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Understanding coercive nuclear reversal dynamics: a comparative case study of US coercive diplomacy against the nuclear programs of Iran, Libya, and South Africa

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THE US AGAINST LIBYA

To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. — Sun Tzu, Chinese philosopher, and strategist.

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The main goal of this chapter is to analyze the coercive nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya. The time scope of the entire chapter spans from 1969, when Gadhafi toppled the regime of King Idris, till 2003 when Libya officially announced its decision to abandon its nuclear program and its WMD program in general. Just like the previous Iranian case study, we will analyze the coercive dynamics between Washington and Tripoli against the backdrop of our hypotheses.[652] Hence, we will always consider to what extent the US coercive strategy exploited the weaknesses of Libya and to what extent Washington demonstrated the motivation to have a sustained campaign to compel Tripoli. That is, In essence, **to what extent Libya's decision to comply or resist the US request relates to the political and economic effects of Washington's coercive diplomacy** Considering the propositions of our theoretical framework (proportionality, reciprocity, and credibility) and the choice of the structured-focused method, this chapter will also be divided into sub-sections which aim at answering the following questions: **what were the objectives pursued by the US after implementing coercive policies against the Libyan nuclear program? What were coercive strategies adopted to achieve these objectives? What were the expected outcomes of the US when implementing its coercive strategies against Libya's nuclear program? What were the actual results at the end of the process, and why such outcomes?**

The answer to these questions will help us to demonstrate the validity of the four essential elements regarding the effectiveness of a coercive strategy in the nuclear realm.[653] In this regard, the first section will analyze the history of foreign relations between Libya and the World, especially the US. This will help us understand the strategic importance of Libya for the US and the continuity or breaks of patterns in Libya's foreign policy. The second section will dwell on the drivers behind Libya's decision to obtain nuclear weapons. In contrast, the third section will emphasize Libya's political system, emphasizing nuclear decision-making during Gadhafi's era. The fourth section will analyze the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya, while the fifth section will stress the theoretical conclusions about our research goal.

Before stressing the theoretical answers to the previous questions, it is essential to emphasize that, unlike the Iranian case, we did not conduct interviews with experts or former officials related to the Libyan nuclear issue. This is because many of the actors

[652] We hypothesized that coercive diplomacy could compel a State to abandon its nuclear (weapons) program under two conditions: if the coercer's strategy exploits the target's weaknesses and if the coercer demonstrates a motivation to have a sustained campaign to compel the target.
[653] The four core elements are the following**:** the display by the coercer of **strategic empathy towards its target**, the formulation of **clear and acceptable demands** to the target, then the display by the coercer of **a higher resolve than the target** to achieve his/her objective, and the offer of **credible incentives** to the target if the target complies.

involved had already passed away or were too old to answer our questions. Nevertheless, we had access to primary sources such as speeches and interviews of officials who were directly or indirectly involved in the negotiation process. This permitted us to identify the parameters they considered when making their decisions. In addition, we also read memoirs from former negotiators and scholars who interviewed the people involved in the process. Combined with indirect sources like articles from experts or scholars and statistical data, we were able to identify the pattern of behavior of the actors involved in the Libyan nuclear dynamics and the driving factors behind their decisions.

5.1 SECTION I – A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBYA AND THE GREAT POWERS.

This section aims to understand the evolution of the relations between Libya and the Great Powers, notably the US and the UK. The merits of analyzing the foreign relations of Libya are twofold. First, it will enable us to understand the bargaining positions of the States mentioned above based on the geopolitical importance of Libya in their strategic calculus. Of course, we do not assume that the core elements shaping the UK and the US's Libyan foreign policy have been stable over time; yet, identifying the drivers of their foreign policy with Libya will provide an insightful light on the motivations of the UK and the US to handle the Libyan challenge the way they did. On the other hand, dwelling on the foreign relations of Libya will also help us to understand the international responses of the Libyan Leader Gadhafi, based upon his vision of the global role of Libya.

Just like Iran, Libya has been subject to foreign influences throughout history. As Saima Raza described it, "the history of the Libyan region has been characterized by a seemingly never-ending procession of foreign rulers who have attempted to subdue the restless network of tribes which have populated the hinterland."[654] In Antiquity, for example, the Libyan territory went under the domination of many Great Powers like the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Although the Arab presence in the Maghreb region dates to the 7th Century, Libya, as we know it today, has been primarily influenced by the Ottomans for almost four centuries, from 1551 to 1912.[655] During that period, Libya was under the international sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire through the country retained a margin of autonomy under the administrative rule of an appointee of the Sublime Porte (the name of the government of the Ottoman Empire).

[654] RAZA, Saima, **Italian colonisation & Libyan resistance to the Al-Sanusi of Cyrenaica (1911 – 1922),** Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia), Vol.6, 2012, p.88
[655] SIEBENS James and CASE Benjamin: **The Libyan civil war: context and consequences,** THINK International and Human Security, August 2012, p.4

The country was divided into three central regions: Tripolitania in the North-West, Cyrenaica in the East and Fezzan in the South-West. The scramble for Africa began in the aftermath of the Berlin Conference (Nov. 1884 – Feb. 1885), and consequently, many European countries embarked on colonial conquests of African territories. Regarding North Africa, although France and the UK had already conquered most of the North African countries (France beat Algeria in 1830, Tunisia in 1881 and Morocco in 1912, while the UK conquered Egypt in 1882), they nevertheless also coveted Libya for commercial and territorial purposes.[656] However, no European country had set its sight on Libya more than Italy.[657]

Italy's interest in Libya stemmed from two main factors: on the first hand, the desire to possess colonies like its European rivals, and on the other hand, the historical defeat of the Italian troops during the war against Ethiopia (1895-1896). Regarding the former, possessing a colony by an Empire or Kingdom symbolized prestige and power in the European concert. Subsequently, the Kingdom of Italy couldn't afford to rule over an African territory and benefit from the resources available. Valentina Colafrancesco shares this view as she declares: "Italian interest in Libyan territories was first aroused in 1880, triggered by Italian government ambitions in extending and conquering new territories in North Africa, to become a colonial power on par with other European countries."[658] Regarding the latter, Italy underwent a stingy defeat against the Ethiopian troops of Emperor Menelik II. This was perceived in Italy and the rest of Europe as a humiliation that needed to be avenged. Consequently, "within fifteen years, a vigorous nationalist movement was proclaiming the need to create a virile, bellicose nation which would wipe out the shame at Adowa and force the plutocratic imperialist powers to give justice to Italy (Watson-Seton 169) - this came in the form of Libya."[659]

However, two main challenges precluded Italy from achieving its goal to colonize Libya: the appetite of its European rivals for Libya and the Ottoman challenge. Following the failure of its soft approach (the creation of economic corporations and a financial proposal), the Italians capitalized on the domestic weaknesses of the Ottoman Empire (financial challenges due to the different wars with the European States) and launched

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656 Rachel Simon argues that European States 'interests in Libya lied mainly on the fact that Libya constituted a "transit region and a border district". Read SIMON, Rachel: **Libya between Ottomanism and nationalism. The Ottoman involvement in Libya during the War with Italy (1911-1919),** Berlin, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1987, pp.44-45

657 RAZA, Saima, **Italian colonisation & Libyan resistance to the Al-Sanusi of Cyrenaica (1911 – 1922),** ***Op. Cit.,*** pp.89-90.

658 COLAFRANCESCO, Valentina, **A case of paradiplomacy?: Italian-Libyan diplomatic relations from the rise to power of Gaddafi till the beginning of the "Arab Spring",** Egmont Institute, Studia Diplomatica , Vol. 65, N.3, 2012, p.94

659 RAZA, Saima, **Italian colonisation & Libyan resistance to the Al-Sanusi of Cyrenaica (1911 – 1922),** ***Ibid.,*** p.91

several assaults. Hence, the Ottomans did not resist the Italians' assaults long and grudgingly signed the Treaty of Lausanne (18th of October 1912), officially acknowledging the Italian sovereignty over Libya.[660] With the acquisition of Libya, the Italian Kingdom could comfortably claim the same international prestige as most of its European rivals. Just like the other colonial Powers, Italy's plans were twofold. First, they aimed to exploit Libya's resources and lands to solve domestic issues and, second, to promote Western values. Regarding the former, Italians intended to exploit the alleged resources of Libya to strengthen Italy's economy, especially the private actors who had invested in the different war campaigns. In addition, the Italian government was facing increasing pressure from its population in the South and urgently needed a safe place to settle them and provide them with job opportunities.[661]

Second, just like the other European colonial Powers, Italy's colonial campaign was also rooted in the belief in the *White Man's Burden*. In other words, Italians firmly thought that the greatest merit of their colonization of Libya was the "civilization" they would bring to the "savage" Libyans. Carlo Schanzer nicely described those two mindsets of Libya in these words: "Italy knows her duty as a colonizing power -- the duty of endeavoring to reconcile the supreme necessity of colonization with the vital needs of the indigenous populations. (…) The Italy of today wishes to develop her African possessions for the benefit not only of the homeland but also of the subject populations and of humanity as a whole."[662]

Consequently, the Italians thought that the conquest of Libya would be achieved with relative ease. Unfortunately, it was not the case. Libya remained an Italian colony from 1912 till 1947 (35 years), when the post-WWII Peace treaties were signed. Even though Italy continued to face strong resistance from several tribes like the Cyrenaica under the leadership of Sheikh Omar al-Mukhtar,[663] the influence of the other Great Powers played a strategic role in the dismemberment of the Italian Empire. As Dirk Vandewalle described, *Libya had passed from colonialism to independence at the behest of the Great Powers without a unifying ideology or a movement whose goals and aspirations were shared throughout the country*.[664]

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660 RAZA, Saima, **Italian colonisation & Libyan resistance to the Al-Sanusi of Cyrenaica (1911 – 1922), *Op. Cit.,*** p.104

661 M. E. P., **The Italian colonial Empire: a note on its rise and fall,** Bulletin of International News, 1944, Vol. 21, N. 6, p.211. (Published by Royal Institute of International Affairs)

662 SCHANZER, Carlo, **Italian colonial policy in Northern Africa,** Foreign Affairs, 1924, Vol. 2, N. 3, p.448. (Published by Council on Foreign Relations).

663 VANDEVALLE, Dirk: **A History of modern Libya**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p.31

664 VANDEVALLE, Dirk: **A History of modern Libya, *Ibid.***, p.43

Among those Great Powers, the UK and the US played an incremental role in the independence of Libya. Their involvement was more visible during and after WW2, both from the military and political perspectives. Regarding the military view, Libya was one of the battlefields of WWII. Indeed, Italy, Germany, and other States formed the Axis powers, which fought against the Allies, which the UK, the US, and France mainly constituted. With the defeat of the Axis powers, Italy lost most of its colonial territories, including Libya, by signing the Paris peace treaties in 1947. Art. 23 of this treaty stated, "Italy renounces all rights and titles to the Italian territorial possessions in Africa, i.e., Libya, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland."[665] Two Western powers later replaced Italy in Libya's administration: the UK and France. Still, the US also watched it for strategic reasons, as we will see later.

Dario Cristiani describes British-Libyan bilateral relations as *historically troubled.*[666] This description can be explained by the ambivalent British foreign policy with Libya from the end of WW2 till the incremental role played by the UK in the toppling of the Khadafi regime. Concerning the period after 1945, British interests in Libya were related to its strategic positions in the Mediterranean region. As former British foreign minister Anthony Eden described it, "these Italian overseas possessions do not come under the control of potential enemy states, as they flank our sea and air communications through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and provide bases from which Egypt, the Sudan and Kenya could be attacked."[667] By referring to "enemy States", the British diplomat was surreptitiously referring to the Soviet Union, as the World on the eve of the Cold War. Consequently, the decisive role played by the UK and the US in the independence of Libya as a Kingdom in 1951 should also be understood by the determination of those Powers to keep such a strategic region from falling under the control of the Soviet influence.

The role of Libya in the UK Cold War strategy consisted mainly in hosting British military bases in exchange for financial aid; this bargain was formally acknowledged by the signing of the Anglo—Libyan treaty in 1953.[668] Consequently, the British established military bases in Libya, especially in the Eastern part of the country, like in El Adem – Tobruk, where military complexes were built. However, the relations between the two countries did not last for long as the coup d'état orchestrated by

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[665] The UNITED NATIONS, **Treaty Series - Treaties and international agreements registered or filed and recorded with the Secretariat of the United Nations,** 1950, Vol. 49, N.747, p.139. Accessed on from the link https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%2049/v49.pdf the 20th of March 2021.

[666] CRISTIANI, Dario, **UK Libya: The consistency of being selective,** ISPI, Analysis N. 238, March 2014, p.3

[667] VAN GENUGTEN, Saskia: **Libya in Western foreign policies, 1911–2011, *Op. Cit.,*** p.47

[668] BLACKWELL, Stephen, **Saving the King: Anglo-American strategy and British counter-subversion operations in Libya, 1953-59**, Middle Eastern Studies, 2003, Vol. 39, N. 1, p. 2

Khadhafi put an end to the British presence in the country. The US is the second leading Western Power that played a decisive role in Libya after WW2. Initially, the relations were based on commercial interests, as Libya represented a decisive trade route. However, the potential attacks from pirates could seriously disrupt the economic activities of the US. In this regard, *the Bey of Tripoli and Joel Barlow, U.S. agent plenipotentiary, finally concluded a treaty of peace and friendship, guaranteed by the Dey of Algiers, on 4 November 1796. It promised protection and free passage for the naval vessels of both states and instituted a system of passports to ensure said protection*.[669] Nevertheless, both countries went to war a couple of times later. In some cases, war's origins lay in subjective and objective issues.

Regarding the subjective causes of war between Tripoli and Washington, the US misinterpreted the terms of the treaty of peace, especially the role-played Algiers in the implementation of the treaty. Regarding the objective reasons, leaders of Tripoli always complained about the two standards policy of the US in dealing with "Barbaric States" like Libya, Algeria or Tunisia. Consequently, to balance its relationship with the US and recalibrate its financial commitment toward Tripoli, like Algeria's, which was receiving $642,500[670] from the US, the Pasha of Tripoli Yusuf Karamanli attempted to sign a new agreement with the US who rejected the demand. Tripoli's leaders attacked the US Consulate in 1801, and Washington responded by sending naval forces. Ronald Bruce St John maintains that the deployment of those naval troops *marked the beginning of a United States naval presence in the Mediterranean.*[671] Despite those tensions, Libya became an essential asset in the geopolitical chessboard of the US after WWII. Unfortunately, this position fostered grievances from the population and certain military leaders, as we will see later. Just like Iran's relationship with the US under the Shah, many Libyans loathed the fact that their country was a puppet in the hands of the West. The following subpart will analyze the motivations behind Gadhafi's desire to obtain nuclear weapons and the US interests in the region.

669 ST JOHN, Ronald Bruce: **Libya and the United States, Two centuries of strife,** Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, p.22
670 KITZEN, Michael, **Money bags or cannon balls: The origins of the Tripolitan War, 1795-1801,** Journal of the Early Republic, 1996, Vol. 16, N. 4, p.604
671 ST JOHN, Ronald Bruce: **Libya and the United States, Two centuries of strife, *Ibid.,*** p.24

5.2 SECTION II – THE EMERGENCE OF THE LIBYAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM: ORIGINS, RATIONALE, AND REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS.

After the previous analysis of the relations between Libya and the external world, especially the US, this section will dwell on the importance of a nuclear program for Libya. In other words, the main objective of this section is to answer the following questions: what were the drivers behind Khadafi's decision to seek nuclear weapons? In addition, what could have been the regional consequences of Libya's acquisition of nuclear weapons? Answering these questions will help us to understand the nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya, more importantly, the bargaining positions of Libya during the negotiations with the US over Tripoli's controversial nuclear program.

According to several experts, the drivers behind Libya's desire for nuclear weapons were threefold. Indeed, Tripoli's quest for a nuclear status can be explained by the desire for international prestige, security concerns and critical domestic stakeholders within the Libyan establishment. In this regard, Elena Geleskul argues that Libya's attempts to obtain a nuclear arsenal under Khadafi can be grouped into three periods that illustrate the drivers behind the country's motivations to become a nuclear State. Those three time periods are 1969-1971, 1971-1992, and 1995-2003.[672] But before dwelling on the strategic importance of nuclear weapons for Gadhafi's foreign policy, it is essential to understand the very context of the emergence of Gadhafi's rise to the highest leadership position in Libya. Libya officially became an independent State on the 24th of December 1951 as a federal monarchy under King Idris I.[673]

Until the discovery of oil in 1959, Libya relied exclusively on international aid and the money received from Western Powers (the US and the UK) for hosting military bases in the context of the Cold War. As Charles O. Cecil accurately described it, "up through the first decade of the Cold War, Libya and the other nations of North Africa were of great strategic importance to Europe, for they offered a potential land route which would allow Soviet ground forces to out-flank Western defenses in Western Europe in the event of a war. (…) The Libyan government was aware of the country's strategic importance to the West and did not hesitate to use this factor to support requests for increased aid and rents for military bases."[674] However, the improvement of the Western military defense capabilities and the discovery of oil had a tremendous impact on Libya's domestic and international politics.

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[672] GELESKUL, Elena, **The history of the Libyan nuclear program: The reasons for failure**, Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security Vol. 15, N.2, 2009, p.140
[673] MORONE M., Antonio, **Idris' Libya and the role of Islam**, Oriente Moderno, N.1, 2017, p.112
[674] CECIL O., Charles, **The determinants of Libyan foreign policy**, Middle East Journal, Winter 1965, Vol. 19, N. 1, p.21

The improvement of the US military defense capabilities impacted the strategic role of Libya in the West's goal to deter the Soviet Union. Indeed, "as the range of aircraft increases, staging bases become less important. As the nature of war changes, North Africa as a flanking route to Europe for hostile land forces loses its attractiveness."[675] In other words, advanced technological warfare equipment negatively impacted the geopolitical importance of Libya in international affairs. Concerning the discovery of oil, this was probably the best revolution Libya would be going through for the next fifty years, at least. Charles Cecil described it in these terms: "a nation once a backwater in Northern Africa, whose greatest asset was probably its 1000-mile Mediterranean coastline, was suddenly confronted with the prospect of seemingly unlimited wealth. All previous predictions of Libya's future became obsolete overnight."[676]

Before the actual exploitation of oil, Libya had demonstrated massive potential in hydrocarbon deposits, sparked the interest of several countries like the UK, The Netherlands, France, and Germany, whose oil companies competed to obtain concessions of exploitation[677] just like in Iran during the Shah era. With oil production of more than 3 million barrels per day (b/d) in the late 60s,[678] Libya became one of the most significant oil producers in the world. However, oil's impact in Libya was visible in international affairs; Libya's domestic politics was also affected by the discovery of black gold. Not only did it foster irredentist financial claims in the regions where the primary oil deposits were found (as those regions claimed a large percentage of the gains from the exploitation of oil), but it also caused social unrest in the country, notably because of vast corruption and mismanagement policies in the young independent nation. "The good-news story was not all roses. Libya's new role as an oil exporter brought problems as well as benefits, not least of which was corruption," Alison Pargeter argues.[679] The combination of all these factors nurtured deep frustrations in many sections of the country, especially among a group of military officers led by Muammar Kadhafi.

Muammar Kadhafi emerged as the Libyan leader in a specific regional context. Indeed, several Arab leaders were preaching ideology of Arab unity as the solution for the prestige and glory of their countries and people. Among them, one Arab leader had a remarkable influence on Khadhafi's vision of the new Libya and the role it was supposed

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675 CECIL O., Charles, **The determinants of Libyan foreign policy**, ***Ibid,*** p.22
676 CECIL O., Charles, **The determinants of Libyan foreign policy**, ***Ibid.,*** p.23
677 CLARKE I., John, **Oil in Libya: Some implications**, Economic Geography, January 1963, Vol. 39, N. 1, p.42
678 US Energy Information Agency, **Country analysis brief: Libya,** November 19, 2015. Accessed from https://s3.amazonaws.com/rgi-documents/39ab0d06fabf10743a096d298d5c5ff0e10098c6.pdf on the 13th of May 2021.
679 PARGETER, Alison: **Libya – The rise and fall of Qaddafi**, London, Yale University Press, 2012, p.41. Consulted online.

to play not only in regional politics but also in international affairs: this was the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser was one of the most notorious promoters of pan-Arabism. However, many analysts share the opinion he capitalized on this ideology's political dividends to promote his country's interests. Fawaz Gerges argues in this regard that "[Nasser's] use of Arab nationalism or pan-Arabism (…) was never purely a matter of principle and sentiment. It was not conceived as just an idealist political project but rather as a product of realist calculations taken within the parameters of the particular set of circumstances in which he found himself."[680] Nevertheless, the young Muammar Kadhafi deeply admired him and shared his political vision. Consequently, galvanized by the political ideology of his mentor and deeply frustrated by the puppet statute of Libya in the hands of the Great Powers, Khadhafi led a bloodless coup d'état against King Idris in 1969 and became the Revolutionary leader of Libya.

After toppling the regime of King Idris, Khadhafi established a twelve members Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the highest institutional organ in the new Revolutionary republic. George Joffé argues that a State's foreign policy can also be understood as "the external projection of the dominant ideological preconceptions that inform the domestic structure and dynamism of the state in question—a kind of political discourse that also affects, or even determines, the nature of relations with other states or their populations."[681] Regarding the new foreign policy of Libya in the early days of the Revolution, Khadhafi did not have a precise and autonomous set of beliefs regarding the international role Libya was set to have. Indeed, most of his thoughts and actions were based on the ideology of his model Gamal Nasser. Consequently, just like his mentor, Khadhafi championed anti-colonialism and anti-Zionism. In this regard, since Libya was perceived as a puppet in the hands of the Great Powers under King Idris I, one of Khadhafi's first international decisions was *to demand the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Wheelus Air Force Base near Tripoli*.[682] Khadhafi's ideological beliefs also shaped his quest for nuclear weapons.

With regards to Libya's nuclear goal, unlike many countries whose nuclear ambitions are usually primarily driven by security imperatives, Khadhafi was seeking a nuclear statute firstly for the international prestige conferred to Nuclear Weaponized States (NWS). As he declared in an address to the General People Congress, "in 1969 and early

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680 GERGES A., Fawaz: **Making the Arab world: Nasser, Qutb, and the clash that shaped the Middle East,** New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2018, pp.187-188

681 JOFFÉ, George, ***Prodigal or pariah? Foreign policy in Libya,*** in VANDEWALLE, Dirk (Ed.): **Libya since 1969. Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p.191. (Consulted online)

682 BLACK R., Craig: **Deterring Libya. The strategic culture of Muammar Qaddafi**, The Counter-proliferation Papers, Future Warfare, Series No. 8, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 2000, p.7

1970s, we did not reflect on where or against whom we could use the nuclear bomb. Such issues were not considered. All that was important was to build the bomb."[683] Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer digs in as she stresses that "the Libyan regime's initial efforts to pursue a nuclear weapons capability were inspired in no small part by the notion that nuclear weapons could elevate Libya to a regional and international role matching the regime's ideological principles and ambitions."[684] In other words, Khadhafi initially considered acquiring a nuclear statute as the main criterion of international prestige at the regional and global levels. This belief is close to Jacque Hyman's notion of *oppositional nationalist*.[685] However, the security incentives quickly prevailed as the pillars of the new regime were still fragile.

After toppling former Kind Idris, the new Libyan authorities deeply feared a foreign intervention from the Western powers, notably the US. Ironically, Western Powers initially backed Khadhafi's coup. Brenda Lange declares, "the United States originally supported the regime change, primarily because of Qaddafi's Anti-Communist stance, and even provided CIA protection."[686] However, to the surprise of the West, Khadhafi's anti-imperialist beliefs distanced him from many European and American countries. Consequently, he integrated the possibility of being also toppled by a West-masterminded coup. Hence, he considered the possession of a nuclear arsenal as the only credible deterrent military instrument capable of protecting the new regime. Yet, Western Powers were not the only threat to the new regime's survival; Israel's nuclear arsenal was also perceived as a significant threat to the Revolutionary government.[687] Because Israel was already a nuclear State, Khadhafi logically concluded that only a nuclear arsenal could balance Israel's strategic advantage in the region. In addition, he was aware that the destruction of Israel – one of his Revolutionary goals, as he considered Israel to be the symbol of Western colonialism in the Middle East (Palestine) – could not be achieved without an overwhelming military capability. Consequently, nuclear weapons appeared to him as the only credible military instrument to help him achieve his goal. However, the new Libyan authorities were not only worried by foreign threats; the perspective of a domestic toppling of the new regime was also a significant source of concern for Khadafi.

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683 BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid, **Libya's nuclear intentions: Ambition and ambivalence**, Strategic Insights, 2009, Vol. 8, N.2, p.3

684 BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid, **Libya's nuclear intentions: Ambition and ambivalence**, ***Ibid,*** p.3

685 *Oppositional nationalists define their nation as being both naturally at odds with and naturally equal (if not superior) to a particular external other. As a result, when facing the external other, oppositional nationalist leaders are uniquely predisposed to experience two highly volatile emotions: fear and pride.* Read HYMANS E. C., Jacques: **The Psychology of nuclear proliferation: Identity, emotions and foreign policy**, ***Op. Cit.***, p.13.

686 LANGE, Brenda: **Muammar Qaddafi**, (Major World Leaders), Philadelphia, Chelsea House Publishers, 2005, p.42. CIA stands for Central Intelligence Agency.

687 BLACK R., Craig: **Deterring Libya. The Strategic culture of Muammar Qaddafi**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.18

As previously highlighted, Khadafi orchestrated a bloodless military coup. Yet, the entire military establishment was not involved in the toppling of former King Idris. Consequently, the new Libyan authorities were worried about the absence of a complete commitment to the revolutionary ideals by the other military personnel. Therefore, obtaining a nuclear arsenal would have reduced the risk of military treason in a war against the West. Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer described it in these terms: "a nuclear deterrent appears to have been perceived as a technological "fix", requiring little manpower yet enabling the regime to protect Libya's vast territory from external threats. This carried the additional appeal of avoiding an over-reliance on the armed forces, which would have made the military a power repository that could give rise to challenges to the regime."[688] Driven by security concerns, Khadhafi's nuclear imperative was reflected in his different strategies to acquire nuclear fire, starting with a nuclear hastiness from 1969 till 1971.

The Libyan authorities resorted to several strategies to obtain a nuclear arsenal quickly. The first one was to purchase readymade nuclear warheads from nuclear powers. In this regard, the Libyan authorities turned to any potential supplier, irrespective of his ideological and strategic side. Consequently, one of the first countries targeted by Libya was China, but the Chinese declined the proposition based on their limited nuclear arsenal. As Elena Geleskul wondered, *how could China supply Libya with nuclear weapons if it had quite a limited arsenal itself?!*[689] Libya then turned to India with an offer of $15 billion in exchange for the supply of nuclear warheads. The Libyan authorities expected their Indian counterpart to accept the offer as it would have helped the latter to reimburse their foreign aid.[690] A similar proposal had been submitted to the Soviets ($10 billion) and sparked intense debates within the Soviet establishment.

However, the pro and cons Libyan deal considered its repercussions in the region first. The former argued that it could help balance Israel's strategic domination against the Arabs States, while the latter warned against the risks of a *domino effect* in the region. Finally, *it was decided to reject the Libyan offer and to assist the country in a different way. The Soviet Union helped in the establishment of the research center in Tajura and supplied Libya with a light water 10MW reactor that was using highly enriched uranium.*[691] It is worth noting that the Libyan government had also initiated nuclear cooperation with regional countries like Egypt, but they nevertheless failed to meet up

[688] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid, **Libya's nuclear turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli,** Middle East Journal, Winter 2008, Vol. 62, N. 1, p.60
[689] GELESKUL, Elena, **The History of the Libyan nuclear program: The reasons for failure**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.141
[690] SOLINGEN, Etel: **Nuclear logics: Contrasting paths in East Asia and the Middle East, *Op. Cit.***, p.213
[691] GELESKUL, Elena, **The History of the Libyan nuclear program: The reasons for failure**, ***Ibid***

to their expectations. Consequently, Libya changed its strategy to obtain a nuclear arsenal.

The second significant period during which Libya actively sought to acquire nuclear weapons spans 1971-1992. During this period, the Libyan government's strategy evolved from an "off the shell" to an indigenous program. To put it in Hyman's words, *after that (previous) setback, Gaddafi decided to build the bomb in-house.*[692] The change in the nuclear strategy was not only driven by the failure of the initial strategy or attempts; indeed, many internal and external factors should be considered to explain Khadafi's new strategy. Among the internal factors, Khadafi initiated a Cultural Revolution five years after his rise to the country's highest leadership. We will dwell on the impact of the Cultural Revolution in the section dedicated to Libya's political system and decision-making. This Cultural Revolution also significantly impacted Khadhafi's quest for nuclear weapons. Indeed, it radically transformed Libya's State and its formal institutions and led Khadhafi to increase pressure on Libyan nuclear scientists to obtain nuclear weapons quickly. To put it another way, driven by revolutionary ideals, Khadhafi requested his scientific community to deliver tangible results regarding the prospects of Libya's weaponization.

However, just like in several other areas, Libya lacked nuclear experts who could manage and complete the nuclear project. As Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer described it, "the small nuclear establishment thus had to navigate carefully while the State was being transformed and fragmented. […] Scientists were in a particularly difficult position in the changing Libyan state where technocrats were primary targets of the regime's revolutionary zeal."[693] To overcome these technical challenges, the Libyan government first created Libya's Nuclear Energy Commission in 1973, then reportedly helped the Pakistani government obtain nuclear weapons in 1974.[694] However, Khadhafi refuted this information later to maintain good relations with rival India.

Regarding the external factors which drove Khadhafi's change of nuclear strategy, the 1973 oil crisis undoubtedly played a critical role in Libya's quest for nuclear capability. The previous oil crisis clearly had tremendous geopolitical impacts worldwide, and Libya was no exception. With an estimated oil production capacity of 3.400.000 million barrels per day in 1970 and 3.000.000 million barrels per day (BPD),[695] Libya largely

[692] HYMANS E. C., Jacques: **Achieving nuclear ambitions: scientists, politicians, and proliferation**, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p.241
[693] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid: **Unclear physics: Why Iraq and Libya failed to build nuclear weapons,** New York, Cornell University Press, 2016, pp.151-152
[694] ASGHAR U., Muhammad, KHAN B., Muhammad and HUSSAIN Shahzad, **The case of Libya's WMD: analysis of key factors for nuclear turnaround,** Margalla Papers, Winter 2018, Vol. 22, N.1, p.92
[695] BARLTROP, Richard, **Oil and gas in a new Libyan era: conflict and continuity**, OIES paper: MEP 22, February 2019, p.9

benefited from the price of oil barrels during the oil crisis. Khadhafi logically invested the available money in his nuclear project. Just like then Iran's Shah, who signed several technical cooperation and training agreements with MIT, as we previously analyzed, Khadhafi also signed several technical and training agreements with several countries. For example, *Libya reportedly reached an agreement with India in 1977–8, under which the latter would have provided assistance for the peaceful application of nuclear technology in exchange for cheap oil.*[696]

Another driver of Libya's change of strategy was the Israeli threat in general and the Yom Kippur War between Israel and the Arab countries. In this regard, Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer argues that "disappointment over not having been consulted by the Arab war coalition in 1973 appears to have fueled the Libyan regime's desire to obtain nuclear weapons."[697] It is also important to mention that the ambivalent nuclear foreign policy of Khadhafi was twofold: on the one hand, Libya maintained good relations with countries which had bitter bilateral relations like India and Pakistan; on the other hand, the Libyan regime complied in theory with international nuclear norms by signing international treaties like the NPT while infringing them in practice by actively seeking a nuclear deterrent capability.[698]

The third period during which Libya sought nuclear weapons spanned from 1995 to 2003. The Libyan quest for nuclear weapons through illegal channels characterized this third period. Indeed, since Libya was under economic sanctions due to the terrorist actions it sponsored abroad, Khadafi finally resorted to the black market to obtain the components for its nuclear program. After an unsuccessful attempt in 1984, the Libyan authorities contacted the "father of the Pakistani bomb," Abdul Qadeer Khan. Abdul Q. Khan actively began its nuclear smuggling activities after granting the nuclear fire to his country Pakistan.[699] Hence, just like North Korea or Iran, Libya also did its "nuclear shopping" in Khan's illegal supermarket. Abdul Khan's services' significant advantage was delivering a nuclear package to its clients. Gordon Corera confirms it by saying, "Khan's great innovation had been to act as a broker, integrating a complex marketplace into something much simpler. A country such as Libya could cut a deal with Khan alone. […] Rather than purchase piecemeal, a country would be offered everything on a

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[696] BOWEN Q., Wyn: **Libya and nuclear proliferation: Stepping back from the brink,** London, Routledge, IISS, Adelphi Paper, 2006, p.28 (1st ed.)
[697] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid, **Libya's nuclear turnaround: Perspectives from Tripoli, *Op. Cit.,*** p.62
[698] ASGHAR U., Muhammad, KHAN B., Muhammad and HUSSAIN Shahzad, **The case of Libya's WMD: analysis of key factors for nuclear turnaround,** Margalla Papers, 2018, pp.91-92
[699] CLARY, Christopher, **A.Q. Khan and the limits of the non-proliferation regime,** UNIDIR, Disarmament forum, 2004, N. 4, p.37

platter—but at a price."[700] Concerning Libya, Khan and the Khadafi regime agreed on the supply of critical components the Libyan nuclear was desperately lacking. Consequently, "by 1997 the first tranche of equipment arrived—twenty assembled P-1 centrifuges (the same type that was delivered to Iran) and parts for two hundred more, enough for the Libyans to begin research."[701]

Even though the Libyan nascent nuclear program was already operational, Khadhafi's desire for nuclear weapons led him to request more advanced centrifuges. Such centrifuges could enable him to obtain enough fissile material to produce a nuclear warhead quickly. Logically, the Libyan authorities ordered P2 centrifuges to increase the enrichment capabilities of the nuclear program. However, two main stumbling blocks precluded the achievement of this goal. On the one hand, the scope of the centrifuges that Libya requested. Indeed, "the Libyans wanted the works - an entire nuclear weapons capability from start to finish. [Therefore,] it presented new challenges in terms of sourcing the materials and producing the components."[702] Buhary Syed Abu Tahir, a Malaysian resident Sri Lankan and close aide of Abdul Q. Khan, played an incremental role in solving this problem. Though he declared that his role in the Libyan nuclear project was *to merely act as the coordinator between Dr Khan, the Libyans and the contractors,*[703] he was actually *the CEO, the man who got things done. He would organize transshipments of material and move the money around the world.*[704]

On the other hand, Libya's financial capabilities were seriously limited by UN terrorism-related sanctions. Indeed, the UN had imposed a total air and arms embargo on Libya (Art 4 and 5) through Resolution 748.[705] This obstacle ultimately prevented Libya from acquiring advanced centrifuges, which would have improved the enrichment capabilities of the embryonic nuclear program. However, the centrifuges originally destined for Libya were stocked in Dubai but finally sold to Iran.[706] As we will see in the chapter dedicated to the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya, the combination

[700] CORERA, Gordon: **Shopping for bombs. Nuclear proliferation, global insecurity, and the rise and fall of the A. Q. Khan network**, Oxford, Oxford University, 2009, p.108
[701] CORERA, Gordon: **Shopping for bombs. Nuclear proliferation, global insecurity, and the rise and fall of the A. Q. Khan network**, ***Ibid.***
[702] CORERA, Gordon: **Shopping for bombs. Nuclear proliferation, global insecurity, and the rise and fall of the A. Q. Khan network**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.109
[703] **Extract from the statement of Sayed Abu Tahir Bin Bukhary,** Managing Director of SMB Group of Companies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 7th of June 2006. Annexure "L", *Plea and Sentence Agreement, State vs. Geiges, Wisser, and Krisch Engineering*, September 2007, p.7
[704] CORERA, Gordon: **Shopping for bombs. Nuclear proliferation, global insecurity, and the rise and fall of the A. Q. Khan network**, ***Ibid.,*** p.110
[705] **UNSC Resolution 748** adopted on the 31st of March 1992. Accessed on the 22nd of May 2021 from the link https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/748(1992)
[706] ALBRIGHT, David: **Libya: A major sale at last,** ISIS Special Report, 2010, p.5. Accessed from https://isis-online.org/uploads/isisreports/documents/Libya_and_the_Khan_Network_1Dec2010.pdf on 22nd of May 2021.

of the terrorism-related sanctions and the mismanagement issues of the nuclear program mainly explain why Libya could not build a robust nuclear program. The following section will be dedicated to the Libyan political system.

5.3 SECTION III – THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LIBYAN POLITICAL SYSTEM.

This section will analyze the characteristics of the Libyan domestic political system. In this regard, the section will be divided into two main sub-parts. We will first examine the features of the Libyan polity. In other words, the first subpart will dwell on Libya's *system of social organization centered on the machinery of government.*[707] We will focus then on the characteristics of the foreign policymaking of Libya under Khadafi. Thus, the general goal of the section is to identify the key actors and their actual political weight in the decision-making of Libya's foreign policy.

5.3.1 The Characteristics of the Libyan polity.

When Khadhafi rose as the ultimate leader of Libya in 1969 after toppling the regime of former King Idris, the country's political system was based on modern Western institutions. Considering the political and cultural heterogeneity of the country, symbolized notably by the three autonomous regions of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan, the federal system appeared to be the best way to maintain the country united after its independence. John Wright confirms it in these words: "Britain, in effect, unilaterally decreed that if there was to be an independent Libyan state at all... it would take only the form that Idris, Britain and Britain's Western allies wanted: a federal monarchy under the Sanusi crown."[708] However, Libya moved from a federal kingdom to a unitary' in 1963 after the amendment of the constitution by Law N.1.[709]

Libya was still a parliamentary monarchy as the king still ruled the country. Under Art. 41 of the Constitution, the Parliament shared the Legislative power with the King.[710] Like in Liberal countries, two chambers constituted the Parliament: the Senate and the House of Representatives. Lastly, the Judiciary was represented by the Supreme Court

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[707] HEYWOOD, Andrew: **Politics,** London, Red Globe Press, 2019, p.37 (5th Ed.)
[708] WRIGHT, John: **Libya. A modern history,** The UK, Croom Helm, 1982, 304 pages. Cited by ABUN-NASR M., Jamil: **A History of the Maghreb in the Islamic period,** London, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.406. Consulted online.
[709] **Libya's Constitution Promulgated by the "National Constituent Assembly" on 7 October 1951. Abolished by a Military Coup d'état on 1 September 1969.** Accessed online from the link https://constitutionnet.org/sites/default/files/1951 - libyan constitution english.pdf on the 24th of May 2021.
[710] **Libya's Constitution Promulgated by the "National Constituent Assembly" on 7 October 1951, *Ibid.***

and the courts. However, despite the formal democratic apparatus, the balance of power among the different branches of the government was not a reality. Indeed, the king always influenced the Parliament and restricted its actions whenever they hampered his political objectives. "For example, in 1964, opposition spokesmen were arrested to facilitate the electoral triumphs of pro-government candidates. In response, the opposition reconstituted itself from elected members of the Lower House. In response to this challenge, the king took the dramatic step of dissolving parliament."[711] However, Libya underwent a radical transformation of its political landscape after the advent of Khadhafi.

Less than five years after his ascension to the country's highest leadership, Khadafi initiated a Cultural Revolution called the Jamahiriya. The Jamahiriya mainly referred to the *State of the masses*. Most ideas related to the Jamahiriya were consigned in a significant ideological document called the "Green Book". Khadafi's vision of the form of the Libyan States and institutions was totally at odds with the Western and Eastern. In other words, he rejected both Capitalism and Communism (Marxism) and advocated for a "Third Universal Theory"[712] (TUT), which would transcend the ideals of the two previous philosophies. He asserts that the advent of the TUT would give back power to the people. Indeed, Khadafi was firmly convinced that the intermediary role of the Parliament prevented citizens from effectively exerting their sovereign rights to oversee events affecting their daily lives. As he declared in the *Green Book*, "a parliament is originally founded to represent the people, but this in itself is undemocratic as democracy means the authority of the people and not an authority acting on their behalf."[713] But then, how did Khadhafi intended to replace the former institutions? In other words, which institutions would replace those that existed before?

Khadafi considered direct democracy only as an effective democracy, as it would allow ordinary citizens to supervise the actions of their leaders. Consequently, *the formal system of direct democracy in Libya is thus based on three foundations: the local Basic People's Congresses, the local People's Committees, and Professional Organizations*.[714] The Basic People's Congress assumed a legislative role primarily and elected the members of the People's Committee for a mandate of three years. The People's Committee was the Executive branch at the local level. On top were the General People Congress, which elected the members of the General People Committee. Therefore, the

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711 OTMAN Waniss, KARLBERG Erling: **The Libyan economy. Economic diversification and international repositioning**, New York, Springer, 2007, p.16 (1st ed.)
712 VANDEVALLE, Dirk: **A History of modern Libya, *Op. Cit.***, p.96
713 AL-QADDAFI, Muammar: **The Green book,** Tripoli, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016, p.9 (Originally published in 1975).
714 MATTES, Hanspeter, ***Formal and informal authority in Libya since 1969*** in VANDEWALLE: Dirk, **Libya Since 1969: Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan**,** 2008**,** p.58-59 (1st ed.)

Basic People's Congress was playing the role of a "local parliament" as *the decisions of the Basic People's Congresses concerning national issues usually provide the basis for the bills to be debated by the annual General People's Congress.*[715]

On the other hand, the General People Committee was playing the "council of ministers" role. Still, political activities were restricted to Basic People's Congresses, and foreign policy decisions were excluded from their competence.[716] The Professional Organizations were composed of citizens from different sectors (Universities, Labor Organizations, etc.) with representatives in the Basic People's Congress. Despite this form of direct democracy, it is worth noting that the political game was heavily locked by a non-popular institution: the Revolutionary Leadership. This was the highest political institution in Libya's political system. The Revolutionary Leadership "was neither elected nor could it be dismissed; [its member included] Qadhafi, his extended family and tribe and the members of the Revolutionary Command Council."[717]

Besides these formal institutions, Libya's political system also included several informal institutions that played a role in political life, irrespective of the scope. It is important to note that their informal characteristic was not due to their unconstitutional existence but rather to the fact that they were not officially known as the consultative organs within the Libyan establishment. The first informal institution created by Khadafi was the *Free Unionist Officer Movement (FUOM)*. According to Hanspeter Mattes, the FUOM was created in August 1964, and its member was recruited among Khadafi's military classmates during their training in the military academy of Benghazi.[718] One of their most outstanding achievements was the ousting of King Idris I in 1969. The FUOM changed their name later and became the Revolutionary Command Council, composed of twelve (12) members under the leadership of Khadafi. Concerning their role in the Libyan decision-making, "they remained a critical constituency for Qaddafi with whom he took care periodically to consult."[719]

Another important informal institution was the *Forum of the Companions of Qadhafi (FCQ).* Like the FUOM, the FCQ comprised Khadafi's relatives and school friends. Khadafi also relied on them when taking political decisions. Despite their consultative role in

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[715] MATTES, Hanspeter, ***Formal and informal authority in Libya since 1969*** in VANDEWALLE: Dirk, **Libya Since 1969: Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.59
[716] VANDEVALLE, Dirk: **A History of modern Libya, *Op. Cit.***, p.103
[717] ANDERSEN R., Louise (Ed.): **How the local matters. Democratization in Libya, Pakistan, Yemen and Palestine**, DIIS report, 2013, p.28. An information accessed on the 26th of May 2021 from the website https://pure.diis.dk/ws/files/52426/RP2013_01_How_the_local_matters_web.jpg.pdf
[718] MATTES, Hanspeter, ***Formal and informal authority in Libya since 1969*** in VANDEWALLE: Dirk, **Libya Since 1969: Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Ibid.,*** p.63
[719] HINNEBUSCH A., Raymond, **Charisma, revolution, and State formation: Qaddafi and Libya,** Third World Quarterly, Jan., 1984, Vol. 6, N. 1, p.62

the country's political decision-making, Hanspeter Mattes argues that "when judging the stability of the regime in Libya, the Free Unionist Officers, the Forum of the Companions of Qadhafi, and the leading members of both organizations, deserve to be regarded intensively. Changes in the makeup of their personnel, and in their functions, enable us to draw conclusions concerning the potential stability or instability of the regime."[720] Concerning the nuclear reversal theories, the Libyan political regime in its early days can be categorized as an ***inward-looking regime*** (Etel Solingen). The previous configuration combined with Khadafi's vision of Libya's international role, partly explain Libya's first confrontational foreign policy. However, as we will see later, Khadafi adopted a more pragmatic stance progressively beyond his regime's formal insular configurations.

5.3.2 The Characteristics of the foreign policymaking of Libya under Qaddafi.

With specific aspects of Libya's foreign policy, the complex features of the Libyan political system could not allow an easy external analysis of the actors involved in the foreign policy decision-making process. Nonetheless, several variables should be considered when analyzing the factors affecting Libya's foreign policy formulation under Muammar Qaddafi. The first variable is the primary decision-maker. Unlike Iran, where the foreign policy was the result of the back-and-forth of the members of the Supreme National Security Council, in the case of Libya, there is not substantial information regarding the type of actors and their interactions during the foreign policy-making of the country. Yet, many observers agree that Qaddafi's vision of Libya's international actions and reactions to external threats prevailed. For instance, Margaret Hermann and Charles Herman maintain that "Libya's Qadhafi and Cuba's Castro are examples of predominant leaders whose orientations appear to predispose them to be relatively insensitive to information that does not conform to what they want to do."[721] Although they do not detail the different actors or institutions that intervened during the decision-making of Libya's foreign policy, George Joffé and Emanuela Paoletti nevertheless acknowledge that "although Colonel Qadhafi has long played a dominant role in policy formulation, both domestic and external, he also operates within a structured environment which has its effects on the development and articulation of foreign policy."[722]

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[720] MATTES, Hanspeter, ***Formal and informal authority in Libya since 1969*** in VANDEWALLE: Dirk, **Libya Since 1969: Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Ibid.,*** p.65

[721] HERMANN G., Margaret and HERMANN F., Charles, **Who makes foreign policy decisions and how: An empirical inquiry**, International Studies Quarterly, Dec. 1989, Vol. 33, N. 4 pp. 365- 366

[722] JOFFÉ, George and PAOLETTI, Emanuela, **The foreign policy process in Libya**, The Journal of North African Studies, June 2011, p.3

The country's permanent security interests are the second primary variable when analyzing Libya's foreign policy-making. According to George Joffé, Libya has always been concerned with three main elements regarding its security, irrespective of the nature of the political regime. Those three main elements are related first to the country's independence, particularly regarding the risk of invasion of its Egyptian neighbor after Nasser's death. In this regard, Libya and Algeria signed a mutual defense agreement – the Hassi Messaoud agreement – in 1975.[723] The second core security interest was the issue related to external borders, especially in the South with the Sahara. Indeed, the Libyan authorities have always considered being the Achilles heel of the country and tried to secure this vast region either through incitement (ideological means) or coercion, as was the case with the short war against Chad in 1987. The imperative of energy security (the third permanent security interest) is closely related to this second core interest. Indeed, "Libya, unlike most states which must ensure that they have untrammeled access to energy supplies, is more concerned about its access to oil services and to the international oil market, for, without this, it cannot gain the economic rent on which its economy, society, and polity depend."[724]

The third primary variable to consider regarding the formulation of the Libyan foreign policy is the set of informal actors that played a role either as advisors or in the implementation process of the foreign policy. One of the leading advisory organs in foreign policy-making was the "men of the tent." The men of the tent referred to *the colonel's old associates, many from the Union of Free Officers — which planned and executed the revolution in 1969.*[725] Another vital organ which played an incremental role in Libya's foreign policy-making was the *al-Qadhafi Charitable Foundation*; besides these informal organs and institutions, a cluster of close aids – diplomats, military, and intelligence officials – also influenced the formulation of the foreign policy of Libya. These were senior diplomats like Dr Abdulati al-Obeidi and Mohammed Siala. Dr al-Obeidi, Bashir Saleh Bashir, Mohamed al-Barrani, Abouzeid Omar Dourda; Senior Military and Intelligence officials like Moussa Koussa and Abdallah Sanusi. However, as Joffé George and Paoletti Emanuela emphasized, "the actual decision-making process, of course, remains utterly opaque, although its personalized nature and the fact that senior officials are constantly being reshuffled without warning means that it can often be very slow to respond to external circumstance."[726] The following section will analyze the nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya.

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[723] BISSELL E., Richard and RADU S., Michael: **Africa in the post-decolonization era**, New Jersey, Transaction Publishers, 1984, p.154. (Consulted online)
[724] JOFFÉ, George, ***Prodigal or pariah? Foreign policy in Libya,*** in VANDEWALLE, Dirk (Ed.): **Libya since 1969. Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.195. (Consulted online)
[725] JOFFÉ George and PAOLETTI Emanuela: **Libya's foreign policy: drivers and objectives,** The GMF Series, Mediterranean Paper Series, 2010, p.17
[726] JOFFÉ George and PAOLETTI Emanuela: **Libya's foreign policy: drivers and objectives, *Ibid,*** p.18

5.4 SECTION IV – THE COERCIVE DYNAMICS BETWEEN THE US AND LIBYA.

The main goal of this section is to analyze the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya. As we previously mentioned, this part will deeply analyze the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya. This will be done against the backdrop of our hypotheses. In other words, when addressing the Libyan nuclear challenge, did Washington's coercive strategies exploit Tripoli's weakness? Did the US demonstrate a motivation to have a sustained campaign to compel Libya to reverse its controversial nuclear policy? In essence, did Tripoli's response to Washington demands stem from coercive-related domestic changes or fear of heightened threats? Also, were these coercive strategies and threats credible, proportionate and reciprocal to the Libyan response?

Considering our theoretical lens (neoclassical realism), we will also highlight the transmitting-belt role played by the intervening variables between the independent variable (systemic pressures/international demands) and the dependent variable (foreign policy). In other words, we will demonstrate how the perceptions of the Libyan leaders, the strategic culture of the country, the nature of the regime, and the configuration of the domestic institutions or domestic balance of power among the institutions and the State-society relations shaped the nature of the nuclear responses of Tripoli to the coercive demands of Washington. This will enable us to emphasize the relevance of the four ingredients of an effective coercive strategy in the nuclear realm: the display by the coercer of strategic empathy towards its target, the formulation of clear and acceptable demands to the target, the display by the coercer of a higher resolve than the target to achieve his/her objective, and the offer of credible incentives to the target if the target complies.

Following our structured-focused comparative methodology approach, just like the previous Iranian chapter, our research design will also be based on the following questions: **what were the objectives pursued by the US when implementing his coercive policies against Libya? Which coercive strategies were adopted to achieve these objectives? What were the expected outcomes of the US after implementing his coercive strategies? What were the actual outcomes of the coercive dynamics, and why such outcomes?** However, it is worth noting that the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya share commonalities and differences with Iran's. Regarding the former, the issue over the effectiveness of the US coercive strategy concerning Libya's renunciation of its nuclear program has been at the center of intense

debate in both the political[727] and the academic milieu.[728] Concerning the latter, unlike the Iranian case, the sanctions adopted against Libya were not nuclear-related; instead, they were based upon Libya's controversial foreign policy (support for terrorism and chemical program).

Consequently, establishing a direct connection between the coercive strategy of the US and the outcome of the Libyan nuclear program could be problematic. Yet, as the quest for nuclear weapons would have served the foreign agenda of Kadhafi, analyzing the reaction of Libya against the international pressure could shed light on Tripoli's response to (potential) direct nuclear-related sanctions. In other words, nuclear weapons are considered a foreign policy instrument in a broad list of assets in a State's chessboard (soft power etc.). Of course, a nuclear status in global politics is an international prestige of its league, compared to chemical weapons and other WMD as previously described with Nah Liang.[729] Indeed, one should remember that nuclear weapons have a different strategic importance for States than chemical or bacteriological weapons. This is evidenced, among others, by their financial cost and the international interest sparked by this issue.

Therefore, Libya could have reacted differently had it possessed a credible nuclear weapons arsenal. However, as we will analyze later in the section, Libya did not possess a full-fledged nuclear program, to begin with. Therefore, analyzing Libya's nuclear-related reaction to foreign pressure in the package of its international behavior would be more convenient regarding our research goal. In addition, the availability of information related to the coercive nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya also explains our analytical strategy. Subsequently, we will analyze the coercive between Libya and the Great Powers (the US), considering the three significant periods during which Tripoli sought nuclear capability. Those are 1969-1971, 1971-1992, and 1995-2003.[730] But before dwelling on the insights of these periods, we will first analyze Khadafi's vision of Libya's role in international politics.

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[727] See JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience,** Virginia, National Institute Press, 2009, 150 pages. See also INDYK S., Martin, **The Iraq war did not force Gadaffi's hand**, ***Op. Cit.***

[728] On the one hand for example, Bruce Jentlesson and Christopher Whytock argued that Libya was driven toward nuclear disarmament through coercive diplomacy. See JENTLESON W., Bruce and WHYTOCK A., Christopher, ***Who "won" Libya? The force-diplomacy debate and its implications for theory and policy, Op. Cit.*** On the other hand, scholars like St John Bruce Ronald take a different view and argue that Libya was driven toward nuclear reversal through traditional instruments like negotiations. See ST JOHN B., Ronald, **"Libya is not Iraq": Pre-emptive strikes, WMD and diplomacy**, Middle East Journal, Summer, 2004, Vol. 58, N. 3, pp. 386-402

[729] TUANG L., Nah: **Security, economics and nuclear non-proliferation morality: keeping or surrendering the Bomb, *Op. Cit.*, p.1**

[730] GELESKUL, Elena, **The history of the Libyan nuclear program: The reasons for failure**, ***Op. Cit.***, p.140

5.4.1 Muammar Khadafi's foreign policy: ideas and beliefs.

Understanding Khadafi's vision of international politics will provide substantial answers to the "how and why" Libya adopted a specific reaction pattern against global pressures. George Joffé and Emanuela Paoletti argue that Khadafi's foreign policy was based upon three main pillars: "opportunistic constancy, national self-interest and ideological commitment."[731] We will start with the third pillar, as "the ideology of the Libyan state is, officially, very much the personal creation of its leader, Qadhafi, a feature that will have profound implications for the way in which policy is formulated and articulated in Libya."[732] Therefore, analyzing Khadafi's ideology regarding Libya's foreign policy will help us to understand Libya's international actions.

The core ideology of Qaddafi's foreign policy can be summarized in two words: unity and anti-imperialism. Indeed, his childhood has been filled with stories and images of foreign powers exploiting and looting his country's resources. This experience has deeply influenced his perception of international politics.[733] Consequently, Khadafi developed a solid Manichean understanding of international politics. Indeed, he thought that Western Powers championed imperialism and hegemony over weak countries, and it was the historical duty of Arab countries to undermine their spiteful and oppressive ambitions. In this regard, Nasser's nationalist Egypt naturally appeared as the leader of the coming liberation campaign against Imperialist countries like Israel. Unsurprisingly, Libya's primary role in this campaign was to dedicate its resources to achieving this objective. As Qaddafi declared in the early days of the 1969 Revolution, "tell President Nasser we made this revolution for him. He can take everything of ours and add it to the rest of the Arab world's resources to be used for the battle against Israel and for Arab Unity."[734]

It is important to note that Khadafi's use of Islam was not only for his Arab unity project instead, but Islam also helped him to appease identity-based social tensions in the country. In other words, Islam and the Arab unity agenda created a "rally 'round the flag effect" in the country, thus shutting any social tensions in the young post-revolutionary 1969. Ronald Bruce St John confirms it: "Qaddafi also viewed the promotion of Arab nationalism as one means to overcome the regional, tribal and clan divisions which plagued Libyan society."[735] Yet, he did not provide an expansive political room to the religious authorities as they could undermine the implementation of the Revolutionary

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[731] JOFFÉ, George and PAOLETTI, Emanuela, **The foreign policy process in Libya**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.1
[732] JOFFÉ, George, ***Prodigal or pariah? Foreign policy in Libya,*** in VANDEWALLE, Dirk (Ed.): **Libya since 1969. Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.196. (Consulted online)
[733] LANGE, Brenda: **Muammar Qaddafi**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.63
[734] OYENIYI A., Bukola: **The history of Libya**, California, Greenwood, 2019, p.106. Consulted online.
[735] ST. JOHN B., Ronald: **Qaddafi's world design: Libyan foreign policy, 1969-1987**, London, Saqi Books, 2001, p.26

ideals. However, Qaddafi's plans were hampered by Nasser's death in 1970; indeed, not only did he lose his role model, but also the champion of the Pan Arabism project. He was so affected that he even fainted twice during Nasser's burial.[736] Nonetheless, with Nasser's departure, Khadafi felt bestowed with the mission to carry-on Nasser's will and therefore began to export the Revolution ideals by all means available, including diplomacy or force (**NIC of oppositional nationalists**). Still, irrespective of the scope of his revolutionary zeal, he was limited by the power capabilities of his country. Subsequently, he adjusted his foreign policy whenever needed and seized every opportunity to pursue his goals. This leads us to the second pillar of Qaddafi's foreign policy: "opportunistic constancy."

Despite the central role played by ideology in Libya's foreign policy, Khadafi also adopted a pragmatic stance when facing specific challenges. Those challenges were multifold, but security and economics stood among the biggest. Geoffrey Simons maintains that "he (Khadafi) is no doubt equally conscious that Libya has not managed to achieve the desired levels of self-sufficiency, that the nation remains painfully dependent upon foreign workers, foreign technical expertise and foreign markets."[737] Consequently, he would not hesitate to bargain with the *devil* whenever Libya's interests were at stake. For instance, this is why Tripoli maintained a meaningful level of (oil and food) trade with Tel Aviv despite the thorny bilateral relations with Israel.[738] **(Actions from a compromise hybrid regime – Etel Solingen).** Libya's retreat after its defeat against Chad in (1978-1987) is another bold example of the Libyan choice of pragmatism over ideology. Indeed, motivated by the desire to export the Jamahiriya, Khadafi launched several military interventions aimed at toppling any pro-Western government, starting with then France-backed Chadian President François Tombalbaye, then Hissène Habré, when the latter renewed military cooperation with France and the US. After his defeat in 1987, Khadafi did not initiate another military campaign against his neighbor. Indeed, such an initiative could have driven the US into another military conflict against Libya after its military raid against the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi during "Operation El Dorado Canyon" in 1986.[739] Those two examples clearly show the limits of Khadafi's ideological commitment whenever the country's national interests were at stake.

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[736] BURLEIGH, Michael: **Small wars, far away places. The genesis of the modern world: 1945-65,** London, Macmillan, 2013, p.511

[737] SIMONS L., Geoffrey: **Libya: the struggle for survival**, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1993, p.264. (1st ed. - Consulted online.)

[738] ABADI, Jacob, **Pragmatism and rhetoric in Libya's policy toward Israel,** Journal of Conflict Studies, 2000, Vol. 20, N. 2, p.13. An information accessed on the 30th May 2021 from the link https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/4313.

[739] JOFFÉ, George and PAOLETTI, Emanuela, **The foreign policy process in Libya**, ***Op. Cit.,*** pp.19-20

Concerning the third pillar of Libya's foreign policy -- *national self-interest,* -- as we previously mentioned, the country's core national interests were broadly threefold. Those were the independence of the country, border and energy security. However, just like in any other nation, the stability of the Revolutionary regime was the paramount priority of Muammar Khadafi. Hence, he would not hesitate to thwart any domestic or external threat to the stability of his regime. But in the end, concerning Libyan's foreign policy making, "it is in the intense personalization of the policy process that the answer to the conundrum of Libyan foreign policy really lies, for it is here that the balance between pragmatism and ideology is struck and where the less rational aspects of Libya's ideology can be manifested. One of the most striking aspects of this is the way in which, usually, pragmatic opportunism can tone down the ideological content of policy if that serves the national interest."[740]

5.4.2 The coercive nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya.

Describing Qaddafi's ambitions, Alison Pargeter argues that "Libya was always going to be too small for Qaddafi; he considered himself a revolutionary of international proportions, and Qaddafism was not about to be confined to the domestic sphere."[741] (**Oppositional nationalism**). In other words, Khadafi was convinced that Libya should not be the sole beneficiary of the revolutionary ideals of 1969. On the contrary, it was imperious to export the values of the revolution to free other peoples, especially the Arabs, from Western servitude. Consequently, he embarked on a foreign campaign to convince or compel others worldwide to adhere to his anti-imperialism project; his first target was the Arab world. Khadafi's main goal was to usher regional support to his anti-Western project. In this regard, he associated religious principles and concepts with political projects. Ronald Bruce St John described it in these terms: "Qaddafi also revived Islam as a key component of Arab nationalism, [for he] believed the Arab and Islamic identities were inextricably linked; therefore, he felt the Arab revolution must also be an Islamic one."[742]

Unfortunately, his message did not always receive a favorable echo within Libya and abroad in the Arab world. Regarding the latter, though many Arab leaders barely shared the Arab unity project, they nevertheless distanced themselves from Khadafi's approach and methods. For instance, they turned down the Libyan leader's desire to build an Arab military coalition to erase Israel from the region's map early in the 1969 revolution. Regarding the former (domestic reception of the Revolutionary ideals), although the Revolutionary institutions strove to implement the revolutionary ideals in the post-1969 Libyan society, many segments of the society, especially the younger

[740] JOFFÉ, George and PAOLETTI, Emanuela, **The foreign policy process in Libya**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.10
[741] PARGETER, Alison: **Libya. The Rise and fall of Qaddafi, *Op. Cit.,*** p.118
[742] ST. JOHN B., Ronald: **Qaddafi's world design: Libyan foreign policy, 1969-1987, *Op. Cit.,*** p.33

generation, did not blindly adhere to Khadafi's principles. For example, *one Islamist-leaning student told the Colonel after one of his speeches to the medical college in Benghazi in May 1972: 'Brother Muammar, there is no call for nationalism in the Qur'an. The Qu'ran didn't say, "oh Arabs", not even once, and the mention of the Ummah [nation] in the Qu'ran is the Islamic one.' A shocked Qaddafi did not take kindly to the challenge; he shouted at the student: 'No, no, you are sick! I blame this college … you are sick, and you have to be treated … and we must put you in a clinic. The young student was arrested and, two days later, appeared on television meekly repenting.*[743]

Considering the reluctance of the Arab leaders to support Libya's assertive foreign policy, Gaddafi decided to launch a solitary campaign against Western countries or the regional allies; this marked the beginning of Gaddafi's *foreign adventurism*. He supported any subversive group, irrespective of the country, which allegedly acted against any form of "anti-imperialism." Mark Kosnik argues in this regard that, *throughout the 1970s, Qaddafi sponsored terrorists as diverse as the infamous "Carlos," the Red Brigades of Italy, the Red Army in Germany, Direct Action in France, FP-25 in Portugal, neo-Nazi activists in Spain, and right-wing terrorists in Italy and Germany*.[744] However, consistent with his ideological beliefs, there was not a more prominent political issue in Qaddafi's eye than the Palestinian issue; in fact, *the Colonel not only wanted to champion the cause; he wanted to be the cause*.[745] Qaddafi logically dedicated important support (finance, logistics, or training) to any military group which targeted Israel. One of the most privileged groups in this regard was the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which perpetrated the Attack on the El-Al airliner at Rome airport on September 5, 1973, thanks to missiles provided by the Libyan government.[746] Libya was directly or indirectly involved in several other terrorist actions like the attack of Pan-Am Flight 110 airliner on Rome runway on December 17, 1973, or the assassination attempts of several foreign leaders like former Chadian president Felix Malloum or former Sudanese president Gaafar Nimeiry.[747] But how did the US respond to these actions?

Libya's controversial actions did not go unnoticed and unpunished. In fact, the US government, notably the Carter administration, imposed economic sanctions against

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[743] PARGETER, Alison: **Libya. The Rise and fall of Qaddafi, *Op. Cit.,*** p.121

[744] KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism,** Naval War College Review, 2000, Vol. 53, N. 2, p.14

[745] PARGETER, Alison: **Libya. The rise and fall of Qaddafi, *Ibid.,*** p.125.

[746] ZOLI Corri, AZAR Sahar, and ROSS Shani**, Patterns of conduct. Libyan regime support for and involvement in acts of terrorism,** Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism, Syracuse University, 2012, p.6

[747] BURR J., Millard and COLLINS O., Robert: **Darfur: The long road to disaster,** Princeton, Markus Wiener Publishing, 2008, p.152. (2nd ed.). Cited by ZOLI Corri, AZAR Sahar, and ROSS Shani**, Patterns of conduct. Libyan regime support for and involvement in acts of terrorism, *Ibid,*** p.7

Libya in 1978. More precisely, under the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) provisions, President Carter aimed to prevent Libya from importing military equipment.[748] The AECA refers to *the basic U.S. law providing the authority and general rules for the conduct of foreign military sales and commercial sales of defense articles, defense services, and training.*[749] President Carter detailed the objective of the previously-mentioned sanctions against Libya the following year (1979) in a letter to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. More precisely, he recalled first Libya's nuisance role in the region, especially in neighbouring countries with "Libyan troops have been directly involved in three countries in the past year (Chad, Uganda, and the Central African Republic) and are on a high state of alert along the border with Egypt. […] Therefore, discontinuation of the controls would be seen by other friendly countries as a United States contribution to strengthening Libyan capability to mount hostile actions along its borders."[750] What was the impact of these actions on the Libyan military capabilities?

Since the previous restrictive measures aimed at precluding Tripoli from accessing military equipment necessary to implement its foreign policy agenda, the AECA restrictive measures can be described as a **coercive denial strategy**. But their impact on Gaddafi's military capabilities was relatively minor. Indeed, the military equipment – the large tractors – used by Libya and targeted by the US's AECA was *available from foreign suppliers in adequate quantities to serve the Libyan market.* Therefore, *there are very few alternative means available to the United States. [As] Libya has no need for U.S. economic or military assistance*.[751] In addition, the 70s constituted a blessed period for Libya. Not only did Tripoli benefit from the 1973 oil crisis, but it also secured a 9% GDP by the end of the decade.[752] With such economic performance and financial capabilities, Qaddafi could enjoy domestic legitimacy and sustain its controversial foreign policy. Hence, in the absence of credible leverage, the first US attempt to change Libya's foreign policy was clearly a failure as it could not seriously hurt Libya. On the contrary, it backfired, as Qaddafi took his aggressive foreign policy a step further by supporting terrorist organizations which master-minded and perpetrated terrorist actions against

[748] COOKE F., John, **The United States' 1986 emergency economic sanctions against Libya - Have they worked?,** Maryland Journal of International Law, Vol. 14, Issue 2, 1990, p.202

[749] Defence Security Cooperation Agency, **United States Code, Title 22 – Foreign Relations and Intercourse**, 2010 edition. Accessed from https://samm.dsca.mil/glossary/arms-export-control-act-aeca on the 30th May 2021.

[750] CARTER, Jimmy, **Export controls for foreign policy purposes. Letter to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate,** the American Presidency Project, December 29, 1979. Accessed from https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/export-controls-for-foreign-policy-purposes-letter-the-speaker-the-house-and-the-president on the 30th May 2021.

[751] CARTER, Jimmy, **Export controls for foreign policy purposes. Letter to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, *Ibid.***

[752] **Libya GDP - Gross Domestic Product.** Accessed on the 1st of June 2021 from the link https://countryeconomy.com/gdp/libya?year=2005

civilians and military personnel from several nationalities, including the US. One of these well-known terrorist organizations was the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO).

The ANO, also called the Fatah Revolutionary Council or the Revolutionary Council, or the Revolutionary Council of Fatah, was founded in 1974 in Bagdad by Sabri al-Banna, famously known through his warrior's name Abu Nidal "father of struggles."[753] He was a Palestinian dissident and terrorist leader who founded his organization following significant disagreements with Yasser Arafat's Fatah. The roots of the relations between the ANO and Libya are shady; however, he landed in Syria, then in Libya after his ousting by Saddam Hussein in 1983 during the Iran-Iraq war. Although the ANO was not yet based in Libya, the Libyan government was involved in the simultaneous attack of Rome and Vienna airports in 1985 perpetrated by the ANO. ZOLI Corri argues that *Libya provided passports to the ANO for the attack, as well as funding and support. Qadhafi praises the assaults as —heroic operations carried out by the sons of the martyrs of Sabra and Shatila.*[754] But how did the US government react to this series of challenges?

Libya-sponsored terrorist actions represented a bold challenge to the US government, particularly the newly elected president Ronald Reagan. Indeed, the inability of the Carter administration to respond effectively to international terrorism led the next administration not only to consider the fight against terrorism as its paramount foreign policy priority but also and consequently, to adopt a new doctrine to address the terrorist threat. From that moment onward, *affronts to the United States would be addressed by direct reaction.*[755] Subsequently, the 40th US President needed to react boldly to Qaddafi's controversial actions. However, there was no consensus on the nature of the actions within the US government.

Indeed, some officials strongly supported the idea of a military action under the code "Flower." The *Flower* operation was divided into two sub-operation: first, "Tulip," which referred to a CIA covert action aimed at supporting dissent groups living abroad whose goal was to topple Gaddafi and second, "Rose", which referred to US-backed air strikes operation carried out by a third country (Egypt).[756] Unlike the proponents of the first option, officials from the State Department and the Pentagon objected to the plan respectively because of the risk of Soviet intervention and a potential ground intervention shall the air strikes stall. Finally, Reagan first chose the "gradual turning of

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[753] The Mackenzie Institute, **Abu Nidal Organization (ANO),** Terrorism Profiles. Accessed on the 1st June 2021 from https://mackenzieinstitute.com/terrorism-profile-abu-nidal-organization-ano/ .
[754] ZOLI Corri, AZAR Sahar, and ROSS Shani**, Patterns of conduct. Libyan regime support for and involvement in acts of terrorism, *Op. Cit.,*** p.9
[755] JOFFÉ, George, ***Prodigal or pariah? Foreign policy in Libya,*** in VANDEWALLE, Dirk (Ed.): **Libya since 1969. Qadhafi's revolution revisited**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.202. (Consulted online)
[756]STANIK T., Joseph: **El Dorado Canyon: Reagan's undeclared war with Qaddafi,** Annapolis, Naval Institute Press, 2002, p.135. (Consulted online)

the screw" variant of coercion, which spanned economic sanctions to military actions. Regarding the 1985 bombing of the Rome and Vienna airports, Ronald Reagan opted for a coercive denial strategy as he signed Executive Order 12543.[757] After concluding that *the policies and actions of the Government of Libya constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to* the US, *[he declared] a national emergency to deal with that threat*.[758]

More precisely, President Reagan prohibited, among others, "the import into the United States of any goods or services of Libyan origin, other than publications and materials imported for news publications or news broadcast dissemination" (Section 1. a), "the performance by any United States person of any contract in support of an industrial or other commercial or governmental project in Libya;" (Section 1. e) or "the grant or extension of credits or loans by any United States person to the Government of Libya, its instrumentalities and controlled entities." (Section 1. f) Although those coercive measures targeted mainly the trade and industrial sector, we did not consider them punitive, coercive measures as President purposely avoided imposing sanctions that would hurt the population. Indeed, Section 1b prohibits "the export to Libya of any goods, technology (including technical data or other information) or services from the United States, **except publications and donations of articles intended to relieve human suffering,** such as food, clothing, medicine and medical supplies intended strictly for medical purposes."[759]

Notwithstanding the previous coercive measures, the Reagan administration was under increasing domestic pressure and consequently increased the American pressure against Gaddafi. As Mark Kosnik argues, "the American people were becoming increasingly convinced that Qaddafi was responsible, and many voices demanded a response."[760] However, the US needed to overcome a significant obstacle: **the potential opposition of the European allies**; in fact, several European firms had signed several oil exploitation contracts with Libya, while Tripoli had also invested in different European oil companies like Tamoil.[761] Consequently, the US officials attempted a coercive isolation strategy against Libya by convincing their European partners to

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[757] Executive Orders - **Executive Order (EO) 12543--Prohibiting trade and certain transactions involving Libya.** Accessed from https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12543.html on the 1st of June 2021. This EO prohibited among others the import into the US of "goods and services of Libyan origin." (Section 1a)

[758] Executive Orders - **Executive Order 12543--Prohibiting trade and certain transactions involving Libya, *Ibid***.

[759] Executive Orders - **Executive Order 12543--Prohibiting trade and certain transactions involving Libya, *Op. Cit.*.**

[760] KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism**, ***Ibid.,*** p.16

[761] ST JOHN B., Ronald: **The changing Libyan economy: causes and consequences,** Middle East Journal, 2008, Vol. 62, N. 1, p.86

substantially reduce the share of Libyan oil in their import needs; unfortunately, it was a failure. Consequently, trapped between the domestic pressures over the need to take action and the necessity to avoid undermining the European interests in Libya, Reagan opted for a middle-ground solution.

Therefore, rather than going for an open military confrontation against Gaddafi's Libya, Ronald Reagan created a "sense of urgency" to deter Libya from pursuing its subversive and defiant policy. The US credibility was demonstrated through symbolic actions like the mobilization of military aircraft. "In March 1986, the aircraft carrier USS America (CV 66) was sent to join the carriers USS Saratoga (CV 60) and USS Coral Sea (CV 43) in the Mediterranean. The three carriers, with twenty-seven other warships, were ordered to operate north of Libya to intimidate Qaddafi and demonstrate U.S. resolve," Mark Kosnik argues.[762] What was Libya's response to this demonstration of force?

Muammar Gaddafi was not impressed by the US acts of intimidation; on the contrary, he escalated the tensions with Washington. More precisely, he instructed the "*People's Bureaus" (Libyan embassies) in East Berlin, Paris, Rome, Madrid, and other European capitals to undertake terrorist acts against American targets.*[763] These political actions of Gaddafi constitute the backdrop against which the subsequent aggressive actions of Libya occurred, notably the bombing of a discotheque in Berlin. Indeed, the Libyan government was also involved in the bombing of a discotheque in Berlin a year later (1986), where at least one US military personnel was killed, and 200 persons were wounded.[764] However, the tensions between the US and Libya reached their nadir after the 1988 bombing of Pan American Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, with almost three hundred people killed. But before analyzing the reaction of the US to the Berlin events and dwelling on the international response to the Lockerbie events, it's crucial to analyze the driving factors behind Libya's defiance.

Several factors, including the nature of the coercive strategy, can explain Libya's defiance. Indeed, both the going Carter' and the coming Reagan administrations relied on coercive denial strategies. As we previously analyzed in the literature review, this strategy aims at lowering the advantages of the defiant policy of the target by focusing on its military or civilian (economic) infrastructures. However, suppose the target succeeds in deviating from or circumventing the harmful effects of the sanction policy.

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[762] KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.16

[763] MARTIN C., David and WALCOTT John: **Best laid plans: The inside story of America's war on terrorism,** New York, Touchstone Books, 1988, p.xx. Cited by KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism**, ***Ibid.,*** p.17

[764] TAGLIABUE, John, **2 killed, 155 hurt in bomb explosion at club in Berlin,** the New York Times, 6th April, 1986. Accessed from https://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/06/world/2-killed-155-hurt-in-bomb-explosion-at-club-in-berlin.html on the 1st June 2021.

In that case, the coercive denial strategy will not send the necessary *costly signals* to bend the target's will. Even when Reagan resorted to a coercive, punitive strategy, the Americans carefully avoided imposing sanctions that would impact the lives of the civilians, which also undermined the credibility of their threats and the level of their resolve.

Concerning our analytical model (credibility, proportionality and reciprocity), the US threats were **not credible** enough to signal Washington's higher resolve to compel Libya. Indeed, not only were the two countries not economically interdependent, but Libya could easily access the military materials denied by the US military sanctions. In addition, the nature of the threats wielded by Washington was **not proportional** to the nature of his demands on Iran. One should also consider the economic performance of Libya, which had a 9% GDP, as we previously analyzed. Concerning the transmitting-belt effect of neoclassical realism, the good economic statistics of Libya at that time allowed their leader to increase their domestic legitimacy and extract public support for their policy (**State-society relations**). One should also consider the lack of international support for the US coercive policy. Bounded by their economic ties with Libya, several European countries resisted the call to join Washington to coerce Libya effectively. Based on the previous information, Washington's first coercive attempts to compel Tripoli undoubtedly **failed to exploit the weakness** of his target. But Libya's *alleged* involvement in Berlin (1986) and Lockerbie (1988) progressively shifted the nature of the US response to Libya's defiance.

The response of the Reagan administration to the Berlin attacks was very different from those of the previous episodes. While President Reagan first opted for economic sanctions and symbolic demonstration of forces against Libya, he now chose to respond to Libya's challenge by launching military air strikes against Tripoli and Benghazi (Horizontal escalation); the code name of this military operation was "Operation El Dorado Canyon." The choice of air strikes was made against the backdrop of the National Security Decision Directive 279, which identified terrorism as acts of war. President Reagan declared that "terrorists are waging a war against, not only the United States, but all civilized society in which innocent civilians are intentional victims, and our servicemen are specific targets."[765]

Operation *El Dorado Canyon* had both political and military objectives. In Reagan's words, the main political goal was to "diminish Colonel Qaddafi's capacity to export terror" (and) "provide him with incentives and reasons to alter his criminal

[765] History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, **NSDD-179: Task Force on Combatting Terrorism,** National Security Council, 20th July 1985. An information accessed on the 2nd of June 2021 from the link https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/230136 .

behavior."[766] "Reagan made his wishes clear (regarding the military goal): if any military operation went forward, it had to destroy critical elements of Qaddafi's terrorist infrastructure while minimizing both American losses and Libyan civilian casualties."[767] However, it is essential to mention that many analysts agree that the undeclared purpose of Operation El Dorado Canyon was actually to get rid of Gaddafi.[768] From a theoretical perspective, if the objective of President Reagan was actually to assassinate Gaddafi, then the US administration had chosen to rely on a **decapitation strategy** and expected a **decapitation mechanism** which could either convince Gaddafi to reconsider his policy or lead to the emergence of a new leadership in Libya, had the operation been a success. But since Operation El Dorado Canyon was officially set to change Qaddafi's policy, we will analyze the coercive strategies based upon the official declarations of the US leaders.

Consequently, the US military operation falls under both "type A" and "type B" coercive defensive diplomacy. It is important to recall that "type A" coercive defensive diplomacy aims at stopping a target short of its goal, while "type B" aims at compelling a target to undo an action. Regarding "type A", several Intelligence reports assessed that Libya intended to carry out additional attacks against US diplomats or civilians. From this perspective, an implicit goal of Operation El Dorado Canyon was to deter Gaddafi from pursuing his controversial foreign policy. Concerning "type B", President Reagan wanted to "convince" Gaddafi to stop and undo his terrorist plans or actions. In addition, the US president relied on a "denial" strategy to compel his Libyan counterpart to abandon the terrorist pattern, as he insisted on the necessity to strike only military targets. But why did President Reagan rely on force this time, unlike during the previous incidents with Libya?

The US government's choice of force in response to the Lockerbie challenge stems from several factors. The first was the determination of the US authorities to set the red line Libya had crossed. Aside from the sponsored-terrorist activities, Libya-US relations were also affected by skirmishes. For instance, in March 1986, the US aircraft sunk Libyan vessels over the Tripoli-claimed Gulf of Sidra. Hence, the Lockerbie incidents

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[766] HOSMER, Stephen: **Operations against Enemy leaders**, California, RAND Corporation, 2001, p.27. Accessed online.
[767] STANIK T., Joseph: **El Dorado Canyon: Reagan's undeclared war with Qaddafi,** ***Op. Cit.,*** p.204
[768] PLUCHINSKY A., Dennis: **Anti-American terrorism: From Eisenhower to Trump - A Chronicle of the threat and response: The Eisenhower through Carter Administrations**, London, World Scientific Publ., 2020, p.130 (Vol. I). Read also HERSH M., Seymour, **Target Qaddafi,** The New York Times, February 22, 1987. Accessed from https://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/22/magazine/target-qaddafi.html on the 2nd of June 2021. See also CANALES, Pedro, **"Operation El Dorado Canyon": Spain in the Libyan hornet's nest,** Atalyar, 22nd of June 2020. Accessed on the 2nd of June 2021 from https://atalayar.com/en/blog/operation-el-dorado-canyon-spain-libyan-hornets-nest.

must have constituted the straw that broke the camel's back. Therefore, then Secretary of State George P. Schultz bitterly declared later that "we have taken enough punishment and beating. We have to act."[769] In the same line, Joseph Stanik argues that from a political perspective, Operation El Dorado Canyon *would send a clear message to those who support or sponsor terrorism that they could not do so without paying a very heavy price.*[770]

The second reason the US chose military force over economic sanctions was the reluctance of the European partners to decrease their import of Libyan crude oil. As Mark Kosnik declared in this regard, *having been unable to generate the European support necessary to implement meaningful economic or political sanctions, President Reagan turned to what he deemed his only remaining option - unilateral military action.*[771] The last factor that explained President Reagan's choice of force was the existence of "incontrovertible evidence"[772] of Libya's leadership implication in the 1986 bombing. Such evidence would certainly prevent any reaction from the Soviet bloc. How did Libya respond to the US military strikes?

Before dwelling on the Libyan response to the 1986 US bombing of the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, it is important to analyze the nuclear proliferation activities of Libya during that period. A 1985 CIA report assessed that "the serious program deficiencies make it highly unlikely the Libyans will achieve a nuclear weapon capability within at least the next 10 years."[773] In other words, Libya's nuclear program was still at the **phase 1** (Eleonora Mattiacci and Benjamin Jones) when being engaged by the US. But why was the Libyan nuclear program underdeveloped, considering its importance for the country's authorities? External and domestic factors provide substantial answers to the previous question. Concerning the former, aside from the reluctance of many international partners to trade with Libya in the nuclear field, Tripoli was also subject to political pressure from its key partners, who seriously pushed for compliance with nuclear-related international norms. Regarding the latter, as previously analyzed, from early 70s till the mid of the 90s, the Libyan nuclear strategy moved from an "off the shell" to domestic nuclear infrastructure. Unfortunately, the ideals of the Cultural Revolution seriously hampered the achievement of nuclear objectives of Gaddafi. In his

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769 TAILLON D. J., Paul: **Hijacking and hostages: Government responses to terrorism,** Connecticut, Praeger, 2002, p.33 (1st ed.) Consulted online.
770 STANIK T., Joseph: **El Dorado Canyon: Reagan's undeclared war with Qaddafi, *Ibid.,*** pp.203-204
771 KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.17
772 McCREDIE A., Jeffrey, **The April 14, 1986 Bombing of Libya: Act of self-defense or reprisal**, Vol. 19, Issue 2, Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law, 1987, p.216.
773 Directorate of Intelligence, **'The Libyan nuclear program: a technical perspective',** Central Intelligence Agency, February, 1985, p.29. Accessed online the 3rd June 2021. From the website https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116906.pdf?v=f2006499c8db362ad293652987e164f6

attempt to transform the country, Gaddafi mistakenly muzzled and restricted the room of maneuverability of two central bodies which had an incremental role in the development of the Libyan nuclear infrastructure; those were the scientific community and the diplomats. In fact, they were *both crucial for the development of a nuclear program through a combination of indigenous human resources and foreign technology.*[774]

Consequently, all the Libyan initiatives (in terms of international cooperation) aiming at building a sustainable nuclear (weapons) program had mixed results. For instance, one of the most significant and rarest nuclear milestones that Libya had reached was the construction of *a 10-megawatt nuclear research reactor at Tajoura.*[775] Libya obtained and later developed the Tajoura Nuclear Research Center (TNRC) thanks to the previous achievement. Importantly, Libya had already secured more than 2,000 tons of lightly processed uranium from Niger for its nuclear enrichment plans.[776] Yet, the Soviet leaders carefully maintained their nuclear cooperation with the Libyans to a strict minimum to prevent them from getting closer to the nuclear threshold. Bruce St John shares this point of view by declaring that "while the supply of Soviet arms to Libya has increased, the economic and political relationship has been much slower to develop. […] With the exception of the nuclear program, the Soviet Union has been largely unable to offer the material and the know-how the Libyans require to accomplish their development goals."[777]

[774] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid: **Unclear physics: Why Iraq and Libya failed to build nuclear weapons, *Op. Cit.,*** p.151
[775] DAVENPORT, Kelsey, **Chronology of Libya's disarmament and relations with the United States,** Arms Control Association, 2018. An information accessed on the 3rd June 2021 from the link https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/LibyaChronology.
[776] DAVENPORT, Kelsey, **Chronology of Libya's disarmament and relations with the United States, *Op. Cit.***
[777] BRUCE ST JOHN, Ronald, **The Soviet penetration of Libya,** The World Today, 1982, Vol. 38, N. 4, p.137

Figure 8; The Tajoura Nuclear Research Centre.[778]

The Soviet Union's reluctance to deepen their relationship with Libya can be explained, among others, by ideological divergences, Libya's controversial foreign policy, geopolitical issues, as Qaddafi opposed the project of a Soviet naval base in the Mediterranean Sea, and, more importantly, Soviet proliferation concerns regarding the true Libyan intentions. Concerning the IAEA, the early days of nuclear cooperation with Libya started on medical grounds. Indeed, *with the assistance of the IAEA, the Faculty of Science (of the University of Tripoli) ordered equipment for a new radioisotope laboratory to enable students to carry out research experiments*.[779] However, the Libyan authorities requested additional support from the IAEA in terms of materials (nuclear reactors). Still, the UN nuclear watchdog chose to temporize its implication in developing the Libyan nuclear program. The main reason for the IAEA's cautiousness was the suspicions over the actual nuclear ambitions of Libya, although Tripoli had signed the safeguard agreements.

In addition to the lack of expertise and limited external support, the Libyan nuclear program was sorely plagued by mismanagement issues.[780] Several officials were reluctant to objectively or accurately assess the program's evolution while requesting additional public funds. A third factor which hampered the achievement of the nuclear goal was the paradoxical absence of a centralized monitoring organ in charge of the

[778] **The Tajoura Nuclear Research Centre**, Virtualglobetrotting. Accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from https://virtualglobetrotting.com/map/tajoura-nuclear-research-centre/view/google/.
[779] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid: **Unclear physics: Why Iraq and Libya failed to build nuclear weapons, *Op. Cit.,*** p.153
[780] COHEN S., William: **Proliferation: Threat and Response,** Department of Defense, November 1997, p.53

evolution of the nuclear program. Qaddafi delegated the nuclear progress monitoring to Abdessalam Jalloud, his deputy in the RCC. Combined with the heavy presence of low-skilled foreign experts in its technical leadership, the supervision of a sensitive infrastructure such as the nuclear program by ideology-driven leaders seriously undermined the prospects of achieving the Libyan objectives. Consequently, critical steps in the building of the nuclear program were leapfrogged. As the US intelligence community accurately estimated, one of the Libyans' biggest technical nuclear challenges was *the absence of coherent planning*.[781] Based on the previous information, the Libyan nuclear program was embryonic from the 70s until the early 90s. It was not yet a significant source of international concern, unlike its terrorist actions. What was the impact of operation El Dorado Canyon in Libya?

The 1986 US air strike of the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi had mixed results. They were considered a "success" from a military perspective. Indeed, as the report of the US Department of Defense on the Bombing of Libya concluded, *the results of the strike met the established objectives [as] all targets were hit and all targets received very appreciable damage.*[782] However, certain observers tend to temper the enthusiasm of the US authorities. While the strikes effectively hit many "aim points," the momentum of the strikes (during the night) and technical issues (equipment and navigation) hampered the effectiveness of the strikes in a city like Tripoli. However, the *results at Benghazi were only slightly better. (…) The Jamahiriya barracks were heavily damaged, and many of the targets at the Benina Airfield were damaged.*[783] Concerning the physical impact on Libya's leaders, *Qaddafi reportedly was wounded in the April 1986 bombings and, for a time thereafter, appeared extremely disoriented.*[784] Irrespective of the accuracy of the strikes, Operation El Dorado Canyon, sent a univocal message to the Libyans regarding the US readiness to confront any future Libya-sponsored attack against the US interests or citizens. Unfortunately, to the dismay of the US leaders, the Libyan authorities did not shiver. Rather, they promised to respond in kind proportionately to their power capabilities.

From a political perspective, Operation El Dorado Canyon failed and even backfired. There was a domestic consensus in Libya over the necessity not to falter in front of what was described as another *act of arrogance* from the US. For instance, the people's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison (the equivalent of the Ministry of

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781 Directorate of Intelligence, **'The Libyan nuclear program: a technical perspective', *Op. Cit.,*** p.32
782 Report of the U.S. Department of Defense on the Bombing of Libya, 8 May 1986, cited in JENTLESON W., Bruce, **The Reagan administration and coercive diplomacy: Restraining more than remaking governments,** Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 106, N. 1, 1991, p.72
783 KOSNIK E., Mark, **The military response to terrorism**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.18
784 JENTLESON W., Bruce and WHYTOCK A., Christopher, **Who "won" Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and Its Implications for Theory and Policy, *Op. Cit.,*** p.59

foreign affairs under the new regime) first denied the implication of Libya in the Berlin incidents. They contended that "the attack on US targets in Germany is not new; there have been incidents and attacks against US targets in German territory carried out by Germans on the basis of their opposition to US presence on their territory."[785] But more importantly, they called upon the Libyan authorities not to shiver in front of the US attacks instead of maintaining the same policy until their primary objective of toppling imperialism was achieved. As they emphasized, "Libya is a small revolutionary State that does not possess nuclear weapons; however, its means of repelling aggression is the revolutionary force throughout the world, and it will fight with this force until official terrorism comes to an end and the aggressors pay a dear price."[786] Reference to expressions like 'revolutionary force throughout the world" and "pay a dear price" clearly hinted at proxy organizations Libya relied on to conduct its controversial foreign policy.

In line with the position of the people's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, Qaddafi condemned the air strikes and promised to maintain his foreign policy. "We will not stop inciting popular revolution whatever raids they carry out; we will not stop. We are responsible for the revolution, and they cannot make us abandon it. (…) Whether the raids increase or not, we will not retreat. We will not retreat in the face of raids," the Leader maintained.[787] Though he had officially promised not to retaliate, Libya was yet again reportedly involved in another terrorist attack: the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie in Scotland. Jonathan B. Schwartz argues *that the 1986 air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi evidently had failed to deter further Libyan acts of terrorism and, indeed, may have even provoked the Pan Am 103 bombing.*[788] But before dwelling on the Pan Am flight 103 events, what factors explain the Libyan reaction to the US bombing? Both domestic and external factors can explain the continued Libyan defiance of the US. Regarding domestic factors, the air strikes created a rally-round-the-flag effect (neoclassical realism's **intervening variable of the State-society relations**), and Qaddafi, who had been physically injured in the attacks, could be regarded as a national hero; without forgetting that those air strikes also *led to his lionization in the developing world*.[789]

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[785] **Statement by People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, Libya 13 April 1986.** Accessed from Survival, **Global Politics and Strategy,** Vol. 28, Issue 5, 1986, p.453.
[786] **Statement by People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, Libya 13 April 1986.** Accessed from Survival, **Global Politics and Strategy, *Op. Cit.***
[787] **Speech by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi 16 April 1986.** Accessed from Survival, **Global Politics and Strategy, *Op. Cit.,*** p.455.
[788] SCHWARTZ B., Jonathan, **Dealing with a "rogue State": the Libya precedent,** American Journal of International Law, Vol. 101, Issue 3, July 2007, p.556.
[789] TAKEYH, Ray, **The Rogue who came in from the cold,** Foreign Affairs, 2001, Vol. 80, N.3, p.64

There was no international consensus over the condemnation of the US air strikes, concerning the external factors. On the first hand, many State members of the Non-Aligned Movement condemned the strikes. They also helped to the adoption of a UNGA Resolution which clearly "condemned the military attack perpetrated against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on the 15 April 1986 (and) called upon the government of the United States in this regard to refrain from the threat or use of force in the settlement of disputes and differences with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya…."[790] On the other hand, many Western Powers, including France, the UK and the US, vetoed a proposed UNSC Resolution aimed at condemning the US bombings. As we previously analyzed, Libya was reportedly involved in the 1988 Pan Am 103 flight bombing.

Those who had expected an end or at least a break to the terrorist attacks after the 1986 events must have been disillusioned when, two years later, a bomb exploded on a flight from London to New York in Scotland. As the incident was called later, the Lockerbie attacks cost 270 human lives, among which 190 Americans and 11 residents in the town of Lockerbie.[791] The attention of the US investigators was first turned toward the Iranian Revolutionary Guards since the new authorities in Iran had been bogged down by their Iraqi enemies since the beginning of the war in 1980. Western Powers heavily supported Saddam Hussein, so Tehran might have retaliated by targeting US civilians via the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.[792] However, after three years of investigation, two Libyan Intelligence officers – Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed Al Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah (Lamin) – were allegedly identified as the perpetrators of the Lockerbie attacks. How did the US government react to these attacks?

Logically, the US could have reacted the same way as they did during the 1986 Berlin Discotheque events; after all, not only had so many US citizens been killed in this terrorist attack, but Libya was once again involved in a terrorist event targeting the US interests or citizens. Surprisingly, the US government chose a different pattern of behavior. Rather than showering the Libyan cities with bombs again, the US authorities decided to address the issue via legal means. What are the drivers of this decision? The political failure of the 1986 air strikes first drove the legal choice over the military. As we previously analyzed, the bombings of the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi did not deter the Libyan authorities from challenging the US, without forgetting that there was consensual international support of the US unilateral initiative.

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[790] **Art.1 and 2 of the A/RES/41/38** adopted on the 20th of November 1986. Accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/41/38

[791] FBI, **New Charges in Pan Am Flight 103 Bombing,** 20th Dec. 2020. Accessed on the 3rd June 2021 from https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/new-charges-in-pan-am-flight-103-bombing-122120

[792] ENGELBERG, Stephen, **Suspects Iran Unit in the Pan Am Bombing,** the New York Times, 25th Feb. 1989. Accessed from https://www.nytimes.com/1989/02/25/world/us-suspects-iran-unit-in-the-pan-am-bombing.html on the 3rd of June 2021.

Therefore, conducting another military operation would have increased the antagonism of the Third-World countries. Secondly, "the United States may have believed that placing the case before the international community — and the courts — rather than responding unilaterally would help ensure that the policies of Libya would receive sustained scrutiny, possibly deterring it from further acts of terrorism."[793] Another essential element to consider is the election of President George H. Bush (the father) as the 41st US President. President George H. Bush considered multilateralism and international sovereignty as the pillars of the post-Soviet global system.[794] Therefore, it is unsurprising that he chose to handle the Libyan issue via legal terms instead of force. However, was the US gamble a success?

The US goal to obtain a consensual international condemnation of the Libya-perpetrated bombing of the pan Am 103 flight was a success. In fact, the Security Council (SC) had unanimously adopted Res. 731 against the backdrop of Res. 635, which *condemned all acts of unlawful interference against the security of civil aviation* (art.1) and *called upon all States to cooperate in devising and implementing measures to prevent all acts of terrorism. (art.2)*[795] This Resolution invited Libya to extradite the two Libyan suspects. More specifically, Res. 731 "condemned the destruction of Pan Am flight 103, and Union de transports aériens flight 772 and the resultant loss of hundreds of lives (art.1), strongly deplored the fact that the Libyan Government has not yet responded effectively to the above requests to cooperate fully in establishing responsibility for the terrorist acts referred to above against Pan Am flight 103, and Union de transports aériens flight 772 (art.2) (and) urged the Libyan Government immediately to provide a full and effective response to those requests to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism (art.3)."[796] From a theoretical perspective, Res.731 did not contain **any credible threatening measure** as confirmed by the tone used by the SC members. They **"urged"** and not **"called upon"** *all States individually and collectively to encourage the Libyan Government to respond fully and effectively to those requests.* (Art.5)[797] Nonetheless, the fact that the African States and other member States of the SC had greenlighted the adoption of the Resolution hinted at increasing the isolation of Libya. But how did the US manage to obtain such an international consensus?

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[793] SCHWARTZ B., Jonathan, **Dealing with a "rogue State": the Libya precedent, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.556-557
[794] ENGEL A., Jeffrey, **A better world... but don't get carried away: The foreign policy of George H. W. Bush twenty years on,** Diplomatic History, 2010, Vol. 34, N. 1 p. 29
[795] **UNSC Res. 635** adopted on the 14th of June 1989. Accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/635.
[796] **UNSC Res. 731** adopted on the 21st of January 1992. Accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/731.
[797] **UNSC Res.731, *Ibid.***

The unanimous adoption of Res.731 results from the combination of several factors. First is the interest convergence between Western Great Powers, including the US, UK and France. Indeed, the Lockerbie attacks happened before the Utah flight 772 incidents, during which an aircraft from the French company Union de Transports Aériens exploded in the Ténéré desert in Niger on the 19th of September 1989. The French investigators found later that Libya secret service agents were also involved in the attack; among them was Qaddafi's brother-in-law Abdullah Senoussi.[798] Concerning the UK, London had grievances against Tripoli regarding the shooting of the British officer Yvonne Fletcher in 1984[799] during the protest of Libyan students against the regime policy in front of the Libyan embassy. The second main factor that explains the success of the American initiative was the choice of multilateralism over unilateralism, which legitimized the initiatives carried out by Washington later. But how did Libya react to the adoption of Res.731?

The Libyan government rejected the UN demands to extradite the two suspects of the Lockerbie incidents because any extradition would "violate the rights of [Libyan] citizens protected by law."[800] Instead, Libya decided to submit the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) because Res. 731 was not binding and was adopted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Consequently, according to the Libyan authorities, the case should be addressed against the backdrop of the 1971 Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (MCSUASCA). Under this Convention, "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…."[801]

By invoking the previous Convention, the Libyan authorities obviously wanted to avoid the implementation of the UN Security Council decisions, which they argued was a mere instrument in the hand of the imperialist States, notably the US. But the choice of Libya's legal counterattack could have also been motivated by the will to shield the political isolation Libya was subjected to. After all, "the United States managed to convince even

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[798] BBC News, **Libyans sentenced for French bombing,** March 10, 1999. Accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/294306.stm

[799] RONEN, Yehudit, **Libya's conflict with Britain: Analysis of a diplomatic rupture**, Middle Eastern Studies, 2006, Vol. 42, N. 2, p. 274.

[800] **Letter from the Secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and international Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya addressed to the Secretary-General**, (delivered March 2, 1992). Quoted by JOYNER C., Christopher and ROTHBAUM P., Wayne, **Libya and the aerial incident at Lockerbie: What lessons for international extradition law?**, Michigan Journal of International Law, Vol. 14, Issue 2, 1993, pp.227-228

[801] **Art.7** of the 1971 Convention of Montreal for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation. An information accessed on the 3rd of June 2021 from the link https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20974/volume-974-I-14118-english.pdf.

States with close economic ties to Libya, such as Italy and Germany, to support the sanctions as a way to force Qaddafi to hand over the bombing suspects."[802] As Christopher Joyner and Wyne Rothbaump put it, "the Court, however, dismissed this claim by stating that it does not have the authority to challenge Security Council decisions."[803] Considering Libya's refusal to surrender the two suspects, the UNSC imposed additional sanctions.

Libya's refusal to comply with the previous demands of the UNSC led the latter to adopt a new Resolution (738) aiming at compelling Tripoli to comply with its earlier demands in Res.731. Both Resolutions differed in many regards, both in the form and the substance. Concerning the formal aspects, the SC members' tone was more assertive in Res.748 as they now "called upon States" and not just "urged them" as they did in Res.731, which clearly connotes their irritation with Libya's behavior. Concerning the substance, the SC opted for the **"classic ultimatum"** variant of coercion and hoped to create a **"sense of urgency"** as they set a time after which the member States could implement the measures mentioned above. Indeed, the SC decided that on the 15th of April 1992 (that is two weeks after the adoption of the Resolution), "all States shall adopt the measures set out below, which shall apply until the Security Council decides that the Libyan Government has complied (with its demands.)."[804]

The SC also relied on a **coercive denial strategy** as most of the sanctions targeted sectors or areas that could help the Libyan authorities to maintain their defiant foreign policy. For instance, the SC decided that all States should "prohibit any provision to Libya by their nationals or from their territory of arms and related materials of all types, including the sale or transfer of weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment…"[805] Furthermore, the SC decided that all States shall "deny permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in or overfly their territory if it is destined to land in or has taken or has taken off from the territory of Libya unless the particular flight has been approved on the grounds of significant humanitarian need by the Security Council."[806] Lastly, another main goal of the SC was to isolate Libya by imposing diplomatic sanctions like reducing personnel in foreign representations in Libya. (Art. 6-a of Res.738). How did Libya react to this first set of UN sanctions? The building of an international consensus against Libya affected Tripoli. However, rather than fully complying with the demands of the UN, *Libya proposed that the suspects be tried in a*

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802 TAKEYH, Ray, **The Rogue who came in from the cold, *Op. Cit.,*** p.64
803 JOYNER C., Christopher and ROTHBAUM P., Wayne, **Libya and the Aerial Incident at Lockerbie: What lessons for international extradition law?**, ***Ibid.,*** p.250
804 **Art. 3 of the UNSC Res. 738**. Accessed from https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/748(1992) on the 3rd of June 2021.
805 **Art. 5a of the UNSC Res. 738**, ***Ibid***
806 **Art. 4a of the UNSC Res. 738**, ***Ibid.***

neutral court, monitored by either the Arab League or the UN; (but) the US and the UK regarded this as buying time and adopted SCR 883 expanding the sanctions.[807]

UNSC Res.883 was adopted on the 11th of November 1993 with an overall objective to compel Libya to comply with the demand to extradite the two suspects of the Lockerbie events. However, in line with the "gradual turning of the screw" variant of coercion, the SC members maintained their denial-based coercive strategy. This was done mainly through adopting economic sanctions, notably **financial and trade sanctions**. Concerning financial sanctions, the SC demanded *all States in which there are funds or other financial resources (including funds derived or generated from property) owned or controlled, directly or indirectly the Government or public authorities of Libya, (a) or any Libyan undertaking (b), shall freeze such funds and financial resources and ensure that neither they nor any other funds and financial resources are made available, by their nationals or by any persons within their territory, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of the Government or public authorities of Libya*.[808] However, the SC carefully avoided any measure that could hurt the civilians as *the measures imposed by paragraph 3 above do not apply to funds or other financial resources derived from the sale or supply of any petroleum or petroleum products, including natural gas and natural gas products, or agricultural products or commodities, originating in Libya*.[809]

Regarding the trade sanctions, the SC restricted its coercive measures to the **commercial activities of the Libyan aircraft company**. Indeed, Art.6-a of the Res.883 required from the other State members *the immediate and complete closure of all Libyan Arab Airlines offices within their territories,* while Art.6-b *prohibited any commercial transactions with Libyan Arab Airlines by their nationals or from their territory, including the honoring or endorsement of any tickets or other documents issued by that airline*.[810] However, the SC also prohibited States from manufacturing or delivering several critical components of the Libyan oil infrastructures like pumps of medium or large capacity, loading buoys or single point moorings (Annex I and II of Res.883). Considering their strategic importance for any oil industry, the fact that the SC had prevented the Libyan government from accessing the previously mentioned items hinted at the potential adoption of a **coercive punishment strategy**. Indeed, Libya, unable to renew critical components of its oil infrastructure, would have failed to

[807] POPOVSKI, Vesselin, **Fighting the Colonel: UN Security Council sanctions on Libya,** United Nations University, 10th of May 2011. Accessed from https://unu.edu/publications/articles/fighting-the-colonel.html#info on the 3rd of June 2021.
[808] **Art. 3 of the UNSC Res. 883**. Accessed from http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/883 on the 3rd of June 2021.
[809] **Art. 4 of the UNSC Res. 883**, ***Ibid.***
[810] **Art. 6a and 6b of the UNSC Res. 883**, ***Ibid.***

produce and sell oil in the short or medium term; there is no worse catastrophic scenario for a rentier State like Libya.

In addition to those first multilateral sanctions, the US government also contemplated possibly imposing several unilateral sanctions against Libya concerning the Lockerbie incidents. In this regard, on the 30th March 1993, the US Senate adopted S. RES. 68 "urging the President of the United States to seek an international oil embargo through the United Nations against Libya because it refused to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 731 and 748 concerning the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103."[811] More precisely, the US Senate urged the President to "immediately seek an international oil embargo through the United Nations against Libya for its refusal to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 731 and 748 concerning the bombings of Pan Am Flight 7 103 and UTA 772."[812] How did Libya react to these sanctions?

Libya's reaction to the previous UN demands was unchanged. Indeed, Libya refused to hand over the two suspects in the Lockerbie events. But what can explain that continued defiant behavior toward the UN? First, although Libya was already considered a *Pariah State* due to its controversial behavior, several International Capitals maintained their trade relations with Tripoli. Vesselin Popovski confirms it in these terms: "interestingly, an oil embargo was never imposed given that some States were heavily dependent upon Libyan oil. The sanctions had a narrow goal to bring the two Libyan suspects to trial and a broader goal to deter Libya from future terrorist acts."[813] Second and consequently, the Libyan economy was not seriously impacted by the previous reprisal measures. For instance, as the following table confirms, the Libyan GDP in 1992 and 1993 were respectively -2.7% and -3.9%.[814] It is worth highlighting that those poor economic performances were not caused by external pressures but by the country's mismanagement policies and corruption.

[811] US Senate, **S. Res. 68,** 103D Congress 1st Session, Calendar N. 52, 1993, p.1. Accessed from https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/sres68/BILLS-117sres68is.pdf on the 3rd of June 2021
[812] Art. 1 in US Senate, **S. Res. 68,** ***Ibid.***
[813] POPOVSKI, Vesselin, **Fighting the Colonel: UN Security Council sanctions on Libya,** ***Op. Cit.***
[814] Data accessed on the 4th of June 2021 from **Country Economy.** Consulted on https://countryeconomy.com/gdp/libya?year=2004.

Evolution: Annual GDP Libya		
Date	Annual GDP	GDP Growth (%)
2004	32,996M.$	4.5%
2003	26,186M.$	13.0%
2002	20,471M.$	-1.0%
2001	34,112M.$	-1.8%
2000	38,271M.$	3.7%
1999	35,975M.$	0.5%
1998	29,960M.$	-0.4%
1997	36,531M.$	-0.6%
1996	35,683M.$	2.6%
1995	32,690M.$	-12.4%
1994	28,796M.$	1.9%
1993	30,921M.$	-3.8%
1992	34,358M.$	-2.7%
1991	33,908M.$	15.7%
1990	30,644M.$	3.7%

Table 6: Evolution of Libya's annual GDP.[815]

As the Libyan authorities remained firm in their position, the US Congress decided to increase its coercive pressure on Tripoli to compel Libya to surrender the two suspects in the Lockerbie issue. Considering the growing concerns of the US government over Iran's controversial nuclear activities, Congress decided to sanction both countries, as their activities (sponsoring international terrorism and attempts to acquire WMD) constituted a serious threat to international peace and security. This new sanction policy was adopted on the 5th of August 1996 and referred to as "the Iran Libya Sanction Act – ILSA." Regarding specifically Libya, the Congress authorized the President to sanction any individual that had "exported, transferred, or otherwise provided to Libya any goods, services, technology, or other items the provision of which is prohibited under paragraph 4(b) or 5 of Resolution 748 of the Security Council […] or under paragraph 5 or 6 of Resolution 883 of the Security Council of the United Nations"[816] One of the toughest sanctions was the impossibility for a government or entity to have access to the US market if dealing with a sanctioned person. In addition, US banks or

[815] Data accessed from https://countryeconomy.com/gdp/libya?year=1990 on the 4th of June 2021
[816] Section 5 of the ILSA, **Public Law 104–172, 104th Congress**, 5th of August 1996. Accessed on the 4th of June 2021 from https://www.congress.gov/104/plaws/publ172/PLAW-104publ172.pdf

financial institutions were prevented *from making loans or providing credits to any sanctioned person*.[817] How did Tripoli react to the ILSA?

The ILSA did not significantly impact Libya's decision to hand over the two suspects of the Lockerbie attacks. Surprisingly, the biggest threat to the Libyan came not from outside but from within. Indeed, the Qaddafi regime faced several economic and military challenges. Regarding the military, Qaddafi faced many attempted military coups throughout the 80s[818] and the 90s. Ray Takeyh and Gideon Rose argue that: "at least a dozen coup attempts, most recently in November 1996, attest to the unreliability of the Libyan army. In a 1993 coup attempt led by the army, Qaddafi had to call in the air force to suppress the ground forces."[819] This clearly shows that internal divisions existed within the Libyan political establishment. But dissent factions from the regular army did not constitute the only military challenge to the Qaddafi regime; in fact, several Islamist factions also shook the pillars of the Qaddafi regime during the 90s.

Concerning the economic challenge, while the UN and the US sanctions undoubtedly impacted the Libyan economy, they nevertheless *exacerbated* or worsened an already catastrophic financial situation caused by *the weight of corruption and a disorganized distribution system*.[820] Consequently, as the following table 5 clearly indicates, between 1993 and 1996, the unemployment rate in Libya oscillated between 20% and 19.83%.[821] Thus, when the US Congress imposed the ILSA, the Libyan authorities **framed those sanctions as instruments of Western imperialism (neoclassical realist's intervening variable of the nature of the regime)**. Lisa Anderson argues that "at the outset, the sanctions were probably a boon for the regime, serving to distract popular attention from the mismanagement that was responsible for many of the country's economic and social woes."[822]

[817] Section 6, art.3 of the ILSA, **Public Law 104–172, 104th Congress*, Ibid.***
[818] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Libya's Qaddafi: still in command?,** Current History, Vol. 86, N.517, The Middle East, 1987, p.65
[819] TAKEYH, Ray and ROSE, Gideon, **Qaddafi, Lockerbie, and prospects for Libya,** Policy Analysis/Policy Watch, 1998, Vol. 342, p.2
[820] ST JOHN R., Bruce, **The Changing Libyan economy: causes and consequences,** Middle East Journal, 2008, Vol. 62, N. 1, p.78
[821] **Libya's unemployment rate 1992-2004.** An information from the World Bank accessed on the 4th of June 2021 from the link https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/LBY/libya/unemployment-rate
[822] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Rogue Libya's long road,** Middle East Report, 2006, N. 241, p.44

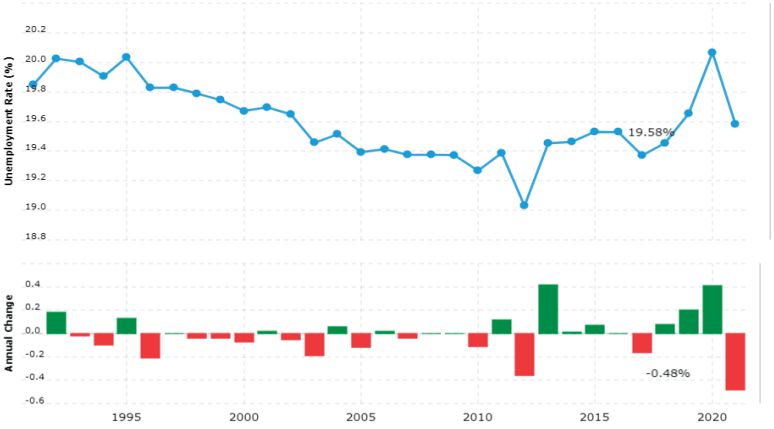

Table 7: Libya unemployment rate 1992-2004, Macrotrends - World Bank.[823]

By the middle of the 90s, two main issues drew international concerns regarding Libya: the handing over of the two suspects of the Lockerbie attacks and the WMD, notably Libya's embryonic nuclear program. Those two issues also reflected Qaddafi's dilemma regarding his country's (new) foreign policy. Will he comply or continue to defy the US? Either choice would have had both domestic and international impacts on Tripoli. Indeed, although Libya had been sanctioned mainly because of its alleged involvement in the Lockerbie attacks, its overall image was seriously tarnished, and the country was increasingly isolated. Logically, several countries severed their commercial relations with Tripoli. Consequently, Libya could no longer have access to international assets to either relieve its crumbling economy or sponsor its foreign policy adventurism (**International power-base erosion mechanism.**) Finally, Qaddafi chose to comply or defy the US and the other Great Powers based on the sensitiveness of the issue. Therefore, as the Libyan nuclear program was still embryonic, Qaddafi intensified Libya's quest for a nuclear deterrent capability.

As previously analyzed, Libya's nuclear strategy during the 90s consisted in acquiring nuclear components through illegal channels. As Libya could already not trade with its counterparts, acquiring nuclear devices for its nuclear could be possible only via the black market. In this regard, Abdel Q. Khan's smuggling network was the best option to achieve the abovementioned goal. In line with his firm nuclear stance, Qaddafi acknowledged for the first time that Libya could and should build or seek any credible deterrent against US potential future aggressions. More precisely, he described his wish

[823] **Libya's unemployment rate 1992-2004,** ***Op. Cit.***

to obtain a deterrent capability in these terms: "if we had possessed a deterrent — missiles that could reach New York— we would have hit it at the same moment. Consequently, we should build this force so that they and others will no longer think about an attack. Whether regarding Libya or the Arab homeland, in the coming twenty years, this revolution should achieve a unified Arab nation… This should be one homeland, the whole of it, possessing missiles and even nuclear bombs. Regarding reciprocal treatment, the world has a nuclear bomb, we should have a nuclear bomb."[824] Yet, despite those bold and aggressive declarations and actions, the Libyan nuclear program did not progress substantially.

However, if Libya remained firm on the nuclear issue from a technical perspective, its position from the international legal point slightly progressed. Indeed, Tripoli signed the Treaty of Pelindaba in April 1996.[825] But this move should be analyzed as a consistently deceiving Libyan strategy which consisted of fighting nuclear proliferation in theory while seeking nukes in practice. In addition, Libya progressively adopted a conciliatory stance on the Lockerbie case. Nevertheless, the alteration in policy underwent an intricate evolution within the Libyan establishment. Until 1998, for instance, Libyan not only sustained its defiant policy regarding the US but also violated core provisions of the UN Resolutions. This was the case when "on 16 April 1996, a Libyan-registered aircraft flew from Tripoli, Libya, to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The Security Council considers this clear violation of Council resolution 748 (1992) of 31 March 1992 as totally unacceptable and calls on Libya to refrain from any further such violations."[826] This behavior reflected the upper hand of the hardliners who did not want to compromise with the demands of the UN. On the other hand, reformers criticized this approach and called for an urgent policy change. Consequently, "an extraordinary dispute broke out in the higher echelons of the regime. The pragmatists in the bureaucracy (…) stressed the need for structural economic reforms and international investments to ensure Libya's long-term economic vitality and political stability. (But) the hard-liners, (…) wanted to continue defying the West, for they saw Libya's past radicalism as the basis of the regime's legitimacy."[827] However, Libya finally

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[824] SPECTOR S., Leonard and SMITH R., Jacqueline: **Nuclear ambitions: The spread of nuclear weapons 1989-1990,** New York, Routledge, 2020, p.183. Consulted online

[825] The Pelindaba Treaty is the nuclear legal framework which establishes Africa as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. It was adopted on the 11th of April 1996 but entered into force on the 15th of July 2009. See **African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (ANWFZ) Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty),** Nuclear Treaty Initiative, 23rd September 2020. Accessed from https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/african-nuclear-weapon-free-zone-anwfz-treaty-pelindaba-treaty/ on the 4th June 2021.

[826] **Statement by the President of the Security Council [on "Letters dated 20 and 23 December 1991, from France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America (S/23306, S/23307, S/23308, S/23309 and S/23317"]**, S/PRST/1996/18 of the 18th of April 1996. Accessed on the 4th of June 2020 from the link https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f14220.html

[827] TAKEYH, Ray, **The Rogue who came in from the cold, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.65-66

handed over the two suspects later, showing that Gaddafi had sided with the reformist camp. What can explain this sea change of policy?

Libya's policy change can be explained by several factors, starting with domestic drivers. Indeed, Qaddafi experienced unprecedented domestic challenges. The economic situation was reaching alarming levels, sparking unrest and riots throughout the country, without mentioning the mistrust Qaddafi had towards the army, considering the attempted failed putsch previously mentioned. All the previous elements led him to redefine his priorities regarding international and domestic politics seriously. Lisa Anderson confirms it when she declares that *the growth of opposition means that the government's now limited resources will be needed at home. The imperatives of political survival dictate expenditures on domestic consumption and, more important, on the domestic intelligence and repressive apparatus that maintain Qaddafi in power.*[828]

Qaddafi was also aware that his troubles would be over shall he accede to the international demands. But greenlighting the handing-over of the two suspects could have domestic repercussions, notably in terms of legitimacy. Therefore, he could have afforded such risks provided he was proposing attractive incentives. In this regard, the SC adopted a Resolution (1192) under which it pledged to lift the sanctions as soon as Libya complied with their demands. More specifically, the SC *decided that the aforementioned measures shall be suspended immediately if the Secretary-General reports to the Council that the two accused have arrived in the Netherlands for the purpose of trial before the court described in paragraph 2 or have appeared for trial before an appropriate court in the United Kingdom or the United States and that the Libyan Government has satisfied the French judicial authorities with regard to the bombing of UTA 772*.[829]

More than an economic incentive, this SC commitment actually constituted a survival guarantee to Qaddafi's regime under these circumstances. Another important factor that motivated Libya's decision to comply was the flexibility of the US government. Indeed, once the investigations had clearly established the responsibility of Libyan agents in the Lockerbie attacks, the US and the UK insisted on the necessity to try them before a US court; Qaddafi objected and suggested a trial instead in a third and neutral country. The US first rejected the proposal and considered it "a bluff." However, the emergence of a "sanction fatigue" combined with increasing critics from the Lockerbie

[828] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Libya's Qaddafi: still in command?**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.87
[829] Art.8 of **UNSC Res. 1192**. Accessed from http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1192 on the 5th of June 2020

victims' family members ultimately convinced Washington to accede to the Libyan demands.[830]

It is also important to highlight the strategic role played by third actors, which were trusted by both antagonistic camps. In this regard, Prince Saud and Nelson Mandela played an incremental role in reducing Libyan distrust toward the Western Powers (UK and US). Both leaders agreed to address the Lockerbie stalemate through a secret channel which two trusted diplomats of both countries would chair: then Saudi Arabia ambassador to the US, Prince Bandar bin Sultan and Jakes Gerwel. This move led to the existence of two channels or tracks. The second track of diplomacy set into motion was between the United States, the *United Kingdom, and the international community. The two powers were thrown on the defensive by Mandela's dramatic entry into the fray*.[831] The informal track served mainly as a transmitting belt between the leaders of all the countries involved in the Lockerbie case. Still, the moral statute of Nelson Mandela undoubtedly granted him an informal referee role.

Subsequently, Mandela paid closer attention to the demands of each party and raised their concerns whenever needed, like when Qaddafi requested a clarification between the "lifting and suspension" of sanctions. In this regard, *Blair assured Mandela that the United Kingdom would not be uncooperative on these matters; the United Kingdom had no "hidden agendas" or "undisclosed demands."*[832] Nevertheless, it was mutual respect and high consideration that Mandela and Qaddafi had for each other that played a decisive role in the diplomatic solution of the first bone of contention related to the Lockerbie issue. Mark Kersten confirms it in these words: *at the time of the Lockerbie deal, the South African President intimated that his personal relationship with Gaddafi had produced a political breakthrough and, more importantly, that diplomacy and negotiation must always remain an option*.[833]

Consequently, Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah and Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed Al Megrahi – the two suspects in the Lockerbie attacks – were tried in the Netherlands under Scottish law. After one year trial, the first suspect was released while the second was sentenced

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[830] ANDREWS R., David, **A thorn on the tulip - A Scottish trial in the Netherlands: The story behind the Lockerbie trial,** Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law 307, 2004, Vol. 36, Issue 2, p.311 and p.314

[831] BOYD-JUDSON, Lyn, **Strategic moral diplomacy: Mandela, Qaddafi, and the Lockerbie negotiations**, Foreign Policy Analysis, 2005, Vol. 1, N. 1, pp. 81-89

[832] BOYD-JUDSON, Lyn, **Strategic moral diplomacy: Mandela, Qaddafi, and the Lockerbie negotiations, *Op. Cit.,*** p.88

[833] KERSTEN, Mark, **What Mandela teaches us: negotiating between Good and Evil,** Justice in Conflict, 6th of December 2013. An information accessed on the 6th of June 2021 from https://justiceinconflict.org/2013/12/06/what-mandela-teaches-us-negotiating-good-and-evil/.

to lifetime jail, which was commuted to a 27-year sentence later.[834] The decision of the ICJ intervened in a specific international context: President George Bush had just been elected as the 44th US President. With particular respect to Libya, President Bush first adopted a soft tone at the beginning of his mandate, pledging to compel Qaddafi to accept to pay compensation to the families of the Lockerbie victims and expressing concerns about the resolve of certain States like Libya to acquire WMD.[835] However, like the previous Iranian case, President Bush took a tougher stance after 9/11.

The 9/11 events constituted a watershed moment in global politics. After being challenged in several regions like the Middle East (Iran) and Africa (Somalia, Libya), the US was attacked within their borders, and such slight could not be left unpunished. Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State under Clinton, argued that the 9/11 events informed President Bush about the necessity *to depart, in fundamental ways, from the approach that has characterized U.S. foreign policy for more than half a century*.[836] Logically, the US government chose to address the threats to its core security interests in a pre-emptive way: "to launch an attack against an attack that one has incontrovertible evidence is either actually underway or has been ordered."[837] Surprisingly, Gaddafi condemned the *horrifying* attacks against the twin towers and sent a message of solidarity to the US. That the leader of the alleged greatest supportive State of international terrorism had condemned an action against its sworn enemy was surprising, if not shocking.

The desire of Libya to distance itself from its international rogue statute can explain this move. In addition, an exhausted Qaddafi seemed to have realized the unproductiveness of his hitherto foreign policy. As he declared, *I supported all liberation movements fighting imperialism, but I believe that is over now.*[838] (Jacques Hymans - Progressive transition from an **oppositional nationalist** to a **sportsmanlike subaltern** which leaders that "would lack either the motivation or the certitude required to take such a dramatic step as building the bomb."[839] However, confident analysts doubt the sincerity

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[834] MCFADDEN D., Robert, Megrahi, **Convicted in 1988 Lockerbie bombing, dies at 60**, New York Times, May 20, 2012. Accessed from https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/21/world/africa/abdel-basset-ali-al-megrahi-lockerbie-bomber-dies-at-60.html on the 6th of June 2021. Also read The Guardian, **Lockerbie bomber is innocent, says acquitted suspect**, Friday 24th of August 2001. Consulted on the 6th of June 2021 from https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2001/aug/24/lockerbie.

[835] ZOUBIR H., Yahia, **Libya in US foreign policy: From rogue State to good fellow?,** Third World Quarterly, 2002, Vol. 23, N. 1, p.47

[836] MORGAN J., Matthew (Ed): **The impact of 9/11 on Politics and War. The day that changed everything?**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p.2

[837] GRAY S., Colin, **The implications of preemptive and preventive war doctrines: A reconsideration**, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2007, p.9

[838] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Rogue Libya's long road, *Op. Cit.,*** p.45

[839] HYMANS E. C., Jacques: ***The Psychology of nuclear proliferation: Identity, emotions and foreign policy, Op. Cit.,*** p.14

of Qaddafi in breaking with its old defiant posture. For instance, "in March 2001, he praised Osama Bin Laden for being able to terrify the United States."[840]

Nevertheless, the appeal of international integration seemed to have prevailed though "the regime still possessed the resources to ensure survival against domestic threats and develop a weapons program, most notably after 1999 when oil prices and energy investments in Libya increased."[841] (**Moving from an inward-looking regime to an outward looking regime – Etel Solingen**). Evidence of Libya's strong desire to join the concert of nations was its participation in the fight against Al-Qaeda, notably by sharing information on the terrorist with the US.[842] As we previously analyzed, this ambivalence seems to have been a distinctive feature of Qaddafi, as he had already engaged simultaneously with two foes (Pakistan and India). But how did the 9/11 events impact the Libyan nuclear dynamics? Before dwelling on the impact of the 9/11 events on the Libyan nuclear dynamics, it is important to emphasize the US approach regarding the WMD challenge after the Al-Qaida-led terrorist attacks. In this respect, Robert G. Joseph argues that President's Bush new approach to fighting against WMD went through the "putting in place (of) a comprehensive strategy involving proactive diplomacy, actions to counter proliferation directly, and better means for organizing and equipping the United States and its friends and allies to respond to the use of such weapons."[843]

Concretely, from a political perspective, George Bush released the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (NSCWMD). This strategy was based on three main pillars: counter-proliferation to combat WMD use (mainly via deterrence and interdiction), non-proliferation with *a strengthened non-proliferation to combat WMD Proliferation* (via international cooperation and legal instruments), and a subsequent management to respond to WMD use (through the improvement of defense instruments against the actual use of WMD.)[844] George Bush also created the "Proliferation Security Initiative" (PSI), an informal multilateral framework to share intelligence regarding proliferation-related activities. However, the trauma of the victims of the terrorist attacks led President Bush to address the terrorist challenge with military force.

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[840] STEVENS A., Christopher, **The Libyan debate: coercive diplomacy reconsidered**, Diplomacy & Statecraft, 2017, Vol. 28, N.2, p.323

[841] STEVENS A., Christopher, **The Libyan debate: coercive diplomacy reconsidered**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.322

[842] PAEK, Sunwoo, **Discouraging the bomb: U.S. counter proliferation success against Libya,** The Korean Journal of International Studies, 2020, Vol.18, N.3, p.210

[843] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.1-2

[844] President Bush, **National strategy to combat Weapons of Mass Destruction,** Arms Control Association, 17th of December 2002. Accessed from https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_01-02/document_janfeb03 on the 7th of June 2021

Considering the US new military strategy, which preconized a pre-emptive war, George Bush waged a global "war on terror", and his first target was the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Emboldened by a Congress Resolution (S.J.Res. 23 - Authorization for use of military force), the US launched a military campaign against the Taliban a month after the 9/11 events. This military campaign began with air strikes, and several Western Powers like the British, France, Australia, and Germany joined the US in their military efforts. The Taliban were defeated three months after the beginning of the military campaign, and the leader of Al-Qaida, Osama Ben Laden, fled.[845] As previously analyzed, George Bush delivered his State of the Union address in January 2002, three months after the 9/11 attacks. This was a landmark speech regarding the new US foreign policy, as President Bush identified three countries – Iraq, Iran, and North Korea – as the members of the "axis of evil."[846] Based on the previous incidents between Tripoli and Washington, one would have expected Libya to be mentioned in the axis evil.

Surprisingly, Libya was not listed among those "rogue States" that challenged the US-led global system. Peter Viggo Jakobsen maintains that Bush's omission of Libya in the axis of evil rhetoric was a goodwill gesture. "To keep the **negotiations** on track, the United Kingdom persuaded National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of State Colin Powell to keep Libya out of Bush's 'axis of evil' speech," he argued.[847] Wait! Negotiations? Yes! Indeed, Libya had already entered informal talks with the UK and the US to solve the remaining issues related to the Lockerbie case. As we previously analyzed, the handing over of the two suspects of the Lockerbie attacks was just one demand in a broader list set by the UK and the US. The other demands included the official acknowledgement by Libya of its responsibility for the attacks, the payment of compensation to the family members of the victims and Libya's cooperation in a criminal investigation.[848] George Bush was perfectly aware that any move toward a comprehensive agreement with Libya was impossible unless the Lockerbie case was fully cleared. Indeed, the US Congress echoed the dissatisfaction of family members of the Lockerbie attacks, who felt that justice had been partly served with the trial of the suspects.

However, accessing the remaining demands of the US did not go without political risk for Qaddafi in Libya's domestic landscape. In a country where the leader enjoyed almost a God status, acknowledging the responsibility of a terrorist attack would have

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[845] Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), **The U.S. war in Afghanistan, 1999 – 2021**. Accessed on the 7th of June 2021 from https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-war-afghanistan

[846] **George Bush Address on the State of the Union on January 2002, 29**, ***Op. Cit.***

[847] JAKOBSEN V., Peter, **Reinterpreting Libya's WMD turnaround – Bridging the carrot-coercion divide,** Journal of Strategic Studies, August 2012, Vol. 35, N.4, p.503

[848] BOYD-JUDSON, Lyn, **Strategic moral diplomacy: Mandela, Qaddafi, and the Lockerbie negotiations**, ***Op. Cit.,*** pp. 81-89

undermined his credibility and legitimacy. Therefore, Libya was first opposed and frustrated when the Americans and the British formulated the demand. Back then, Mandela even considered the demand "unacceptable." At the same time, then Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs Omar Al-Muntasser warned that "the Libyan people will blame Qaddafi."[849] Concerning the compensation issue, the Libyans criticized the West's unfairness as they did not request any compensation from the Saudi government after the 9/11 events, which were perpetrated by Saudis nationals. Considering those issues, the solution lay in the formulation of the text, which needed to avoid any personal implication of the leader and shaming of the country.

Hence, when the Libyans officially acknowledged their responsibility in the Lockerbie attacks, they framed it as an exemplary act of respect for international law. More precisely, they emphasized that "out of respect for international law and pursuant to the Security Council resolutions, Libya as a sovereign State: has facilitated the bringing to justice of the two suspects charged with the bombing of Pan Am 103 and accepts responsibility for the actions of its officials; has cooperated with the Scottish investigating authorities before and during the trial and pledges to cooperate in good faith with any further requests for information in connection with the Pan Am 103 investigation (and) has arranged for the payment of appropriate compensation. "To that end, a special fund has been established, and instructions have already been issued to transmit the necessary sums to an agreed escrow account within a matter of days."[850] With all the conditions met, the UN adopted Resolution 1506 on the 12th of September 2003, lifted the Pan Am 103-related sanctions against Libya, and removed the Lockerbie issue from the SC agenda.[851] However, as terrorism had built the international agenda at the moment, Libya could easily **deflect** international attention from the WMD issue. In other words, the fact that the terrorism issue was the main priority of global leaders helped Libya escape, at least temporarily, from the international scrutiny of its WMD program. This strategy constituted another behavior pattern in Libya, which we will analyze later.

In a clear demonstration of his determination, President Bush waged "Operation Iraqi Freedom" in March 2003, and Saddam Hussein's downfall happened less than three months later. Those two military campaigns of the US had an impact on Libya's nuclear ambitions. That two foes which incarnated the most significant security challenges

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[849] BOYD-JUDSON, Lyn, **Strategic moral diplomacy: Mandela, Qaddafi, and the Lockerbie negotiations**, ***Ibid.,*** p.89

[850] **Letter dated 15 August 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.** Accessed from https://undocs.org/S/2003/818 on the 7th of June 2021.

[851] **Art. 1 and 3** of the UNSC Res. 1506. Accessed from https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/1506(2003) on the 7th of June 2021.

(terrorism and WMD) to the US interests had been defeated within three months did not go unnoticed in Tripoli. In fact, a panicking Qaddafi called then-Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and reportedly declared: "I will do whatever the Americans want because I saw what happened in Iraq, and I was afraid."[852] (**Credible threats from the coercer – Rupal Mehta**) Consequently, then Head of Libya's secret services, Musa Kusa, reached out to his British counterpart to express Libya's readiness *to initiate talks with Britain and the United States regarding its WMD programs*.[853] But before dwelling on the US response to the Libyan move, it is important to highlight two main lessons from the previous developments.

The fact that Libya had signaled its willingness to discuss its WMD-related activities after the US military campaign in Iraq clearly demonstrates the incremental role played by this **indirect military coercion** in Tripoli's calculus. (Horizontal escalation) Yet, Qaddafi's overture was not unprecedented. Indeed, Libya had already indirectly reached the Bush (father) administration in the early 90s via Gary Hart, a Democrat Senator who had just retired. The Libyan Intelligence community officials clearly expressed the desire to enter into direct contact with the US administration, but the latter dismissed the proposal. "We will have no discussions with the Libyans until they turn over the Pan Am bombers," responded the US officials.[854] Even when the Libyans acceded to the US demands against the lifting of the sanctions, or when Abdul Salaam Jalloud (the second highest figure in Libya's leadership) proposed to put "everything on the table", including the WMD, Washington remained firm in its position not to interact with Tripoli. Gary Hart does not provide a clear answer to the US sticky position, but, most likely, the US administration did not want any interaction with Libya at that time. The same scenario happened on the eve of the 2000s when Libya offered to give up its chemical weapons program *in exchange for an easing of the sanctions imposed because of its alleged support for terrorism.* Still, *the U.S. refused (once more), telling the Libyans that taking responsibility for the downing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 was a much higher priority*.[855]

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[852] SOLINGEN, Etel: **Sanctions, statecraft, and nuclear proliferation,** New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp.272-273. (Consulted online)

[853] BAHGAT, Gawdat, **Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: The case of Libya**, International Relations, 2008, Vol.22, N.1, pp.105-106

[854] HART, Gary, **My secret talks with Libya, and why they went nowhere,** The Washington Post, 18th January 2004. Accessed from https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2004/01/18/my-secret-talks-with-libya-and-why-they-went-nowhere/d144215b-f781-4c18-978e-33c483850a7b/ on the 8th June 2021.

[855] FRANTZ Douglas and MEYER Josh, **The deal to disarm Kadafi**, Los Angeles Times, 13th March 2005. Accessed from https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-mar-13-fg-libya13-story.html on the 7th June 2021.

The second main lesson from Qaddafi's sudden overture relates to Libya's domestic politics or decision-making. As we previously analyzed, Libya's decision-making was characterized by two opposing camps: the hard-liners who advocated for a continuous hard stance on the nuclear program and the pragmatists who encouraged domestic reforms and a conciliatory approach on the nuclear issue. (**Domestic coalitions and mixed signals – Hybrid compromise, Etel Solingen**). As previously analyzed, if the Libyans had been conciliatory on the Lockerbie issue as they handed over the two suspects as required by the UN, Tripoli would nevertheless pursue its nuclear activities. For example, *by October 2000, they had set up and successfully run a single P-1 centrifuge model provided by the Khan network. Later that year, they began to install three P-1 centrifuge cascades at Al-Hashan. (But) this work was interrupted in April 2002 when the centrifuges were disassembled and placed in storage at another site in Tripoli, Al-Fallah, due to security concerns*.[856]

Libya might have considered the Latin principle of *in dubio pro reo* – which means "when in doubt, in favor of the defendant" – when sustaining their controversial nuclear activities. In other words, as one is innocent until proven guilty, the Libyan authorities might have decided to keep their **denial and deceptive nuclear strategy** until proven guilty of proliferation activities. Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer argues that Libya's ambivalent behavior *was not unusual in the Gaddafi regime. […] By encouraging separate and apparently contradictory policy tracks, Gaddafi could permit both options to develop further, delaying his final decision while balancing the different regime factions*.[857] Nonetheless, the Iraq events in 2002 compelled Kadhafi to take a position finally.

The direct consequence of the 2003 Iraqi events in Libya's decision-making was the rise of the pragmatist faction. Proponents of a moderate Libyan foreign policy like Gaddafi's son Saif Al-Islam or Mohamed A. Zwai, a former ambassador to the UK, had the wind in their sails.[858] The fact that two hostile regimes had been toppled was already threatening enough for the stability of Gaddafi's regime. Still, the capture of Saddam Hussein sent an unambiguous message to the leader of the Jamahiriya Revolution about his fate if he did not change his policy. (Robert) Joseph, a leading American negotiator, argued that "Saddam's capture weighed heavily on the minds of Libyan representatives."[859] One could also assume that Libya's desire to discuss its WMD activities, notably the nuclear program, was driven by the Lockerbie experience, which

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[856] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid: **Unclear physics: Why Iraq and Libya failed to build nuclear weapons, *Op. Cit.,*** p.207
[857] BRAUT-HEGGHAMMER, Målfrid: **Unclear physics: Why Iraq and Libya failed to build nuclear weapons, *Ibid.,*** p.198
[858] JAKOBSEN V., Peter, **Reinterpreting Libya's WMD turnaround – Bridging the carrot-coercion divide, *Op. Cit.*,** p.501
[859] STEVENS A., Christopher, **The Libyan debate: coercive diplomacy reconsidered**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.336

set a precedent of confidence between Libya and the UK. Regarding Libya's nuclear program, then Prime Minister Tony Blair recalled that Tripoli approached London with the hopes that "it could resolve its WMD issue in a similarly cooperative manner," [860] as was the case with the Lockerbie issue. Against this backdrop, the Libyans reached the British "to clear the air" regarding the WMD and ease the thorny relations with the US. Soon after the Libyan initiative, the British informed the Bush administration about Tripoli's intentions.

Unlike the previous administrations, George Bush agreed to discuss with the Libyans regarding its WMD. The Western Powers did not consider this Libyan initiative to be a bluff as "the direct involvement of Saef al-Islam – widely regarded as a representative of his father and potential heir – in this approach was taken as a sign that Gadhafi himself was ready to negotiate."[861] However, considering the issue's sensitivity for the countries involved, the trilateral negotiations between Libya, the UK and the US took place secretly. Consequently, the negotiating teams were composed of members of the intelligence community and led respectively by Musa Kusa (head of the Libyan secret services), Stephen Kappes (deputy director of operation in the CIA) and Sir Mark Allen (director of the counter-terrorism in the MI6). It is important to note that the Libyan negotiating team was under Saef al-Islam's leadership and composed of two moderates (Ambassador Abdellati Obaidi and Ambassador Mohamed Zwai) which signaled a more conciliatory approach during the coming negotiations.

However, in line with Tripoli's traditional ambivalent, if not contradictory, policy, the Libyan diplomats sent contradictory messages. While they officially expressed their readiness to discuss and seriously solve the WMD issue with the West, they did not clearly indicate which aspects of the WMD program should be addressed. Robert Joseph, a US negotiator and former senior director for counter-proliferation strategy in the National Security Council staff, captured the contradictions in these terms: *the March 2003 request to "clear the air" on WMD was more likely an attempt to hedge against what Tripoli saw as potential liability to the regime than a signal of intent to abandon WMD programs.*[862] Nevertheless, each party clearly expressed its demands which can be listed in two main groups: the rehabilitation of Tripoli in the concert of the nations and the total lifting of the US unilateral sanctions from the Libyans. At the same time, the US requested the dismantling of the nuclear program and the long-range missiles. However, just like with the Iranian case, political and technical stumbling blocks stood in the way of the normalization of Libya/US relations.

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[860] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Rogue Libya's long road, *Op. Cit.,*** p.46
[861] BOWEN Q., Wyn: **Libya and nuclear proliferation: stepping back from the brink**, ***Op. Cit.***, p.62 (1st ed. - Consulted online.)
[862] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** p.35

The political obstacles were twofold: first, the deep mistrust between the two States (the US and Libya) and second, the nature of the demands of the US. The distrust constituted a significant obstacle to resolving the Libyan nuclear issue, as thirty years of enmity could not be easily erased within months. In addition, by requesting Libya to give up its WMD and long-range missiles, the West demanded to forgo strategic assets of the country's foreign policy. Qaddafi was so wary that he even *"suspected an ambush" by the West (aiming at) getting him to give up his only deterrent*.[863] (**Intervening variable of the leader's perception**) Therefore, Libya's top leadership needed assurances regarding the true intentions of the West. In a political regime where the leader embodied the entire decision-making system, credible appeasing words could only come from people in the inner circle. Who else than the leader's son to fulfil this role? Saef al-Islam Kadhafi, the leading Libyan negotiator, would alleviate his dad's concerns whenever they were raised. *When Gaddafi grew nervous, Seif al Islam says he reassured his father about the West's intentions, telling him, "Trust me."*[864] The second main assurance to Libya's leader regarding the West was the frame under which the negotiations were set: "U.S. and UK participants were conscious from the beginning of the need to structure the outcome on a win-win basis: a non-proliferation victory for the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as a political and a national security victory for Libya," Robert Joseph emphasized.[865] (**Strategic empathy**)

Concerning the technical perspective, the Western Powers requested a total dismantling of all the WMD components, especially the nuclear' ones. This specific demand was formulated against the backdrop of the Iranian case. Indeed, the Americans wanted to avoid repeating the hide-seek game with the Iranians, who "cynically manipulated the provisions of the NPT to acquire sensitive technologies for weapons purposes under the guise of a peaceful program," the Americans argued.[866] However, as we will see, this demand fostered deep regrets in the Libyan camp later. Closely related to this demand was the need for an intrusive inspection of the Libyan nuclear program by experts from the US, the UK, and the IAEA. At first glance, this seemed extremely difficult, as Libyans were first opposed to such intrusive inspections, raising sovereignty imperatives and even denying the nuclear program's very existence at some point.

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[863] MACLEOD, Scott, **Behind Gaddafi's diplomatic turnaround,** Time, 18th May 2006. Accessed on the 7th of June 2021 from http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1195852,00.html.
[864] MACLEOD, Scott, **Behind Gaddafi's diplomatic turnaround, *Ibid*.** See also BECKETT Francis, HENCKE David and KOCHAN Nick: **Blair. The power, the money, the scandals,** London, John Blake, 2016, 288 pages.
[865] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** p.17
[866] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Ibid.,*** p.9

Consequently, between April and September 2003, the trilateral nuclear negotiations did not make substantial progress. Qaddafi developed a **buying-time strategy** as the Libyans kept delaying the perspective of foreign inspections of its controversial nuclear program, arguing that they constituted a breach of Libya's sovereignty.[867] One would have expected the Bush administration to adopt more coercive measures to compel Libya to respond to its demands. But such a move could have failed or backfired, considering the mistrust of Qaddafi. This does not mean that there were no pressures on the Libyan government; in fact, Georges Bush decided to extend the ILSA for another five years in 2002, signaling that the US had not forgone the economic pressure pattern. In addition, even though solving the Lockerbie issue had helped the US administration keep the domestic pressure in check, George Bush allowed some hawks in his administration to blame Libya for its misbehavior in the international system. For instance, then Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton described Libya as a "rogue State" which should be included in the axis of evil.[868] But more importantly, the Iraqi specter still loomed on the horizon, as US officials maintained that "all options are on the table." Therefore, George balanced the (indirect) threats with incentives by blowing hot and cold. (**Combination of sanctions and incentives – Rupal Mehta.**)

The breakthrough regarding the inspection of the Libyan nuclear facilities happened when the BBC China, a Malaysian ship destined to deliver nuclear components, was seized by the Italian thanks to US intelligence. According to many experts, this achievement resulted from international cooperation under the aforementioned PSI framework. Concerning the Libyan nuclear goal, not only did the seizure of the BBC China constitute blatant proof of Tripoli's illicit nuclear activities, but it was also a major success of the **denial strategy** of the West. Consequently, the BBC events seriously impacted Qaddafi's nuclear calculus. In this regard, Scott MacLeod argues that "the discovery provided the public with smoking gun proof of Libya's covert nuclear program. (…) The seizure added pressure on Libya to come clean."[869] Dafna Hochman digs in as she argues that *the (BBC) seizure in early October likely sealed his decision to dismantle his nuclear weapons program. Being caught red-handed seemed to have expedited Qadhafi's willingness to disarm*.[870]

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867 TOBEY, William, **A message from Tripoli: How Libya gave up its WMD**, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 3rd of December 2014. Accessed from https://thebulletin.org/2014/12/a-message-from-tripoli-how-libya-gave-up-its-wmd/ on the 7th of June 2021.

868 BOLTON, R., John: **Beyond the axis of evil: Additional threats from Weapons of Mass Destruction',** The Heritage Foundation, Washington, May 6, 2002. Accessed online on the 7th of June 2021 from the website http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/docs/0205/doc01.htm

869 MACLEOD, Scott, **Behind Gaddafi's diplomatic turnaround, *Op. Cit.***

870 HOCHMAN R., Dafna, **Rehabilitating a rogue: Libya's WMD reversal and lessons for US policy**, The US Army War College Quarterly, 2006, Vol.36, N.1, pp.76-77

How did the US react to the BBC China events? The Bush administration could have capitalized on the BBC China events to publicly blame the Libyans for their continuous controversial nuclear activities, especially considering the increased domestic and international pressure related to the absence of evidence related to the Iraqi case. Instead, Robert Joseph wisely *urged that the seizures be kept secret to maximize American leverage on Qaddafi (…), and Hadley agreed that the seizure could best be used to jolt the Libyans into more dramatic concessions, a decision that was promptly approved by President Bush*. [871] This was another vivid display of **strategic empathy** from the Americans. And they were right in their gamble, as *Seif al Islam admits, but the lack of bullying by MI6 and the CIA reassured Gaddafi. "We realized that we were dealing with friends and sincere people,"* he said.[872]

Consequently, the US and UK experts were allowed the conduct inspections in the Libyan nuclear facilities, and their conclusions were subject to controversies. Before dwelling on the findings of those national experts, it is important to highlight that the IAEA, the UN nuclear watchdog, was almost excluded from the technical part of the disarmament process of Libya. In this regard, Geoffrey E. Forden recalls that *the U.S. and U.K. were less than enthusiastic partners with the IAEA during the denuclearization of Libya. If it had not been for the Gaddafi-regime instance that the IAEA play a lead role in the verification process, the denuclearization might well have taken place without multi-international involvement*.[873] But the Libyan request was not the only explaining factor of the presence of an international actor in Libya's nuclear disarmament. Indeed, then Director General of the Agency also threatened the Western Powers to report what he considered an obstruction to his mandate under the NPT.[874] Consequently, the US and the UK finally agreed to allow the IAEA to be associated with the dismantling process, but the IAEA, which was kept in the dark regarding the existence of the Libyan nuclear-related negotiations in the first place did not agree with the US estimates of the Libyan nuclear program.

The first series of US/UK expert inspections took place in October 2003, while the second occurred in December. Those two missions concluded that Libya had embarked on an enrichment path as the inspectors discovered several centrifuges and hexafluoride equipment.[875] In addition, the US/UK inspectors also found nuclear

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871 TOBEY, William, **A message from Tripoli: How Libya gave up its WMD**, ***Op. Cit.***
872 MACLEOD, Scott, **Behind Gaddafi's diplomatic turnaround, *Op. Cit.***
873 FORDEN E., Geoffrey, **Lessons from past nuclear disarmament: What worked, what did not**, Sandia Report, Global Security Research and Analysis, 2018, p.26
874 EL BARADEI, Mohamed: **The Age of deception: nuclear diplomacy in treacherous times, *Op. Cit.,*** p.155. Consulted online.
875 BOURESTON, Jack and FELDMAN, Yana, **Verifying Libya's nuclear disarmament,** The Verification Research, Training and Information Center (VERTIC), 2004, Issue N. 112, p.2

weapons design documents handed to the IAEA inspectors.[876] The main divergence between the IAEA and the US/UK experts lay in the description of the full scale of the Libyan nuclear program. The choice of the words was important as it would have had implications regarding both Libya – in terms of legitimacy – and the US in terms of credibility. Robert Joseph stresses that "while it would have taken substantial time and effort for Libya to produce a nuclear weapon, the revised intelligence assessment was that Libya was well on its way to developing a nuclear weapons capability."[877]

On the contrary, El Baradei described the Libyan nuclear program as "nascent", arguing that "the pilot plant had very small capacity and no ability to produce uranium hexafluoride gas, the feedstock for uranium enrichment. Even on a laboratory scale, Libyan scientists had never produced UF6 domestically. (…) Their enrichment capacity, as I have noted, was limited to a small number of centrifuges with no production or even testing of nuclear material."[878] Irrespective of the size and enrichment capacity, the very existence of the Libyan nuclear program constituted a violation of Tripoli's engagement under the NPT and the Pelindaba Treaty. Hence, Libya urgently needed to renounce it and amend it publicly. (**The Libyan nuclear program was still at the phase 1 - Eleonora Mattiacci and Benjamin Jones**)

While the discovery of the Libyan nuclear program left Qaddafi without any counterargument regarding its proliferation activities, acknowledging them publicly proved to be more difficult. Indeed, the Libyans would have lost more international credibility in the eyes of their remaining supporters, like the Egyptian President, who was "incensed that the Libyans had not told them about their WMD programs, nor about their negotiations with the Americans and the British."[879] Yet that was the US/UK's main goal from the beginning of the negotiations. But two main obstacles precluded the achievement of such a goal: first, the strategic importance of the nuclear program for Libya and second, the country's reputation at the international level. As previously analyzed, even though the program was still at a rudimentary stage, the Libyan perceived it as a valuable deterrent asset; consequently, Libya needed credible security incentives to comply with the US demands. Concerning the country's reputation, Qaddafi desired to regain respectability at the international level and acknowledging recalcitrant behavior could have undermined that goal. Addressing those two issues was fundamental for Libya's compliance.

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[876] SQUASSONI A., Sharon and FEICKERT Andrew: **Disarming Libya: Weapons of Mass Destruction**, Washington, Library of Congress Washington, Congressional Research Service, 2004, p.4
[877] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** p.51
[878] EL BARADEI, Mohamed: **The Age of deception: nuclear diplomacy in treacherous times, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.154-155. Consulted online.
[879] EL BARADEI, Mohamed: **The Age of deception: nuclear diplomacy in treacherous times, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.157-158. Consulted online.

Regarding security concerns, the Western Powers guaranteed that Libya would not be subject to a regime change after relinquishing its nuclear program and defense missiles (**credible incentives and confidence-building measures**). *The Libyan leader asked for assurances that the US would forgo efforts at regime change, lift sanctions and provide economic and military assistance; (and) the British delivered a personal letter from Blair formally agreeing to Qaddafi's conditions*.[880] Furthermore, Saif al Islam even revealed that "as part of the agreement by Libya to renounce its nuclear weapons program, the United States "has committed itself to defend us." (He) also expected that "agreements on military and security cooperation" would follow."[881] The importance of the international reputation of Libya concerning the nuclear program transpired in the first draft of the nuclear declaration. Indeed, the Libyan authorities purposely avoided any reference to their nuclear program. Instead, they just called for a nuclear weapons-free world. Such a declaration was obviously rejected by the Western Powers, who requested an explicit acknowledgement by Libya of its WMD – notably the nuclear-related – and a firm commitment to destroy them.

Unexpectedly, the issue over the formulation appeared to be a greater challenging issue than expected. Both the US and UK administrations raised their concerns about the likelihood of Libyan compliance with the demands mentioned above. Then British Prime Minister Tony Blair directly contacted Qaddafi to convince him to accede to their demands. "Please, we are in a hurry. It is a big success for all of us," said an impatient Blair to Qaddafi.[882] Robert Joseph argues that "Qaddafi reportedly was concerned about: (1) the appearance of the Libyan decision being portrayed as caving into pressure, and (2) the prospect that Libya would be attacked because it had now admitted that it possessed WMD programs."[883] (**Intervening variable of the leader's perceptions**). Those Libyan fears clearly show that the Iraqi symptom was still ticking in the minds of Qaddafi, who needed credible assurances regarding his personal and political survival. Finally, Libya responded by submitting two drafts highlighting the context of its nuclear program's emergence and dismantling. Unsurprisingly, both versions referred to Libya's decision to develop a nuclear program in a defensive posture and its decision to relinquish it was done "on its own free will" and because "an arms race does not serve its security nor the security of the region."[884]

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[880] ANDERSON, Lisa, **Rogue Libya's long road, *Op. Cit.,*** p.46
[881] CIGAR, Norman: **Libya's nuclear disarmament: Lessons and implications for nuclear proliferation**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.4
[882] MACLEOD, Scott, **Behind Gaddafi's diplomatic turnaround, *Op. Cit.***
[883] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** p.63
[884] JOSEPH G., Robert: **Countering WMD. The Libyan experience, *Op. Cit.,*** pp.64-65

The Western Powers were not completely satisfied by the draft but, as a **reciprocal** gesture to Gaddafi's flexibility, acknowledged Libya's effort to meet their demands. Finally, a compromised version was reached among the three parties and contained specific details regarding the components of the nuclear program and the scud missiles, the timeline of the dismantling and the commitment not to embark again on such a path. However, the negotiations were hitherto conducted by diplomats and had not yet received the blessing of the ultimate decision-maker in Libya: Muammar Qaddafi. This was a significant source of anxiety both in Washington and London, as described by a senior British official: "we were worrying that it was all going to get called off, (…) it got later and later."[885] Finally, Libya's decision to abandon its WMD-related components was publicly announced by Mohammed A. Chalgam, then Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the 19th of December 2003, and Qaddafi appeared briefly to deliver his public blessing, calling it a "wise decision and a courageous step."[886]

George Bush immediately reacted to the Libyan announcement in these words: "as the Libyan government takes these essential steps and demonstrates its seriousness, its good faith will be returned. Libya can regain a secure and respected place among the nations, and over time, achieve far better relations with the United States." However, George Bush emphasized the *trust but verify* strategy as he declared that "because Libya has a troubled history with America and Britain, we will be vigilant in ensuring its government lives up to all its responsibilities; [but happily stressed] that old hostilities do not need to go on forever"[887] Tony Blair made similar remarks, describing Libya's nuclear decision as "historic," which "entitled it to rejoin the international community." He called on other States like North Korea to follow the Libyan example, which *demonstrated that countries can abandon programmed voluntarily and peacefully*. [888] Based upon the reports of the IAEA and Paula DeSutter, then US Secretary of State for Verification and Compliance, President George Bush lifted all the remaining sanctions against Libya.[889] What lessons can be learned from the previous coercive nuclear dynamics between the US and Libya?

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[885] FRANTZ Douglas and MEYER Josh, **The deal to disarm Kadafi**, ***Op. Cit.***
[886] FRANTZ Douglas and MEYER Josh, **The deal to disarm Kadafi**, ***Ibid.***
[887] Remarks by the President, **President Bush: Libya Pledges to Dismantle WMD Programs,** Office of the Press Secretary, 19th of December 2003. An information accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from the link https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/12/20031219-9.html
[888] **Full transcript: Blair's Libya statement,** BBC News, 19th of December 2003. Accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/3336073.stm
[889] KERR, Paul, **U.S. lifts remaining economic sanctions against Libya**, Arms Control Association, 2004. Accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from https://dev.armscontrol.org/act/2004-10/us-lifts-remaining-economic-sanctions-against-libya

5.5 SECTION V – LESSONS FROM THE COERCIVE NUCLEAR DYNAMICS BETWEEN THE US AND LIBYA.

As previously highlighted, the main goal of this chapter was to answer the main questions related to our research design: what were the objectives pursued by the US when they implemented their coercive policies against Libya? What were coercive strategies adopted to achieve these objectives? What were the expected outcomes of the US after implementing its coercive strategies against Libya? What were the actual outcomes at the end of the process, and why such outcomes? But we analyzed these coercive nuclear dynamics against the backdrop of our hypotheses: the exploitation by the US coercive strategies of the weaknesses of Libya and the demonstration by the US of a motivation to have a sustained campaign to compel the Libya to abandon its nuclear weapons program. Also, we would consider whether or not the US coercive strategies and threats were credible, proportionate and reciprocal to the Libyan response. Considering our theoretical lens (neoclassical realism), we would also highlight the transmitting-belt role played by the intervening variables between the independent variable (systemic pressures or international demands) and the dependent variable (foreign policy). This research design would help us to confirm the relevance of the following four ingredients regarding the implementation of a successful coercive strategy in the nuclear realm: the display by the coercer of strategic empathy towards its target, the formulation of clear and acceptable demands to the target, the display by the coercer of a higher resolve than the target to achieve his/her objective, and the offer of credible incentives to the target if he complies.

Regarding the coercive goal, unlike the Iranian case, where the US had a fixed goal since the 1979 Revolution, the US objectives related to Libya evolved over time. Indeed, as we previously analyzed, the Libyan nuclear challenge became a severe source of concern in the middle of the 90s. Until then, Libya's controversial international actions were mainly related to its terrorist activities. This can be explained by several factors, including ideology-driven global behavior (Arab unity, anti-imperialism) and political, technical, and logistical obstacles regarding the nuclear program. Consequently, from the 1969 revolution till the middle of the 90s, the main coercive goal of the US was to compel Libya to abandon its financial support for terrorist organizations (Abu Nidal) or violent political movements (IRA). During the second half of the 90s decade, the US coercive goals progressively moved from a strict terrorism perspective to a WMD. This was mainly explained by the improvement of intelligence methods of investigation (Khan illicit nuclear network) and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Just like the coercive goals, the US coercive strategies also progressed, considering the nature of the threats to thwart.

Concerning the US coercive strategies, the US adapted its response to the nature of the challenges posed by Gaddafi's actions and their impact on the domestic landscape. Concerning the terrorist challenge, the US government (Reagan) first adopted a denial strategy to prevent Libya from accessing (financial and logistical) incremental resources for its foreign agenda. In adopting such a coercive strategy, the US expected a power-base erosion mechanism as the sanctions would affect key stakeholders in the country's decision-making. However, Libya counter-attacked with **defiance and framing** strategies as they framed the US as the leader of Western imperialism, which helped to portray Qaddafi as the spearhead of the victims of hegemony. Considering the increase in terrorist attacks, which clearly demonstrated the failure of the denial strategy, the Reagan administration finally resorted to a punishment and even decapitation coercive strategy by launching air strikes against critical military infrastructures and the Leader's residence. It is worth emphasizing that those decisions were made in line with the increasing domestic pressure in the US and the necessity to demonstrate credibility at the international level.

The US expected unrest and assassination mechanisms by adopting a punishment and assassination coercive strategy, respectively. Concerning the former, the impossibility of the Libyans to import key components of their oil refineries would have precluded them from selling their main economic asset abroad, thus leading to increased prices and unrest movements in the society. Concerning the latter, by (allegedly) killing Qaddafi, the Libyans would have permitted the emergence of a new and more conciliatory leadership. However, Qaddafi could deflect the effect of the previous coercive measures by **portraying** himself as a personal target of the external enemies' assaults. This would then create a rally-round-the-flag impact in society. In addition, Libya benefitted from the **international support of several countries**, especially from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Consequently, the US adjusted their coercive strategy by relying on unilateral initiatives and multilateral responses. The timing was perfect as the Cold War had just ended, and many States supported the new counter-terrorism approach of the US. Logically, the multilateral strategy of the US impacted Libya's behavior.

Before dwelling on the impact of the international support to the US approach against Libya's controversial behavior, it is important to highlight the mechanism envisioned by the US. By having recourse to international support to address the Libyan terrorist challenge, the US relied on a coercive diplomatic isolation strategy which deprived Libya of its foreign political support **(International power-base erosion mechanism)**. In addition, the US-led UN sanctions against Libya highlight the adoption of a **coercive shaming strategy** as Tripoli was now labelled as a "Pariah State' which sponsored terrorism. Combined with the domestic challenges (economic mismanagement, failed military coups) and the absence of an international godfather

(the Soviet Union), the international isolation of Libya led its authorities to seek a solution to its exclusion from the concert of the nation. Unfortunately, trapped in ideological considerations (George Bush father) and concerned with solving the Lockerbie issue, the US administration (Bill Clinton) declined the offer.

Nonetheless, while the Libyans seemed ready to change their policy concerning terrorist groups, they actively tried to improve the rudimentary nuclear program by recoursing to the black market. **This dissimulation or ambivalent** policy was the first mechanism adopted by the Libyans to escape from the international scrutiny of their controversial nuclear activities. However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks negatively affected Libyan plans. Indeed, George Bush, who had just been elected as the 43rd US president, put both terrorism and WMD issues in the same basket and consequently launched military campaigns against targets (Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq) which were deemed as the biggest sponsors of the aforementioned security threats. With the rapid defeats of Afghanistan and Iraq, Qaddafi felt increasingly unsecured and initiated a rapprochement with the US via the UK. Yet, he could also deny the existence of a WMD program and delay his answer to the Western powers' demands. This clearly showed that Qaddafi retained room for maneuverability when dealing with the US and UK.

As previously stressed, the Libyan case is usually described as one of the biggest but most controversial successive coercive models. Scholars and politicians usually do not agree on the real driving factors behind Gaddafi's decision to comply with the US/UK demand to forgo his nuclear program. While some authors argue that diplomacy and incentives pushed Qaddafi toward nuclear disarmament,[890] others argue that the fate of Saddam Hussein played an incremental role in Qaddafi's decision to comply.[891] Some former Libyan officials share this argument, like Abd al-Rahman Shalgam, who argued that George Bush's unambiguous threats in terms of "either you get rid of your weapons of mass destruction or he will personally destroy them and destroy everything with no discussion"[892] created **a sense of urgency** which hastened Libya's nuclear rollback decision. Nevertheless, based on the previous information, Libya decided to comply with the US demands not because incentives or threats were separately applied but because they were simultaneously and wisely used during the entire nine months of negotiations with Libya. Furthermore, there is both empirical and historical evidence which supports our argument or finding.

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[890] MÜLLER-FÄRBER, Thomas: **How the Qaddafi regime was driven into nuclear disarmament**, ***Op. Cit.***

[891] JENTLESON W., Bruce and WHYTOCK A., Christopher, ***Who "won" Libya? The force-diplomacy debate and its implications for theory and policy, Op. Cit.***

[892] CIGAR, Norman: **Libya's nuclear disarmament: Lessons and implications for nuclear proliferation, *Op. Cit.,*** p.2

Unlike previous research, which concluded that Libya was led toward nuclear disarmament either through incentives[893] or threats,[894] we humbly suggest that choosing between carrots and sticks or between bullets and silver when assessing Libya's motivation to relinquish its nuclear program is simplistic and partial. Indeed, such an approach does not fully grasp the interactions between the two parties. Henceforth, this research aligns with Peter Viggo Jakobsen's assertion[895] that Libya has successfully disarmed thanks to the wise and simultaneous application of (indirect) threats and incentives. Indeed, there is no doubt regarding the usefulness of the security threats in leading Libya to disarm. This was demonstrated by Qaddafi's frequent concerns regarding his personal security and that of his regime. However, the fact that Libya had suggested discussing his WMD activities twice before the US military campaign against Saddam Hussein lessens the absolute relevance of the military coercion school of thought.

Thereof, "the Iraq war ***only*** did not force Gaddafi"[896] to abandon his nuclear-weapons program. Another set of factors also paved the way for the successful outcome of the Libyan nuclear issue. One of them was undoubtedly the incremental role played by positive incentives in terms of a more prestigious international status and, more importantly, the security guarantees provided by the US/UK. Saif Al-Islam confirms it in these terms: *(the) regime insecurity informed Libya's decision: "we told them: listen, do you have ambitions in the Gulf of Sirte? They said, no. We asked them: do you have any desire to interfere in our internal affairs? They said no. do you want to threaten the Libyan regime? No. Do you? No. No."*[897]

A third factor to consider in Libya's nuclear reversal decision is the broad strategy of the US/UK when discussing with Qaddafi. Firstly, President Bush wisely alternated *veiled threats* with incentives by sometimes allowing hawkish officials to play the role of "circuit breakers" while reassuring Qaddafi about its true intentions. Secondly, the Western Powers also treated their adversary with respect and consideration, as demonstrated by the personal diplomacy of then-British Prime Minister Blair, who referred to Qaddafi as "brother leader." Even when the US had leverage to bully the Libyans, as was the case with the seizure of the BBC-China, they refrained from shaming the country and its leader. Such confidence-building behavior was decisive as *it served*

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893 MÜLLER-FÄRBER, Thomas: **How the Qaddafi regime was driven into nuclear disarmament**, ***Op. Cit.***

894 AHMED YUSEF, B. Aessa: **Libyan foreign policy: a study of policy shifts in Libya's nuclear programme**, PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2014, 303 pages.

895 JAKOBSEN V., Peter, ***Coercive diplomacy, Op. Cit.***, p.247

896 INDYK S., Martin, **The Iraq war did not force Gadaffi's hand, *Op. Cit.***

897 STEVENS A., Christopher, **The Libyan debate: coercive diplomacy reconsidered**, ***Op. Cit.,*** p.336

to assure the adversary that compliance will not result in new demands and that promises of compensation will be kept.[898]

It is also important to emphasize the strategic role played by pragmatist actors like Saif Al-Islam Kadhafi, who adopted a balanced approach between the strategic demands of both camps. As a transmitting belt between his father and the Western Powers, he helped to alleviate the risk of misperception between the conflicting parties.[899] Finally, George Bush's approach to Libya is worth praising as, unlike in the previous Iranian case, he clearly understood his enemy and behaved accordingly. But this was possible only because he had *uncharacteristically sidelined the administration's neoconservative wing — which strongly opposes any offer of carrots to State sponsors of terrorism, even when carrots could help end such problematic behavior — when crucial decisions were made*.[900]

The envisioned transmitting-belt effect of the neoclassical realism theory also transpired in the coercive dynamics between Washington and Tripoli. Though intervening variables like the balance of power among institutions or the strategic/political culture did not occur during the coercive dynamics between Washington and Tripoli, other intervening variables like the perceptions of the leader and the State-society relations (in terms of extracting public support, the victimization of the leader) played an incremental role in shaping the nature of Libya's response to the US demands. As the previous analysis has demonstrated, Gaddafi's security perceptions were omnipresent during the interactions with the US. Also, Gaddafi capitalized on the US bombings against Libya to extract public support (State-society relations) to sustain his defiant nuclear and terrorism policies. These intervening variables led to the creation of counter mechanisms we identified thanks to the process-tracing method.

The Libyan authorities also crafted counter-coercion strategies like the deception strategy, as they relied on the black market to obtain sensitive nuclear components. However, these strategies were not successful, as the US undermined them by wielding indirect but credible security threats to Gaddafi's regime. In addition, they formulated acceptable demands to the Libyans, provided credible incentives in terms of security guarantees, and reciprocated to the Libyans' goodwill gestures. In this case, the US subdued their enemy without fighting, as the combination of all the previous elements

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[898] JAKOBSEN V., Peter, **Reinterpreting Libya's WMD turnaround – Bridging the carrot-coercion divide, *Op. Cit.*,** p.495

[899] METTER, Nils, **A case for clandestine diplomacy: The secret UK-US-Libyan talks**, Working Paper, 2014, p.26

[900] LEVERETT L., Flynt, **Why Libya gave up on the bomb,** Brookings, 23rd January 2004. Accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/why-libya-gave-up-on-the-bomb/

convinced Gaddafi to change his international behavior in general, and his nuclear policy in general. Although unwillingly, the US coercive strategy against Libya confirmed Sun Tzu's precept that "to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."[901] Thereof, the previous information supports the relevance of Christopher Whytock and Bruce Jentlesson's coercion model (credibility, proportionality and reciprocity). This case study also confirms the relevance of our four ingredients regarding implementing a coercive strategy.[902] Lastly, considering Jakobsen's typology of success, the US engagement with Libya can be considered as a "cheap success," given the minimal level of threats needed to compel Gaddafi to acquiesce to Washington's demands.

While ending the chapter on a sad note would tarnish the insightful and beautiful picture of the previous coercive dynamics, it is nevertheless important to highlight the impact of the negative end of Qaddafi on future coercive nuclear negotiations. Just like many countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which experienced the Arab Spring in 2011, Libya's domestic landscape also went under turmoil. Rebels demanded Qaddafi's demission after 42 years of rule and were backed by foreign actors, notably NATO. This intervention ultimately led to the downfall of the former leader of the Libyan Jamahiriya. Without dwelling on the merits or limits of humanitarian interventions, the fact that a regime willingly relinquished its WMD and was toppled less than 8 years later sent a negative message to recalcitrant proliferators. In fact, it strengthened the proponents of the nuclear deterrence theory as the ultimate guarantee of a regime's survival. This was evidenced by North Korea's criticism of Libya's referred to as a model of nuclear disarmament by then US National Security advisor John Bolton.[903]

But then Libyan leaders had already started regretting their strategic decision before Bolton's reckless analogy: "we have been told that President Bush is a man that honors his own words, we are not so sure of that anymore. Libya has not been rewarded for the good service it did to world peace," admitted a disappointed Qaddafi during an interview in 2005.[904] His elder son Saif Al Islam Qaddafi, goes further as he grudgingly warns: "nowadays everyone is afraid to even touch North Korea. If there were an atomic bomb, no one would be attacking us. (…) It's a good lesson for anybody ... for us and for

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[901] MCNEILLY, Mark: **Sun Tzu and the art of modern warfare**, ***Op. Cit.***, p.15

[902] The display by the coercer of **a strategic empathy towards its target**, the formulation of **clear and acceptable demands** to the target, display by the coercer of **a higher resolve than the target** to achieve his/her objective, and the offer of **credible incentives** to the target if the target complies.

[903] BAKER, Peter, **Libya as a model for disarmament? North Korea may see it very differently,** New York Times, 29th of April 2018. Accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from the link https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/29/us/politics/bolton-libya-north-korea-trump.html.

[904] CNN: **2005 interview, Gadhafi on ending nuclear program.** Accessed on the 10th of June 2021 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98qnaR-0Z14

others ... it means this is a message to everybody, that you have to be strong, you [can] never trust them [i.e., NATO], and you have to be always on alert."[905] While studies on the conducive conditions of implementing coercive diplomacy usually focus on the procedural aspects of the interactions between the coercer and the coerce, the distributive aspects should not be neglected. In other words, the coercer should also consider the benefits of the target in the long run when accessing his demand; this will undoubtedly discourage recalcitrant proliferators from resisting future demands of the coercer. The following chapter will focus on the South African nuclear issue.

Like in the Iranian chapter, before the analysis of the coercive interactions between the US and South Africa over Pretoria's nuclear program, we summarized the findings of the coercive nuclear dynamics between Washington and Pretoria in the following table. Indeed, table 16 encapsulates the substance of the previously mentioned interactions by highlighting the main actors (sender and target), the driving factors of the target's controversial actions (the building of the nuclear program), the international context under which the interactions occurred, the issue at stakes between the protagonist overtime, the goals of the sender, its coercive strategy, the instruments used to implement its strategy, the expected outcomes of its strategy, the actual outcomes after the implementation of the coercive strategy, the reasons and mechanisms behind the actual outcomes of the coercive dynamics between the protagonists, and lastly, the nature of the demands formulated by the sender or coercer

[905] CIGAR, Norman: **Libya's nuclear disarmament: Lessons and implications for nuclear proliferation, *Op. Cit.,*** p.5

COERCER	TARGET	ISSUE	DRIVERS OF THE TARGET	OBJECTIVES	INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	COERCIVE STRATEGY	COERCIVE INSTRUMENT	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	ACTUAL OUTCOMES	MECHANISMS	NATURE OF THE DEMANDS
USA	LIBYA	Libya's support for terrorism	Ideology (pan Arabism and anti-imperialism)	Stopping Libya's support for terrorism	Cold War	Denial, punishment, and decapitation	Trade sanctions, logistical embargos. Financial sanctions, and air strikes	Unrest, power-base erosion. Assassination, change of leadership	Defiance and continuation of terrorism support. Intensification of nuclear seeking activities	Victimisation and self-portrayal, Rally round the flag and international support	Unacceptable – No offer of incentives.
			Ideology (pan Arabism and anti-imperialism)	Stopping Libya's support for terrorism	Post-Cold War (1990-1997)	Diplomatic isolation and naming and shaming	Political pressures, continuity of previous trade and financial sanctions. Multilateral sanctions (UN Res. 731, 748, 883). Unilateral sanctions (ILSA)	International power-base erosion	Libya's offer to settle the terrorism issue and nuclear concerns.	Economic instability and failed military coups.	Unacceptable – No offer of incentives.
USA	LIBYA	Libya's Attempts to acquire nuclear weapons	Ideology (pan Arabism and anti-imperialism)	Undermine Libya's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons	Prior to 9/11 events	Denial	ILSA	Compliance with UN Res. 731, 748, 883. Ending of terrorism and attempts to acquire nuclear weapons.	Continuation of international terrorism and intensification of nuclear seeking activities.	Dissimulation or ambivalent nuclear policy, framing.	Unacceptable – No offer of incentives
			Ideology (pan Arabism and anti-imperialism)	Stopping Libya's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons	Post 9/11 events	Indirect decapitation Denial	Military threats / Risk of changing the regime via a military invasion. military trade embargo (BBC-China cargo)	Risk of decapitation and incapacitation.	Full transparency on nuclear activities.	Perceived security threat to the regime, economic instability, failure of the terrorism and nuclear objectives and incentives	Acceptable and offer of incentives (regime security guarantees. economic prosperity)

Table 17: Findings of the coercive dynamics between the US and Libya.