Pinter Publishers, 1991, p.182.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Egyptian Diplomacy in 1990", (unpublished Report, n. p.) , Cairo, Egypt, pp. 9-10

launched radical reforms that were intended to reduce party control of the government apparatus,¹⁰ and in December 1988, the Supreme Soviet approved the establishment of a Congress of People's Deputies that was to act as the Soviet Union's new legislative body.¹¹ Elections to the Congress were held throughout the USSR in March and April 1989,¹² and Gorbachev was elected as the first executive President of the Soviet Union on 15 March 1990.

These changes occurred alongside other international changes, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, which ended East Germany's Communist regime. The ending of the Cold War ushered in a new beginning and by the end of 1989 the political and ideological divide between the West and the East had essentially been terminated.¹³ In 1989 the first free labour union was founded in communist Poland – a process that signalled the eventual collapse of the Polish communist system.¹⁴ It was through the collapse of the Soviet Union and the domino effect that this had on the Eastern European communist countries that the Cold War came to an end.¹⁵ This created a new era in international politics and gave birth to a new international order. All this affected Libyan foreign policy, since the Soviet collapse deprived Libya of its traditional superpower backing, and forced it to pursue relations within a new global order. Nor was it the case that Libya and the Soviet Union had been perfect partners. In

¹⁰ Strayer, Robert w., *Why Did the Soviet Union Collapse, Understanding Historical Change*, New York, M. E. Sharpe, 1989, pp, 140-141

¹¹ Simon, Gerhard, "Perestroika: an Interim Balance Sheet", in the Federal Institute for Soviet and International Studies (eds.), *the Soviet Union 1987-1989: Perestroika in Crisis?* London: Longman, p. 13

¹² Ibid, p.13

¹³ White, Stephen, "All Power to the Soviets?" in Jon Bloomfield (ed.), *The Soviet Revolution, Perestroika and the re-making of Socialism*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1989, p.147.

¹⁴ Strayer, *Why Did the Soviet Union Collapse...*, op. cit. pp. 140- 143

¹⁵ Wenger, Andreas and Doron Zimmermann, *International Relations From the Cold War to the Globalized World*, New York, Lynne Rienner, 2003, p. 210

fact, the relationship between them had soured – a phenomenon that laid the groundwork for the gradual withering of bilateral relations.

The Impact of the Soviet Collapse on Libya

The collapse of the Soviet Union was bound to have a huge impact on Libya because of the fact that it had been Libya's primary weapons source as well as a major ideological and diplomatic supporter. Like some of the other Arab states, Libya fell within the military orbit of the Soviet Union through the supply of weapons, which in and of itself acted as a sort of deterrent against expansive Western military action against the country.¹⁶

Regarding the nature of the relationship between Libya and the Soviet Union, Salem al-Shawihdi, one of the members of the Libyan government and a formal envoy of al-Qaddafi during the re-establishment of Libyan-Egyptian relations in 1989, told the researcher:

In general, for countries like the Arab countries, the bilateral system gave them space to move politically, and gave more opportunity to choose. Where some of them came under the Western umbrella, others like Libya leaned towards the Eastern umbrella. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the existence of only one superpower reduced the room for manoeuvre. Moreover, the Soviet Union had been a weapons source for most of the Arab countries including Libya. So under an American-dominated system, circumstances would be more difficult for Libya.¹⁷

The Soviet Union had indeed been an important weapons resource for Libya. This was stated in an interview given by Karl Brutents of the international department of the Soviet Union Communist Party Central Committee, who said, "We give arms to Syria and Libya with

¹⁶ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, *Monthly Political Report: "Libyan and the Soviet Union"*, (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli-Libya, September 1990 .

¹⁷ Personal Interview, with Salem al-Shawihdi, Tripoli, 16 May 2003

ordinary conditions, namely, without political restriction, and with unrestricted co-operation.”¹⁸

It was clearly in the Soviet Union’s financial interests to promote closer relations with a country that could pay in hard currency, both for its own weaponry and for the Soviet equipment supplied to other Arab states. For example, al-Qaddafi reportedly had transferred about US\$1 billion to Moscow in September 1980 to pay for Syrian arms. Given Libya’s importance as a major arms purchaser, it is rather surprising that Moscow continued to distance itself from some of al-Qaddafi’s more excessive policies in the 1980s.¹⁹

The relationship between the two countries was in fact built around mutual interests that revolved heavily around military weapons. On one side the Libyans needed Soviet weaponry and on the other the Soviets needed Libyan money. Anatolii Egorin wrote sympathetically about how the Libyans were “agitating the entire world” by their independent foreign policy and unprecedented confrontation with the mightiest power. He said that between 1970 and 1992 the amount of military technological cooperation reached about US\$19 billion, of which Libya had paid more than US\$15 billion. Reflecting this is the fact that 80 percent of the Libyan army’s weapons were Soviet-made. Furthermore, thousands of Russians were servicing this military equipment, training Libyans, and working in the field of civil engineering. However, in the post-Soviet era Russian policy was dramatically different and more in line with that of the West, especially after Russia had supported the UN Security Council

¹⁸ For more details see *The USSR International Affairs Middle East and North Africa*, 7 January 1986, P.H15, p. 43

¹⁹ Dawisha, Adeed, and Karen Dawisha, *The Soviet Union; Middle East Policies and Perspectives*, London, Royal Institute Of International Affairs (Chatham House), 1982, p.115.

sanctions against Libya in 1992. This had been unexpected and caused severe damage to Russian interests in Libya.²⁰

Aside from the military factor, which was extremely important, another major fact was that of the ideological environment prevailing after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the US as the only global superpower. This allowed the US to extend its economic and ideological tentacles throughout the world and to punish states, such as Libya, which had previously stood in the way of the pursuit of its interests. No longer able to hide under the diplomatic umbrella of the Soviet Union, Libya became vulnerable to political attacks by the US.

Both sides brought about a gradual disengagement between the Soviet Union and Libya, especially after the Libyan leadership had become aware of the weakness of the Soviet Union during the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, which was clear within a few hours of the outbreak of the Gulf war. Al-Qaddafi was uncomfortable with the attitude of the Soviet Union towards the Gulf conflict, especially when President Gorbachev announced on 17 January 1991 that American military operations in the Gulf were scheduled to begin and that the Soviet Union would do everything in its power to limit the scope of the conflict. The Soviet Union appealed to a number of influential countries, such as France, Britain, Germany, Italy and India and a non-permanent member of the Security Council, as well as to most of the Arab countries, to take steps to limit the conflict in the Gulf and prevent its spread. Demonstrations against the Soviet Union immediately took place in Libya, and al Qaddafi himself participated in the marches.²¹

The Soviet Union accepted the legitimacy of the war, the intervention of international forces, and the war on Iraq though this did not have

²⁰ Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) , *the Middle East and North Africa*, op. cit., pp. 56-57

²¹ Simons, Geoff, *Libya; the Struggle for Survival*, London, Macmillan, 1993, p.19

the approval of Libya. Al Qaddafi's disappointment was clear when he asked: "why did the Soviet Union not say it was not permissible to crush Iraq and annihilate it once it left Kuwait, despite the fact that there is a treaty of friendship and cooperation between Moscow and Baghdad?"²² Speaking to a Soviet journalist in Tripoli, al-Qaddafi attacked the Soviet Union leadership for its indecision and avoidance of an active role in seeking a peaceful solution of the Gulf crisis. From al-Qaddafi's point of view, the world was going to be destabilized since the Soviet Union had traditionally played the role of counterbalance to the other world superpower. He believed that the Soviet Union should ultimately regain its global influence, and considered this point so important that he volunteered to speak in Red Square to the Soviet people to strengthen their morale.²³ This indicates how much Libya depended on the Soviet Union.

On 18 November 1991, al-Qaddafi's worry over the collapse of the Soviet Union became clear when he announced that the whole world had suffered from the Soviet downfall wrought by the West.²⁴

Libya clearly feared the repercussions of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Samir al-Odebi, the head of the Libyan-Egyptian Friendship Society, stressed in an interview with the researcher that the Soviet Union had never been Libya's ally; Libya had merely had relations with the Soviet Union to combat the United States threat. He said that this applied to the expression that says, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend."²⁵ This affirms al-Qaddafi's fear regarding the collapse of the Soviet Union, which left the United States as the world's sole superpower. Al-Qaddafi repeatedly expressed regret that

²² Al Qaddafi's Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 9 September, 1991, p.22

²³ Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) *The Soviet Union and the Middle East, Monthly Summary and News Analysis of the Soviet and East European Press*, Vol, XVI, No. 1, 1991, p. 34 .

²⁴ Ibid, al-Qaddafi Speech, *Al-Sijil al- Qawmi*, 18 November 1991, p. 233

²⁵ Personal Interview with Samir al-Odebi, Head of the Libyan-Egyptian Friendship Society, Cairo. 3 November 2003

Saddam Hussein had given the United States a golden opportunity to station military forces permanently in the Persian Gulf, believing that his presence would impact directly on Libya. He warned his counterparts that their turn would come: if America and its allies in the Gulf triumphed, they would move to the Mediterranean and to Libya.²⁶

Libya was also worried that the collapse of the Soviet Union had affected the Palestinian issue. The diminishing power of the Soviet Union and its eventual disintegration was of particular concern for al-Qaddafi because he feared the imposition of a US-dominated order on the Middle East, one that would negatively impact on the Palestinians. He argued during the early 1990s that the Arabs were interested in seeing the Soviet Union stand on its own feet and restore the superpower balance.²⁷ Speaking on 1 September 1992 on the anniversary of the Fatah uprising, he said that the Middle East had lost its value now that the Soviet Union was no more. Rather optimistically, he stated that the Arabs and the Israelis would get together and recognise each other and the story would thus come to the end.²⁸ Al-Qaddafi intended this comment to express irony as it meant that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Arabs would be subject to the control of the United States, which supports Israel.

A third major shift evident in Libyan policy after the collapse of the Soviet Union was the gradual abandonment of socialist practice and rhetoric, or in other words, the decline of ideological influences on Libyan policy. The most obvious expression of this was the Libyan decision slowly to abandon the leading role of the public sector in the national economy and to afford the private sector a bigger role in the management of the country's economic affairs.

²⁶ Al-Qaddafi Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, National Register, December 1990, p. 240

²⁷ Al-Qaddafi Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, National Register, November, 1991, p. 200

²⁸ Al-Qaddafi Speech, during an anniversary of Al Fatah revolution, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 1 September 1992, p. 339

The collapse of Soviet Union in fact affected the ideological dimension of Libyan policy in both the political and the economic arenas by forcing Libya to develop new methods and organize its policies differently. Libya had often relied on a strict ideological commitment and perspective when formulating policy, but in the absence of the power of the Soviet Union this became increasingly more difficult to adhere to. Sawani, an academic and member of the Revolutionary Committees, stated that after the collapse of the Soviet Union Libya had to pursue contacts with the real world. Libya had to work within a world which required it to be less antagonistic, to look at the expected reliance on the new world order, and to keep its relations away from the enemy stage.²⁹

At a meeting with the General People's Congress on 13 June 2003 al-Qaddafi himself pointed to the collapse of the Soviet Union as evidence that the public sector's importance in the national economy should be reduced:

I would like to offer you the ideological reason why the public sector should no longer exist...One of the major reasons behind this is that there are no potential ethical and patriotic officers to run the public sector. We recognised that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had collapsed. Overall, there are many disadvantages of the public sector. Therefore, we must cancel it from the structure of our economy, not only because of its disadvantage in Libya, but also all over the world. All members of staff of the General's Conference and all Libyans should understand this.³⁰

Al Qaddafi ensured that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, members of Libya's political and economic leadership would understand the necessity of alleviating dependence on the public

²⁹ Personal Interview with Youssef M. Sawani, an academic and member of the Revolutionary Committees, Tripoli, 1 April 2003.

³⁰ Al Qaddafi, Speech to the General conference in Sirt city- Libya, 13 June 2003, p.292

sector.³¹ This point demonstrates how the collapse of the Soviet Union affected Libya's ideological disposition and its transition, at least ideologically, away from a confrontational stance to one more aligned with other countries in the world.

The 1991 Gulf War

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on 2 August 1990 had a very great impact on the Arab region, particularly in exposing the weakness of the inter-state system that had characterised the region. One of the major repercussions of the invasion was the division created between the Arab governments, some of which wanted to settle the dispute through the intervention of international forces, and others who sought to settle the conflict regionally. Libya led the calls opposing military force to resolve the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict, as seen in the dispute between al-Qaddafi and some other Arab leaders at the Arab League meeting of March 1991.³² This section highlights the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict, dealing with it in two parts. The first concentrates on the resolutions of the Security Council imposed on Iraq during the invasion of Kuwait and Iraq's reaction to these resolutions. The second part of the section is concerned with the most significant effects of this invasion on the Arab region, and Libya's position within this.

The Invasion of Kuwait and the Security Council Resolutions

When Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990 the Security Council adopted a series of resolutions condemning the invasion. These decisions all opposed Iraqi actions and placed significant international

³¹ Al Qaddafi, Speech to the General conference in Sirt city, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 1 September 2003, p. 292

³² Arab League, "The Arab Leaders Meeting on March 10 1991" (unpublished, n.p.), Cairo, Egypt, 1991. The dispute between Mubarak and al-Qaddafi was shown on a Libyan TV programme; when a disagreement arose about the involvement of the International Forces in the Arab region, the programme showed Al-Qaddafi angrily threatening Mubarak; "You will see Mubarak, vowed that it would not be good for you"

Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

pressure on Iraq to comply with the resolutions, which Iraq refused to do. This section tries briefly to address these decisions.

Resolution 660

When Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, the Security Council adopted Resolution 660. The Security Council was alarmed by the invasion of Kuwait and the use of military force. It was determined at the UN that Iraq's actions were a gross breach of international peace and security. Regarding the invasion, and acting under Articles 39 and 40 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and demanded that Iraq withdraw immediately and unconditionally and return its forces to Iraq. Resolution 660 called upon Iraq and Kuwait immediately to begin intensive negotiations to resolve their differences and to support all efforts in this regard, especially those on the part of the League of Arab States.³³ On 10 August 1990, the Arab League agreed to act on this Resolution and asked Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

Resolution 661

On 6 August 1990, the Security Council adopted Resolution 661, which imposed stringent economic sanctions on Iraq; it provided for a full trade embargo, excluding medical supplies, food and other items needed for humanitarian purposes, all of which were to be determined by the Security Council Sanctions Committee.³⁴ The UN Secretary-General was asked to supply a progress report within thirty days of the passage of the resolution. A committee of the Security Council, consisting of all the members of the Council, was established to examine the reports submitted by the Secretary-General and to seek further information from all states regarding the action taken by them concerning the effective implementation of the provisions laid down

³³ See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 660, 2 August 1990.

³⁴ See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 661, 6 August 1990.

by the Committee. The committee subsequently became known as the Sanctions Committee.³⁵

Resolutions 665 and 666

On 25 August 1990 the Security Council passed Resolution 665, which was intended to strengthen Resolution 661 “by calling upon those member states that were deploying military forces in the area to cooperate with Kuwait to use commensurate measures relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war.”³⁶ On 13 September 1990, the Council adopted Resolution 666 in order to put more pressure on Iraq. These resolutions strengthened sanctions against Iraq, which were meant to force the country to withdraw its military forces from Kuwait. In the event that Iraq would not withdraw its forces, the resolutions threatened further sanctions, isolation and even military action. Iraq did not respond to any of these resolutions.³⁷ The resolutions intensified the division between different governments in the Arab League, where opinions were split between supporting and opposing the intervention of international forces to resolve the conflict.

Resolution 670

Since Iraq had ignored all the above resolutions, the Security Council therefore adopted Resolution 670 on 25 September 1990, reaffirming the previous ones. It condemned Iraq’s continued occupation of Kuwait, its failure to rescind its actions and end its purported annexation and its holding of Third State nationals “against their will”,³⁸ all in flagrant violation of the earlier resolutions and of international humanitarian law. Resolution 670 further condemned the treatment by Iraqi forces of Kuwaiti nationals, “including measures to force them to leave their own country and the mistreatment of persons

³⁵ Tim Niblock, *“Pariah States” and Sanctions in the Middle East; Iraq, Libya, Sudan*, op.cit, p. 99

³⁶ See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 665, 25 August 1990.

³⁷ See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 666, September 13, 1990.

³⁸ See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 670, September 25, 1990.

and property in Kuwait in violation of international law, noting with grave concern the persistent attempts to evade the measures laid down in Resolution 661.”³⁹ Resolution 670 also stated that the Council was “determined to ensure by all necessary means the strict and complete application of the measures laid down in Resolution 661.”⁴⁰ The resolutions downplayed military threats by “reaffirming the determination to ensure compliance with Security Council resolutions by maximum use of political and diplomatic means.”⁴¹

Resolution 687

On 3 April 1991, after the war had ended, the Security Council passed resolution 687, which was aimed at putting more pressure on Iraq. It focused on the need to ensure Iraq’s peaceful intentions in light of its invasion of Kuwait. The resolution referred to Iraqi and Kuwaiti commitments to the transcripts that had been signed by the two countries on 4 October 1963, the restoration of friendly relations, and recognition of the officially recognised boundary between the two countries, and called on Iraq to give up its weapons of mass destruction,⁴² drawing attention to the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925 that obliged Iraq to take note of the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons, and also to the fact that Iraq had signed the declaration on the goal of universal disarmament of chemical and biological weapons, adopted by the states that had participated in the Paris Conference from 7-11 January 1989.⁴³

Resolution 687 emphasised Iraq’s commitment under the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (July 1968), and required Iraq to comply with paragraph 12, including an inventory of all nuclear material in Iraq that was to be subject to “the Agency’s verification and inspections to confirm that Agency safeguards cover

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, April 3, 1991.

⁴³ See United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, 3 April 1991.

all relevant nuclear Activities in Iraq, to be submitted to the Security Council for approval within one hundred and twenty days of the passage of the present resolution".⁴⁴

It was not until April 1991, after the war, that Iraq began to react to the resolutions. A letter from Ahmed Hussein, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, dated 6 April 1991, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, stated that while Iraq had to accept Resolution 687, his many objections included the fact that the Resolution "embodied a fundamental contradiction", since it began with a reaffirmation of Iraq's sovereignty but in practice constituted an "unprecedented attack" on that sovereignty. Of particular importance was the border issue, which was being imposed on Iraq by the Security Council rather than achieved through negotiations.⁴⁵ In connection with sanctions, the Minister complained that Iraq had accepted all the Security Council resolutions adopted after the occupation of Kuwait, after the boycott imposed on the Iraqi force, yet the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi force to a large extent still applied.⁴⁶ Niblock notes that lifting the sanctions under resolution 687 gave broad discretionary authority to certain influential Security Council members who had arbitrarily drawn up the Council's recommendations so as to impose them for political purposes "that bore no relation to the Charter or international law."⁴⁷

On the question of compensation, Ahmed Hussein did agree that the resolution recognised that Iraq might justly claim compensation of its own. This was a reference to the deliberate destruction of the country's civilian infrastructure: e.g., pharmaceutical production plants, mosques, churches, bridges, power generating stations, factories producing powdered milk for infants, commercial centres,

⁴⁴ Ibid. See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 687.

⁴⁵ Tim Niblock, *"Pariah States" and Sanctions in the Middle East*, p.103

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

shelters, irrigation, telephone exchanges, residential neighbourhoods, and water distribution networks. As Niblock points out, Hussein's letter emphasised the "double standards" of the Security Council. In resolution 487 the Council had condemned Israel's 1981 attack on Iraqi nuclear installations that were used for peaceful purposes and that were under international safeguards, and had considered that Iraq was entitled to appropriate compensation for the destruction it had suffered.⁴⁸

Yet no action was taken by the Security Council to implement that resolution. The same resolution had called on Israel to submit its nuclear facilities under international inspections, yet Israel's failure to do this was ignored. The lip service paid to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in the region, therefore, was simply a cover for creating an imbalance of power in the region favourable to Israel [and for] placing Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction within the context of an attempt to create a regional balance with Israel.⁴⁹

The letter also contended that Iraq had become the target of a plot that was aimed at destroying the potential it had deployed, "with a view to arriving at a just balance in the region which would pave the way for the institution of justice and of a lasting peace."⁵⁰ The positions adopted in the letter remained the basis of Iraq's stance with regard to Resolution 687 over the years that followed ...an acceptance that Iraq had no alternative but to admit, coupled with a deep level of resentment at the resolution's provisions.⁵¹

Resolution 688

On 5 April 1991, another resolution, Resolution 688 was adopted by the Security Council. Concern was shown about "the suppression of

⁴⁸ Tim Niblock, *"Pariah States" and Sanctions in the Middle East*, pp. 103, 104

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, most recently in the Kurdish populated areas”,⁵² which had led to a massive flow of refugees towards and across international borders, as well as to cross-border incursions.⁵³ Resolution 688 also insisted that Iraq “allow immediate access by international humanitarian organisations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq and make available all necessary facilities for their operations”,⁵⁴ with requests for the Secretary-General to continue his humanitarian efforts in Iraq.

Being comprehensive and including military, economic and political dimensions, the resolutions had a great impact on Iraq’s people, in particular children who suffered through the impact of sanctions. By the mid-1990s it was estimated that at least half a million Iraqi children alone had died as a result of sanctions. On national television in 1996 the then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was asked what she thought about the fact that around 500,000 Iraqi children had died as a result of sanctions. She agreed that this was “a very hard choice” but she said, “We think the price is worth it”.⁵⁵

The Impact of the Gulf War on Libya and Arab Attitudes

The impact of the Gulf War affected the whole Arab region. Most significantly the war exposed the weakness of the Arab countries, which was expressed in the split among them, while also serving to increase tensions among them, and particularly between al-Qaddafi and other Arab leaders. In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, most Arab governments reacted predictably. The occupation took place at a time when the foreign ministers of the 45 member states of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) were meeting in Cairo. As soon as the news about the Iraqi invasion arrived, 21 of the

⁵² See: United Nations Security Council Resolution 688, 5 April 1991.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Chomsky, Noam, “US Iraq Policy Motives and Consequences”, in Anthony Arno (ed.), *Iraq under Siege; the Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War*, London: Pluto 2nd edition 2003, p. 66

ministers of the League of Arab States held a meeting with an Iraqi delegate, Sadoun Hammadi, in an attempt to avert further danger.⁵⁶

On 3 August the Ministers passed Resolution 3036 by 14 to 1 (Iraq voted against), but there were five abstentions and the Libyan representative walked out.⁵⁷ In fact the Libyan representative could not take any action with or against Iraq without al-Qaddafi's permission, which was why he had walked out.⁵⁸ Resolution 3036 was formulated to condemn the Iraqi aggression, and was supported by the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, Qatar, Somalia, Algeria, and Djibouti. The resolution declared that those countries denounced the bloodshed and destruction of public buildings in Kuwait, and called on Iraq to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its troops. The countries abstaining were Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, Mauritania and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.⁵⁹ At the same time, the Yemen government's call for the Security Council to put an end to the damage and bloodshed was noteworthy.⁶⁰ The abstainers evidently believed that such a resolution would hamper efforts to broker an Arab solution.

The attitude of the Arab governments was further clarified eight days later at the Arab League meeting in Cairo, on 10 August 1990. They called on Arab states to co-operate with Security Council Resolution 661, which had been issued on 6 August 1990. For Libya this meeting,

⁵⁶ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, Monthly Political Report: "Libya and the Arab League during the Gulf war 1990", (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli-Libya, September 1991

⁵⁷ The Arab League, *Report on the Arab Foreign Ministers meeting during the Organisation of the Islamic Conference meeting*, (unpublished, n. p.), Cairo, August 2 1990.

⁵⁸ From this researcher's point of view, none of the Libyan government, including al-Qaddafi's sons, has the right to make decisions inside or outside Libya.

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Arab League unpublished Report, Cairo, Egypt, 1991,op.cit.

as the Arab expression says, was “the straw that divided the camel’s back”,⁶¹ when the Arab countries voted for the intervention of an international force in the Gulf to compel Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.⁶² For al-Qaddafi this was evidence of the weakness of the Arab states, and he rejected any such action, in particular one that involved the US in the Gulf region. Libya disagreed with Egypt over this point during the Arab League meeting in Cairo,⁶³ and on 14 August 1990, al-Qaddafi openly declared his view on Libyan TV:

There is no right for any state to impose sanctions or to act unless it is under the name of the United Nations. No call for a presence in the Gulf region – a call for any act there – should be issued unless the UN Council does it. Any forces in the Gulf not under the United Nations flag or formed by a decision of the Security Council and under its leadership, will represent an invasion force, and should be resisted.⁶⁴

Al-Qaddafi believed that if the US entered the Gulf region, it would not leave. The United States was exasperated by al-Qaddafi’s interference in the Iraq crisis, and on 25 August 1990 President Mubarak privately warned al-Qaddafi that the Americans would begin to direct their hostility towards Libya if Tripoli persisted in supporting Iraq; he repeated his warning during his visit to Libya on 20 November 1990.⁶⁵ Al-Qaddafi was also receiving warnings broadly similar to those given to Saddam by United States officials, compliant Western politicians, and media organisations. Mubarak insisted that

⁶¹ This expression is used when something is already split or divided

⁶² Arab League Summit, *The Arab Leader’s meeting*, (unpublished Report, n. p.,),10 August 1990.

⁶³ Secretariat for General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, *Libya and the Arab League during the Gulf War 1990*, op.cit.

⁶⁴ Al-Qaddafi’s Declaration on Libyan TV, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 14 August 1990, p. 81

⁶⁵ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, *Monthly Political Report: Libyan-Egyptian Relations*, (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli, Libya, 20 November 1990.

Libya would face repercussions for its support of Iraq, while al-Qaddafi claimed that the United States would not resolve the crisis, but would make it worse.⁶⁶

The practical position of Libya during the Gulf War was clear when al-Qaddafi unveiled a seven-point peace plan on 3 September 1990, following consultations with Iraq, Jordan and Sudan. The scheme, which was intended for implementation under joint United Nations-Arab League supervision, included the following provisions:⁶⁷

1. Iraqi troops should withdraw from Kuwait and be replaced by UN forces;
2. US and other international forces should pull out of Saudi Arabia and be replaced by Arab and Muslim troops;
3. the UN embargo on Iraq should be lifted;
4. the disputed part of the Rumeila oil field, as well as Bubiyan and Warba Islands, should be ceded to Iraq;
5. the Kuwaiti people should be allowed to decide their own system of government;
6. the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people should negotiate on matters of debt and compensation;
7. there should be a unified Arab oil policy to be forcibly implemented to prevent future transgressions against OPEC quotas.

Clearly Libya's plan could have provided a basis for negotiation. However, it was immediately rejected by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and criticised by the western powers.

Other North African states sought to establish a common diplomatic position. This was articulated through the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), a regional organisation created in February 1989, as noted above. An emergency meeting of AMU heads of state, called by

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Al-Qaddafi Speech at the Inaugural Meeting of the First Session of 1991 of the Permanent Bureau of the Arab Lawyers Union, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 16 September 1990, pp. 1092-1094.

Algeria on 3 September 1990, rejected the use of force to resolve the Iraqi-Kuwaiti dispute, and the use of sanctions to starve Iraq into submission or to undermine the Iraqi economy. The five governments' involved – Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania – also began a series of peace initiatives that was to last up to the outbreak of hostilities on 16 January 1991.⁶⁸ Al-Qaddafi declared that the meeting was not just another attempt to find an Arab solution, but rather an attempt to coordinate positions in the event of armed aggression against Iraq.⁶⁹

The attitude of Libya was to refuse the intervention of any international military force in the Arab region. On 7 October 1990, al-Qaddafi asserted that the Arabs had split into two fronts in the Arab summit in Cairo, and declared that the Arab Cooperation Council that included Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, and Yemen, had ceased to exist,⁷⁰ since it believed that the weakness of Arabs displayed at the Arab summit on 10 August 1990 with regard to the Iraqi crisis, had led to a failure to help resolve that crisis. This was another significant element that encouraged al-Qaddafi to change his foreign policy towards the Arab states.

The Arab states began to participate in the organising of military forces to counter Iraq's aggression,⁷¹ although Mauritania, Jordan and Sudan expressed strong reservations about participating in the military forces and Yemen and Algeria officially abstained, while Tunisia absented itself. Libya, joined by Iraq and the PLO, voted against the move. The position of some Arab countries changed after the Iraqi crisis had developed and worsened, and there was resentment among

⁶⁸ The Arab League, *The impact o the Second Gulf War*, (unpublished n.p.), Cairo, Egypt 1991

⁶⁹ Al-Qaddafi, Speech to students of the Political Science Department at Nasser University, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 5 October 1990, p.1098.

⁷⁰ Al-Qaddafi, Speech during the Special Session in the General People's Congress, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 7 October 1990, p. 316.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Arabs at the flow of foreign forces into the region; Libya's stance on the Arab League resolutions was the first sign of how al-Qaddafi was thinking in the early stages of the Gulf War.⁷²

On 20 October 1990, al-Qaddafi called on Muslims to put pressure on Iraq to withdraw its troops from Kuwait and to accept Libya's settlement plan. At the same time he called on Muslims to boycott the holy places in Saudi Arabia as long as American troops remained there.⁷³ He also refused to join the anti-Iraq coalition even though he was at the same time criticising Saddam's poor judgment in thinking that he would have been able to annex Kuwait without provoking a concerted Western response. Al-Qaddafi stated:⁷⁴

Saddam Hussein was naive to the extent that he was beguiled in his invasion of Kuwait. Saddam and his gang accepted to take part in this farce. We (Libya) are not talking about this, but we talk about the Arab nation ... They are all traitors to this nation, Saddam likes Bush or Reagan or Samir al-Yahudi (Samir the Jew) – all of them traitors to the Arab nation.

On 20 October 1990, after the failure of an effort to arrange a dialogue between Saddam Hussein and King Fahd,⁷⁵ al-Qaddafi declared that Libya was no longer involved in the crisis. Regarding the interference by the international forces in the Gulf region, he reported that he had asked King Fahd why he had brought America into the Gulf area and who would ensure that America would leave the Gulf? King Fahd, as quoted by al Qaddafi, responded:

I saw with my own eyes Iraqi tanks advancing towards Saudi Arabia. Do you want me to wait until Saddam attacks Saudi Arabia on the second night? You yourself... said that you would make an alliance

⁷² Ibid, p. 317.

⁷³ Al Qaddafi, television interview, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 20 October 1990, p. 924

⁷⁴ Al-Qaddafi, Speech to Students of the Political Science Department at Nasser University, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 5 October 1990, p.1094.

⁷⁵ Al-Qaddafi, Speech to the General People's Congress, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 7 October 1990, p.317.

Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

with the devil to defend your country (Libya). I have formed an alliance with the devil, I considered America as a devil, for the defence of Saudi Arabia.⁷⁶

There was initially some doubt as to whether Libya would apply the United Nations sanctions against Iraq, and in particular on the matter of the Humanitarian Aid Resolution 687 passed on 2 March 1991, which called for recalling paragraph 9 of Resolution 661 (1990) regarding assistance to the government of Kuwait and paragraph 3 (c) of that resolution regarding supplies strictly for medical purposes, and foodstuffs, in humanitarian circumstances.⁷⁷ Libya expressed its support for Iraq, especially in term of humanitarian assistance, and al-Qaddafi confirmed his support for Iraq during sanctions.⁷⁸ But in fact, by the beginning of 1992 Libya had itself endured sanctions, when it was charged on the Lockerbie issue.

A further division occurred in March 1991 at the Arab League summit, at which Egypt steam-rolled through a decision on a majority vote with Syria, to participate, with Gulf and Moroccan support, in the Gulf War against the Iraqi forces. Egypt enthusiastically endorsed Washington's view on the need to confront Iraq militarily with Arab troops, from countries such as Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia, participating in the proposed multinational force that was to be stationed in Saudi Arabia.⁷⁹ Despite the adverse economic effects of its participation, even after its debts (estimated by Egyptian sources that November, to have been equivalent to US\$9 billion) had been cancelled, Egypt continued to support the Western-

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, A Monthly Political Report: The Invasion of Kuwait, (unpublished, n.p.) Tripoli, Libya, 1990-1991.

⁷⁸ Al-Qaddafi, Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, March 1991, p. 988

⁷⁹ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, op.cit. 1990-1991

led United Nations military initiative in the Gulf by sending 30,000 troops to join the international force.⁸⁰ Al-Qaddafi was opposed to the participation of Arab forces alongside international forces on the grounds that this could cause clashes between Arab forces, particularly Syrian and Iraqi forces, and that this was exactly what the Zionists wanted.⁸¹

Some of the Arab anger derived from the fact that, even though the Arab countries insisted on a regional solution to the conflict that could be arrived at between them, the Western powers ignored this.⁸² During the Arab summit meeting in March 1991, there was increasing anxiety over the political and diplomatic stagnation that faced the Middle East, which was divided between those who supported Washington and those who did not.⁸³ There were disputes between al-Qaddafi and some of the other Arab leaders. On 2 August 1991, al-Qaddafi stated that:

We have given to America an historic opportunity so that it directly brings its forces into the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf ... we give them an irreplaceable opportunity. An opportunity which they had never expected, an opportunity whereby they could come any time to the Arabian Peninsula.⁸⁴

On 23 August 1991 al-Qaddafi expected an American military presence in the Gulf, was achieved by all Arabs at the beginning of the invasion. He said in his speech: "We excluded the American military presence in the Arabian Gulf region...These battleships! Now it is in the Gulf area."⁸⁵

⁸⁰ The Arab League, *The impact o the Second Gulf War*, (unpublished, n.p.), op. cit.

⁸¹ Al-Qaddafi, Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, April 1991, p.928

⁸² Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, op.cit, 1990- 1991.

⁸³ Arab League, *The impact o the Second Gulf War*, op. cit.

⁸⁴, p. 333.

⁸⁵ Al- Qaddafi, Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, August 1991,op.cit. p 423

The popular attitude in Libya towards Iraq was evident when a million Libyans staged demonstrations in Libya opposed to military action against Iraq. After the war, on 5 September 1991, al-Qaddafi himself took part in the marches while at the same time appealing to the United Nations Secretary-General to ensure that the military operations did not go any further than expelling Iraq from Kuwait.⁸⁶

On 25 October 1991, al-Qaddafi stated his opposition to the Arab countries that had participated with the international forces, saying that:

The aim of the war is not clear. If only Iraq were threatened, by the USA, we would all have gone to Baghdad, Our choices are limited, if we fight with Iraq, we will not fight the United States of America only, its allies also, the Arab States.⁸⁷

The main reason for Libya's decision not to support military action was that it favoured mediation to end the crisis and therefore believed that the Arab League's action would make any such initiative less likely to succeed. Libya had also participated with the PLO in another attempt to resolve the crisis peacefully.⁸⁸

The position of Libya could be summarised thus – al-Qaddafi knew and observed that the Arab alliances were weak, but at the same time refused any involvement of the United States in regional affairs. According to al-Qaddafi, Libya would support Kuwait against Iraq and Iraq against the United States. It could be concluded that the impact of the Gulf war and the war's repercussions on Libya were as follows. First, Libya had realised the weakness of the Arab countries in not taking a unified stand to resolve the dispute peacefully. Secondly, the war caused a dispute between Libya and some Arab countries over trying to prevent the entry of international forces into

⁸⁶ *Al-Fajar al-Jadeed* (Libyan daily), 22 September 1991, p 1

⁸⁷ Al-Qaddafi's Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 25 October 1991

⁸⁸ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, op. cit., 1990-1991.

the Arab region. Finally, and most importantly, Libya had realised the weakness of the Arab League, and the United States dominated the decisions, which led to Libya's request to withdraw from its membership of the Arab League.

The Lockerbie Issue and its Ramifications

On 21 December 1988, a Pan American World Airways jumbo jet, Flight PA103, travelling from London's Heathrow airport to John F. Kennedy airport in New York exploded as it was flying over the Scottish village of Lockerbie. The American Embassy had received a warning that a Pan American flight was targeted by terrorists for bombing, but officials at Heathrow Airport were unaware of the threat and thus made no attempt to prevent the plane from taking off. The crash over Lockerbie village occurred during the week of Christmas 1988 and killed 270 people, including 189 Americans.⁸⁹

It was initially claimed that the bomb had been devised by the Iranians in revenge for the shooting down of the Iran Air flight 655 on July 1988 by the United States, and that Iran had employed a gang of Palestinians who had the support of the Syrian government to carry out the attack.⁹⁰ In December 1988, the suspicions of British and US investigators initially focused on the two Palestinians who, they claimed, were in charge of the bombing and included Abu Talib who was a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.⁹¹ In November 1991, however, after continued investigation, the United States and Britain accused two Libyans of being behind the bombings. It was claimed that the two Libyans had "run a shell company known as Medtours from Malta addresses as a cover for Libyan

⁸⁹ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, *Monthly Political Report: Libya and the United States during Lockerbie*, (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli-Libya, December 1992.

⁹⁰ Geoff Simons, *Libya: the Struggle for Survival*, The Macmillan Press, London, 1993, pp. 8-11.

⁹¹ Ibid.

intelligence”,⁹² and that between 1 September and 21 December 1988 they had criminally “acquired luggage tags, at Luqa airport”.⁹³ They had bought clothing from Sliema, on 21 December, and one of them, El-Magrahi, had entered Malta using a false passport under the name Ahmad Khalifa Abd al Samad. They both had suitcases, one of which contained an explosive device concealed in a radio, and these were placed on Air Malta flight KM18 to Frankfurt. It was alleged that the device “was programmed to be detonated by one of the timers obtained from the Swiss firm MEBO AG, and the suitcase was tagged so that it would be placed on Pan Am flight 103, from Frankfurt to New York via Heathrow.”⁹⁴ A statement by the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, stressed that the bombing was “a mass murder, which is alleged to involve the organs of government of a state”.⁹⁵ Before this statement, indictments had been issued in France against four Libyan officials suspected of involvement in the bombing of UTA flight 772⁹⁶ in September 1989. On 27 November 1991, The United States, Britain and France issued a tripartite declaration demanding that Libya hand over the two suspects for trial in Scotland or the United States and that Libya satisfy the requirements of French justice over the UTA bombing. The declaration also demanded that Libya take complete responsibility for this action.⁹⁷ Libya refused to hand over the two Libyan officials, saying that the declaration was political and not judicial. The declaration demanded the payment of compensation by Libya, before the guilt of the accused had been established, and without evidence of Libyan state involvement. On 8 December 1991 the Libyan Secretary for Foreign Relations announced that Libyan judicial authorities would conduct

⁹² Tim Niblock, “*Pariah States*” and *Sanctions in the Middle East*; op. cit, p. 36

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.37

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.36

⁹⁶ UTA was the French airline, Union des Transports Aériens.

⁹⁷ Niblock, “*Pariah States*” and *Sanctions in the Middle East*, op. cit., p. 37

Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

their own investigation into the case against the two Libyans. Western judges were invited to discuss the issue with the Libyan judiciary; and Britain and the United States were asked to produce the evidence against the two accused.⁹⁸

On 18 January 1992 the Libyan government informed the UN Security Council that the Libyan position would rely on the 1971 Montreal Convention. Libya sought to judge the two Libyan offenders under its own domestic law according to Article 7 of the Montreal Convention, which stated that:

The Contracting State in the territory of which the alleged offender is found shall, if it does not extradite him, be obliged, without exception whatsoever and whether or not the offence was committed in its territory, to submit the case to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution. Those authorities shall take their decision in the same manner as in the case of an ordinary offence of a serious nature under the law of the State.⁹⁹

Libya maintained that the terms of the Montreal Convention included conditions for recourse to the International Court of Justice, if the United States or Britain had objections to Libya's interpretation of the Law. According to the Montreal Convention:

Any dispute between two or more Contracting States concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention, which cannot be settled through negotiation, shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the Parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those Parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Libya asked the US and UK to refer their dispute regarding the Lockerbie issue to the International Court of Justice, according to the Montreal Conventions 1971, see: Article 7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, Montreal Conventions 1971, Article 14,

Al-Qaddafi refused to surrender the two Libyan suspects on the grounds that there were no operative extradition treaties between Libya, the UK and the USA.¹⁰¹

Between 1991 and January 1992, there appeared to be two options before the US and the UK: the use of military force, or UN sanctions. The Libyan government considered that military force was a real possibility, having been informed of this by President Mubarak. The Arab countries, including Egypt (which was an ally of the United States), were hostile to any military actions against Libya. Mubarak telephoned President Bush to tell him that any military action against Libya would smash the peace process in the Middle East and would damage the standing of the US in the Arab region.¹⁰² He also contacted al-Qaddafi to tell him that Libya might be attacked by the US and the UK if Libya did not respond.¹⁰³ It should be noted that these threats were made before the UN Security Council had passed Resolutions 731 and 748 of January and March 1992.

With the military threat looming, the United States and the United Kingdom called on al-Qaddafi to accept responsibility for the actions of the two men, to make public all it knew about the bombing, and to pay compensation to the relatives of the victims.¹⁰⁴ The adoption of Resolution 731, the first of the Security Council's resolutions on the Lockerbie issue (it referred to both Lockerbie and the bombing of French UTA-772 over the Sahara), represented another step in the

¹⁰¹ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Libya and the United States during Lockerbie", op. cit.

¹⁰² Simons, Geoff. L., *Libya and the Wes: from Independence to Lockerbie*, London, I. B. Tauris, 2003, p. 145.

¹⁰³ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Libya and the United States during Lockerbie", op. cit

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

escalating pressure on Libya. On 21 January 1992, Washington and London had pushed the UNSC to approve Resolution 731 which called for Libyan cooperation in the investigations in progress over the destruction of Pan Am Flight 103 and UTA Flight 772. The Resolutions urged Libya immediately to provide a full and effective response to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism; however, Libya did not respond.¹⁰⁵ The passage of Resolution 731 represented one more step in the escalation of international pressure on Libya. The absence of diplomatic relations between Libya and the West forced these countries to find ways to communicate through intermediaries to help resolve the crisis.¹⁰⁶

The reaction of Libya was expressed to the United Nations at a meeting between the Secretary-General's special representative, Vasiliy Safronchuk, and al-Qaddafi on 26 January 1992, when al-Qaddafi confirmed Libya's desire to cooperate in finding those responsible for the Pan Am and UTA bombings but insisted that Libyan courts should handle the case against the two Libyans. He suggested that the Secretary-General invite judges from the United States, Britain and France as well as representatives of relevant international bodies to observe a trial of the accused. He raised the possibility of the accused being tried in a third country, suggesting that Malta or an Arab country might be appropriate. Al-Qaddafi also informed the special envoy that the Libyan judges would require further information and requested that the United States and British governments provide it. If the latter were dissatisfied with the Libyan judges, he said, and then they should send their own judges.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ UN Security Council, Resolution 731, 21 January 1992.

¹⁰⁶ Matar, Khalil I. and Robert W. Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya: A Study in International Relations*, Jefferson, NC and ; London : McFarland and Company, 2004, p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ Niblock, "*Pariah States*" and *Sanctions in the Middle East; Iraq, Libya, Sudan*, op. cit., p. 39

Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

On 11 February 1992, the Libyan representative informed the UN Secretary-General that Libya now agreed to the French demands, which conformed to international law and did not violate Libyan laws. The Libyan law that covered such cases had been in force since 1950 and specified that Libyan nationals could not be handed over in the absence of an extradition treaty. Al-Qaddafi had said that he was ready to cooperate fully with the Security Council in a way that would not breach international law. Libya believed that a mechanism should be created for the implementation of Resolution 731 and suggested that negotiations be held to set up such a mechanism.¹⁰⁸ The Arab League urged the United Nations Security Council to avoid adopting a decision to take military, economic, or diplomatic measures that might increase the complications and impact on the Arab region. Despite the efforts of Libya and of the Arab League, the Security Council proceeded on 31 March 1992 to pass a resolution enabling international sanctions to be imposed on Libya.¹⁰⁹

Libya's refusal to comply with Resolution 731 led to the passing of UNSC Resolution 748 on 31 March 1992, which gave Libya a time limit for the extradition of the two suspects. The resolution passed by a vote of ten in favour with none against and five abstentions: China, Cape Verde, India, Morocco and Zimbabwe. Resolution 748 imposed limited sanctions against Libya, including an embargo on aircraft, arms sales and air travel (flights to and from Libya were banned), and a reduction in the staff of Libyan diplomatic missions abroad. This resolution was adopted under Chapter Seven of the UN Charter, which provided for force to be used with respect to threats to peace.¹¹⁰

The reaction of Libya to Resolution 748 was expressed by al-Qaddafi in April 10 1992, when he stated that Chapter Seven should not be applied against Libya. He said:

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p.40

¹¹⁰ See UN Security Council Resolution 748, 31 March 1992.

Article Seven is unacceptable; it should not apply to Libya, according to peace and international security. Article Seven will put more pressure on Libya, since the United States, Britain and France have threatened Libya. They have pressured suspects who might not be guilty. Libya does not refuse the investigation of the two Libyan suspects, if they are taken in trial in Libyan courts, or mixed courts or a neutral international court.¹¹¹

Al-Qaddafi condemned the UNSC resolutions on numerous occasions during subsequent speeches. For example on 2 September 1993 he said:

The United Nations Security Council presupposed that Libya was guilty. Because of many of the resolutions, Libya was put under pressure to hand over the two Libyan suspects. Libya should not be responsible for an activity of which we feel we are not guilty. The punishment should not come before a trial; Libya should not be punished before having a fair trial.¹¹²

During 1992 and 1993 the Libyan position did not change, and at the end of 1993 the United States, Britain and France sponsored a new resolution, tightening the sanctions on Libya. Passed on 11 November 1993, SCR 883 provided for the freezing of Libyan financial assets abroad and banned the export to Libya of selected equipment for downstream operations in the hydrocarbon sector.¹¹³ The frozen financial assets excluded funds derived from oil sales, gas petroleum and agricultural products, so Libya was still able to export its oil without restrictions.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹Al-Qaddafi Speech, *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 1991-1992, No. 23, published by the Centre for Research and Studies of the Green Book, p. 401.

¹¹²Al-Qaddafi, Speech to the Libyan Intelligentsia, Writers and Journalist, 2.9.1993, in: *Al-Sijil al-Qawmi*, 1993-1994, no. 25, published by the Centre for Research and Studies of the Green Book, pp. 445-446.

¹¹³ Security Council Resolution 883, 11 November 1993.

¹¹⁴ Niblock, "*Pariah States*" and *Sanctions in the Middle East*, op. cit., p. 41

Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019)

From 1992 to 1999 Libyan foreign policy was aimed at finding a framework that could facilitate a trial of the two Libyans under either Libyan or international law. In February 1994 Libya asked for the two accused Libyans to be tried at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, which was supported by the Arab League in their meeting on 27 March 1994.¹¹⁵ Libya argued that its position was based on ICJ judgements, according to the Montreal Convention of 1971; the two Libyans should stand trial in the courts of the accusers' nationality. Yet there was an inconsistency in al-Qaddafi's position since he also suggested that a trial could be held in a neutral country, ignoring the requirements of the Montreal Convention.¹¹⁶

On 24 and 25 August 1998, the United States and the United Kingdom put forward new proposals, in which the accused would be judged in a specially-convened court in the Netherlands with three Scottish judges sitting in judgement, and with imprisonment in Scotland if the accused were found guilty. If the temporary Scottish jurisdiction acquitted them, the accused would not face any other charges arising from any other evidence revealed in the court. In addition, the lifting of sanctions was raised as part of the proposal.¹¹⁷

On 9 February 1999, Libya agreed to hand over the two Libyan suspects charged with the bombing over Lockerbie in 1988, for trial in the Netherlands according to Scottish law. The announcement was made on 19 March 1999. It had been agreed that the Scottish judges would try the men in a specially-constructed courtroom in an old American-Dutch air force base at Camp van Zeist in the province of Utrecht, the Netherlands.¹¹⁸ The two Libyans suspects, Abdel Basit

¹¹⁵ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Libya and the United States during Lockerbie", op. cit.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Niblock, "*Pariah States*", op. cit., p. 50

¹¹⁸ Simons, Geoff, "Lockerbie: Lessons for International Law", *Journal of Libyan Studies*. Vol. 1, No 1, Summer 2000, p. 44

Al-Miqrahi and al-Amin Khalifa Fihaima, were transferred to the Netherlands, arriving in Holland on 5 April 1999 for formal arrest by the Dutch authorities. The following day, they were charged with murder and conspiracy before being formally committal for trial. Scottish judicial procedures were being followed the letter.¹¹⁹ In addition, the United Nations suspended sanctions against Libya. Relations between Libya and the US improved when a State Department delegation visited Libya in April 2000 and concluded that Lockerbie was no longer an issue. Libya started to improve its relations with the West from 5 May 2000.¹²⁰

The trial began on 3 May 2000, almost twelve years after the Lockerbie disaster, and the court ultimately jailed Abdel Basit Al Miqrahi, who would serve his sentence in a Scottish prison in Scotland according to the treaty between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, and discharged al-Amin Khalifa Fihaima, who was escorted a day after the verdict to a Dutch airbase for a special non-stop UN flight in a Dutch Royal Air Force plane to Libya.¹²¹

Libya then announced that it had stopped supporting terrorism and had ended its relations with groups and organisations involved in terrorist actions. To prove this, Libya destroyed terrorist training camps on 26 October 2002 and invited the UN to send an inspection committee to verify this. Libya also said that anyone found to be involved in terrorism would be punished, and confirmed that it would not interfere in the internal affairs of any other country.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Libya and the United States during Lockerbie", op. cit.

¹²¹ Matar, Khalil I and Robert W. Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya*, op. cit., p.227.

¹²² Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Libya and the United States during Lockerbie", op. cit.

On 6 August 2003, an agreement was reached whereby Libya was to pay US\$10 million in compensation to each of the 270 families, who had lost relatives in the bombing. The first US\$4 million per family would be contingent on the UN removing the sanctions against Libya (they had previously been simply suspended), with the next US\$4 million linked to the ending of US sanctions. The final US\$2 million would be paid only when Washington had removed Libya “from its list of state sponsors of terrorism”.¹²³ This satisfied the US and UK requirements, and was negotiated directly between Libyan lawyers and the lawyers for the victims.¹²⁴

Libyan Disappointment with the Arab Attitude during the Lockerbie Affair

Al-Qaddafi's disappointment with the post-Lockerbie position of the Arab countries was clear. The impact of the case was obvious from the change in al-Qaddafi's orientation from the Arab to the African sphere. His gradual withdrawal from the inter-Arab system and embracing of the African system was a major consequence of Lockerbie. This section looks at how Libyan relations developed with other Arab countries, and the impact of Lockerbie on Libyan policy.

The Arab countries were very important for al-Qaddafi since relations between Libya and those countries had been very strong during the 1970s. Al-Qaddafi had been greatly influenced by Gamal Abdul Nasser, the leader of the Egyptian Revolution. Relations between the two leaders were based on Arab nationalism, which was strong in the Arab world during the 1950s when the Arab countries gained independence, and Arab Nationalism was one of the most important banners to be raised by al-Qaddafi during the 1970s and 1980s. The three circles on which al-Qaddafi focused were the same three with which Nasser had been primarily concerned: Arab, African and

¹²³ Simons, *Libya and the West from Independence to Lockerbie*, op. cit., 2003, p.163.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

Islamic.¹²⁵ Indeed, ever since the Libyan Revolution, al-Qaddafi had dealt with Arab policy in the light of Nasser's words at the end of a visit to Libya: "I will leave you, and I tell you that my brother Muammar will be faithful, to Arab nationalism and Arab Unity."¹²⁶

It should be noted here that there were no relations between Libya and Egypt from 1977 until June 1989, as a result of the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David agreement. By the late 1980s, however, there was some change in Libyan foreign policy, particularly in 1989 when Libya accepted Egypt's return to membership of the Arab League and agreed to the Arab League being relocated to Cairo.

The effect of Lockerbie on Libyan foreign policy was highlighted through the change in Libyan policy towards the Arab countries. The background of Arab involvement in this issue needs to be explained. A few days after the United Nations sanctions were imposed on 21 January 1992, al-Qaddafi had sent letters to all Arab leaders to ask them for real action against the UN sanctions but received no response from the Arab countries regarding the Lockerbie issue. According to provisions of the Common Defence Agreement (CDA) signed by Arab states in the League of Arab States (LAS) in 1952, al-Qaddafi had expected more support from Arab governments.¹²⁷ Therefore, on 27 March 1992 al-Qaddafi warned that Libya would boycott any countries that became enemies of Libya and would maintain economic relations with friendly countries. He also said "I am saying it clearly. What I say is, those who support our case will benefit from our

¹²⁵ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Monthly Political Report: al Qaddafi and Egypt since 1970s", (unpublished, n.p.), Tripoli-Libya, 23 July 1972.

¹²⁶ This message was left for al-Qaddafi during Nasser's speech in Benghazi during his last visit in 1970, a few months before his death; the speech was shown on Libyan TV on the anniversary of Egypt's Revolution.

¹²⁷ *The Strategic Report* 1991, Cairo, Egypt, published 1992, p. 274

projects and those who will stand against our political case will get nothing.¹²⁸

During the summit meeting of the Arab League on 31 March 1992 Resolution 5151 was passed; it called on the UN Security Council to avoid adopting any decision to take economic, military, or diplomatic measures “that might increase the complications and have an adverse impact on the region.”¹²⁹ During informal LAS sessions, the Libyan government also asked for discussion of its dilemma with the West over Lockerbie, and as a result of the general Arab attitude, Resolution 5156 was passed on 5 December 1992, in which the LAS expressed support for Libya’s request for a trial for the two Libyan suspects in a neutral country, as mentioned above. At the same time the LAS adopted Resolution 5158, which called for the creation of a committee of LAS members to follow up the Lockerbie case to support Libya.¹³⁰

Al-Qaddafi had expected more support from the Arab countries, but the Arab countries were the first to applied sanctions on Libya. This upset al-Qaddafi, particularly because it was his neighbours, such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, who applied sanctions immediately after the UN had imposed sanctions on Libya in January 1992. Furthermore, immediately after the UN resolution was issued, Egypt and Tunisia refused to grant permission for Libyan planes to land at their airports and also refused to allow Libyan aircraft already in Egypt and Tunisia to return to Libya, by keeping the planes grounded at their airports.¹³¹

Even though Egypt tried to do something to resolve the Lockerbie issue during the sanctions, Libya, as noted above, was not be satisfied;

¹²⁸ Al-Qaddafi’s Speech, *Al- Sijil al-Qawmi*, National Register 1992, p. 58

¹²⁹ Niblock, “*Pariah States*” and *Sanctions in the Middle East*, p. 40

¹³⁰ *The Strategic Report* 1991, op. cit., p. 274.

¹³¹ Some of the planes were kept at Egyptian and Tunisian airports, which caused damage to some of them, while others were used by other airlines. See: Arab League, (unpublished Report, n.p.), Cairo, Egypt, February 1992.

nor did Egypt's efforts change the situation, even when Egypt's representative at the time, Nabil al-'Arabi, went to the UN and addressed the SC meeting:

Egypt calls upon the Security Council to keep in sight all the consequences that will impact negatively on the people in Libya... The Security Council should consider alleviating the economic suffering of Libya and of its neighbours that would arise from the adoption of the draft resolution under consideration.¹³²

Libya began to realise that the Arab countries would not breach the sanctions, particularly during 1992-1993 when Saudi Arabia "refused to allow a breach for the Hajj flights (pilgrimage) flights while imposing further limitations on the number of Libyans wishing to fulfil this vital religious duty."¹³³ This led al-Qaddafi to react by announcing on television in September 1995 that he was sending more than a hundred Libyans on camels through Egypt to Jerusalem for Hajj in November 1995.¹³⁴ In fact he did not send them to Jerusalem and the hundred Libyans went to Saudi Arabia for the Hajj, passing through Egypt and Jordan by arrangements made with these countries. The Council of the Arab League met in Cairo on 19 April 1993 and adopted Libya's 1992 proposal that the two Libyans should be tried in a neutral country or at the ICJ. The following year, on 27 March 1994, an urgent meeting of the Arab League asked the UN Security Council to take into consideration the proposal of the Arab League's Secretary-General that the two suspects be tried at the ICJ under Scottish law by Scottish judges.¹³⁵ Egypt tried to take a lead in resolving the Lockerbie issue and Mubarak urged Boutros-Ghali, the

¹³² The Strategic Report, 1991, op. cit., p. 35.

¹³³ Matar, Khalil I. and Robert W. Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya a Study in International Relations*, op. cit., p. 29

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ The Arab League Summit, "Lockerbie and the Arab League", (unpublished, n.p.), Cairo, 1993.

Secretary-General of the United Nations, to try to find a solution to the problem.¹³⁶

Libya was not satisfied with any of the Arab efforts. The Libyan leader had personally asked for support from all the Arab leaders, particularly those who had strong relations with the United States and Britain, and encouraged them to become involved in the Lockerbie issue. They did do something, when the LAS decided to support Libya's position by receiving flights of high-ranking officials or flights made for humanitarian reasons to and from Libya, but this was not enough for al-Qaddafi.¹³⁷

Al-Qaddafi expected more from Egypt than he expected from other Arab countries, first because he knew that Egypt had economic problems, and Libya could help Egypt economically; secondly because al-Qaddafi undoubtedly knew that Egypt could play a mediator role because of its good connections with the US.¹³⁸

In January 1996, al-Qaddafi asked Egypt to become more involved with the Libyan problem, as he felt that Cairo was not serious in pursuing it with the US. He later announced, during a meeting with members of the Revolutionary Committees in March 1996, that Libya had relied on Mubarak, but that Mubarak had lied to Libya, and had done nothing significant to resolve Lockerbie. According to Al-Qaddafi: "Egypt tried to benefit from the sanctions on Libya and created a committee named "The Committee for Benefiting from

¹³⁶ Matar and Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya*, p. 26.

¹³⁷ Secretariat of the General Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Co-operation, Arab Unity Department, "Monthly Political Report: Libya and the Arabs during Lockerbie", (unpublished, n. p.), Tripoli, Libya, 1997.

¹³⁸ Al-Qaddafi himself announced this when he realised that Egypt had not made any progress on the Lockerbie issue. He declared this on many occasions, for instance at his meeting with the Revolutionary Committees in March 1996.

Libya's Sanctions". Egypt was concerned essentially with its own interests with the US and not in helping Libya."¹³⁹

For further confirmation, in 2006 the researcher asked Tahir Siala, the Secretary of Cooperative Affairs in the General People's Committee for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, if there were any role accounted to Egypt during the Lockerbie issue? Siala told the researcher on 24 April 2006 that Egypt had done nothing seriously to resolve Lockerbie; he believed that Egypt was in a position where the US would not let it take any action. He also stressed that Bush had asked Mubarak not to discuss the Lockerbie issue with him, or interfere in the Lockerbie issue: "Otherwise, if he did talk about Lockerbie Bush would not accept Mubarak's visit to the US, unless the purpose of the visit was simply to discuss any problem related to Egypt."¹⁴⁰

While receiving the African leaders who were flying into Tripoli on a regular basis, the Libyans became increasingly convinced that they would never see an Arab challenge to the sanctions.¹⁴¹ Al-Qaddafi's reaction, in particular, was to change the Arab Unity Bureau, one of the Libyan foreign policy's structures, to the African Bureau, only two days before the LAS meeting in 1996. Additionally, al-Qaddafi announced that he would be paying more attention to the African continent than to the Arab world.¹⁴²

The Impact of Lockerbie on Orientation on Libyan Foreign Policy

In fact, Libya's orientation toward Africa was not new. Since 1969 Libya had been concerned with Africa as one of three spheres of

¹³⁹Al-Qaddafi Speech with Members of the Revolutionary Committee, Tripoli, March 1996.

¹⁴⁰ Personal interview with Tahir Siala, Assistant Secretary of the Secretariat of Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, Libya, Tripoli, 24 April 2006.

¹⁴¹ Matar and Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya*, op. cit., p. 99.

¹⁴² *Strategic Report 1998*, Cairo, January 1999, p. 156.

influence: Arab, African and Islamic.¹⁴³ The attitude of African countries during sanctions in 1996 had driven al-Qaddafi to move away from the Arab countries and led later to Libya's withdrawal from the Arab League. The "anti-Arab policy" was reflected in al-Qaddafi's televised speech on 1 September 1997, when he said: "I do not belong to the Arab nations any more, I am African; I belong to the African nations." The researcher met al-Qaddafi personally on 16 September 1997, two weeks after his declaration that he no longer belonged to the Arab nation, and asked him why he had turned against the Arab countries after his long years of sacrifice for Arab Unity since the 1969 Revolution. Was it just his reaction in terms of the Arab attitude towards sanctions? To these questions he answered in a disappointed tone: "My expectation of the Arabs was more than from the African countries, but what happened is the opposite, Africa acted when the Arabs could not. What was done by African leaders should have been done by the Arabs".¹⁴⁴

Al-Qaddafi was clearly disappointed about the Arab reaction to the sanctions.¹⁴⁵ During 1993-1998 the OAU Council resolutions expressed general solidarity with Libya. On 27 January 1995 Resolution 1566, adopted by the OAU, called for the trial of the two Libyans in a neutral country and the lifting of sanctions. Another meeting took place on 4 June 1997 and suggested three points to end the Lockerbie issue: to try the two in a neutral country, or in the ICJ under Scottish law, or to establish a special criminal tribunal at the ICJ. At this meeting the OAU raised the possibility that OAU countries might decide to break the sanctions. The meeting called for the lifting of sanctions because the sanctions had begun to affect the

¹⁴³ The Three Circles (Arab, African, Islamic) had been used by the Egyptian leader Gamal Abd al-Nasser after the 1952 Revolution, as a method of Egyptian foreign policy during the 1950s and 1960s.

¹⁴⁴ The researcher met al-Qaddafi personally, after his announcement that he did not belong to the Arab nation any more, 16 September 1997. .

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 16 September 1996.

population. Continued sanctions might cause them further suffering. After the meeting, the OAU Secretary General was mandated to prepare a practical plan of action.¹⁴⁶

Libya became more involved in the affairs of the continent, as was evident when the OAU held its next summit in Burkina Faso on 18 June 1998. The resolution they adopted moved the whole confrontation to a new level. The African leaders decided they would ignore the sanctions from the beginning of September, while threatening further actions if the United States and the United Kingdom did not accept the trial in a third country.¹⁴⁷ By the end of June 1998 a resolution of the OAU Council's Ministers had determined that the decision to stop sanctions would take effect at the beginning of September 1998, unless the UN Security Council responded by then to the 'neutral country' proposal. Some African countries had even broken the sanctions before the resolution was passed.¹⁴⁸

The attitude of al-Qaddafi strengthened after the African leaders had decided to fly to Libya to participate in the Al-Fatah Revolution celebrations. However, the OAU also urged Libya to comply with Security Council Resolutions 731, 748 and 883 immediately, and to work towards the withdrawal of those resolutions.¹⁴⁹ These efforts were accepted by al-Qaddafi and strongly encouraged Libya to reorient its policy more favourably with other African countries.

During the 1990s, Libyan foreign policy focused on national Libyan interests rather than Arab nationalism and Arab unity. By the end of the decade this had helped Libya to break out of the isolation that had characterised Libyan policy since the beginning of the 1980s. Al-

¹⁴⁶ Niblock, "*Pariah States*" and Sanctions in the Middle East, op. cit., p. 47

¹⁴⁷ Matar and Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya a Study in International Relations*, op. cit., p.101

¹⁴⁸ Niblock, "*Pariah States*" and Sanctions in the Middle East; *Iraq, Libya, Sudan*, op. cit., p. 47

¹⁴⁹ Matar and Thabit, *Lockerbie and Libya*, op. cit., p.103.

Madhani, a member of Libya's government, and head of the Secretariat General of the Community of Sahel Saharan States, confirmed the Libyan foreign policy changes. The significance of his statement comes from his position, and because he is close to al-Qaddafi, and is al-Qaddafi's representative to most of the African countries. Like al-Qaddafi, al-Madhani deplored the attitude of Arab countries, and in confirming the changes in Libya's policy towards Africa, he declared that Libya would be looking towards its own interests from that time on. Al-Madhani stated:

The Libyan government is criticised by the Arab countries for realizing that it does not serve its national interests by relating to the Arab world, since the Arab states and the Arab business community applied the sanctions imposed the Security Council against Libya even before the European business community and European states did so.¹⁵⁰

More evidence on this is offered by Abdullah al-Ashaal, former assistant to the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who attributed the change in Libyan foreign policy to the disappointment felt by Libya. Al-Ashaal said that since 1969 Libya had tried to achieve Arab unity, but its efforts had been largely unsuccessful. It was this lack of success that allowed Libya to change its policy toward Africa.¹⁵¹

Libyan-African relations improved as a result of the African response to sanctions, which contrasted with the Arab attitude at the time. The change in Libyan foreign policy towards the regional context refocused nationalism around African concerns, and the scale of Libya's investments in Africa exceeded that in Arab countries. The increasing presence of the Libyan leader in Africa rather than in Arab countries was also noticeable, and Al-Madhani confirmed that the

¹⁵⁰ Personal Interviews with Mohamed al-Madhani, the Head of the Secretary General of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, Tripoli, 13 April 2003

¹⁵¹ Personal Interview, with Abdullah al-Ashaal, Former Assistant to the Minister of Egyptian Foreign Policy, Researcher met him two months later, after his Resignation, Cairo, 8 November 2003.

concentration on the regional African community came within the changes in the international environment. This took place throughout the processes of resolving the Lockerbie issue, since the position of the African states in supporting Libya was superior to the position of the Arab states. The African states realized that Libya was part of the African region; any threats towards it could be considered as threats towards them.¹⁵²

Summary

It can be concluded that the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Second Gulf War, and the Lockerbie issue were the main external factors that influenced Libyan foreign policy in the period 1989-2004. These three primary external factors forced Libya to reform its foreign policy approach towards both the Arab countries and Africa. Libyan foreign policy rejected the traditional Arab political orientation and increasingly strove towards political and economic integration with Africa. The external factors also interplayed with internal policy and dynamics, including ideological influences and the domestic economic situation that helped create a new era in Libyan foreign policy, in particular after changes in the world order.

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Issue No. (7-8 of the Fourth year 2019

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