

BENGAZI, INSTABILITY, AND A NEW GOVERNMENT: SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF U.S. INTERVENTION IN LIBYA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MAY 1, 2014

Serial No. 113-110

Printed for the use of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.fdsys.gov>
<http://www.house.gov/reform>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

88-089 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2014

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
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BENGHAZI, INSTABILITY, AND A NEW GOVERNMENT:

SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF U.S. INTERVENTION IN LIBYA

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2014
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:33 a.m., in Room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Darrell E. Issa [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Issa, Mica, Duncan, Jordan, Chaffetz, Walberg, Lankford, Amash, Gosar, DesJarlais, Gowdy, Farenthold, Lummis, Woodall, Massie, Meadows, DeSantis, Cummings, Maloney, Norton, Tierney, Lynch, Connolly, Speier, Duckworth, Kelly, Horsford, and Lujan Grisham.

Staff Present: Alexa Armstrong, Staff Assistant; Brien A. Beattie, Professional Staff Member; Molly Boyd, Deputy General Counsel and Parliamentarian; Lawrence J. Brady, Staff Director; Caitlin Carroll, Press Secretary; Sharon Casey, Senior Assistant Clerk; Steve Castor, General Counsel; John Cuaderes, Deputy Staff Director; Jessica L. Donlon, Senior Counsel; Kate Dunbar, Professional Staff Member; Adam P. Fromm, Director of Member Services and Committee Operations; Linda Good, Chief Clerk; Frederick Hill, Deputy Staff Director for Communications and Strategy; Christopher Hixon, Chief Counsel, Oversight; Caroline Ingram, Professional Staff Member; Jim Lewis, Senior Policy Advisor; Mark D. Marin, Deputy Staff Director of Oversight; Ashok M. Pinto, Chief Counsel, Investigations; Andrew Rezendes, Counsel; Laura Rush, Deputy Chief Clerk; Jessica Seale, Digital Director; Jonathan J. Skladany, Deputy General Counsel; Rebecca Watkins, Communications Director; Aryele Bradford, Press Secretary; Jennifer Hoffman, Minority Communications Director; Peter Kenny, Minority Counsel; Chris Knauer, Minority Senior Investigator; Elisa LaNier, Minority Director of Operations; Lucinda Lessley, Minority Policy Director; Juan McCullum, Minority Clerk; Dave Rapallo, Minority Staff Director; and Valerie Shen, Minority Counsel.

Chairman ISSA. The Committee on Government Oversight will come to order. Today's hearing on Benghazi Instability and a New Government: Successes and Failures of U.S. Intervention in Libya.

The Oversight Committee's mission statement is that we exist to secure two fundamental principles. First, Americans have a right to know that the money Washington takes from them is well spent; and second, Americans deserve an efficient, effective government that works for them. Our duty on the Oversight and Government

Reform Committee is to protect these rights. Our solemn responsibility is to hold government accountable to taxpayers. It's our job to work tirelessly in partnership with citizen watchdogs to deliver the facts to the American people and bring genuine reform to the Federal bureaucracy. This is our mission.

Today, the Oversight Committee convenes a fourth hearing related to the security situation in Libya before, during, and after the September 11 terrorist attack in Benghazi which claimed the lives of four Americans. The committee has previously brought forward important witnesses who offered new enlightening testimony on security failures that forced the administration to walk back, false claims about the nature of the terrorist attack.

The testimony of previous witnesses also identified key questions in the interagency process that only this committee has the jurisdiction and the charge to investigate. While much of the committee's effort in the investigation has focused on the Department of State, we have recently conducted several joint interviews of relevant military personnel with the House Armed Services Committee. While we had requested that these interviews be conducted as unclassified, the Pentagon leadership insisted that they occur at the inexplicable and unreasonable level of Top Secret.

Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have called for an end to this investigation. These calls are clearly premature, and only raise public concerns about the political agenda to stop an important investigation before it has completed gathering facts about this interagency Obama administration debacle. In particular, the committee seeks insight into communications and directions that flowed between the State Department, the Department of Defense and, yes, the White House.

It is essential that we fully understand areas of responsibility before, during, and after the attacks. It's my hope that today's hearing will help us add to our investigation's expanding body of knowledge, and I am pleased that we will be proceeding on an entirely unclassified basis. We do so because the American people, more than anyone else in this body, have the absolute right to know why four men are dead in an attack that could have been prevented.

We have a distinguished panel of witnesses before us today that will bring expertise to us about the current situation in Libya. One of our witnesses, retired United States Air Force Brigadier General Robert Lovell, brings with him firsthand knowledge of U.S. military efforts in Libya as he served at U.S. African Command.

U.S. African Command is sometimes called AFRICOM. In the military command lingo, this is the organization that had responsibility, not just for Libya, but for the entire continent of Africa. This unit's mission included both the Libyan revolution and the September 11, 2012 terrorist attack on a diplomatic compound in Benghazi. At the U.S. African Command, General Lovell served as the Deputy Director For Intelligence and Knowledge Development and as Deputy Commanding General of Joint Task Force Odyssey Guard. In this assignment, he was tasked with helping the State Department reopen the U.S. embassy in Tripoli after the fall of Qadhafi. We appreciate all of our witnesses taking time to testify and enlighten the public about the situation in Libya and the effects of U.S. decisions.

In addition to pursuing the relevant information about the military's involvement in Libya, we continue to receive documents from the State Department. Since late March alone, we have received over 3,200 new documents, many of which have never been seen before by anyone outside of the administration and all of which, and I repeat, all of which, should have been turned over more than a year and a half ago when the committee launched its investigation. Some of these documents which were brought to light only days ago through a FOIA request by an organization known as Judicial Watch, show a direct White House role outside—I'm going to repeat this. The documents from Judicial Watch's FOIA which were pursuant to our request more than a year and a half ago, show a direct White House role outside of talking points prepared by the Intelligence Community. The White House produced the talking points that Ambassador Rice used, not the Intelligence Community.

In pushing the false narrative that a YouTube video was responsible for the deaths of four brave Americans, it is disturbing, and perhaps criminal, that documents like these were hidden by the Obama administration from Congress and the public alike, particularly after Secretary Kerry pledged cooperation, and the President himself told the American people in November of 2012 that, "every bit of information we have on Benghazi has been provided."

This committee's job is to get to the facts and to the truth. I, for one, will continue to chip away at this until we get the whole truth. The American people—sorry. The Americans who lost their lives in Benghazi, those who were wounded, and the American people deserve nothing less.

So today's hearing is critical for what our witnesses will give us, and I welcome you and I thank you for being here. But it comes in a week in which the American people have learned that you cannot believe what the White House says. You cannot believe what the spokespeople say, and you cannot believe what the President says, and the facts are coming out that, in fact, this administration has knowingly withheld documents pursuant to congressional subpoenas in violation of any reasonable transparency or historic precedent at least since Richard Milhous Nixon.

I now recognize the ranking member for his opening statement.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank the chairman for yielding, and thank you for this hearing.

In 2011, the people of Libya rose up against their dictator, Muammar Qadhafi, to end his oppressive role which lasted more than four decades. At the time, Republicans and Democrats alike strongly supported helping armed rebels in their efforts to overthrow Qadhafi. For example, in April 2011, Senator John McCain traveled to Libya and met with the rebels, after which he proclaimed, "They are my heroes."

During a national television appearance on July 3, 2011, Senator McCain warned that allowing Qadhafi to remain in power would be far more dangerous to the United States than the alternative. He stated, "This notion that we should fear who comes after or what comes after Qadhafi ignores that if Qadhafi stays in power, it is then a direct threat to our national security." During a television appearance on April 24 of 2011, Senator Lindsey Graham agreed that taking the fight directly to Qadhafi would protect our national

security. He stated, "You cannot protect our vital national security interests if Qadhafi stays." He also stated, "The focus should now be to cut the head of the snake off."

As the revolution grew stronger, Qadhafi embarked on a brutal crackdown, and on March 17, 2011, he threatened his own people and warned that he would show them "no mercy." The next day, President Obama explained to the world why the United States was joining the effort to remove Qadhafi, and he said this: The world has watched events unfold in Libya with hope and alarm. Last month protestors took to the streets across the country to demand their universal rights in a government that is accountable to them and responsive to their aspirations. But they were met with an iron fist. Instead of respecting the rights of his own people, Qadhafi chose the path of brutal suppression. Innocent civilians were beaten, imprisoned, and in some cases, killed.

Senator McCain applauded the President's decision by the way. During a press conference in Libya, he stated, and "Had President Obama and our allies not acted, history would have remembered Benghazi in the same breath as former Yugoslavia, a scene of mass atrocities and a source of international shame."

In an op ed in April 2011, Senator McCain wrote this: "The President was right to intervene. He now deserves our support as we and our coalition partners do all that is necessary to help the Libyan people secure future freedom."

In October 2011, Qadhafi finally met his ugly demise. During his oppressive rule, he was an extremely dangerous tyrant. During the 1980s, he supported international terrorism, including the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which claimed the lives of 270 innocent civilians. He also reportedly pursued chemical, nuclear and biological weapons. In fact, after Qadhafi was killed, the new Libyan government reportedly uncovered two tons of chemical weapons that Qadhafi had kept hidden from the world, yet armed and ready to use.

As we all know our dedicated and patriotic special envoy named Christopher Stevens arrived in Benghazi to work with the Libyan people on their transition to democracy. He had forged deep connections and affiliations with the Libyan people during his career. He understood the challenges caused by 40 years of oppression. Ambassador Stevens believed in the promise of a new future for this country. Today Libya is at a crossroads. Open a newspaper and you will read about persistent violence in a country awash in weapons and a central government that has not yet consolidated its control over the country.

On the other hand, the Libyan people continue to look to the West with respect and with hope. They aspire to work with the United States to build a stable, pro-democratic country.

If we want the people of Libya to succeed, we must find a way to reengage the world and ourselves on behalf of a nation that desires our help. This was the bipartisan goal shared by Republicans like Lindsey Graham and John McCain who called on the United States, "to build a partnership with a democratic and pro-American Libya that contributes to the expansion of security, prosperity and freedom across a pivotal region at a time of revolutionary change."

I hope today is a step towards this goal. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about how we can assist the people of Libya. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman. All members may have 7 days in which to submit opening statements for the record and any quotes of Senator Lindsey Graham or John McCain they wish.

For what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I have four documents I would lack to ask unanimous consent to enter into the record. One is from the Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, entitled Lessons From Libya, How Not to Intervene, dated September 2013. Another is an Associated Press article of March 22, 2014, entitled Libya's Guns, Free for All Fuels Regions' Turmoil. Another one is the Global Research of April 5, 2014. Headline is, NATO's Humanitarian Intervention in Libya, Transforming a Country Into a Failed State. The final one is a document that's listed as unclassified. It's a State Department document that I previously referenced by Congressman Trey Gowdy, and the subject line is Libya update from Beth Jones. The date is September 12 at 12:46 p.m. There's a paragraph in here that I think is pertinent to our discussions today. It's referencing the Libyan ambassador: "When he said his government suspected that former Qadhafi regime elements carried out the attacks, I told him that the group that conducted the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia, is affiliated with Islamic extremists." This coming from the State Department going to Victoria Nuland, Patrick Kennedy, Cheryl Mills, Secretary Clinton's chief of staff. I'd like to enter this into the record which has not been out there in the public.

Chairman ISSA. One question. What was the date and time on that?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Date is September 12, 2012, 12:46 p.m. This is hours after the attack. It is what the State Department told the Libyan government what was happening, "I told him," meaning the Libyan ambassador, "that the group that conducted the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia, is affiliated with Islamic extremists." Those were the facts as the State Department knew them and I think everybody should see this.

Chairman ISSA. Without objection. So ordered and copies will be distributed to all members on the dais.

Chairman ISSA. We now welcome our guest and witnesses. Brigadier General Robert Lovell is the Former Deputy Director for Intelligence and Knowledge Development Directorate at United States African Command, and the Former Deputy Commanding General of Joint Task Force Odyssey Guard.

Ms. Kori Schake, Ph.D. is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution. Mr. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Ph.D., is a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Mr. Frederic Wehrey is a Ph.D. He is a senior associate for Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. General, your title is impressive, but they're all doctorates.

Pursuant to the rules, if all witnesses would please rise to take the oath and raise your right hands. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the

whole truth and nothing but the truth? Thank you. Please be seated.

Let the record reflect that all witnesses answered in the affirmative.

In order to allow sufficient time for questions, I would ask that each witness summarize their opening statements which will be placed in the record in the entirety in addition to other extraneous material you may want to submit as a result of this hearing, but please try to stay close to the 5 minutes. And as my predecessor, Mr. Towns, often said, green means go everywhere. Yellow means hurry up through the intersection, and red means stop, so please observe that on the little countdown clocks. And with that, General, you're recognized.

WITNESS STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT LOVELL

General LOVELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ISSA. And for all the witnesses, pull your mic close to you when you speak because they're fairly insensitive in that sense. Thank you, General.

General LOVELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Minority Member, and members of the committee. I retired this past year after 33-plus years of service. My service began in 1979 upon enlistment in the United States Air Force. It's also been my honor and privilege to serve as an officer since earning my commission in 1985. Throughout these years I've served with many brave and distinguished men and women, both uniformed and civilian. I thank them for their service and their example. My time in service was filled with many great and humbling opportunities. I'm thankful for these as well. Over the span of my career, I've been shaped by professional education, training, and experience. These and other personal influences have formed my thoughts on today's subject.

To present a sense of context, here's a brief outline of my previous service most relevant at hand. The chairman has already covered some. What I would like to add is as an AFRICOM plank holder, I twice served in Africa Command, first as Colonel as the NRO representative to the command, and next as a general officer as the Deputy Director of Intelligence and Knowledge Development Division. Additionally, I served as a JOC watch officer for Joint Operations Center during Odyssey Dawn and Operation Unified Protector. And in addition to that, I also served as the senior military liaison to National Science Foundation. That's relevant since the Science Foundation was also an interagency partner that greatly influenced my views on how interagency partnership works.

My theme is three topics are submitted in my written statement. First topic, U.S. Africa Command and the interagency nature of that command.

Second, Military Operations With Regard to Libya, discusses strategy, supporting policy, and policy in a highly dynamic and limiting—can be highly dynamic and limit strategy when it's challenged to achieve a desired result.

Benghazi in 2012. This is the most serious of the themes. There are many sayings in the military. One saying that rings most true is you fight the way you train, and in Benghazi we did. Many with firsthand knowledge have recounted the heroism displayed by the brave Americans in Benghazi that night. They fought the way they trained. That's in the record. Outside of Libya there were discussions that churned on about what we should do. These elements also fought the way they were trained, specifically the predisposition to interagency influence had the military structure in the spirit of expeditionary government support waiting for a request for assistance from the State Department. There are accounts of time, space and capability, discussions of the question could we have gotten there in time to make a difference. While the discussion is not, could or could not of time, space and capability, the point is we should have tried.

As another saying goes, always move to the sound of the guns. We didn't know how long this would last when we became aware of the distress, nor did we completely understand what we had in front of us, if we had a kidnapping, rescue, recovery, protracted hostile engagement, or any or all of the above. But what we did know quite early on was that this was a hostile action. This was no demonstration gone terribly awry.

To the point of what happened, the facts led to the conclusion of a terrorist attack. The AFRICOM J2 was focused on attribution. The attacks became attributable very soon after the event. Thank you for the invitation to appear before this committee. I'm here because I take this matter very seriously. I'm prepared to take your questions.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you, General.

[Prepared statement of General Lovell follows:]

Brigadier General Robert W. Lovell, U.S. Air Force (Retired)

Congressional Testimony
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Benghazi, Instability, and a New Government: Successes and Failures of
U.S. Intervention in Libya
May 1, 2014

It is with a sense of duty as a retired General officer that I respectfully submit these thoughts and perspectives. There are lessons learned over 33 (+) years in uniform that I hope are translated below into useful information to take into consideration on this serious subject.

U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)

The newest of the United States' Combatant Commands (COCOM), AFRICOM was designed and implemented to be different from other COCOMs. It achieved this difference. That difference is a mixed blessing.

It can be asserted that AFRICOM was formed and operates with an organizational expectation of interagency cooperation and influence. The most influential of the interagency partners in the Command is the Department of State. This deference to the State Department was a learned and cultivated trait in AFRICOM. In addition to the uniformed military positions, the structure of the Command includes interagency senior leadership and staff positions. As an example, the Deputy Commander for Military Operations (3-Star) and Deputy for Civil-Military Activities (Senior Foreign Service) alternated in sharing the Chair at the daily AFRICOM J-staff meeting. This reinforced the command's and staff's predisposition to leadership from senior DOS level executives. It is significant to note that not until March 2011 did AFRICOM adopt traditional J-codes. The first significant Command Plans were adopted just prior to this time as well. Many of the plans were for military action short of war and could be characterized as humanitarian- or evacuation-focused.

Given the nature of U.S. policy in Africa and the relative recent activation of AFRICOM, much of the focus of the Command went into building relationships, not only on the continent, but within our own government. Especially significant were the relationships with the U.S. Ambassadors, the Department of State and with in the DOS the Pol-Mil Bureau. Given the nature of the mission of the Command, Exercises and Training stressed these relationships.

Given the dynamistic nature of policy making with regard to Africa and the need to craft strategy to support the unfolding policies, it is time to take the next step in the creation of capability and capacity within AFRICOM. It is clear the approach to the continent is an interagency one. As the former CJCS described, the U.S. policy is affected by "expeditionary government." Therefore, more is needed to support this approach in AFRICOM. Specifically,

now is the time to move toward establishing a task force type of capability stationed at perhaps 4-6 locations that would afford AFRICOM the needed dedicated assets to perform across the spectrum of military operations in support of U.S. policies.

Military Operations with regard to Libya

The Arab Spring was tumultuous. The revolution in Libya ended a 40 year reign of power by Moammar Qaddafi.

Strategy supports Policy, and when Policy is highly dynamic and limiting, Strategy is challenged to achieve "desired" results. U.S. policy to intercede militarily with Operation Odyssey Dawn and subsequently along side a number of allies in Operation Unified Protector (UN Resolution 1973) posed unique challenges for the creation of an effective Strategy. Not the least of which was a Libyan Order of Battle that was in desperate need of update. There was no ready plan on the shelf to execute a military strategy given the nature of the environment and the limitations on capabilities. In short, the Strategy to approach the military operations from a NATO (+) perspective allowed the Joint Task Force for Operation Unified Protector (OUP) to build upon an adopted and adapted framework across the J-codes for Combined operations. The ability to mobilize and employ the combat power with limited "boots on ground" and in the implied timeframe was commendable.

Post OUP, the U.S. military strategy for Libyan operations was facilitated through AFRICOM by activation of Joint Task Force Odyssey Guard headquartered in Longare, Italy. The mission of JTF-OG was essentially to assist the Department of State in reestablishment of the Embassy in Tripoli, Libya. This JTF was activated from the conclusion of UOP until JTF-OG deactivation in January 2012. At that time, January 2012, the J-Codes in AFRICOM and SOCAF assumed the full duties of the new-normal in Libya.

Simply put, perhaps overly so, the new-normal in Libya was a former intact country now fractured and divided along many lines of diplomatic, economic and military power in desperate need of organization toward self rule in the post-Qaddafi environment. This was and is a tall order. The Department of State was the U.S.-lead for this effort and the military was in the support role.

Benghazi 2012

This is the most serious of the themes.

There are many sayings in the military.

One saying that rings most true is.....You Fight the way you Train. And in Benghazi, we did.

Many with firsthand knowledge have recounted the heroism displayed by the brave Americans in Benghazi that night. They fought the way they trained. That is in the record.

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There are accounts of time, space and capability discussions of the question, could we have gotten there in time to make a difference. Well, the discussion is not in the “could or could not” in relation to time, space and capability—the point is we should have tried. As another saying goes: “Always move to the sound of the guns.”

We didn’t know how long this would last when we became aware of the distress nor did we completely understand what we had in front of us, be it a kidnapping, rescue, recovery, protracted hostile engagement or any or all of the above.

But what we did know quite early on was that this was a hostile action. This was no demonstration gone terribly awry.

To the point of what happened, the facts led to the conclusion of a terrorist attack. The AFRICOM J-2 was focused on attribution. That attacks became attributable very soon after the event.

Chairman ISSA. Ms. Schake.

STATEMENT OF KORI SCHAKE

Ms. SCHAKE. Sir, I think the starting point for our conversation about Libya is that this is a failing state. Right? Security is eroding. Governance is ebbing, and as a result of those two things, Libya is unable to capitalize on its one big advantage which is the oil revenue on which its economy is predominantly based. And unless we are uninterested in this outcome, both for Libyans themselves and from the threats that are emanating to us from them, American policy should actually work to strengthen security in Libya and to strengthen governance in Libya so that the economy can help buffer the transition period of a fragile democratizing government.

Our policies are not doing that. Our policies are principally interested in limiting our involvement, and as a result of that, the problems inherent in all transitioning societies, in societies that have lived 40 years under repressive governments and had dysfunctional economies, they need structured assistance and help. The United States knows how to do that in terms of security sector reform, in terms of governance, and yet we helped overthrow a government without helping establish security or governance. We have largely ignored the growing restiveness of militia in Libya and the migration of jihadists to Libya where, you know, the jihadists are now in possession of a Libyan government military base less than 20 miles from the capitol. And in overtaking that base, they also got some pretty valuable American military equipment which we are going to be seeing in Syria, in Libya, and even in our own country unless we really help manage the problem of jihadism in Libya and elsewhere.

Building government capacity is the key to doing that. That is, we cannot expect that the Libyan government is going to be able to disarm militia or to control the spread of jihadism in their territory. That will be the result of political negotiation. It cannot lead political negotiation because militia will not disarm until they have a high level of confidence that the reason, the political vacuum that exists in Libya, is actually going to be managed by political means. The Libyans are having a very messy, very slow, one-step-forward/one-step-back conversation about governance in their country, but this is what democratization looks like, and they deserve an awful lot more help from us and from nongovernmental institutions that the United States supports, the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute. Instead, we have been largely silent on an election that was marred by violence and in which, you know, yesterday's parliamentary vote in Tripoli was prevented from coming to conclusion by storming of the parliament by armed men. As Mr. Cummings said, we need to do all that is necessary to help the Libyan government transition, and we are not.

The last thing I would say is that if American policies won't help this fragile government transition to establish security and governance, that we ought actually to encourage other states to do so, states in the region that can situate it politically amongst its neighbors, or states from outside the country, and predominantly this

administration's policies have criticized both the motives and the actions of others instead of encouraging them into a void our own policies are leaving.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Schake follows:]

Testimony by Dr. Kori Schake, Hoover Institution, before the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform, 1 May 2013.

Libya's Challenges

Libya is a failing state. Security is deteriorating. Governance is ebbing. The security situation is limiting the economy in ways that prevent the state from utilizing its one major advantage: oil revenue. Without more encouragement and direct support, Libya's tribes and regions will not come together by political means, they will fracture. Which means that unless we are uninterested in the fate of Libyans and unconcerned by threats that may emanate from the country, American policies ought to seek to redress these trends.

Instead, the problems Libya is experiencing have all been aggravated by Obama Administration policy choices. We overthrew the government without a plan for establishing security or helping stabilize fragile processes of democratization. We have ignored the growing aggressiveness of militia and activity of jihadists. We have been silent on an election marred by violence. We are not helping organize the parliamentary elections coming in a few months, which are likely to be a bellwether for legitimacy of democratic processes in Libya. Their policies have been and are concerned primarily with limiting our involvement rather than limiting threats emanating from Libya and assisting a society in transition from repression.

There are several means by which the United States could help establish security and governance in Libya. The first is assistance building government security forces. The absence of security is a major impediment to both governance and economic activity in Libya, as yesterday's attack on the Libyan Parliament makes clear. The central government is nowhere near strong enough to disarm the militia. Restiveness, criminality, and insurgents are fomenting increasing violence that should be countered. Excellent work has been done by the RAND Corporation, the Atlantic Council of the United States, and the Carnegie Endowment; any of these approaches would be far preferable to the approach our government is taking.

Libya's militia can't be disarmed by force; tribes and militia will need to be persuaded, and that will likely follow rather than lead political processes. Financial incentives can give the government leverage and should be encouraged, but political accommodation will also be essential if the militia are to be brought under control. Trust will need to be built that needs can be met by political means, and that putting aside weapons will not result in attacks on them or political marginalization. In the meantime, they can be utilized to provide local security while we assist in training, organizing and funding a Libyan national army. The United States is uniquely experienced in security sector reform, and itself provides an important example with our blend of national guard and reserve forces and their state-level responsibilities.

The inability of the government — central, regional, or local — to provide adequate security has consequences beyond those of the safety of Libyans striving to build a better future. It has also resulted in terrorist training camps springing up throughout the country, most notably the establishment by al Qaeda at a base less than twenty miles from the capitol. In overtaking that base, jihadists also acquired U.S. military equipment: night vision equipment, M-4 rifles, pistols, military vehicles, and ammunition. We will be seeing these used in Syria, Libya, Lebanon, against friendly governments and against Americans if the jihadists are able. We absolutely should not doubt their intentions to do us harm.

Libya has long been a major source of jihadists for al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations; the weakness of its governance now makes it also a major destination for jihadists. Unless we help the government of Libya police its territory, we should expect

this problem will worsen, and we will be dealing with its consequences throughout the region and in our own country.

Besides our near-term security interests, we also have an interest in societies choosing democratic means to address their needs. The Arab spring has been an affirmation that people are seeking governments they can hold accountable. It has also brought into harsh light the challenge of accommodating political Islam. For democratic governments in muslim countries will elect Islamists. And their election will cause concern about protection of fundamental freedoms for muslims and non-muslims alike. Winners of elections are being pressured to step aside as public concern rises about governance.

Libya is struggling with these issues — foundering often, but so far righting itself. The government of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan resigned in March, responding to these very concerns among Libyans. Yesterday the Parliamentary session to select a new prime minister was interrupted by armed gunmen evidently attempting to intimidate legislators into voting for their candidate.

The political process is moving in Libya, and deserves our vigorous support. The National Transitional Council and General National Congress have struggled to establish a process for nominating the constitutional committee — but the negotiations between them represent real political bargaining and inclusiveness. While messy, their disputes are actually a demonstration of developing representative government. The substantive issue they are debating is the balance between the central government and regional preference for greater autonomy. Federalism will be essential in a society as long-riven by tribal and regional differences, exacerbated by the Ghaddafi government as a means to stay in power.

So it is no bad outcome that the formation of the constitutional committee is dealing with this issue. It is central in all democratic societies. Federalists, especially in Libya's east, want the right to elect their own participants to draft the constitution; that conflicts with the mandate of the General National Congress to draft the constitution. Libyans are still resolving this. Encouragement by our government and the non-governmental organizations like the International Republican Institute and National Democratic Institute can help reassure all parties to the negotiation that their concerns will be taken into account in constitution drafting — and can help ensure they actually are.

The 2012 local administration law devolves considerable powers from Tripoli to governorates and districts, with local councils given wide authority. This is both a popular and a smart strategy. Revenue distribution remains a problem and budgeting processes have not been established, but the central government seems to be largely funding activities that build security and administer local needs. In any event, the structure of the Libyan economy (it's complete dependence on oil revenue centrally collected) will require a push of money from the central government rather than relying on local tax revenues.

The main faults of Libyan debates over formation of the constitution drafting body are those of secrecy: back-room negotiations without public involvement, adequate inclusiveness, or transparency. Here, too, our government and NGOs have a positive role to play, emphasizing the benefits in all democracies of social inclusiveness and the legitimacy that comes from openness in political processes.

Because the political process was opaque and security prevented polling in some places, elections for the constitutional committee foundered. As Karem Mezran's work shows, "violence kept many voters at bay and disruptions prevented several dozen polling centers from opening. Efforts to hold makeup elections proved futile. In the end, only 48 seats on the committee were filled, representing no more than 15 percent of the

electorate.” That is ominous for Libya, and an indictment of our involvement that the Obama Administration did so little to help organize the election and has nothing to say about the results.

The failure of constitutional committee elections in Libya to provide legitimacy may now stall the process until after parliamentary elections this summer. But turnout for the constitutional committee election should worry us: it suggests Libyans are losing confidence in democratic processes.

These are unglamorous activities, but crucial. Much of the work of assisting societies in transition from authoritarian governance is the work of offering examples and reinforcing values. There is a natural tendency to expediency in transitioning societies, but getting the fundamental political institutions and practices right is essential to positive political development, as our own American experience demonstrates. Fair representation is the main issue being debated in Libya; we should have views on that and be vigorously debating them with all political sides in Libya.

The building of governance and political legitimacy are the central tasks in Libya. The United States should be much more active in supporting and assisting in these tasks. We should also be much more involved in encouraging other states to do so. The Obama Administration does little and also criticizes countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia for their involvement. President Obama won't lead, but he also won't encourage others to — it is the worst possible combination. If we are to remain distant from the problems of transitioning countries, we ought at least to help ensure they get assistance elsewhere.

So much assistance is needed in so many transitioning countries in the Middle East that we should be much more supportive of the efforts of our regional allies. A division of labor in which we and our allies lead in different countries would be of great benefit to Libya and other transitioning countries. Such involvement not only has direct benefit, but it also situates countries like Libya in circumstances of regional support. Instead of supporting the leadership of others, we convey distrust of both their motives and their actions. We ought instead to acknowledge that neither we nor our allies in the Middle East want a bad outcome for countries like Libya. Allowing others to lead requires respect for their motives, support of their actions, and tolerance for a wider range of outcomes than our own direct and active involvement might permit.

President Obama prides himself that his foreign policy “doesn't make errors.” This is not true. His fundamental misjudgment is believing that only action has moral and practical consequences. But inaction also carries costs, and our inaction in Libya is making a difficult transition much more fraught, both for Libyans and for American interests.

Chairman ISSA. Dr. Gartenstein-Ross.

STATEMENT OF DAVEED GARTENSTEIN-ROSS

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Chairman Issa, Ranking Member Cummings, distinguished members, it's an honor to appear before you to discuss the successes and failures of the NATO intervention in Libya. Two days ago, it seemed that we were seeing rare good news out of Libya. Oil exports were about to resume from the Zueitina port after rebels holding it had come to an agreement with the government. On another optimistic note, the interim parliament had convened to select a new prime minister. The previous prime minister had resigned only after 6 days after his family was attacked. The prime minister before him was actually kidnapped by rebels. But the prime minister vote didn't go well. Gunmen stormed the parliamentary building and forced lawmakers to abandon their plans. This is Libya today. Each step forward seems to produce another step or two back usually driven by security problems.

The central government can't execute basic sovereign functions in its own capital building. Last year gunmen shut down the ministries of justice and foreign affairs for two weeks due to a political dispute, the equivalent of gunmen here shutting down the Departments of Justice and State. Outside countries are questioning whether it's safe to even keep diplomats in Libya.

Jordan's ambassador was kidnapped last month. Two Tunisian diplomats are being held by jihadists, and there have been many other attacks on embassies and diplomatic staff. I need not remind anyone here of what happened to our own Ambassador Stevens. I've submitted 15 pages of written testimony explaining at some length why I conclude that the cost of NATO's intervention in Libya outweighs the benefits. It's worth acknowledging that the war was superbly executed. NATO responded with extraordinary speed to the situation and saved the lives that Qadhafi would have taken had he overrun Benghazi, the rebel stronghold that he was threatening when the intervention began. This was accomplished with no allied casualties and only a \$1.1 billion cost, but the question remains: Was going to war in Libya the right choice? I would suggest that the strategy of intervention should be called into question. Several advocates of military action argue that the Arab Spring had stalled at the time and that intervening could help breathe new life and new momentum into the revolutionary events.

The desire to see dictators fall is, of course, noble, but noble intentions do not automatically make for wise actions. NATO's intervention came when there was already wrenching changes and an unpredictable regional situation. The Tunisian and Egyptian leaders had fallen, and there were other revolutionary rumblings. Intervening represented not just a decision to stop Qadhafi's advance, but also to speed up the pace of change. The problems associated with speeding up events can be seen in the intervention's second order consequences. The most well-known occurred in north Mali where a collection of Al Qaeda-linked jihadists, including Al Qaeda's North African affiliate, and Tuareg separatist groups, gained control over broad swaths of territory prompting a French-led intervention in January 2013.

Mali's Tuareg rebellion has a long history, but Qadhafi's overthrow transformed the dynamics. Libya's dictator had been a longtime supporter of Tuareg separatism, and with him gone, the Tuaregs had lost a major patron. Jihadist groups exploited the Tuaregs' loss of Qadhafi. There were other ways that NATO's intervention contributed to the jihadist takeover in Mali. Thousands of Tuareg rebels fought for Qadhafi as mercenaries, and after the dictator's defeat, they raided his weapons caches. Their heavily armed return to Mali reinvigorated a longstanding rebellion. The French military intervention pushed the jihadists from areas that they controlled, but there are signs that now a year later the jihadists may be back and, indeed, southern Libya has played a role in their comeback. Fighters from Ansar al-dine and Al Qaeda Islamic Maghreb fled from the advancing French and allied forces into southwest Libya and blended with local militants.

The jihadists in North Africa have also been able to gain from the situation in Libya. A variety of Jihadist groups operate training camps there. Militants have benefited from the flow of arms into neighboring countries, and these factors make Libya a concern as a possible staging ground for future terrorist attacks, something vividly illustrated in the January 2013 hostage crisis at Algeria's In Amenas gas plant, 30 miles from the Libya-Algeria border, which had multiple links to Libya, including training, weapons and point of origin.

Despite the superb execution of NATO's intervention, it has created a much more complicated regional dynamic for the U.S. It has helped jihadist groups, and it has had negative consequences for Libya's neighbors. Further, it isn't clear that the intervention saved lives. Some scholars, including in the Belfer Center document that Representative Chaffetz introduced, argue that the fact that the NATO intervention prolonged the war, meant that on net it cost more lives than it saved. And even if it saved lives in Libya, further lives were lost as a result in places like Mali, Egypt and Algeria. This is why I cannot join with those who proclaim NATO's intervention to be a strategic success. Again, I appreciate the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Gartenstein-Ross follows:]

Chairman Issa, Ranking Member Cummings, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you to discuss the successes and failures of the U.S. and NATO intervention in Libya that began in March 2011. This is an important topic, one that is generally underappreciated by the American public. The military operation produced a large number of second-order consequences with which the U.S. and its allies will be forced to contend for years to come. Indeed, even though the Libya war was undertaken with the best of intentions, and NATO performed brilliantly in its operations, the war appears to be a strategic setback on the whole, and on net it may have already cost more lives than it saved.

The Obama administration was initially skeptical of military intervention in Libya when longstanding dictator Muammar Qaddafi began to crack down on the uprising against his regime in early 2011, adding proclamations worthy of a Bond villain to his military maneuvers. Some of Qaddafi's more outlandish statements include exhorting his followers to cleanse the streets of "the greasy rats" who opposed him, and referring glowingly to China's Tiananmen Square massacre, explaining that China's righteousness was more important than the lives lost in Tiananmen.¹

At the start of the weekend of March 12-13, defense secretary Robert Gates—who was outspoken about his opposition to military action in Libya—"spoke for the dominant view within the administration" when he publicly voiced doubts about intervention.² Christopher S. Chivvis, a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation, explains that at the time two major arguments existed within the administration for military intervention. The first was humanitarian: the concern that, if he wasn't stopped, Qaddafi would slaughter Libyan citizens. The second argument related to "Arab Spring" uprisings that were changing the political face of the Arab world:

The second argument was a strategic one enmeshed in a wider calculus about the Arab Spring: that decisive support for the revolution would vividly demonstrate that the United States supported the uprisings across the region and could thereby deter other regional leaders from crushing legitimate civilian protests by force. If Qaddafi were allowed to cudgel his population into submission, authoritarian leaders in Yemen, Bahrain, and elsewhere could be emboldened to do the same. Not acting in Libya, in other words, would put the United States on the wrong side of history, encourage other Arab leaders to choose violent repression over peaceful reform, and could reverse a democratic surge expected to be in the U.S. interest in the long haul.³

Although Chivvis does not mention it, one factor that seemingly drove the view that the uprisings were in the U.S. interest was the fight against al-Qaeda and affiliated movements that had, at that point, dominated America's strategic agenda for almost a decade. Early in the Arab Spring, U.S. analysts overwhelmingly believed that the revolutionary events were devastating for al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups because they undermined its

¹ "Defiant Qaddafi Vows to Die as Martyr, Fight Revolt," Reuters, February 22, 2011; Ian Black, "Qaddafi Urges Violent Showdown and Tells Libya 'I'll Die a Martyr,'" *Guardian* (U.K.), February 22, 2011.

² Christopher S. Chivvis, *Topping Qaddafi: Libya and the Limits of Liberal Intervention* Kindle ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), loc. 1143 of 6472.

³ *Ibid.*, loc. 1198 of 6472.

narrative and could remove the underlying grievances that drew people to jihadism.⁴ For their own part, jihadist strategists expected that, rather than harming the movement, the revolutionary events would yield significant advantages for it.⁵ Senior al-Qaeda leaders

⁴ This testimony employs the terms *jihadist* and *jihadism* to describe the militant movement with global ambitions that claims its inspiration from salafi Islam. This terminology is controversial amongst terrorism researchers, and also within government, in large part because it is derived from the religious term *jihad*. I employ this language in large part because it has the benefit of being organic: it is the way that those within the movement refer to themselves. Virtually all terms that could be used to describe this movement have their own limitations, and as the terrorism researcher Jarret Brachman notes, the labels *jihadism* and *jihadist* have “been validated as the least worst option across the Arabic-speaking world,” including being employed in Arabic-language print and broadcast media. Jarret M. Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 5.

My conclusion that the belief that revolutionary events in the Arab world were catastrophic for al-Qaeda helped to drive the military intervention in Libya is formed by my conversations with U.S. government analysts from 2011-2014. One media report published before the decision to go to war in Libya that illustrates the widespread analytic view that the revolutions were harmful to al-Qaeda is Scott Shane, “As Regimes Fall in Arab World, al-Qaeda Sees History Fly By,” *New York Times*, February 27, 2011. In the article, numerous Western analysts describe the revolutions as extremely harmful to al-Qaeda because it was confined to the sidelines. Paul Pillar of Georgetown University commented, “So far—and I emphasize so far—the score card looks pretty terrible for al-Qaeda. Democracy is bad news for terrorists. The more peaceful channels people have to express grievances and pursue their goals, the less likely they are to turn to violence.” Brian Fishman of the New America Foundation said, “Knocking off [Hosni] Mubarak has been Zawahiri’s goal for more than 20 years, and he was unable to achieve it. Now a nonviolent, nonreligious, pro-democracy movement got rid of him in a matter of weeks. It’s a major problem for al-Qaeda.” Steven Simon of the Council on Foreign Relations described the uprisings as a strategic defeat for jihadism, explaining that “these uprisings have shown that the new generation is not terribly interested in al-Qaeda’s ideology.”

For public writings arguing that the Arab Spring would undermine al-Qaeda published around the time that the decision to go to war in Libya was made, see Jason Burke, “Amid All the Turmoil in the Middle East, al-Qaeda Remains Invisible,” *Guardian* (U.K.), February 25, 2011 (“That recent events pose a challenge to al-Qaeda is clear. Its rhetoric was already tired before the ‘Arab spring’.”); Paul Cruickshank, “Why Arab Spring Could be al-Qaeda’s Fall,” CNN, February 21, 2011 (arguing that “the burgeoning democracy movement across the Middle East appears to have caught al-Qaeda off guard and threatens to reduce the terrorist group to irrelevance”); Paul Cruickshank, “Why Egypt Revolt Threatens al-Qaeda,” CNN, February 6, 2011 (arguing that “al-Qaeda has an Egyptian problem” because the region’s revolutionary events can “deflate its claims to be the only vanguard for change in the Middle East,” and thus make the group appear irrelevant). The view that al-Qaeda had experienced a major strategic setback due to the uprisings became even more pronounced when its longtime leader Osama bin Laden was killed on May 1, 2011. See Fawaz Gerges, “The Rise and Fall of al-Qaeda: Debunking the Terrorism Narrative,” *Huffington Post*, January 3, 2012; Dan Murphy, “The Future of al-Qaeda and Its Likely Leader,” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 9, 2011; “Bergen Correctly Predicted bin Laden’s Location,” NPR, May 3, 2011; Fareed Zakaria, “Al-Qaeda is Over,” CNN, May 2, 2011. I have addressed the U.S. analytic community’s failures on this issue in Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, “Interpreting Al-Qaeda,” *Foreign Policy*, January 6, 2014.

⁵ See Ayman al-Zawahiri, “And be Neither Weakened nor Saddened,” Al-Sahab Media, August 15, 2011; Hamzah bin Muhammad al-Bassam, “Heeding the Advantages and Lessons of the Two Uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia,” Ansar Dawlat al-Iraq al-Islamiyah, February 25, 2011; Hani al-Siba’i, “The Release of Prisoners After Nearly Twenty Years of Injustice,” Ansar Dawlat al-Iraq al-Islamiyah, February 23, 2011; Atiyatallah Abd al-Rahman, “The People’s Revolt... The Fall of Corrupt Arab Regimes... The Demolition of the Idol of Stability... and the New Beginning,” distributed by the Global Islamic Media Front, February 16, 2011; Hamid bin Abdallah al-Ali, “The Joy Lies in the Harvest of the Two Revolutions,” posted on al-Ali’s official website, February 15, 2011. For a comprehensive review of early salafi jihadist perceptions of the impact the Arab Uprisings would have on the movement, see Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Tara Vassefi, “Perceptions of the ‘Arab Spring’ Within the Salafi-Jihadi Movement,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 35 (2012), pp. 831-48.

believed that Qaddafi's fall would specifically help their movement. For example, when al-Qaeda emir Ayman al-Zawahiri eulogized senior al-Qaeda figure Atiyatallah following the latter's death, he referenced how enthusiastically Atiyatallah watched the advance of rebel factions in Libya. "He told me the good news of the imminent conquest of Tripoli by the mujahedin," Zawahiri said in his audio message. "The shaykh stayed up through the night he was martyred, following reports of his mujahidin brothers' conquest of Tripoli."⁶ The fact that Western analysts generally ignored salafi jihadist strategists' perceptions of the Arab Uprisings helped contribute to misreadings of what the revolutionary events would mean for the militant movement.⁷

Though the arguments for intervention were not persuasive to the majority of the administration's decision-makers as the weekend of March 12-13 began, the administration's thinking rapidly reversed, in favor of military action, in the week that followed. A couple of changes drove the administration's reversal. One was rapid advances made by Qaddafi's forces, as they succeeded in "pushing rebels out of the oil port of Ras Lanuf on March 11 and crushing the uprising in Zawiyah."⁸ Having secured their hold over both Ras Lanuf and Zawiyah, Qaddafi's forces marched on Benghazi, which was the National Transitional Council's (NTC) base of operations. These Qaddafi victories resulted in a second major change: Alarmed by developments, the Arab League issued a statement asking the U.N. Security Council to immediately impose a no-fly zone over Libya to protect civilians.⁹ Chivvis writes that the Arab League vote "was a critical step on the road toward intervention."¹⁰ The combination of Qaddafi's advances and the Arab League vote helped swing the administration's preferences toward military action.

The shift in the U.S.'s preferences in turn led America to push for a stronger Security Council resolution than previously countenanced, and its passage in turn paved the way for NATO's military intervention. It didn't take long for Qaddafi to fall from power, and ultimately meet his gruesome end. The capital city of Tripoli fell into rebel hands in August 2011, and Qaddafi was found by rebels, beaten, and shot to death on October 20.

Rapid as Qaddafi's fall was, the intervention is widely regarded as a success. Writing in *Foreign Affairs*, Ivo Daalder and James Stavridis described the operation as a "model intervention." They elaborated that "the alliance responded rapidly to a deteriorating situation that threatened hundreds of thousands of civilians rebelling against an oppressive regime. It succeeded in protecting those civilians and, ultimately, in providing the time and space necessary for local forces to overthrow Muammar al-Qaddafi."¹¹ Oliver Miles, the former British ambassador to Libya, described the intervention as "a great success," stating that though there were many concerns in Britain about the Libya war at the outset, "I think most people are convinced, now, that it was good and the result is good."¹² Another

⁶ Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Message of Hope and Glad Tidings to Our People in Egypt: Message of Support and Affirmation," October/November 2011.

⁷ See discussion of this point in Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, "Interpreting al-Qaeda," *Foreign Policy*, January 6, 2014.

⁸ Chivvis, *Toppling Qaddafi*, loc. 1223 of 6472.

⁹ Richard Leiby and Muhammad Mansour, "Arab League Asks U.N. for No-Fly Zone Over Libya," *Washington Post*, March 12, 2011.

¹⁰ Chivvis, *Toppling Qaddafi*, loc. 1233 of 6472.

¹¹ Ivo H. Daalder & James G. Stavridis, "NATO's Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2012.

¹² "NATO's Intervention in Libya Deemed a Success," NPR, October 21, 2011.

representative article, published in *Foreign Affairs* at the end of 2012, noted that “a year and a half ago, Libya seemed as though it would be the country where the Arab Spring came to an end.” In contrast, the article noted that following Western intervention, Libya had come to stand out “as one of the most successful countries to emerge from the uprisings that have rocked the Arab world.”¹³

The Libya intervention was indeed a success in many ways. As Daalder and Stavridis note, NATO was able to respond with extraordinary speed to the developing situation in Libya, and was able to save the lives that Qaddafi would have taken had he succeeded in capturing Benghazi. Also remarkable, Daalder and Stavridis observe, is that this was accomplished “without a single allied casualty,” and at a cost of just \$1.1 billion.¹⁴

But though the NATO mission was superb in its execution and achieved its immediate objectives, it was a much more problematic intervention than is commonly acknowledged. The intervention has produced significant ripples, and in fact one of the primary rationales for intervention advanced within the administration was that doing so would have second-order consequences: as several commentators have noted, there was a real feeling at the time that the changes sweeping the region might be reversed if Qaddafi’s advance on Benghazi were not stopped.¹⁵

Though the desire to see the spread of democracy and the fall of brutal dictators who have long dominated the region is noble, noble intentions do not automatically make a course of action wise. NATO’s intervention came at a time when there had already been wrenching changes in the region for which it was difficult to predict the challenges that would inevitably arise: both Tunisia’s Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak had been toppled for power, and there were further revolutionary rumblings. So the choice to intervene represented not just a decision to stop Qaddafi’s advance on Benghazi, but also to speed up the pace of change at a time when the U.S. already had deep questions about what regional events would mean for its interests, and how to respond. This made it more difficult subsequently for the U.S. to act to secure its interests, and to influence events on the ground in the region in a way that could save further lives. As this testimony explains at length, the intervention in Libya left behind a country beset by instability, where the central government has never been able to re-establish control. The intervention has had a destabilizing effect on Libya’s immediate neighbors, most significantly Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria, and also helped to destabilize Mali, significantly contributing to a jihadist takeover of north Mali that would prompt another intervention, this time led by France. NATO’s intervention also accelerated events in Syria, where a tragic civil war has claimed over 150,000 lives.

Taking into account these consequences of NATO’s intervention, it is not clear that lives were saved on the whole. As one of my contacts in the intelligence community recently put it, “lives that were saved in Benghazi turned into lives lost in Timbuktu.”¹⁶ Al-Qaeda and the jihadist movement, rather than being undermined by the intervention, ended up with a new foothold in Libya that also strengthened their efforts in neighboring countries. In short, removing the immediate emotions of the situation that prompted NATO’s intervention and

¹³ Dick Vandewalle, “After Qaddafi: The Surprising Success of the New Libya,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2012.

¹⁴ Daalder & Stavridis, “NATO’s Victory in Libya.”

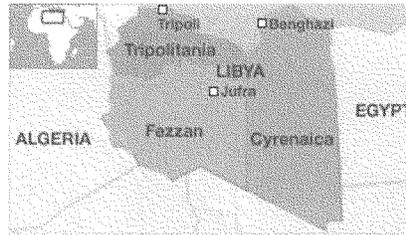
¹⁵ See, for example, Chivvis, *Toppling Qaddafi*; Vandewalle, “After Qaddafi.”

¹⁶ Discussion with senior U.S. military intelligence officer, April 21, 2014.

looking at the broader effects of the decision to go to war in Libya, it appears to have harmed America's strategic interests and made the region more, rather than less, dangerous.

Libya: Fractured Power and Instability

Since Qaddafi's fall, no central government has been able to establish itself. Indeed, observers question whether there is a unifying idea that can keep Libya together as a cohesive entity. After all, as regional specialist Alison Pargeter has noted, the fact that Libya's three distinct parts—Tripolitania in the west, Cyrenaica in the east, and Fezzan in the south—came together as a country in the 1950s is itself “an accident of history,” born from the victorious Allies' maneuvering following the Second World War.¹⁷ Even the changes that have occurred since Libya's independence—the country's unification, urbanization, modernization, and Qaddafi's authoritarian rule—have not eliminated the significant distinctions among the regions.



The NTC, which was formed in 2011 to represent the anti-Qaddafi rebels internationally, was never strong enough to unify the country politically.¹⁸ The central government's writ is particularly weak in the eastern part of the country, which had a more strained relationship with the central government during the Qaddafi years as well. With the government in Tripoli having difficulty projecting its writ beyond the capital, a fractured system of dozens of factions and militias, as well as hundreds of splinter groups, collectively controls most of Libya's territory.¹⁹

The main result of the central government's weakness is an absence of security throughout the country. The various violent non-state actors (VNSAs) who collectively control so much territory in Libya are not only hostile to the central government, but also to each other. A recent *Los Angeles Times* report on the country describes “a grim cycle of assassinations, abductions and firefights in the streets.”²⁰ As competing VNSAs search for any advantage or bargaining chip in their rivalries, kidnappings have become common, with targets including both Libyan and foreign officials, as well as businessmen.²¹

Illustrating Libya's security problems, within a single six-day period earlier this month, gunmen in Libya kidnapped Jordan's ambassador, kidnapped an adviser at Tunisia's embassy (the second Tunisian diplomat kidnapped within a month), and broke into Portugal's embassy. Though not all the perpetrators of these acts are known, both Tunisian diplomats were taken by jihadists, whose resurgence in Libya will be discussed shortly. The situation has grown so severe that Sri Lanka's foreign employment bureau has suspended

¹⁷ Alison Pargeter, *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 12.

¹⁸ Christopher S. Chivvis & Jeffrey Martini, *Libya After Qaddafi: Lessons and Implications for the Future* (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, 2014), pp. 36-37.

¹⁹ Laura King, “Libya Remains in the Grip of Rivalrous Rebel Factions,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 13, 2014.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “Libya's Militias Play Their Cards for a Seat at the Political Table,” *The National* (U.A.E.), April 16, 2014.

sending migrants workers from that country to Libya due to security concerns.²²

A few additional incidents, striking the top levels of Libya's government, further drive home the instability with which the country is forced to contend. In April to May of 2013, armed militias undertook a two-week siege of the foreign and justice ministries in Tripoli as a means of pressuring the parliament to pass a "political isolation" law that would place restrictions on what positions within government Qaddafi-era officials could hold.²³ It is worth reflecting on just how humiliating this was for the central government: its own ministries of justice and foreign affairs were shut down, in its own capital city, for *two weeks* based on a political dispute with non-state actors. The equivalent for the United States would be gunmen forcibly shutting down both the Department of Justice and Department State for a two-week period. Even Libya's then-prime minister, Ali Zeidan, was kidnapped and held by a rebel faction—briefly but quite dramatically—in October 2013.²⁴ After Zeidan was removed from office due to an incident that will be discussed momentarily, his interim replacement, Abdullah al-Thani, lasted for less than a month before he also decided to resign because he and his family had been targeted in an attack.²⁵

The central government's weakness has created a feedback loop in which its efforts to exploit its oil resources to expand its budget have consistently been thwarted—which has, in turn, further weakened the government. One consistent problem has been VNSAs, rather than the government, controlling the country's oil resources. At this point, the major ports and oil fields in eastern Libya have been shut for around nine months. Illustrating this, in late March 2014 a militia held Libya's eastern ports: Not only did this prevent the government from profiting from oil exports, but the militia actually attempted to export oil itself, loading up a North Korea-flagged tanker.²⁶ This incident further demonstrated the central government's weakness: though the government threatened to blow up the tanker if it left the port, its forces essentially watched helplessly as the tanker left for international waters (though some members of pro-government militias pursued the vessel by boat). This humiliating incident caused the parliament to sack Zeidan as prime minister. The conflict between the militias and central government was ended not by government forces, but by U.S. Navy SEALs boarding the tanker. After fleeing Libya for Germany, Zeidan commented on the incident to the press: "Really there is no army, I thought there was one, but then I realized there really isn't any."²⁷

The shutdown of Libya's ports and oilfield has reduced oil production from 1.4 million barrels per day down to 200,000 bpd. This has, in turn, forced the government to undertake severe austerity measures. The head of the parliament's budget committee, Mohammed Abdullah, has said that the government's budget has to be cut by a third, and that

²² Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, "Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau Says Has Decided to Temporarily Suspend Sending Sri Lankan Migrant Workers to Libya," April 22, 2014.

²³ "Deal with Former Rebels Ends Libya Siege," Al Jazeera, May 12, 2013.

²⁴ Chris Stephen & Nicholas Watt, "Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan Calls for Calm After Kidnapping," *The Guardian* (U.K.), October 10, 2013.

²⁵ Sam Frizell, "Libya PM Quits, Says He Was Targeted in Armed Attack," *Time*, April 13, 2014. When he subsequently spoke to the media about the reasons for his resignation, al-Thani emphasized the pressure from parliamentarians and a media campaign against him, and deemphasized—though still mentioned—the violence directed at his family. See "Why I Resigned—Libyan PM," *Daily Times* (Nigeria), April 28, 2014.

²⁶ Patrick Markey & Ulf Laessing, "Armed Militias Hold Libya Hostage," Reuters, March 30, 2014.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

infrastructure and development projects will be halted.²⁸

The central government's weakness is systemic in nature. In contrast to Tunisia and Egypt's relatively peaceful transitions, Libya's prolonged civil war destroyed the old structures of Qaddafi's government. The central government's major seat of power is Tripoli and its writ is limited in the east, where the means of oil production are located. This is particularly problematic for the country's future given the serious questions about whether Libya can be sustained as a unified entity.

Revival of Jihadist VNSAs

As previously noted, some of the rash of kidnappings that have plagued Libya have been carried out by jihadist groups. As previously noted, that was the case for both Tunisian diplomats who were abducted in a one-month period. On April 20, a group called Shabaab al-Tawhid released a video showing one of these diplomats, Mohammed Bel Sheikh, crying and pleading with his government to negotiate with his captors.²⁹

This kidnapping is symptomatic of a broader problem: contrary to the prevalent predictions of analysts in early 2011, jihadist groups, including al-Qaeda, have experienced significant growth in Libya since Qaddafi was toppled from power. One comprehensive report on this topic, entitled *Al-Qaeda in Libya: A Profile*, was published in August 2012 by the Library of Congress's Federal Research Division.³⁰ The report notes that al-Qaeda's senior leadership is attempting to create a clandestine network in Libya, and explains some of its efforts in that regard.

There are several VNSAs in Libya through which al-Qaeda may enjoy influence, or which may perhaps be new faces of al-Qaeda. One is Ansar al-Sharia in Libya (ASL), which is most notorious for its role in the September 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi. A second possibility for al-Qaeda to influence events on the ground in Libya is remnants of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). Though some former LIFG members now align themselves with the government, *Al-Qaeda in Libya* notes that "some former members of LIFG may be among those helping to create the al-Qaeda network." Al-Qaeda's senior leadership has also dispatched emissaries to Libya. *Al-Qaeda in Libya* mentions an operative known as "AA," whom Ayman al-Zawahiri sent in 2011. This is almost certainly a reference to Abdul Baset Azzouz, who had managed to mobilize more than 200 fighters by the end of 2012.

Overall, while it isn't clear how many al-Qaeda aligned groups and individuals are active in Libya, *Al-Qaeda in Libya* concludes that "a few hundred al-Qaeda members" are operating there, and that salafi jihadists aligned with al-Qaeda ideologically have come to control "dozens of mosques and prayer halls in the country."³¹ The report concludes that "al-Qaeda appears to constitute a significant threat to the state-building process in Libya."³²

Since the report's publication, little has occurred that is likely to reverse the gains made by al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups. Jihadist groups continue to take advantage of

²⁸ Feras Bosalum, "Libya Slashes Budget by a Third to Offset Loss of Oil Revenue," Reuters, April 21, 2014.

²⁹ Feras Bosalum & Tarek Amara, "Tunisian Diplomat, in Video Message, Urges Government to Negotiate with Libyan Kidnappers," Reuters, April 21, 2014.

³⁰ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, *Al-Qaeda in Libya: A Profile* (Washington, DC: 2012).

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 25.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

the new environment in Libya in several ways. One is training for militant activities. A variety of jihadist groups, including al-Qaeda, have operated training camps in Libya.³³ These camps exist largely because new opportunities arose after Qaddafi's fall from power, as the central government has been unable to effectively control southern Libya. Muhammad al-Zawahiri has connected his brother, al-Qaeda emir Ayman al-Zawahiri, with the Muhammad Jamal Network (MJN), which has used this safe haven in Libya to establish an enclave. The connections between Zawahiri and the MJN became clear after Muhammad Jamal's November 2012 arrest: as the U.S. State Department's designation of Jamal explains, his "confiscated computer contained letters to al-Zawahiri in which Jamal asked for assistance and described MJN's activities, including acquiring weapons, conducting terrorist training, and establishing terrorist groups in the Sinai."³⁴ As the *Wall Street Journal* has reported, MJN operates camps in Libya that include training for suicide missions, and has been able to smuggle fighters into other countries through Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's established networks.³⁵

A second way jihadist groups have been able to benefit from developments in Libya is the flow of arms into neighboring countries. Most of the "vast stores of weapons" that have flowed out of Libya have been "small arms of Eastern European origin."³⁶ However, observers suspected early on that more sophisticated weaponry, such as surface-to-air missiles, may also have escaped Qaddafi's arsenal, and more recent evidence—including the downing of an Egyptian military helicopter in Egypt's Sinai by militants—tends to confirm these fears. The flow of Libyan arms into Mali had an impact on jihadist militancy's growth in that country, as this testimony will discuss subsequently. Several U.N. Security Council reports prepared by a panel of experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1973 paint a picture of the broad diffusion of Libyan arms, and the impact that this diffusion has had on regional conflict. These reports observe that both "significant quantities of arms" and also fighters have been moved from Libya into Egypt and the Sahel.³⁷ The report also notes a flow of arms from Libya into and Mali (both of which will be discussed subsequently), as well as more far-flung places, including, potentially, the Horn of Africa. As a result, the report found that illicit arms flows from Libya were "fuelling existing conflicts and enriching the arsenals of a range of non-State actors in the region and beyond."³⁸ The impact of this flow of arms extends far beyond jihadist VNSAs, but it has certainly worked to the advantage of jihadist groups.

A third way jihadists have benefited from the situation in Libya is by using its territory as a safe haven. As this testimony discusses subsequently, the Libya safe haven proved

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³⁴ Office of the Spokesperson, U.S. Department of State, "Terrorist Designations of the Muhammad Jamal Network and Muhammad Jamal," Oct. 7, 2013.

³⁵ Siobhan Gorman & Matt Bradley, "Militant Link to Libya Attack," *Wall Street Journal*, October 1, 2012.

³⁶ Christopher S. Chivvis & Andrew Liepman, *North Africa's Menace: AQIM's Evolution and the U.S. Policy Response* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), p. 6.

³⁷ United Nations Security Council, "Final Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Resolution 1973 (2011) Concerning Libya," March 9, 2013, p. 12 [hereinafter Security Council Arms Report, 2013]; see also United Nations Security Council, "Final Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Resolution 1973 (2011) Concerning Libya," February 19, 2014 [hereinafter Security Council Arms Report, 2014]. The Sahel is the geographic region bordered by the Sahara desert in the north, the Sudanian Savanna in the south, the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and the Red Sea in the east.

³⁸ Security Council Arms Report, 2013, p. 5.

important to jihadists and their allies following the French-led intervention in Mali, allowing them to flee their advancing foes and attempt to regroup.

And a fourth issue is the potential for the combination of these factors—training camps, widely available Libyan arms, and a physical safe haven—to cause Libya to be used as a staging ground for future attacks. This was certainly the case for the January 2013 hostage crisis at Algeria's In Amenas gas plant, which occurred just 30 miles from the Libya-Algeria border. The attackers reportedly trained in camps in southern Libya and used Libyan arms when attacking the facility.³⁹ More than 800 people were taken hostage in that attack, and at least thirty-nine foreign hostages were killed.

Regional Impact: North Africa

The impact of these various factors that bolster militant groups can be felt throughout the region. Libya has an extremely porous eastern border with Egypt, much to the alarm of the Egyptian government. The panel of experts that the U.N. Security Council empowered to examine the flow of arms from Libya specifically noted that “the increased availability of weapons” empowered a variety of VNSAs, and singled out Egypt as one place where this dynamic was particularly powerful.⁴⁰ Briefings that the panel received in Israel indicated that some of the weapons that were moved into both Egypt's Sinai Peninsula (a particularly unstable area) and also the Gaza Strip “included man-portable air defense systems and anti-tank guided missiles.”⁴¹ An incident vividly illustrating these concerns occurred in January 2014, when Sinai-based militants shot down an Egyptian military helicopter with a surface-to-air missile. Both the U.N.'s expert panel and also press reporting suggested that the most likely place from which militants may have obtained such weaponry was Libya, where there had long been concerns that such weapons that had been in Qaddafi's arsenal would reach VNSAs.⁴²

There are numerous other signs of how Libya's deterioration is influencing the security situation in Egypt. On March 19, Egyptian security forces raided what has been described as a “workshop” in Arab Sharkas, near Cairo, where a cell was making bombs, explosive belts, and similar devices. Six militants and two security officers died in the raid. Authorities claimed that the militants were associated with the group Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, a claim verified five days later when the group issued an official statement.⁴³ This was a significant

³⁹ Paul Cruickshank & Tim Lister, “Algeria Attack May Have Link to Libya Camps,” CNN, January 23, 2013; Gianluca Mezzofiore, “Algeria BP Siege: Mokhtar Belmokhtar Militants Trained in Jihadi Camps in Libya,” *International Business Times*, January 18, 2013; Richard Spencer, “Libyan Arms That Went Missing Under Qaddafi ‘Fueling Multiple Conflicts,’” *Telegraph* (London), April 10, 2013. The U.N. Security Council report on the diffusion of Libyan arms states that the panel of experts “is currently unable to comment on media reports that militants involved in the In Amenas attack and their weapons had come from Libya,” but mentions a couple of possibly corroborating facts. First, the report states that “traffickers coming out of Libya have used the border near In Amenas to smuggle materiel into Algeria in the past.” Second, the report also notes that the weapons and ammunition used by the hostage-takers “bear strong similarities to materiel present in Libya.” Security Council Arms Report, 2013, p. 30.

⁴⁰ Security Council Arms Report, 2014, p. 14.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴² See *ibid.*; David D. Kirkpatrick, “Militants Down Egyptian Helicopter, Killing 5 Soldiers,” *New York Times*, January 26, 2014.

⁴³ Jamaat Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, “Obituary of the Epic Heroes of ‘Arab Sharkas in al-Qaliyyūbiyyah,” March 24, 2014, available at *Jihadology*, <http://jihadology.net/2014/03/23/new-statement-from->

operation, as five tons of explosives were seized. Egyptian security sources told the media that Libya was the point of origin for this enormous quantity of explosives, and that weapons seized in the raid had also come from Libya.⁴⁴

Tunisia is similarly concerned that the security situation in Libya is already having an impact inside its borders. There is a continuing flow of arms from Libya into Tunisia, which has strengthened the military capabilities of Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia (AST), the country's major jihadist group, against which the Tunisian state has now launched a major crackdown.⁴⁵ Though the crackdown appears to be going well for now, and AST may be up against the ropes, it certainly hasn't been defeated yet. And if AST succeeds in coming back to pose a major challenge to the Tunisian state, it will likely rely heavily on securing advantages and survivability from outside Tunisia's borders.

Both Tunisian law enforcement and also international police organizations have placed the blame for the proliferation of weapons in the country on Libya's shoulders.⁴⁶ AST has been involved in smuggling arms originating from Libya into Tunisia, and has also been stockpiling weapons. As Tunisian interior minister Lotfi Ben Jeddou commented, "The large number of seized weapons inside the country could sustain a war."⁴⁷ Further, Mustapha Ben Amor, Tunisia's director general of national security, said that AST members receive training in Libya, and that the group is funded from Libyan sources (amongst others).⁴⁸

There are also other ways in which AST has benefited from the situation in Libya. Last year, after the Tunisian government issued an arrest warrant for AST's emir Abu Iyad al-Tunisi, he fled to Libya. The Arabic-language newspaper *Essahafa* hypothesizes that, while there, he may have met with Mokhtar Belmokhtar, the emir of the notorious jihadist group Signatories in Blood, which executed the aforementioned January 2013 attack at the Tignantourine gas plant near In Amenas, Algeria. Another connection that Abu Iyad seems to have made during his exile in Libya is political figure Abdelhakim Bilhadj, a former LIFG commander. Tunisian attorney and investigator Taieb Laguil has alleged that Bilhadj provided Abu Iyad with shelter from authorities.⁴⁹

Illustrating the plausibility of this claim, Bilhadj chose as a media adviser Al-Wathiq Billah, the former emir of the jihadist web forum Global Islamic Media Front.⁵⁰ After he was released from a Tripoli prison following Qaddafi's defeat, one of Billah's first acts was sending his greetings to the Ansar al-Mujahedin Network, another jihadist web forum. "He is well,

[jamaat-an%20E1%B9%A3ar-bayt-al-maqdis-obituary-of-the-epic-heroes-of-arab-sharkas-in-al-qaliyubiyvah/](#)

⁴⁴ See Ahmed Eleiba, "Networks of Terror," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, March 27, 2014.

⁴⁵ For a comprehensive account of how the conflict between AST and the Tunisian state escalated, see Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Bridget Moreng & Kathleen Soucy, *Raising the Stakes: Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia's Shift to Jihad* (The Hague: ICCT, 2014).

⁴⁶ Monia Ghanmi, "Tunisia Confronts Arms Smuggling," *Magharebia*, September 25, 2013.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "Tunisia: Al-Qaeda Funds Ansar al-Sharia, Tunisia Reveals," *All Africa* August 29, 2013.

⁴⁹ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Kathleen Soucy, "Abdelhakim Bilhadj and Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia," *FDD Policy Brief*, October 8, 2013.

⁵⁰ See Nasir al-Haqq2, "Do You Remember the Brother Al-Wathiq Billah, the Former Emir of the Global Islamic Media Front?," posted to Ansar al-Mujahedin Network, October 14, 2011 (explaining Billah's relationship with Bilhadj; the post was subsequently removed from the website); author's conversation with senior U.S. military intelligence officer, April 28, 2014.

and sends you his best and salutes the people of the blessed jihadist media,” one user relayed.⁵¹ In March 2014, Billah tweeted in response to President Obama’s visit to Saudi Arabia that nobody needed to be consulted before the killing of Americans, and also posted a eulogy to Sanafi al-Nasr, an al-Qaeda figure who had been reported (incorrectly) as having been killed in Syria. Bilhadj’s questionable allegiances, and the possibility that he may be sheltering Abu Iyad, illustrates the advantages that AST may derive from Libya as a safe haven.

Algeria is similarly concerned about the impact Libya will have on its security. Though the In Amenas hostage crisis, and its connections to Libya, served a grisly warning, Algerian officials had long been concerned about the impact NATO’s intervention would have on it. As the intervention began, Algerian officials warned the press that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) may be able to exploit developments, and isolated the diffusion of arms—including, potentially, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles—as a particular concern. In addition to concerns about the flow of arms, the fact that jihadists could enjoy a safe haven in southern Libya is also a concern for Algeria: Mokhtar Belmokhtar, who was responsible for the In Amenas attack, is now reportedly based in Libya.

AQIM is of particular concern to Algeria, as it is an outgrowth of the Algerian militant outfit Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), and as such the group considers Algeria to be one of its highest priority targets. As southern Libya descended into essentially an ungoverned space, extremist groups such as AQIM have benefited. A letter from AQIM emir Abdulmalek Droukdel to Belmokhtar that the Associated Press recovered from north Mali speaks of the need to take advantage of events in Libya. AQIM has taken advantage in some of the ways that Algeria warned of, as “there are numerous reports of AQIM commanders visiting Libya for weapons purchases.”⁵² Illustrating these concerns, Algerian troops discovered an enormous cache of weapons near the Libya border in October 2013, allegedly including “100 anti-aircraft missiles and hundreds of anti-helicopter rockets, landmines and rocket-propelled grenades.”⁵³

North Mali

It is well known that a collection of al-Qaeda-linked jihadist groups—including AQIM itself—and Tuareg separatist groups gained control over north Mali following the onset of the Arab Uprisings, thus prompting a French-led intervention in January 2013. The push for a jihadist takeover in the north began in January 2012, when a collection of VNSAs made advances. By April 2012, they “had consolidated control of the northern regions of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu.”⁵⁴ Although not all of these VNSAs were jihadist in orientation, jihadists ended up in a dominant position, and they implemented a hardline version of sharia law. Human Rights Watch reports that the “often-widespread abuses” inflicted on civilians “included sexual abuse, looting and pillage, summary executions, child soldier recruitment, and amputations and other inhumane treatment associated with the application of Islamic law.”⁵⁵

⁵¹ Nasir al-Haqq2, “Do You Remember the Brother Al-Wathiq Billah, the Former Emir of the Global Islamic Media Front?,” posted to Ansar al-Mujahedin Network, October 14, 2011.

⁵² Chivvis & Liepman, *North Africa’s Menace*, p. 6.

⁵³ Lamine Chikhi, “Algerian Troops Find Huge Arms Cache on Libyan Border,” Reuters, October 24, 2013.

⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch, “Mali,” *World Report 2013* (2013).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

The Tuareg rebellion against Mali's government has a long history behind it, but Qaddafi's overthrow would transform the dynamics in north Mali. Libya's dictator had been a longtime supporter of Tuareg separatism, and with Qaddafi gone the Tuareg separatists had lost a major patron.⁵⁶ Jihadist groups were able to exploit the Tuaregs' loss of Qaddafi as a patron and forge an alliance rooted in convenience far more than ideology.

There were other ways that NATO's intervention in Libya contributed to the jihadist takeover of north Mali. Many Tuareg rebels—almost certainly thousands—went to Libya to fight as mercenaries on Qaddafi's side.⁵⁷ Following the dictator's defeat, they "helped themselves to a considerable quantity of sophisticated weaponry before returning to Mali."⁵⁸ The international press was able to discern by February 2012—months before VNSAs would consolidate their control over north Mali—that the return of these heavily armed former mercenaries had "reinvigorated a longstanding rebellion and blossomed into a major challenge" for Mali.⁵⁹

The French military intervention, dubbed Operation Serval, pushed the jihadists from the areas that they control. However, there are clear signs that, a year later, the jihadists are back. The *Guardian* explains:

According to local sources but also the security forces, jihadists have regained a foothold in several areas. Islamists have pressured families hostile to their presence to leave their homes. Over the past six months al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has murdered several people who helped the French military in Mali, in particular Tuareg members of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). At least 10 people have been killed.... Three groups are involved in the insurrection in northern Mali: AQIM; the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (Mujao); and Ansar Dine, led by the Tuareg Iyad Ag Ghaly. The latter group are the most visible in the field, concentrated in their traditional sphere of influence, north of Kidal, close to the border with Algeria.⁶⁰

Not only did NATO's intervention help to produce the jihadist takeover of north Mali, but the safe haven jihadists have been able to find in southern Libya has played a role in these groups' comeback. Fighters from both Ansar al-Dine and AQIM fled from advancing French and aligned forces into southwest Libya, where they blended with local militants.⁶¹

⁵⁶ See Peter Chilson, *We Never Knew Exactly Where: Dispatches from the Lost Country of Mali* (Washington, DC: The FP Group, 2013), loc. 69 of 1649; Boureima Hama & Niger Agadez, "With Qaddafi's Fall, Tuaregs Lose Powerful Ally," AFP, September 10, 2011.

⁵⁷ Chilson, *We Never Knew Exactly Where*, loc. 69 of 1649; Peter Gwin, "Former Qaddafi Mercenaries Describe Fighting in Libyan War," *The Atlantic*, August 31, 2011 (quoting an estimate that "roughly 10,000 Tuareg remained in the Libyan army, most of them from Mali").

⁵⁸ Adam Nossiter, "Qaddafi's Weapons, Taken by Old Allies, Reinvigorates an Insurgent Army in Mali," *New York Times*, February 5, 2012.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Jacques Follorou, "Jihadists Return to Northern Mali a Year After French Intervention," *Guardian* (U.K.), March 11, 2014.

⁶¹ Adam Entous, Drew Hinshaw, & David Gauthier-Villars, "Militants, Chased From Mali, Pose New Threats," *Wall Street Journal*, May 24, 2013; Chivvis & Martini, *Libya After Qaddafi*, p. ix (noting that "southern Libya verges on becoming a safe haven for al-Qaeda-linked groups recently chased from Mali by French military forces").

The Syrian Civil War

Today the Syrian civil war is one of the world's most tragic ongoing conflicts, with over 150,000 people killed since the onset of the conflict. It is certainly the most consequential conflict in the world in terms of the future of the jihadist movement, as Syria's civil war will be every bit as meaningful for this generation of jihadists as the Afghan-Soviet war was for militants coming of age in the 1980s—but the impact of the Syrian civil war will likely be even more widely felt.

Both the Syrian civil war and the Afghan-Soviet war can rightly be considered first-order humanitarian disasters, justifiably inflaming passions throughout the Muslim world and beyond. Because of the devastation wrought by both wars, many of the VNSAs who showed up to defend Muslims against their antagonists gained legitimacy from the clerical class and popularity at the street level. Unsurprisingly, both conflicts attracted a large number of Sunni Muslim foreign fighters from abroad, with well over 10,000 joining the forces in Syria that opposed longstanding dictator Bashar al-Assad.⁶² Jihadist factions have been a particular draw for foreign fighters.

In the Afghan-Soviet war, relationships among jihadists were forged on the battlefield that endured for decades and profoundly changed the security environment in many countries: Al-Qaeda itself was one of the outgrowths of these relationships. But while Communists were the enemy in the Afghan-Soviet war, the Syrian war has taken on a more sectarian hue. Iran has steadfastly supported Assad's embattled regime, and the Quds Force, an elite unit within the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has deployed in support of Assad's government. Hizballah militants and Shia irregular fighters from multiple countries have also entered Syria to support Assad. This dynamic has already produced sectarian ripples that did not exist in the Afghan-Soviet war.⁶³ There are two additional reasons that the impact of the Syrian civil war will likely be more widely felt than that of the Afghan-Soviet war. First, transnational jihadist networks did not exist at the beginning of the Afghan-Soviet conflict: rather, they were forged during the course of it. In contrast, the transnational jihadist movement was already well established at the start of the Syria civil war. Second, we now live in a far more networked world than we did during the Afghan-Soviet war.

NATO's intervention in Libya had an impact on the Syrian civil war in several ways. First, the intervention ultimately allowed foreign fighters to train in Libya, and travel from Libya to Syria. Ansar al-Sharia in Libya (ASL) has been known to train jihadists in Libya who are then sent to fight in Syria: videos of its training camps have surfaced publicly.⁶⁴ Libya is a relatively easy place from which fighters can make their way to Syria. A second way that the NATO intervention contributed to violence in Syria is the massive stockpile of arms that was left behind, allowing militants in Libya to shuttle these weapons to the Syrian

⁶² See Aaron Y. Zelin et al., "Up to 11,00 Foreign Fighters in Syria; Steep Rise Among Western Europeans," *ICSR Insight*, December 17, 2013. In addition to the Sunni foreign fighters that this testimony focuses on, the conflict has also attracted Shia foreign fighters who entered the battle on Assad's side. For some of the best work on this subject, it is worth following Phillip Smyth's excellent feature "Hizballah Cavalcade" at the website *Jihadology* (www.jihadology.net).

⁶³ See Aaron Y. Zelin & Phillip Smyth, "The Vocabulary of Sectarianism," *Foreign Policy*, January 29, 2014.

⁶⁴ Aaron Y. Zelin, "New Evidence on Ansar al-Sharia in Libya Training Camps," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, August 8, 2013.

opposition.⁶⁵ The Syrian rebels have received weapons and manpower not only from VNSAs in Libya, but also the new Libyan government, which was naturally sympathetic to the Syrian rebels' cause given its own revolutionary origin.⁶⁶

Another way that NATO's Libya intervention may have influenced events in Syria is that it likely caused Qatar to be more aggressive in its support of the Syrian opposition. Since Qatar strongly backed the Libyan opposition, it naturally viewed Qaddafi's fall as a major foreign-policy victory.⁶⁷ Had Libya not been such a quick victory for the anti-Qaddafi forces, Qatar may have been forced to moderate its foreign adventurism.

Counterfactuals are always a difficult proposition, and given the many factors driving the Syrian rebellion, it is not clear how significant a contributor the Libya intervention was in escalating the Syria conflict. While the *degree* of difference that NATO's intervention made can be debated, it's clear that the intervention helped escalate the Syria conflict to some extent. This would be a worthwhile area for further study.

Conclusion

NATO's intervention in Libya was thus executed nearly flawlessly, yet despite this superb tactical execution the decision to go to war appears to be a strategic mistake (although the intervention did produce some benefits that different people will place different values on, such as the end of Qaddafi's dictatorial rule). The Libya war does not attract the attention in the U.S. of another foreign-policy blunder, the Iraq war, and for good reason: no American lives were lost in Libya, the conflict drained far less money from the Treasury, and the immediate result was to save Libyan lives (even if other lives were lost as a second-order consequences).

But this does not mean that the decision to intervene in Libya is unimportant. The Libya war speaks to the power of flawed analytic assumptions, in this case the widespread belief about the impact that regional revolutions would have on al-Qaeda and jihadism. It speaks also to the cost of taking actions that will speed up events when the pace of change has already produced great uncertainty. The war raises further questions about second-order consequences; and about the responsibility-to-protect doctrine in a resource-constrained environment.

In weighing the costs and benefits of NATO's operation, one would naturally begin with the immediate danger that spurred NATO to act: the likelihood that Qaddafi would have ruthlessly crushed the opposition to his regime in Benghazi. Some scholars believe that, even though lives were saved in Benghazi, on net the fact that NATO prolonged the war in Libya cost more lives than it saved. Alan Kuperman of Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Austin argues that the intervention in fact cost lives in Libya, as Qaddafi had recaptured most of the country at that time and was about to put an end to the conflict. Kuperman argues that NATO's intervention in fact "enabled the rebels to resume their attack, which prolonged the war for another seven months and caused at least 7,000

⁶⁵ C.J. Chivers, Eric Schmitt & Mark Mazzetti, "In Turnabout, Syria Rebels Get Libyan Weapons," *New York Times*, June 21, 2013.

⁶⁶ Ruth Sherlock, "Libya's New Rulers Offer Weapons to Syrian Rebels," *Telegraph* (U.K.), November 25, 2011.

⁶⁷ Mehran Kamrava, *Qatar: Small State, Big Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

more deaths.”⁶⁸ While commentators are often tempted to bolster their case with the most favorable set of facts to support their position, recall the difficulty of undertaking counterfactual analysis. It’s unclear if Kuperman’s conclusion is correct, but his point that the intervention likely prolonged the conflict in addition to saving lives at Benghazi seems to be. The fact that NATO’s intervention had the effect of both saving and also taking lives in Libya should be part of any analysis of the net effect of the conflict. And further, the situation that NATO’s intervention left behind in Libya has cost further lives inside the country, as well as in Mali, Egypt, Algeria, and possibly Tunisia (where levels of violence have been lower, and the direct connection to lives lost is murkier). The intervention also empowered jihadist groups while placing the United States in a more difficult strategic position in the region.

This is why, on net, when I evaluate NATO’s intervention in Libya, I cannot join with those who proclaim it to be a success. Though NATO did its job extraordinarily well, an intervention whose main purpose was saving lives may have ended up claiming more lives than it preserved; and the war certainly helped jihadist groups who are hostile to the United States and its allies while setting back U.S. regional interests.

It may be difficult to hear that such a well-intentioned intervention seems to have produced more harm than good—and the intentions behind the Libya war were certainly rooted in a genuine concern for human life. However, it is necessary to evaluate the impact of any military we take with clear eyes.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

⁶⁸ Alan J. Kupermanh, “Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene,” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, September 2013.

Chairman ISSA. Dr. Wehrey.

STATEMENT OF FREDERIC WEHREY

Mr. WEHREY. Chairman Issa, Ranking Member Cummings, and distinguished committee members, I'm grateful for this opportunity to speak with you about Libya's security crisis and what the international community can do to assist. I bring the perspective of both a scholar who travels frequently to the country and a reserve military officer who served in Tripoli prior to the revolution. During my four visits to Libya, I have spoken with Libyan government officials, military officers, Islamists and militia leaders across the country including in Benghazi.

At the core of Libya's crisis is the power of its militias who draw support from a wide array of local, tribal, ethnic and religious constituencies. Their persistence is rooted in the absence of effective municipal governance, representative institutions and a strong central army and police. Since 2012, these militias have become politicized. They have used armed force to compel the passage of a sweeping law barring Qadhafi era officials from the government, kidnapped the prime minister, and blocked oil production in the east. Weapons are now the de facto currency through which demands are pressed and concessions obtained. Militias have also captured illicit trafficking networks.

Libya's instability has been aggravated by a decision by the weak transitional government to put the militias on its payroll under the loose authority of the Ministries of Defense and Interior. The idea then was to harness the manpower of the revolutionaries to fill the security void left by the nonexistent army which was kept deliberately weak by Qadhafi who feared its potential for coups. By all accounts, this has been a disastrous Faustian bargain. It has attracted new recruits to the militias through the promise of high salaries, and it has given the militia bosses even more political power. That power is especially evident in the East where Islamist militias demand the removal of Qadhafi era personnel from state institutions and the implementation of a Sharia-based constitution before they surrender arms.

These actors, however, remain on the outer fringes of Libya's politics and security institutions. Overwhelmingly, the country's Islamists reject violence for political means.

Faced with the weakness of the central government, an array of informal societal actors, tribal elders, NGOs, municipal councils and religious authorities have mobilized against the militias, especially radical groups like Ansar al-Sharia. They have demonstrated a societal resilience and a moderation that has kept the country from sliding down the path of civil war.

Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that every Libyan I spoke with attributed Libya's crisis to the enduring legacy of Qadhafi's rule rather than the policies or decisions during the NATO-led intervention. It was Qadhafi's 42-year tyranny that deprived Libyans of even a basic role in governance, pitted tribe against tribe and region against region, wrecked the economy, kept the security institutions deliberately weak, and marginalized the eastern part

of the country. Overwhelmingly Libyans remain supportive of the NATO-led operation, and they welcome outside assistance.

What are the areas where this assistance can be best applied? Obviously the most important task is reforming the security sector in training and equipping a new generation of Army and police. The U.S. and its allies are currently engaged in just such a project under the auspices of what is known as the general purpose force, but in doing so, they must ensure that the ranks of this new force are inclusive of Libya's diverse tribes and region and that effective civilian oversight is in place so that political factions do not capture the new security entities as their personal militias.

It is important to recognize that lasting security cannot be achieved without addressing the economic and political motives that drive support for the militias. The government has tried with various schemes to disarm, demobilize, and integrate the young men of the militias. None of these efforts has succeeded because the country is paralyzed between opposing political factions. Each side sees any movement on the security sector as a win for its rivals. In essence, Libya suffers from a balance of weakness amongst its factions and militias. No single entity can compel the others to coercion, but every entity is strong enough to veto the others.

With this in mind, the ultimate solution for Libya's woes lies in the political realm, in the drafting of a constitution, the reform of its elected legislature, and a broad-based reconciliation under the auspices of the national dialogue. These are areas where outsiders can lend advice and measured assistance, but where the ultimate burden must be borne by Libyans themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you here today.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Wehrey follows:]

Chairman Issa, Ranking Member Cummings and distinguished committee members, I am grateful for this opportunity to speak with you about the roots of Libya's security crisis and what the international community can do to assist. I bring the perspective of both a scholar who travels frequently to the country for research and a reserve military officer who served at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli in 2009 prior to the Revolution, and again in early 2011.

Libya after Qaddafi is a country facing a dizzying array of challenges. A weak central government, gutted of institutions by the dictator's idiosyncratic rule, has struggled to assert its authority over vast expanses of the country's territory. The restive eastern region of the country—long marginalized under Qaddafi—has witnessed a worsening spiral of violence between rival tribal factions, Islamists, and remnants of the old regime, as well as calls for greater political autonomy. Porous and ill-policed borders have become veritable thoroughfares for arms smuggling, illicit trafficking, and the movement of armed militants across Africa and the Middle East. Deep and historic political divisions between the western mountains, Tripoli, Misrata, and the east continue to obstruct the formation of a broad-based consensus government, and the drafting of an effective constitution. Long-suppressed grievances by ethnic Tabu, Tuareg and Amazigh have surfaced along the country's southern and western peripheries.

Economically, Libya has suffered from the legacy of Qaddafi's economic mismanagement, poor decisions by its transitional government, and the deleterious effects of the recent eastern oil blockade by militant federalists. In 2012, the country experienced a roughly 104 percent GDP growth; in 2013 it suffered a 6 percent GDP contraction as a result of the variances in oil production. The vestiges of the Qaddafi state, particularly subsidies and dysfunctional welfare institutions, need to be overhauled—but there are few signs of that occurring. If anything public sector salaries and subsidies form a greater proportion of state budget than under Qaddafi; nearly 80 percent of all employees are state employees. The government devotes 60 percent of the budget to salaries and subsidies and 40 percent to debts and contracts with international firms. Even with the return of oil production, this economic mismanagement combined with the depletion of Libya's reserves suggests a bleak outlook.

Mr. Chairman, I have visited Libya four times since the fall of Qaddafi, traveling to the country's major centers of power: Zintan, Tripoli, Misrata, and the troubled eastern city of Benghazi. I have spoken with a range of government officials, Libyan military officers, Islamists, and militia leaders. I want to emphasize that nearly every Libyan I spoke with attributed the current crisis to the enduring legacy of Qaddafi's rule, rather than policies or decisions during the NATO-led intervention. It was Qaddafi's 42-year tyranny that deprived Libyans of even a basic role in governance, pitted tribe against tribe and town against town, wrecked the economy, kept the security institutions of the country deliberately weak, and marginalized the eastern part of the country—which has fueled a witch's brew of militant federalism and Islamist extremism. Overwhelmingly, Libyans remain supportive of the NATO-led operation. And they retain a degree of goodwill toward the United States that contrasts sharply with surrounding countries.

With this in mind, let me offer a diagnosis for Libya's current crisis that moves beyond the headlines and addresses the institutional and political roots of its insecurity.

The Power of the Armed Groups

At the core of Libya's insecurity is the power of its non-state armed formations. Often denoted as "militias," the country's many armed groups are referred to in local parlance as *kata'ib*—brigades—invoking a degree of revolutionary legitimacy that is absent from the term "militia." They vary tremendously in size, affiliation with the central government, regional, tribal or ethnic basis, Islamist outlook, and linkages to political parties. Many did not actually fight in the Revolution but arose after it ended.

Too often, outside observers posit a dichotomy whereby Libyan armed groups are believed to be separate from Libyan society. In fact, the armed groups are deeply and organically rooted across Libya's diverse communities. Their endurance reflects unresolved grievances related to political or ethnic marginalization, distrust of the country's dysfunctional elected body, the General National Congress (GNC), or provincial alienation, as is the case with federalist armed groups in the east. Since 2012, the armed groups have increasingly politicized, using force or the threat of force to compel the passage of a sweeping law barring Qaddafi-era officials from future employment, kidnapping Zeidan, and, most recently, blockading oil production in the east. This politicization is directly related to the absence of effective municipal governance and functioning representative institutions. Weapons are the de-facto currency through which demands are pressed and concessions obtained. "We fought Qaddafi with arms, so now arms are all we know," said one militia member in 2013.

In many cases armed groups have captured illicit trafficking networks and are engaged in what amounts to veritable extortion of the central government. A case in point is the notorious Qaqa Brigade, comprised largely of Zintani members but based in Tripoli. Officially, the Qaqa Brigade affiliated itself with the Chief of Staff, providing border security along the country's porous southwest frontier and guarding oil installations in the southern fields. But the militia was widely known as the most predatory, mafia-like of Tripoli's armed groups. "We decided that our goal is to keep the capital safe," its commander Uthman Mlegta told me in early 2012. "Once everything returns to normal we will give up our arms." What that normalcy will look like is hard to say, especially since the brigade has become increasingly political, acting in effect as the armed wing for Mahmud Jibril's National Forces Alliance (Mlegta's brother is the head of the Alliance's steering committee). In January, Mlegta's brigade threatened to shut down the elected legislature in response to a move to extend the GNC's mandate by his archrivals, armed groups from the powerful city state of Misrata. It was one of several near-coup attempts that heralded a dangerous new chapter in Libya's troubled journey. The crisis was averted only through a last minute intercession by the United Nations. Mlegta himself narrowly escaped an assassination attempt.

If the Zintani and Misratan armed groups were feared for their economic and political predation on the capital, the Islamist armed groups in the east reflect that region's longtime alienation from the center and, increasingly, an embrace of moral piety and purity. The most powerful of the Islamist armed groups arose in the early days of the anti-Qaddafi uprising: the February 17 Revolutionary Brigade, the Rafallah Sahati Companies, the Zawiya Maryrs Brigade, the Omar Mukhtar Brigade, the Ahrar Libya Brigade, and the Annas Ibn Malik Brigade. Their leaders spent time in Qaddafi's notorious Abu Slim prison, a notorious detention center for political prisoners. Some had field experience on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The restless young men of the east flocked to their ranks, drawn by the promise of an ethical code, camaraderie, adventure, and income. Few had other options. On the roster of recruits for one of these units, the Zawiya Martyrs Brigade, a number of pre-revolutionary employment categories appeared with depressing frequency: day laborer, unemployed, mechanic, student. Battling loyalist forces in Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Brega and Sirte, these young men found a new purpose. They forged new bonds. When Qaddafi fell, they found it hard to go back to what they were before.

For some now, there is a refusal to surrender their arms, demobilize and integrate into the formal security apparatus. They demand that the regular security forces first be "cleansed" of Qaddafi-era personnel. This is not simply a political imperative, but a moral one. The Islamists routinely decry state institutions as being irreparably tainted by ethically bankrupt supporters of the former regime. Another precondition is the implementation of a sharia-based constitution that protects the moral sanctity of the army. "We want an army that defends Islamic law and the people not the taghut," the former commander of the Rafallah Sahati brigade Ismail Sallabi told me in November 2013, using the potent Islamic term for "tyrant." Such rejectionism informs the outlook of even more radical groups like the Ansar al-Sharia.

Despite these sentiments, the majority of Libya's Islamists are committed to political participation. This is true even for former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). Some of them hold important cabinet and ministerial positions, or have won seats in the country's elected legislature. Libyan opponents of Islamism and some outside observers often apply blanket labels to Libya's Islamists, calling them "al-Qaeda 2.0." Such a narrative is not only inaccurate, but also highly unhelpful from a policy perspective. To be sure, the U.S. has serious concerns about al-Qaeda's presence in the country and the flow of arms and jihadists outside its borders. But it is important not to conflate mainstream Islamists with the more radical factions that remain on the fringes of Libya's society, politics and security institutions.

The Weakness of the Army and Security Sector

Today, Libya's regular army is a largely hollow force, kept deliberately weak and underfunded by Qaddafi who feared its potential for coups. In some parts of the country, the army does not control its own offices, barracks, and ammunition depots. Under Qaddafi, the Ministry of Defense and the

chief of staff's office did not have an institutional base and staffing functions. Because of this absence, the functioning of the security sector is now highly dependent on personality politics and backdoor deal-making with the various armed groups. There is no system for rationalizing the army's procurement, force development, training, and deployment. The police force fares a little better but is unequipped to handle more difficult and hazardous policing tasks.

Under the strong recommendation of Libya's international donors at the 2012 Paris conference, the Libyans set up a National Security Council, but it remains little more than an organizational chart. Much of its hollowness stems from the fact that setting up a coordinating body would mean addressing the stark political disagreements that pervade the upper reaches of the security sector. And this was something that the embattled former prime minister, Ali Zeidan, was both unwilling and unable to do. Consequently, decision-making continues to be stymied by political rivalries between the Minister of Defense, the Chief of Staff, the head of the GNC and other posts.

Ironically, this absence of inclusive security institutions has fueled the widespread perception that the new government is simply replicating the old habits of the Qaddafi state. Without a clear strategic direction and transparency in resource allocation, the country's armed formations have come to suspect that the defense sector and the Interior Ministry are perpetuating the interests of those who served Qaddafi's regime. The young men filling the ranks of the armed formations are reluctant to join the army and police forces given the security, better pay and relatively easier life afforded by the armed groups. For their part, the commanders of the armed groups and their political allies are loath to surrender the leverage of armed force while the country's political institutions remain so contested and while the state is unable to meet the needs of its far-flung provinces.

A key obstacle confronting reintegration and the building of the new army is the military's bloated senior ranks. No one knows how many soldiers are in the Libyan army: the Qaddafi regime gave out officer commissions as rewards, so today there are estimated to be over 14,000 officers with the rank of colonel and above. In essence, the army today resembles an inverted pyramid. The leaders of revolutionary brigades who wish to shape the future of the defense, police, or intelligence sectors believe that the top-heavy ranks of the army leave little room for them to assume positions of authority. For their part, the senior officers of the army have resisted the integration of the revolutionaries, whom they regard as either excessively politicized, Islamist, or ill-disciplined rabble. Reform-minded Libyans and outside advisors have long recommended an early retirement program for many of these colonels. But the process has proceeded haltingly, partially due to a politically motivated campaign to expel officers suspected of loyalty to the old regime.

The Commission for Integrity and Reform of the Libyan Army is essentially an attempt to apply the sweeping Political Isolation Law to the army in a way that is roughly analogous to the de-Baathification campaign applied to the Iraqi Army. Already, the commission has removed large groups of senior officers at a time—numbering anywhere from 500 to 1,000—and many of them had fought against Qaddafi. As in the case of Iraq, the blanket application of the law could not only

deprive the army of much-needed operational experience, but also provoke widespread social upheaval in Libya, as many of these officers have linkages to major tribes.

The government has responded with various schemes to reform and formalize the security sector while attempting to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate the young men of the armed groups. None has succeeded. The country's nascent security institutions are hotly contested between opposing and shifting political constellations, as are the Cabinet and GNC. Each side, therefore, sees any movement on institutional development in the security sector as a "win" for its rivals.

In essence, the country suffers from a balance of weakness amongst its political factions and armed groups: no single entity can compel others to act purely through coercion, but every entity is strong enough to veto the others. The political stalemate explains much of Libya's paralysis on the security sector: the glacial pace behind the development of the Libyan army, the failure of the regionally constituted National Guard project, and the lack of buy-in for a national-level program for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DRR).

The Development of a "Hybrid" Security Sector: Subsidizing the Armed Groups

Three years after the Revolution, nearly all the armed groups are affiliated in some way with the state. How this arrangement came about stems from a fateful set of policies in late 2011 and early 2012 enacted by the country's weak and unelected transitional government.

Bereft of a way to project its shaky authority and keep order, the National Transitional Council (NTC) tried to establish a measure of control over the armed groups by putting them on its payroll. The idea was to harness the manpower and firepower of the revolutionaries to fill the security void left by the nonexistent police and army and, most importantly, to quell the increasingly frequent outbreaks of communal and ethnic fighting that were flaring up in the western mountains, Bani Walid and the southern towns of Kufra and Sabha. Over time, most of the armed groups subordinated themselves to the Ministry of Defense. Many joined the Libya Shield Forces (LSF), which filled the role of the army and/or the Preventative Security Apparatus, a counter-intelligence and investigative service that arose in the early days of the revolution to root out Qaddafi loyalists. A smaller number in the east joined the Supreme Security Committee (SSC), which roughly approximated the functions of the police, under the Ministry of Interior—although this body was always stronger in Tripoli than other areas.

By all accounts, the results of this hybrid arrangement have been mixed, if not negative, for Libya's stability and its fragile democracy. Libya currently has a fractured, decentralized and hybrid security sector that is marked by the uneasy and frequently hostile interactions between formal and informal actors, with multiple agencies performing overlapping functions, all competing for resources, and, increasingly, pursuing parochial political agendas. The government's subsidization of the Shields and the SSCs had the paradoxical effect of swelling the size of the armed groups as young men flocked to

their ranks, drawn by the promise of a steady salary that far exceeded that of the police and army. “If the Libyan government started paying fishermen,” one friend told me, “then everyone would become a fisherman. So it goes with armed groups.” Today, there are an estimated 165,000 registered “revolutionaries” in Libya, but by some estimates only a fraction of these—perhaps 30 percent—actually fought in the anti-Qaddafi uprising.

Because entire brigades and companies joined the SSCs and Shields, the new structures essentially preserved the cohesion and parochial outlook of the armed groups, albeit under the cover of the state. Having been effectively “deputized” by the government and flush with funds, the armed groups are now even more emboldened to pursue agendas that are increasingly political and self-serving. But perhaps most ominously, the new structures have taken on a life of their own, stymying efforts to build up the regular army. Libyans today refer to Shields and SSCs as a shadow security state, a “third army,” and, even worse, a reincarnation of the dreaded “popular” and “revolutionary” committees that terrorized the country under Qaddafi.

Both the regular armed forces and the police have taken a backseat to the Libya Shield, the SSC, and several other paramilitaries—an ironic mirror of the arrangement that existed in the twilight years of Qaddafi’s rule. Then, the army and police had ceded control of operational tasks to, respectively, the security battalions commanded by Qaddafi’s sons and the internal security service that answered directly to Qaddafi’s office.

There have been a few instances of truly “mixed units” where revolutionaries and the regular army have been fully integrated. But in most cases, there is ambivalence, hostility and a lack of coordination between the two sides. The regular army frequently has hostile relations with the Libya Shield and other paramilitaries. For their part the Shields see the regular army as a hollow, corrupt force that is bloated at the senior ranks. The senior army officers regard the Shields as nothing more than ill-disciplined rabble who are highly politicized and Islamist. The SSCs’ relationship with the police is marked by similar distrust; the police are seen as incompetent and tainted by the legacy of affiliation with the Qaddafi regime.

The new security formations have developed an arsonist and fireman approach to Libya’s security: they justify their continued utility and existence to the fragile government on the basis of their ability to handle neighborhood security, catch drug smugglers, and quell the outbreaks of communal and ethnic fighting in the country’s far-flung provinces. But in many cases the constituent members of these armed coalitions are worsening the country’s instability, by either being directly involved in criminal activity or fighting as partisans in the conflicts they are meant to subdue.

Societal Policing: The Role of Local and Informal Actors

Faced with the weakness of formal state institutions and frustrated at the impotence of the central government, an array of informal actors—tribal elders, municipal councils and religious authorities—

have played a crucial role in quelling violence and policing local communities. These actors have negotiated ceasefires, spearheading local militia disarmament initiatives, and mediating prisoner release between warring clans or towns. They have demonstrated an important and oft-neglected aspect of post-revolutionary Libya—a societal resilience that has kept it from sliding down the path of open civil war.

Civil society and tribal authorities have also acted as checks against more radical armed groups such as Ansar al-Sharia. On multiple occasions in the east, powerful eastern tribes and demonstrators have rallied against the excesses of Islamist extremists, driving them out of certain locales. At the same time, more moderate Islamist figures or respected tribal elders have engaged in dialogue with the radicals attempting to bring them into the political mainstream.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the wake of the tragic killing of the U.S. Ambassador and three of his colleagues. Protestors had mounted similar demonstrations on the compounds of the Ansar al-Sharia and other Islamist armed groups, like the Rafallah Sahati Companies. Later, on June 8, 2013, protestors marched on the compound of the city's most powerful Islamist brigade, the Libya Shield One, headed by a 35-year old former mechanic, Wisam bin Ahmayd. The protestors demanded the eviction of the Shield from Benghazi, the abolition of all armed groups and government-affiliated Shields, with their replacement coming from the regular army and police. Thirty-two people died when the Libya Shield forces opened fire.

Another example of this dynamic at work is the demonstration that occurred in Tripoli last November—a seminal event that came to be commemorated as “Black Friday”—and earlier protests in Benghazi. On November 15, 2013, Tripoli's Local Council organized protests against well-armed Misratan groups that had occupied a former regime compound in the Gharghour neighborhood, which abuts the main road to Tripoli International Airport. The Misratans in Gharghour were long seen as parasitic outsiders in the capital, involved in an array of illicit enterprises, openly flaunting heavy-caliber weapons and, it was later revealed, running their own torture chamber. When unarmed protestors approached their compound that sunny afternoon, forty-six of them died in a hail of gunfire from heavy-caliber weapons wielded by the Misratan militia. Commemorated in nation-wide mourning ceremonies as “Black Friday,” the Gharghour massacre prompted subsequent demonstrations for the withdrawal of Misratan and Zintani militias from Tripoli. At a gathering in Algiers Square the Saturday after the massacre, crowds bore placards reading: “The February Revolution was a popular revolution and not a coup” and “We demand the replacement of the armed groups with the regular army and police.” In the days that followed, the Zintanis and Misratans did evacuate the city.

Although civil society and informal sources of authority have kept the country from descending into total chaos, they are by themselves not sufficient for moving the country forward politically and economically. The challenge for outside assistance is helping Libya achieve a modicum of security that provides space for much-needed institutional and economic growth to occur.

Challenges of Outside Assistance: Building the New Libyan Army

The international community has stepped up its efforts to train and equip a new Libyan national army and police. Since early 2013, the U.S. military's Africa Command (AFRICOM) and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) have been quietly planning to build a new Libyan army and counterterrorism force. The project originated in a plea during last year's G8 summit by then-Prime Minister Zeidan for outside help in building what would later be known as the "General Purpose Force" (GPF), totaling roughly 19,000 new soldiers. When it became clear last summer that Libya's elected government couldn't function free of militia influence, the plan gained greater traction in Washington. The U.S., Turkey, Britain, Morocco and Italy have plans to train and equip the Libyan military at bases overseas. AFRICOM, for its part, will train 6,000 to 8,000 soldiers at a base in Bulgaria. According to a recent Congressional notification, the Libyan government has pledged to pay 600 million U.S. dollars for the training and logistical support. But so far, the U.S. training has stalled because Libya has not provided payment up front.

Pentagon and AFRICOM officials privately assured me that they were asking tough questions about the GPF plan, having learned hard lessons in recent years about building armies in shattered states amid a patchwork of tribal and regional loyalties. "We want to train new units as a whole to ensure that individually trained recruits don't return to Libya and melt back into the armed groups," one AFRICOM official told me. Some officials at the Pentagon expressed concerns about creating a factional militia or even a praetorian guard that might subvert the country's democratic transition. It's not an entirely implausible scenario, given that the British trained then-captain Muammar Qaddafi in the 1960s. Another important imperative is to bolster the institutional structure behind the military, what one official called a "whole of government approach" that includes ministerial reform, payroll streamlining, base infrastructure and, especially, civilian control and oversight.

The most pressing concern, however, is the force's inclusivity. Since it is envisioned to eventually take the place of the Shields in quelling ethnic and tribal in-fighting, its non-partisanship and professionalism must be above question. A top priority, then, is vetting recruits, ensuring that they represent a wide variety of tribes and regions. The U.S. will be putting more boots on the ground in Libya for vetting of the force. But challenges persist.

The greatest challenge to broad inclusion comes from the old guard, the aging members of the Libyan officer corps, who betray an intense contempt for the young revolutionaries, particularly the Islamists. For them, the prospect of integrating militia members into the army would undermine the army itself. "I would rather resign than share this army with those blood idiots," one 20-year colonel told me last fall in Tripoli. These officers resent the various efforts to bring the armed groups under the control of the state, seeing the Shields and the Supreme Security Committees as competition. Even worse, however, is the affront to their status and salary. "Why should a major with 19 years' experience get 800 Libyan dinars, while a militia member of the Shields gets 1,200?" one colonel asked me. The

government recently raised army salaries to exceed those of the Committees and Shields, but it is unclear if this alone will help swell the ranks of the regular forces and compel young men to leave the armed groups. An even more bitter insult to the old cadre is the granting of automatic army ranks to revolutionary commanders.

A similar ambivalence about the force emerged from the country's Islamist militia bosses and their supporters, in Benghazi and across the country. They demand that the bloated senior ranks of the army be purged of Qaddafi-era holdouts before they agree to join it. But their fiercest criticism is reserved for what they saw as Zeidan's opacity and guile in soliciting foreign assistance to build the army. The prominent Islamist commander of Tripoli's Supreme Security Committee, Abdelraouf Kara, told me that Zeidan "doesn't have the right" to go around foreign capitals asking for help in building the army. Other Islamists in the east worried that the new army would become a political tool for the more secular-leaning National Forces Alliance or—even worse—the United States. When U.S. forces—allegedly with Libyan assistance—captured the wanted al-Qaeda leader Nazih al-Ruqai'i (Abu Anas al-Libi), the Grand Mufti of Libya issued a statement wondering if the Libyan young men being trained abroad were getting trained in the art of kidnapping. "The army has to be loyal first to Islamic law," an eastern Islamist told me. "If the state goes against Islamic law then the army should protect Islamic law. We don't want an army that helps foreign powers."

Principles for Moving Beyond the Impasse

Mr. Chairman, to move beyond the impasse, the first step for the international community is to accurately assess the nature of the security challenge in Libya. The framework for understanding the "militia" challenge must move beyond normative questions of "legitimacy" and acknowledge that the armed groups represent certain constituencies, and have become intimately entrenched in the state's security apparatus. The challenge, then, is dismantling and re-integrating the hybrid coalitions of the Supreme Security Committees and Libya Shield Forces that have fallen under the tenuous authority of the Ministries of Interior and Defense.

A second key task is accommodating and even harnessing the power of municipal security structures that involve the informal coordination between tribes and local leaders, regular police, and local armed groups. The nature and extent of these dynamics vary tremendously according to locale, but nowhere are they more evident than in the eastern city of Benghazi. In the troubled epicenter of Libya's revolution, a new security landscape has emerged where formal military forces, tribes, and Islamists work in tense and tenuous proximity, often through "operations rooms" that are meant to coordinate their efforts but are only loosely subordinated to the government in Tripoli. The government needs to invest in security structures that recognize the entrenched localism already at play, rather than trying to forcibly institute a top-down approach that, for many revolutionaries, smacks of the hyper-centralization of the Qaddafi era.

The third and perhaps most difficult task is reforming and bolstering the formal security sector. This will entail reorganizing the defunct defense architecture and training and equipping a new generation of police and army. In doing so, Libya's leaders and outside supporters must ensure that political factions or ambitious personalities do not "capture" the new security entities as their personal militias. Similarly, great care must be taken to ensure that the new forces do not dissolve along regional or tribal lines, or subvert the country's democratic process.

A final imperative is applying the lessons of other post-conflict experiences in demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) in Libya. Too often, Libya is believed to be an exceptional case, where, because of the unique pathologies of the Qaddafi state, the Revolution's grassroots trajectory, and outside intervention by NATO, the challenges of its security sector defy normal paradigms. But a canvassing of DDR and security sector reform (SSR) experiences in other countries reveals a number of truths that pertain to Libya. The most important of these is that DDR and SSR are not solely technical processes. They cannot be accomplished by focusing on the control of arms and structure of security forces at the exclusion of a broader political reconciliation and a solution for the complex set of motives that drive societal support for the armed groups.

With this in mind, the ultimate solution for Libya's security woes resides in the political realm—specifically, the drafting of a constitution, reform of the GNC, and a broad-based national reconciliation under the auspices of the National Dialogue. This is an area where the U.S. and other outside actors can lend advice and measured assistance, but where the ultimate burden must be borne by Libyans themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you here today.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. I'll now recognize myself for 5 minutes of questioning.

General Lovell, you were not on this or the Armed Services Committee's primary list of people that were interviewed in this process, and yet you came forward here today, came forward to the committee. Could you explain to us why you believe it was necessary to come forward to offer us your testimony?

General LOVELL. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I came forward because as a retired officer, most importantly, having served a number of years, I felt it was my duty to come forward. The young men and women that serve in uniform, those that serve along with us in civilian clothes, the circumstances of what occurred there in Benghazi that day need to be known. And with all of the discussion that ensues over a full forthcoming to the American people, it's important. It's a duty to be here.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. Our committee has interviewed a number of people, including those downrange people, both in Libya and in Benghazi, but as I said earlier, we for the most part have not interviewed people at AFRICOM with the exception, of course, being General Ham, although Carter Ham was at the Pentagon on September 11. Do you believe it is appropriate for us to interview other officers and enlisted personnel that served with you in Stuttgart that day as part of our discovery of what they believe could have been done, not just in what the military people call the 2 shop, but also in the 3 shop and so on.

General LOVELL. Sir, I think if it's any information that gives the most well-rounded picture of the occurrences at the time are important to obtain.

Chairman ISSA. One of the questions as we fan out here, but one of the questions that I have for you is, your primary job is, in fact, knowing the risk, knowing who the bad guys are and where they are and knowing what might face them. Is that correct?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Chairman ISSA. So your expertise is not in the operational response of what refuelers were where and could have reacted within a certain amount of time; is that correct?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Chairman ISSA. However, you were intimately familiar with the risk of extremist groups in Egypt, Libya and throughout North Africa, and for that matter, all of Africa. Is that correct?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Chairman ISSA. Now, African Command basically doesn't have any jets. It doesn't have any conventional divisions. Is that correct?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Chairman ISSA. So you leverage all the other commands when you need physical boots on the ground. Is that right?

General LOVELL. Boots on the ground, planes in the air, ships in the sea, et cetera. Right.

Chairman ISSA. However, the role of African Command, and I'm not trying to put words in your mouth, so please correct me if I'm even a little off.

General LOVELL. I will.

Chairman ISSA. Is, in fact, to look at a continent in which we have almost no troops and almost no basing. We have a small joint

base in Djibouti, I believe, but for the most part we have no major military assets in Africa. Is it fair to say that counterterrorism, looking for and being aware and working with the governments in Africa with, or without if necessary, to combat terrorism and, in fact, to make sure that governments are stable and able to support our missions, USAID and the aid missions and the embassies, is that really, to a great extent, why there is a unique command with a four star general in charge of it that focuses on this continent of a billion people larger than North America?

General LOVELL. That's precisely the understanding. It's to help Africans help Africans, and to work with Africans and our other partners to do so.

Chairman ISSA. So in that role, on September 11 earlier there was an attack in Egypt. Did you know of, anticipate, or do you believe that the attack in Egypt was based on seeing a YouTube video?

General LOVELL. Personally no.

Chairman ISSA. So that never came to you even though intelligence and what may have caused something would have been right up your, if you will, 2 alley?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Chairman ISSA. And in the hours that ensued after the attack on our compound in Benghazi, did you hear YouTube video?

General LOVELL. Briefly discussed but not from any serious standpoint.

Chairman ISSA. What time did you first hear that there was a video roughly?

General LOVELL. It was early on in the evening of September 11.

Chairman ISSA. Before 3:15 in the morning?

General LOVELL. Absolutely. We were—absolutely. We were, I would have to say, probably dismissed that notion by then by working with other sources.

Chairman ISSA. Okay. I just want to follow-up this one last thing. You heard about this early on, and you, as the deputy and the highest ranking person that moment working these issues, you dismissed the idea that this attack was, in fact, a demonstration that went awry and was based on a YouTube video out of Los Angeles?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. Recognize the ranking member.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much. More than 3 years ago, a wave of political change swept through the Middle East and North Africa. This Arab Spring promised hope for people oppressed by dictators for decades, but it also led to abrupt change and sometimes budding conflicts. I'm looking forward to hearing about how this movement has evolved over the last 3 years and how the United States can support a peaceful democratic transition in the region.

I'd also like to focus on the choice our country faced when the uprising against dictator Muammar Qadhafi began in 2011. At that time, the United States could have done nothing and allowed Qadhafi to remain in power, or we could have supported the liberation of the people of Libya. At the time, both Republicans and Democrats called on the President to support the rebels and oust Qa-

dhafi. For example, on April 24, 2011, Senator Lindsey Graham said this, "You cannot protect our vital national interests if Qadhafi stays." General Lovell, I want to thank you for coming forth. I really do. Do you agree with Senator Graham that Qadhafi was a threat to our national security?

General LOVELL. Yes, I do.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And, Dr. Schake, how about you? Do you agree with that?

Ms. SCHAKE. Yes, I do.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And I think you, a little bit earlier, agreed with me that there are things that we need to do to be supportive of the government. What would those things be, Doctor, the present situation?

Ms. SCHAKE. There are several things. First as several panelists mentioned, helping establish a Libyan national army that can actually police Libya's territory, reign in the militia as you begin to get political solutions to problems that will permit their disarmament. Second, support and help structure and help organize civil society and elections in Libya. We are doing much, much, much too little in helping the Libyans move a political process forward and we do that largely with examples, our own example, but also what all of us know about democratizing societies. We know how to do this. We're just not doing it nearly enough.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, 3 months later on July 3, 2011, Senator John McCain stated, "If Qadhafi stays, it is then a direct threat to our national security." Dr. Gartenstein-Ross, what's your view, and did you agree with Senators McCain and Graham?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. I do not, sir. Qadhafi was a brutal dictator. Nobody should have tears for him, but he was also about as rehabilitated as a dictator could be. I think that the statement that he threatened our national security would have been very true in the 1980s, true in the 1990s, but by 2011, he was, at most, a third or fourth tier security concern, in my view.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So therefore you disagree with the Senators?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Yes, I do, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Dr. Wehrey, do you agree with the Senators?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, I believe that Qadhafi was keeping a lid on a lot of things that were brewing. I mean, he was probably not a direct security threat the way he was in the 80s, but it depends on how we define security. I mean, many of the ills that spilled over from Libya and the current problems with Libya were because of his rule, because of the way he kept things clamped down, didn't permit civil society, marginalized the East. I mean, the seeds of extremism were sown during his regime. So in that sense, it was a security threat I think, and we know that Libyans were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, so he was exporting a lot of those problems beyond his borders.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And what do you think we should be doing? What steps should the United States be taking to improve the situation in Libya?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, I think under the circumstances the U.S. is doing quite a lot with other partners in Europe and elsewhere. The U.S. is committed to train over 19,000 new Libyan soldiers as part of the general purpose force along with Turkey, Britain, Italy, and

Morocco. This proposal is underway. We're engaged in civil society. Much of the problem is the lack of a partner on the other side. There's such a disarray in the Libyan government that we can't really interface with them. So for instance, the Libyan government has not agreed to provide payment for the general purpose force, which is why we're unable to move forward with this training of the new Army. But during my four travels to Libya since the revolution, I found the international community has been engaged, and the U.S. is there in terms of reforming the defense sector, helping with ministerial oversight, reaching out to Libya's vibrant civil society. A lot of this, the problem is access. The security situation doesn't permit our diplomats to go out and reach Libyans.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And General Lovell, what would you have us do there now to make the situation better in Libya?

General LOVELL. Well, sir, no longer serving and having access to a lot of the pertinent information and data, I wouldn't be able to give you a strong military answer to that. My personal answer to that would be one where it's a set of circumstances where we would have to work together to develop, that development would have to be very engaged on the ground with the people to make that happen.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you, and I ask unanimous consent just to put something in the record at this time. Our records show that or agreed to be made public that we have interviewed, as I said, the Combatant Commander, General Ham. We have also interviewed the Vice Commander, Admiral Leidig, Admiral Landolt and Losey, or Rear Admiral Losey, who's the SOC commander. Would you agree to provide the committee additional suggestions of the people that from your recollection are, outside of this hearing so that it not be public, the people you believe would be most helpful to gain knowledge directly of the facts on the ground on that day?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. May I?

Chairman ISSA. Of course.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Of the list of people that we have already interviewed, I'm sure you're familiar with those titles, would they be people that would be able to render an opinion like you were able to—and I'm not saying you would come up with the same conclusion, but would have the same type of information to render an opinion? These are people who are public servants who are military people. I'm just curious.

General LOVELL. Sir, I know each of those gentlemen and served with them.

Mr. CUMMINGS. An what do you think of them?

General LOVELL. Fine officers.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And so would they be in a position to render an opinion as you have?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Very well.

Chairman ISSA. Okay. So I think we have established that we'll get additional names and that the names that we have already interviewed would be ones that would have been on your list? Yes.

General LOVELL. Yes.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. And I thank the gentleman from Florida. Recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Lovell, a couple of questions. First of all, you have testified that we knew the night of September 11 that this was not just, say, the result of some of the video that had been shown. We knew this wasn't just a demonstration. We knew this was a concerted attack?

General LOVELL. Yes, I did.

Mr. MICA. Okay. That being said, in your position, you would know sort of who knew what. The State Department also would have known pretty instantaneously that there was a pretty serious incident going on in Benghazi. I've seen videos of it. Some of that was transmitted into the State Department and other locations. So we had a pretty good idea of what was going on there. You did. Would you say the State Department should have or could have?

General LOVELL. It could or should, yes, sir.

Mr. MICA. Okay. The attack started at 9:40, which was 3:40 in the afternoon here, approximately a 6-hour difference, I think. Is that correct?

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mr. MICA. So it wasn't an unusual time here in the United States that appropriate people and the highest level people should have been alerted that something serious was going on at one of our posts; is that correct?

General LOVELL. It was during the duty day here in the United States, yes, sir.

Mr. MICA. I don't know if we could have saved the Ambassador and aide that was with him. They may have been killed in the smoke or the first part of that. Would you say that was a pretty good assumption, that they were not, it was not possible to save them because they were probably killed within an hour or two—the U.S. really doesn't have a capability of responding there. Not that we shouldn't have had on the ground the capability to respond to some kind of attack. Would that be a correct assumption?

General LOVELL. You would typically, greatest desire for whatever situation you were going to be in to have adequate security.

Mr. MICA. I know we have over 100 posts, and there were about 14 listed on sort of the endangered or high risk list, and Benghazi was one of them. Isn't that correct?

General LOVELL. You would have to look to the State Department for that. I don't know.

Mr. MICA. We were told that in the past, so if someone failed, they failed to have the proper protections were the posts at risk. Every post doesn't have the same risk. Every point we don't have the same risk, but that was one of the major ones. The time frame didn't allow us maybe to save the Ambassador because they came in and attacked. It was an attack. It wasn't a little demonstration in the street. I believe we had enough time to save the two former Navy SEALs that were trying to protect the post. They were killed at approximately 5:15 a.m. It started at 9:40. That's a good 6 hours. I've been to Italy. I've been to Spain. I've been to Turkey. I've been to Stuttgart. I was informed, as a Member of Congress, if we had an incident, this is before Benghazi, that we could re-

spond, we had the capability of responding in a short order to save American personnel, particularly an ambassador or key assets or American citizens from points, and North Africa isn't exactly the toughest spot. There are places deeper in Africa that are tougher to get to, but I believe we could have saved those two if someone had taken action. Do you think we had the ability to do that?

General LOVELL. Presently or at the time?

Mr. MICA. At the time.

General LOVELL. At the time, it didn't happen that way, and others have discussed the time sequence.

Mr. MICA. Did the United States of America have the ability to protect its, again, people at that post within 6 hours?

General LOVELL. The State Department would be responsible for the time on the ground. Military could have made a response of some sort.

Mr. MICA. The military could have made a response.

General LOVELL. Of some sort.

Mr. MICA. I believe those two individuals were not saved—Mr. Issa and I went to Roda. We interviewed people. Our military personnel, they were not given the go-ahead. They were not given the assets. No one responded to go in and save the two individuals who were lost at approximately 5:50, and I believe we had that capability. Can you tell the committee if you think we had the capability of saving them at that time once again?

General LOVELL. You just mentioned personnel, assets and time and distance. Do I think we had all of those things put together at that moment? I wasn't in operations—

Mr. MICA. But again, it's not—again, we had that capability, I believe. I was told even before this that if we had an incident, that we could go in and rescue or save or resolve the situation, and do you believe we had that capability?

General LOVELL. If capabilities were in hand, then they could be employed.

Mr. JORDAN. [Presiding.] The gentleman from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the chair. Welcome to our panel.

General, let me pick up on that. You were not in the operational chain of command, is that correct, at the time of the tragedy?

General LOVELL. Not in the chain of command. I was serving in a staff role at that point in time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right. So you weren't making decisions?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I don't know if you're familiar with the fact that the House Armed Services Committee on February 10th issued a report, the Republican majority issued a report, and I want to quote from it and see what part of this you disagree with, because my friend from Florida suggests we could have, should have done something from, for example, Rota, Italy.

Secretary Panetta—I'm quoting from the report—I mean Spain rather—in consultation with General Ham, General Dempsey, and others verbally authorized three specific actions. First, two Marine FAST platoons in Rota, Spain, were ordered to prepare to deploy, one bound for Benghazi and one destined for Tripoli. Second, a Special Operations unit assigned to the European Command known as

Commander's In-Extremis Force, CIF, training in Croatia was ordered to move to a U.S. Naval air station in Italy and await further instructions. And third, a Special Operations unit in the United States also dispatched to the region. These orders were issued approximately 2 to 4 hours after the initial attack. Is it your contention that we could have done it sooner or should have done more of it? Or do you deny this happened?

General LOVELL. My belief, as I put in my statement, has to do with we should have continued to move forward with whatever forces we were going to move forward with. The timeline and what specifically happened there was in the operational channels. What I'm looking at is the future, and how we choose to respond in the future really needs to be along the lines of the military feeling empowered to take action under the authorities that it has—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes.

General LOVELL. —so that they can move forward and do that when the capabilities exist.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I want to read you the conclusion of the committee, the Republican chairman, Buck McKeon, who conducted formal briefings and oversaw that report. He said, "I'm pretty well satisfied that given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done much more than we did."

Do you take issue with the chairman of the Armed Services Committee in that conclusion?

General LOVELL. His conclusion that he couldn't have done much more than they did with the capability and the way they executed it?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Given the time frame.

General LOVELL. That's a fact in the record, the way it is written, the way he stated it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay. All right. Because I'm sure you can appreciate, General, there might be some who for various and sundry reasons would like to distort your testimony and suggest that you're testifying that we could have, should have done a lot more than we did because we had capabilities we simply didn't utilize. That is not your testimony?

General LOVELL. No, that is not my testimony, no, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank you very much, General.

Well, actually, Mr. Gartenstein-Ross, if I understood your testimony, Libya is a mess. I mean, it's a very unstable, violent environment. There is no central government control, and that's the environment in which we're trying to work and in which we were working at the time of the tragedy in Benghazi; is that correct?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Yes, that's correct, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And no amount of U.S. troops, security forces even at the time of the tragedy in Benghazi was going to change that environment; is that correct?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Yeah. I mean, certainly you're not going to change the fact that the central government can't exercise a writ.

Mr. CONNOLLY. You know, like my friend from Utah, I went to Tripoli, not Benghazi, and the airport at the time was—security at the airport was controlled by a militia—

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Yeah.

Mr. CONNOLLY. —not by the government. I don't know if that's changed. Has it?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. I'm not aware if—of whether it has now.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yeah. That made one very uneasy about security, you know. Let's hope they're friendly. But it's obviously painful transparent symbolism of the lack of any central authority. And I see you shaking your head, Ms. Schake, as well. Did you want to comment?

Ms. SCHAKE. I agree with you.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yeah. I just think that's also very important, the testimony the three of you have provided, which I very much appreciate. But, I mean, you know, again people can play politics with a tragedy all they want. The fact of the matter is at the time of the tragedy and even to this day, Libya is a very unstable situation postrevolution, and the object is to do the best we can to try to change that dynamic to create a more stable government that can provide security not only for us and our diplomats, but also for its own people. Fair statement, Dr. Wehrey?

Mr. WEHREY. Absolutely. I mean, as I mentioned, we—I mean, since, I think, 2013 the U.S. has been planning for helping the Libyan Government with its security forces. Our diplomats are involved with reaching out to civil society, but it's a tough challenge, and, I mean, I really want to emphasize that a lot of this is on the Libyans' shoulders. I mean, this is a country that needs to reach a broad political reconciliation among its factions before they can be in a position to receive outside help. So when I talk to people from AFRICOM and State Department, there's just this sense that there's a lack of partnership on the other side, and you need that. And I think much of this is taking time. I mean, Libyans are moving forward. They are writing a Constitution. They held elections in 2012 that by all accounts were relatively transparent and fair, and they remain very pro-American, which is in contrast to many other countries in the region.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you very much, and I want to thank all four of you for your testimony. I think it's very enlightening, and actually it's a contribution to what has heretofore been a rather desultory conversation about the tragedy in Libya. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ISSA. [Presiding.] I thank the gentleman.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Florida seek recognition?

Mr. MICA. A unanimous consent request. March 11th, along with more than 60 Members, sent this letter to the President saying it had been a year and a half since the Benghazi attacks, nothing had been done to bring these people to justice, and asking for the administration to act. I would like that to be part of the record.

Chairman ISSA. Without objection, so ordered.

Chairman ISSA. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes. Mr. Chaffetz.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Thank the chairman, and thank you all for being here. Thank you for your service to your country, and, General, God bless you. Thank you for your service, over 33 years.

What was—on September 11, 2012, what was your rank and title?

General LOVELL. Brigadier general, United States Air Force, and I served as the Deputy Director for Intelligence and Knowledge Development, J2.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. J2.

Where were you the night of September 12th, September 11th and 12th?

General LOVELL. I was at my home until I was recalled to the JOC, Joint Operations Center.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Joint Operations Center in Germany?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. You were in the room?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. You were able to see, hear, feel, understand what was going on in that room?

General LOVELL. We work towards understanding. That's the job of the J2, yes, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Were you ever interviewed by the Accountability Review Board, the ARB?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. CIA station chief—your prime responsibility was to try to—as you say in the last sentence of your testimony, that the attacks—the AFRICOM J2 was focused on attribution; that attacks became attributable very soon after the event. What do you believe they were attributable to?

General LOVELL. That they were attributable to an Islamist extremist group.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Al Qaeda?

General LOVELL. It was—we felt it was Ansar al-Sharia.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Which is affiliated with Al Qaeda?

General LOVELL. Yeah. Yes, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. AQIM, were they involved?

General LOVELL. The AAS is who we most principally looked at, but all of the groups at large.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. How quickly did you come to the conclusion that you believed that there were Al Qaeda affiliates or Al Qaeda themselves involved and engaged in this attack?

General LOVELL. Very, very soon, when we were still in the very early, early hours of this activity.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Was it a video?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Was it a video that sparked a protest?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. What I want to get at, Mr. Chairman, are the facts at the time. That's what the White House keeps talking about, the facts at the time. The CIA station chief is quoted as saying, "quote, quote, quote, not not an escalation of protest, end quote." Would you agree or disagree with the CIA station chief's analysis?

General LOVELL. That it is not not an escalation? Absolutely. It was an attack.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Beth Jones at the State Department, in an email that went to, among others, Hillary Clinton's Chief of Staff, says

that she told the Libyan Ambassador—this is September 12th, 12:46 p.m.—“I told him that the group that conducted the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia, is affiliated with Islamic extremists. Would you agree or disagree with that statement?”

General LOVELL. I would agree with it. The timing of it, I don’t know, but the content, yes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, the scandal that is here that some choose to ignore as a phony scandal is the fact that the CIA, the CIA station chief, the military themselves, you have the person sitting in front of us who is the head of intelligence, he is looking at the intelligence, they come to the conclusion that it’s Ansar al-Sharia. And then you also have the Department of State telling the Libyans that it was Ansar al-Sharia. None of them think it’s a video. None of them; the military, the CIA, the CIA station chief, the State Department, all of them. The facts at the time, Mr. Chairman, the facts do not point to a video. That only comes from the White House.

What was going on in the room, General? Our people are under attack. There are people dying. What is the military doing?

General LOVELL. Desperately trying to gain situational awareness in an area where we had a dearth of it.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Were they moving to the sound of the guns? Were they doing what they were trained to do, or were they sitting around waiting for the State Department and Hillary Clinton to call them up and say, do something? What did they actually do?

General LOVELL. We sent a Predator drone overhead to be able to—

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Did we do enough, General?

General LOVELL. Sir—

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Your professional opinion. You are retired, sir. I know you care deeply about this.

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. What was the mood in the room? What was the feeling? Was it to save our people?

General LOVELL. It was desperation there to be able to gain—

Mr. CHAFFETZ. It was what?

General LOVELL. Desperation there to gain situational awareness and to be able to do something to save people’s lives.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Did they actually do it? Did they actually do it? The three actions that we talk about, a FAST team, FAST team is not—they’re not even trained to go in to engage into a fight. The other force they talk about is coming from the United States of America. We had assets there in Europe. Did they actually go to the sound of the guns? Did they actually go into Benghazi?

General LOVELL. No, sir, those assets did not.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Why not?

General LOVELL. Basically there was a lot of looking to the State Department for what it was that they wanted, and in the deference to the Libyan people and the sense of deference to the desires of the State Department in terms of what they would like to have.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Did they ever tell you to go save the people in Benghazi?

General LOVELL. Not to my knowledge, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. We didn't run to the sound of the guns. They were issuing press releases. We had Americans dying. We had dead people, we had wounded people, and our military didn't try to engage in that fight. Would you disagree with that?

Chairman ISSA. The gentleman's time has expired, but the gentleman may answer on any of the questions if you didn't think you got enough time to answer fully.

General LOVELL. Four individuals died, sir; we obviously did not respond in time to get there.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Could we have?

Chairman ISSA. The gentleman's time has expired. Go ahead.

General LOVELL. We may have been able to, but we'll never know.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Because we didn't try.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman.

We now recognize the gentlelady from the District of Columbia Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

This hearing is interesting. It seems to be based on the notion that there were unintended consequences after the intervention into Libya. Let me begin by saying it's the nature of the beast, if one is talking about the Mideast, and it's interesting to note in contrast that when we intervene in Iraq where the consequences were—indeed, where we could have prevented by simply letting the monitors on the ground continue to look for weapons of mass destruction, we just went in willy-nilly. We didn't have anything like that in Libya. And, of course, in Iraq clearly one of the unintended consequences surely would have been renewed conflict between the Sunni and Shi'a, and yet we went in head first, perhaps the most catastrophic war of the 20th century, invasion by the United States of America.

Well, many of us were very doubtful about Libya, to be sure, and many Democrats, frankly, followed our Republican colleagues, who argued very forcefully for intervention in Libya. Democrats were quite split on it. Senator McCain, who I think should be quoted here, he was the Republican standard bearer in the last Presidential—or in the Presidential election of 2008, and he is a leader on foreign policy. He said in 2011, some critics still argue that we should be cautious about helping the Libyan opposition, warning that we do not know enough about them or that their victory could pave the way for an Al Qaeda takeover. Both arguments, he said, were hollow.

Dr. Gartenstein-Ross, how do you respond to Senator McCain's arguments?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. I think that Senator McCain, with respect, was incorrect. I think that we did not know enough about the rebels at the time, something which was testified to contemporaneously by members of the Intelligence Community.

Ms. NORTON. Do we ever know? Do we know enough about them now in Syria? I mean, as I said in the beginning, and I agree we didn't know enough about them, and even if we did, one wonders whether that could have moved us one way or the other as we saw this dictator in power.

Dr. Wehrey, it seems that McCain was saying—Senator McCain was saying that if we did not intervene, the war might have dragged on even longer, and that Al Qaeda would have been strengthened. Now, do you agree that that was a risk?

Mr. WEHREY. I do agree. I think if the war had dragged on, you might have seen sort of the de facto partition of Libya, Qadhafi holding on to certain loyalist areas. The country might have become a magnet for jihadism. Al Qaeda might have gained an even greater foothold.

Ms. NORTON. Were these rebels generally seen as pro-Western? Why do you think Senator McCain praised them so powerfully?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, because they were. I mean, in my interactions with them after the revolution, even Islamists in the East were supportive of NATO's help, and they interfaced with NATO, and so by and large they remain pro-Western.

Now, certainly what happens in any opposition is there are splinters, and there are fissures, and so you had groups peel off that are more radical and have formed links with radical groups, but I think he was accurate.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentlelady.

I would let Members know that there will be a vote on the floor at approximately 10:55. We will remain here, taking questioning probably for the first 10 or so minutes after they call the vote. We will then recess until approximately 10 minutes after the last vote is called, meaning if you vote quickly and head back, you'll be here when I regavel us open again.

We now go to the gentleman from Ohio Mr. Jordan.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I want to pick up where my colleague Congressman Chaffetz was at. You had two statements in your testimony that I think are most telling. The first is always move to the sound of the guns. That means something to you, doesn't it, General?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. JORDAN. It means something to anyone who has ever worn the uniform of our country, doesn't it?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. JORDAN. We take seriously the airmen who have been under your command, the soldiers, the sailors, the airmen who you've had a chance to be an officer for, you take that seriously?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. JORDAN. And you couldn't do that on September 11th because you say in your testimony we were, "waiting for a request for assistance from the State Department." You couldn't react normally, customarily the way the military always react; in this situation, you couldn't do what the military always does. Is that accurate?

General LOVELL. From my perspective, yes, sir.

Mr. JORDAN. And you've been in the military 33 years, deployed all over the planet, all over the world. Has there ever been a situation prior to this where you couldn't react in the normal, customary way that the military reacts?

General LOVELL. No situation in—

Mr. JORDAN. First time in your 33 years rising to the rank of general, first time in your 33 years you couldn't do what the military always does, run to the sound of the guns?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir, for me.

Mr. JORDAN. And why was that the case? What had the State Department done in your time at African Command; what had they done, what was the culture, what was the climate, what had happened where you couldn't do what you normally do?

General LOVELL. This was a command that was created to be a bit different. It was created to work with an interagency environment to ensure that—

Mr. JORDAN. I get that.

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mr. JORDAN. That's in your testimony, too. I get that. But what specifically—I mean, we have soldiers down, you have people under attack. You knew, as everyone now knows, it was a terrorist attack. So when you have soldiers, seamen, airmen under attack, you run to the sound of the guns. You couldn't do that.

So what specifically had the State Department done or said that prevented you from doing—I don't care about—we know this is unique in that it was a little different in the way it was set up, but still when that happens, you still react the way you're supposed to react, the way the military always reacts, and yet you couldn't. What specifically had the State Department—what had they done, or what prevented you from doing that?

General LOVELL. Well, it's not what they did in that particular situation, it's what they didn't do. They didn't come forward with stronger requests for action.

Mr. JORDAN. So—and previously in your time dealing with Libya, when there was a situation, the State Department said, okay, let's do this. Now suddenly they're hesitating and not giving you any guidance at all.

General LOVELL. Prior to that our conditioning was, obviously, with Odyssey Guard, we were there to support the State Department in setting up and establishing the embassy in Tripoli. Therefore, the work that was done relative to Libya was one where the State Department was in the lead, and we worked to support them to achieve the goals of the United States.

Mr. JORDAN. Who at the State Department did you and your—and the officers directly above you, who did you directly interface with?

General LOVELL. Well, in varying circumstances, but for me I had interactions when I was in Langare, Italy, working with Odyssey Guard, would—had talked on occasion with Ambassador Cretz.

Mr. JORDAN. Anyone else at the State Department you interacted with?

General LOVELL. Well, briefings back at AFRICOM over that other summer. Mr. Andrew Shapiro came there as well, he was briefed. And then, of course, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, who was African Bureau, was very engaged, obviously, in what went on.

Mr. JORDAN. And this is the Andrew Shapiro who was senior adviser to Secretary of State Clinton, Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs; is that correct?

General LOVELL. That was his role. He was Assistant Secretary for, right, Political Military Affairs.

Mr. JORDAN. Currently Andrew Shapiro who is part of Beacon Global Strategies, correct?

General LOVELL. That could be where he works, I don't know.

Mr. JORDAN. That's definitely where he works.

Did the general urge the State Department to take a specific action? Did you and/or the general urge the State Department to take specific action on the night of September 11th when you knew a terrorist attack had taken place on our people at our facility in Benghazi?

General LOVELL. I can't speak for anyone other than myself. That was not my place to encourage them to do that.

Mr. JORDAN. And you don't know if the general urged?

General LOVELL. Oh, I don't know that they urged to take action. There was definitely dialogue over what action wanted to be taken.

Mr. JORDAN. But the general, just like you, is trained in the culture that says when you have seamen, airmen, soldiers under attack, you respond, right?

General LOVELL. On location where I was located, it was a senior admiral that was in charge there, but General Ham was engaged back in D.C.

Mr. JORDAN. I understand.

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, chairman. I yield back.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman. If I could have just 10 seconds.

You mentioned Mr. Shapiro and the engagement. Was Libya different in State Department interface with AFRICOM than the rest of Africa, and if so, how?

General LOVELL. This was the—other than the—the answer is yes, it was different, and it was different because our other engagements where we were engaged militarily, where there was obviously—we were supporting the military strategy, the policy of the United States, we obviously worked with a CT-type focus, counterterrorism focus. This was the first activity that did not start out as a counterterrorism effort that employed military combat power for Africa Command since it had stood up.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

Mr. Lynch, are you next or Ms. Duckworth?

The gentlelady is recognized.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to Mr. Lynch as well.

Given the atrocities that Qadhafi committed, it's no question that the people of Libya are much better off without him. However, after 42 years of authoritarian rule, we have a pretty delicate transition to a democracy.

Dr. Wehrey, you testified previously that overwhelmingly the country's political leaders are rejecting violence for political means, and that they're committed to some sort of a democratic path forward, and that they welcome greater cooperation with the U.S. Can you explain in more detail what their willingness is, or how that willingness to cooperate with the U.S. is manifesting itself, and what can we do?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, again, I think it's really significant that a lot of—some Islamists who at one time were foes of the United States, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, these leaders are now in the Parliament, they're in ministries, they're meeting with United States diplomats, they're meeting with our Ambassador there, and, again, it goes back to the tremendous goodwill that stems from our intervention there. And I think they look at the areas where we can help as applying our own expertise in democracy, how do you run a Parliament.

You have to remember, and I was in Libya under Qadhafi, it was an Orwellian state where people had absolutely no role in their own self-governance. They had absolutely no experience at things that you and I take for granted at the very basic local level, so it's all very new to them. So what they're doing is having to learn to scratch. They're sending delegations to other countries to learn how do you run a town council, how do you—what are some structures for federalism, how do you oversee a budget, just basic things, and I think the U.S. has an important role to play.

As I mentioned, there's a tremendous need for security, and they are—you know, the former Prime Minister Zeidan came to the United States and asked for U.S. help in training the new Libyan Army. The United States has stepped up to that request along with Turkey, Britain, Italy, and Morocco, so we are helping and are prepared to help in that respect.

But, again, I would also say engaging with the people of Libya, when I talk to the U.S. diplomats, they tell me that Libyan society is tremendously vibrant, there's an educated class, there's young people, there's a thirst for openness. We're training their media. We're reaching out to youth groups, to women. And I think these are all incredibly, you know, valuable areas. And, yes, the country does have a terrorism problem, but I urge policymakers to not be consumed by that terrorist problem and not let that be the only lens through which we view this country.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Can you speak about their police forces? You said needing help to train their military. Are they asking for help to train their police forces as well from the U.S. or any other allies?

Mr. WEHREY. Other allies. I believe that much of this training is already going on in places like Italy. The Italians are involved, the Jordanians, the Turks. So many countries are stepping up and training their police, and this training, again, is happening overseas at other countries for security reasons.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Are there additional risks to consider as we support Libya's effort towards its transition? For example, are there risks from a program for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of the militia members? You talked about combating terrorism. You know, as the United States helps Libya move forward, I also want to make sure that we minimize risks to our Nation and to our citizens as well, so are there any risks that we should be sort of keeping an eye on as we try to help them move forward?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, absolutely. I think when we train the new Libyan security forces, we want to make sure we're doing a thorough vetting of these individuals to make sure we're not imparting training and equipment to bad actors. I mean, we do this in our

security engagement elsewhere in a number of states, and there's always risks involved. And as I understand it, you know, AFRICOM, they're asking the tough questions; okay, we're going to step in and help train this force, but what are the unintended consequences down the road?

We don't want to create a military that steps in and subverts the democratic process in this country, that, you know, becomes more authoritarian or goes back to the old ways of Qadhafi. I think that's a risk.

I think border control is a huge area that we need to focus on. The European Union is heavily involved in this. I think the United States needs to, I think, push the Europeans to take on more of the burden. Much of their security is directly impacted by what happens in Libya.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you very much. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentlelady.

We now go to the gentleman from Michigan Mr. Walberg.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And General Lovell, I thank you for your service, and I thank you for your willingness and desire to be here.

General LOVELL. You're welcome, sir.

Mr. WALBERG. I recognize the fact that you led as a commander, but you were under command as well, and the frustrations of being under command at times and in this situation appear to be very evident, but I appreciate you being here. You mention in your written testimony that AFRICOM's ability to mobilize and supply combat power with, "limited boots on the ground, and in the implied time frame, was commendable." What do you mean by "the implied time frame"?

General LOVELL. The United States was acting under Odyssey Dawn and then was supporting under the U.N. resolution. So in working through the compressed time frame prior to OUP taking place, the United States was acting with allied partners, and then a more focused NATO-plus effort, if you will, with OUP. So there was a definite desire to get done what we could get done prior to that and then moving forward.

Also there is so much you can do without boots on the ground. Obviously I wasn't in an operational role at that time, but just military knowledge tells you you need boots on the ground to hold and make changes, much as the rest of the panel has discussed here today.

Mr. WALBERG. So the effectiveness, could you elaborate, of this policy?

General LOVELL. Of a "no boots on ground policy," sir?

Mr. WALBERG. Yes, yes, sir.

General LOVELL. Well, you can effect from the sea, you can effect from the air, but you hold and have lasting change by being present on the ground. In a situation where you need more than, say, diplomacy or economic influence, and the military is called in, that's serious business, and the change takes place on the ground.

Mr. WALBERG. So am I to understand, then, that the effectiveness was compromised, that it wasn't complete, that it wasn't as

full as possible, that it wasn't satisfactory without having this boots on the ground available to you?

General LOVELL. I would characterize it as you would obviously have had a different outcome and effect had you had boots on the ground than you had without it.

Mr. WALBERG. Without it.

When did AFRICOM start becoming aware of political turmoil in Libya?

General LOVELL. Well, Libya was a country that we watched, as we watched all of the—I'm speaking from a J2 perspective, we kept tabs on all of the countries there. In the Arab Spring we knew especially that there could be other effects going across that area. There were really things that we watched that were CT oriented, and then other things that we watched that were more broadly politically affecting, and that began to happen.

Mr. WALBERG. When you began monitoring it, when was that?

General LOVELL. That would be in the early 2000—2011 time frame.

Mr. WALBERG. Did AFRICOM have any role in the decision-making process to intervene in Libya, and what type of role?

General LOVELL. I'm sorry, sir, would you please repeat?

Mr. WALBERG. Did AFRICOM have any role in the decision-making process, direct decisionmaking process, to intervene into Libya, and what was that role?

General LOVELL. That would be more at the commander's—the combatant commander's level than my own. I wouldn't have that information.

Mr. WALBERG. What was AFRICOM's role during Odyssey Dawn?

General LOVELL. Their role is to work with other allied partners prior to the U.N. resolution taking effect to assist the rebels in Libya.

Mr. WALBERG. What about Unified Protector?

General LOVELL. That was a more broad effort sanctioned by the United Nations to assist the rebels in Libya.

Mr. WALBERG. Dr. Gartenstein-Ross, some have praised the NATO intervention as a model intervention, but your testimony points to consequences of the intervention. What are some of the most pronounced consequences of this Libyan intervention?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. The largest consequence is what happened in north Mali. There's—

Mr. WALBERG. Well, excuse me—

Chairman ISSA. The gentleman's time has expired. You can finish your answer.

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. The largest consequence is what happened in north Mali. A direct line can be drawn between the intervention in NATO and the Jihadist takeover of north Mali, something that became an issue in the 2012 campaign both because the Tuareg separatist groups, who are not themselves Jihadists, lost a major sponsor in Qadhafi, and Jihadists were able to exploit that; but also because the returning Tuareg mercenaries who fought for Qadhafi both pillaged his armories and came back heavily armed.

There are other consequences that can be felt with the flow of arms throughout the region going to places like Egypt, Algeria, and

Tunisia. Lives have been directly lost there, and one thing that we can see that happened in January of this year is the shoot-down of an Egyptian military helicopter. We don't know for sure where those arms came from, but both the U.N. panel of experts which looks at the diffusion of Libyan arms and also contemporaneous media accounts believe that Qadhafi's armories are the most likely place that militants were able to get this weaponry to shoot down the helicopter. I think that when you look at the unintended consequences, it has made the region much less stable.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

The gentleman from Nevada.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to our witnesses who are here today to testify before this committee. And it's important to recognize that before us today is a panel of experts for whom we as a committee can gather critically important information and advice as well as insight into the on-the-ground and geopolitical realities in Libya and the greater Middle East region.

The tragedy that occurred in Benghazi is that, a tragedy, and out of respect for those who died serving our country, and for the safety of those who continue to do so around the world, it's imperative that this committee gain actionable policy reforms so that we can prevent similar disasters from occurring again.

So I want to ask the panel, and I'll start with Dr. Wehrey, in your testimony you discussed at length the challenges that outside assistance, including from countries like the United States, Turkey, Britain, Morocco, and Italy, face in terms of providing training assistance in the developing—development of an effective Libyan Army. Can you elaborate in what your recommendations to this committee would be?

Mr. WEHREY. Well, again, I think I would recognize that before this training can really take effect, or before you can build a real security sector, you have to have political reconciliation in this country. The Libyans have to get together and hammer out a broad pact, there has to be democratic structures in place, they have to go forward with this national dialogue.

Much of the paralysis and why outside assistance has not had an effect is because there hasn't been this reconciliation among these factions. So I would really urge outsiders to focus on sequencing; that we need to support the Libyans in these political issues, in reforming their parliaments, in the national dialogue, in the Constitution so that this training can take full effect.

Now, it's sort of, you know, the horse before the wagon. I mean, there has to be security in the country for these institutions to function. So we do have to help them to a certain degree create the space for these institutions. But, again, I think the United States since at least last year has recognized that this country needs greater help. When I speak to people in the Defense Department, in AFRICOM, there's a willingness and appreciation for the situation. NATO is engaged, there are other Arab countries, Europe. So the willingness is there.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you.

General or the other panelists, would you propose specific actionable reforms that this committee could recommend?

Ms. SCHAKE. In addition to what Dr. Wehrey said, all of which I agree with, there are several other specific things we could do. One of the United States' great strengths in helping transitioning countries is to emphasize how federalism works in the United States not just politically, but also militarily. The balance of the National Guard and Reservists and their functions in the States is for Libya, in my judgment, a very useful model because their political reconciliation is not going to progress without a more activist federalism that makes the regions of the country and the tribes of the country feel more politically secure than they now feel, and you're not going to get disarmament of the militia until then. So I would put a lot of focus on that.

Second, we need to be a much more vibrant voice talking about how the violence damaged the elections, how much it matters that only 15 percent of the Libyan people were represented in the 48 people elected for the Constitutional Council. We need to create political attention to this, and that will help them to the political reconciliation they need to make.

It's not enough for us to say—and I don't think Dr. Wehrey was doing this, but some people do say nothing can be done because the Libyans themselves need to make progress. They won't make progress without us helping them have the security to make brave domestic political choices, and we're underinvesting in that.

Mr. HORSFORD. Anyone else, last 17 seconds?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. One specific reform that I would recommend is that while the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group which Dr. Wehrey referred to did issue revisions breaking from Al Qaeda, I think that it's important for the U.S. to be aware of whether some figures within government are also helping Jihadist groups. One thing that I think we learned from our experience in Egypt is that that can be very damaging.

One figure in particular I would draw attention to is Abdul Hakim Belhadj, former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group member, whose media adviser had been a member of the Global Islamic Media Forum, which is a Jihadist forum. Online Jihadist celebrated his advances within government, and according to regional media, he's been providing shelter to Abu Iyad al-Tunisi, who is the emir of Ansar al-Sharia, a Jihadist group in that country, so even while we help Libya, I think it's also good to be aware of and to bring political pressure down on those who are supporting America's enemies.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you.

Mr. LANKFORD. [Presiding.] Thank you all.

Let me walk through a couple things, and I'll be the final questioner, and then we'll take a short recess after this for the votes, and then come back and be able to finish up. So let me walk through about 5 minutes or so of some brief questions.

General Lovell, thank you for your service and for all of you in your service and your research and everything. I want to be able to ask just a couple of quick questions.

Based on what you were watching that night, do you feel like the United States was doing everything it could do to protect the peo-

ple, its facilities abroad—that the United States was doing everything it could do to protect our people and our facilities abroad based on what you saw that night?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. Do you believe that night, and even during that night did you believe, that this was a protest rooted in an Internet video?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. Did you have any sort of sense that night based on what you were hearing, the communication between State and DOD and what was happening on the ground trying to gather information, that there was a steadiness and a strength through that evening in trying to make the decisions?

General LOVELL. There was a bit of—there was definitely a strong desire to come to decisions. There was a period of time where gaining an understanding of what was needed from folks on the ground because we didn't have a lot of insight—

Mr. LANKFORD. So was there ongoing communication and coordination? Were you spending time waiting on the State Department to try to get your information?

General LOVELL. There was a lot of back and forth, yes, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. No question for that, but do you feel like there were clear lines of communication and steadiness of leadership that was happening that night, so there was a consistent here's who is in the lead, here's what we're going to do, and a plan that was unfolding?

General LOVELL. It was continually strived for in that room. We were looking back to the United States for more.

Mr. LANKFORD. Were you getting it from the United States? In the room they were planning and strategizing, were you getting clear communication and leadership from Washington, from the United States on what to do next?

General LOVELL. My observations were that they were still looking for more decisions.

Mr. LANKFORD. Does anyone know if we brought the people to justice that did this in our embassy and our facilities? Is anyone aware if justice has been carried out?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. We have not.

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. So the four things that I just walked through were the four talking points that were presented by Ben Rhodes saying these were the areas we're going to talk about when we go on the Sunday shows. All four of those things we knew in the initial days are not true, and we are still waiting for this statement that came out from the beginning—we will take these individuals to justice—2 years later. So the four things the White House put out, three of them are factually not true, and one of them was a promise that is still unkept.

What were you tracking that evening? Were you watching video? Were you tracking phone calls? How were you gathering information through the course of the evening?

General LOVELL. Obviously there were national means being used to gain intelligence. There were the actual communiques that

we received either directly or indirectly from individuals that were on the ground.

Mr. LANKFORD. So you're talking about the email traffic and such of when they were trying to email out and get information.

General LOVELL. They work through Chat, yes, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. Correct.

General LOVELL. And then the analysts work through Chat, and then in addition to that, the operational channels do the same thing. We also had a Pred feed at a certain point in time. We were able to swing a bird over there and then relieve that and gain more. That was an unmanned UAV or—unmanned.

Mr. LANKFORD. Then there's phone conversations happening at different points where the individuals on the ground are in phone communication with other individuals. Were you getting any information about that as well?

General LOVELL. We knew that the—we would have information filtered back to us, yes, that people on the ground were back in communication.

Mr. LANKFORD. Were you aware there was closed-circuit TV that was also on the compound itself, video feed?

General LOVELL. No, sir, I wasn't aware of that.

Mr. LANKFORD. Okay. There is video feed of that night that's fairly extensive, both leading up to the event that you can actually look down the street and see that there's no protest going on on the street, and you can actually see the actions on the compound and be able to go through that. So that video obviously you didn't have a feed to, weren't able to track, but that closed-circuit TV does exist as well as the Predator feed that you're dealing with as well. So all this information is gathering and trying to walk through this, and you're trying to make decisions, and you're in the process of all these decisions being made and trying to gather all this information and be able to give advice to what was going to happen.

Did you get from State—or let me say it this way: Did you know who from State would call you if they wanted you to take action? Was there a clear line of communication; okay, the military is getting into a position of readiness, who are you waiting for from State to call you?

General LOVELL. We—those calls would go back through the operational chain of command, so those people that were engaged were back in Washington, D.C. General Ham was dealing with that as well as Admiral Leidig.

Mr. LANKFORD. So there was a clear line of communication; you knew who would make the call and where that would come from as far as that is concerned?

General LOVELL. Those gentlemen would be in contact with people, we would hear back at that command center from—at my level from a military authority to do something.

Mr. LANKFORD. Okay. Did we have Americans' back that night?

General LOVELL. Sir?

Mr. LANKFORD. The United States military always watches for other Americans and their back. Did we have their back that night?

General LOVELL. Obviously not, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. Based on the situation in Libya now or 2 years ago, would you consider the security situation normal for one of our facilities? Was this a normal security situation? Prior—obviously when the attack is going on, that's not normal. Prior to that attack, was this a normal environment for our personnel?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. LANKFORD. Does anyone else have a comment on that? Was this a normal security environment?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. It was not a normal security environment.

Mr. LANKFORD. I've heard over and over again from the State Department there was a push to normalize security and actually withdraw individuals that were our own, that were Americans, to provide security and to put in country security folks, which is typical for us, that we have a larger force in our embassies and facilities that are provided from in country. We had a militia watching our front door from Libya. So the front door of the facility, a local militia was actually providing the security for it.

Just a quick question for anyone. If you went to Libya right now, would you be okay if one of the local militias guarded your front door? Would anyone be open to that?

Mr. WEHREY. With all due respect, that's the way security is functioning in this country, and I think—

Mr. LANKFORD. No, I understand.

Mr. WEHREY. Yes, but—

Mr. LANKFORD. Was it a normal security environment that we would run it with one of the local militias? I understand local security is typically provided in Libya. At that point were we in a normal environment that we would have one of the local militias, would you trust their loyalty at that time to provide your security for your front door?

Mr. WEHREY. As a matter of embassy protocol, I would make sure that they were vetted; I mean, that they're loyal. But, I mean, this is the nature of Libya right now. These militias consider themselves the army. There is no army.

Mr. LANKFORD. Did you vet the militia at that time based on where we were—

Mr. WEHREY. I don't know. I wasn't there. But, I mean—

Mr. LANKFORD. Just your guess.

Mr. WEHREY. I mean, this is the challenge that we have in this country is, you know, there is—as I mentioned, there was no central army.

Mr. LANKFORD. Correct. So you would assume if there is no central army, then we're not going to try to normalize the security situation. It's not normal. The British have already been run out based on an attack on their facility. The Red Cross has already been run out based on an attack on their facility. Instead, we reduce the number of gun toters, American gun toters, and increase local militia that we can't vet.

Mr. WEHREY. From an embassy standpoint it is highly, I would say, risky. I am saying from my own perspective traveling to Libya, you can go and feel relatively safe, because these militias, as Dr. Schake mentioned, they do provide a sort of neighborhood watch program. Many of them are filling the void of the security forces.

So I think we need to look at how we use the term “militia” very carefully, because these are the groups that are for all intents and purposes the security forces in the country.

Mr. LANKFORD. Right. But 2 years ago it was not normal in a situation. It was as dramatic or more dramatic than it is now and insecure, no way to be able to vet people, unknown on that, and yet we reduced the number of American folks that are providing security and increased local folks that we did not know how to vet. They were watching our front door, and it’s now clear they walked away from the front door, and we had Ansar al-Sharia walk through the front door that they walked away from, and the attack was on.

So with that, let me take a recess. We’re going to move towards votes, and then we will be able to come back and be able to visit again. So we’ll stand in recess until the call of the chair.

[Recess.]

Chairman ISSA. [Presiding.] The committee will come to order.

We now recognize the distinguished gentleman from Arizona. No, I’m sorry, the distinguished other doctor, the gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. DesJarlais.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the panel for being here for this very important hearing.

And, General Lovell, special kudos to you. I know you’re exceptionally well trained because you were commissioned in our great State of Tennessee.

I wanted to talk to you a little bit about the DOD timeline of Benghazi-related events. It says it wasn’t until 6:05 a.m. that AFRICOM ordered a C-17 in Germany to prepare to deploy to Libya to evacuate the Americans wounded in the attack; and furthermore, the timeline says it wasn’t until 2:15 p.m., over 8 hours later, that the plane took off from Germany for Libya. Can you explain why that took so long?

General LOVELL. No, sir, I cannot.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. General, are you familiar with the term “the golden hour?”

General LOVELL. Yes, sir, I am.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Can you tell us what that means to military personnel who have been wounded?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir. The golden hour is absolutely the period of time from when you’re wounded in an engagement or accident and you receive medical treatment. The golden hour, the greatest ability for you or a buddy to survive is during that period of time.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. And if I’m correct, the survival rate, if they do not die on the battlefield, the chance of survival is about 95 percent if they’re reached within that golden hour?

General LOVELL. That’s why it’s the golden hour, yes, sir.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. In this case it looks like they were functioning under maybe what would be called the golden day by this timeline?

General LOVELL. You could characterize it that way, sir.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. Were there, indeed, assets in the region that could have been deployed sooner, in your opinion?

General LOVELL. Again, those are—in the operational area, looking back at it reflectively, there were assets in the area, but, you

know, operations responded the way they did. My contention is that we need more dedicated assets available to the command continuously in order to make a difference in the future.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. In your opinion, if you were given the green light to pick up the phone and make the call to get someone there to help our bleeding Americans, how long would it have taken? Having that opportunity to just make the call, how quickly could someone have gotten there, in your opinion?

General LOVELL. With the assets available, I don't have an answer to that question, sir, in the operational environment. I don't know.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Do you believe it's much quicker than it was?

General LOVELL. Oh, I would certainly hope it would be much quicker than it was, yes.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. So one thing our soldiers, we talked about this earlier in today's hearing, you're taught to run towards the gun, all the military people that I know want to run towards danger, not away from it, but they were not able to do so. Why was that?

General LOVELL. The—within the authorities to move, given the desire to move, it appeared to me from my perspective working there as a staff member of the J2 in there that there were dialogues ensuing with the State Department as to how they wanted to have it approached within Libya as to whether deference to State or deference to Libya.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. I know General Ham was in Washington that night, which left his deputy commander as the senior-most officer at AFRICOM. Was he consulting with the State Department about what he should do in response to the attack in Benghazi?

General LOVELL. From my observations sitting in that room with him when I saw it there, he was absolutely leaning forward to get answers so he could do something, yes.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. So, in your opinion, what was the hold-up? You testified earlier that the CIA knew, the military knew, the State Department knew that this was a terrorist attack, yet somebody was holding this process back. Who was it?

General LOVELL. I wish I knew, sir. From my perspective, it appeared that State Department was the conduit for the ask by the Africa Command.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. So I can say this, you might not be able to, but as an American and you as now a civilian, having bravely served our country for 33 years, the fact is that there was a Presidential election just a few weeks away, and there was a White House that knew all the same things these agencies knew, but yet they were busy concocting a story, a cover-up, an alibi, that we all know now isn't true because they were more concerned about protecting their image in a Presidential election than saving American lives. The IRS targeting to effect the outcome of an election is criminal. This is just sickening. And I'm sure that you're here today partly because you have similar feelings. Not to speak for you, but you're welcome to respond.

General LOVELL. I will say that I'm here today because as a military professional for over 33 years, as well as a citizen of this country, a father of a previously serving military person, father-in-law of serving military people, neighbor to a young man down at Parris

Island going through basic training in the Marine Corps, and just having served, as I said earlier, with a number of brave men and women in uniform and in civilian clothes in this Nation, we need to get this right. We need to get it right. That's what brings me here today. Not that I have all the answers, I don't say that I do, but attention needs to be paid in the most serious way possible to cut through any games and get to the point that we as a Nation are able to support through our military forces the policy and efforts of this country anywhere in the world, and we need to be able to do it and secure American lives as we get the job done.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Thank you for that.

Chairman ISSA. Ms. Schake, it looked like you wanted to answer. The gentleman's time has expired, but if you need to answer, you may.

Ms. SCHAKE. I didn't want to answer, but I did want to endorse the doctor's suggestion that there was information available from the CIS station chief in Libya, from the deputy chief of mission in Libya, from elsewhere in the Central Intelligence Agency, as your committee's investigations have brought out.

The White House made a political choice that the President was running for reelection, campaigning on the basis that Al Qaeda was on the run and the tide of war was receding, and the tragedy in Benghazi was an extraordinarily inconvenient outlier to that story line, and I think that's the basis on which the White House—the choices that people made during the attacks in Benghazi, in my judgment, are unfortunate and had tragic consequences, but the choices the White House made about pretending that we didn't know things that we did know I think are an overt politicization of the events.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

The gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Gowdy. You're next on my hit parade, I think.

Mr. GOWDY. I am, your—Mr. Chairman?

Chairman ISSA. Yes.

Mr. GOWDY. I started to say Your Honor. That was a previous job.

Chairman ISSA. Yeah. No, I still get a gavel, but you're shown as next.

Mr. GOWDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and General, I am confounded, in fact I continue to be confounded, and what I find so confounding is the administration's mantra hasn't changed from Jay Carney to Hillary Clinton, to the President himself, to Ben Rhodes, to even yesterday Bernadette Meehan, the National Security Council. And maybe, Mr. Chairman, instead of teaching reading comprehension, maybe we ought to teach writing comprehension, because I don't understand what this statement means except the end of it: The content reflects what the administration was saying at the time—whatever that means—and what we understood to be the facts at the time.

So that's the mantra, Mr. Chairman and General, is that we used the best evidence we had at the time, the facts that we had at the time. So you can imagine, General, that that would make someone who is interested in facts and evidence to say, okay, well, then, cite all the facts for me. Cite the evidence. If your mantra

really is that we used the best facts and the best evidence we had at the time, then cite the facts for me. Call your first witness. Introduce your first piece of evidence. Because I'll tell you the first piece of evidence I would introduce is from the State Department. Beth Jones to Cheryl Mills, Mr. Chairman—you know who Cheryl Mills is—Jake Sullivan. This is September the 12th, Mr. Chairman. This is well before the administration started misleading the American people. We've got an email from Beth Jones to Cheryl Mills and Jake Sullivan and a plethora of other people: I told him, with "him" being the Libyan Ambassador, the group that conducted the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia, is affiliated with Islamic extremists. So that's the State Department that knew the day after that this video had nothing to do with the attack in Benghazi. So that's the State Department.

CIA station chief in Tripoli, Mr. Chairman, not—and for those who don't know what that word means, he repeated it again—not not an escalation of protest. This is someone in Libya at the time. CIA says video had nothing to do with it.

Mr. GOWDY. Now we go to DOD, military. What evidence did you have that this was an escalation of a protest rooted in spontaneity that got out of control and resulted in the murder of our four fellow Americans? Did the military have any evidence supporting the video narrative?

General LOVELL. No, sir, there was none.

Mr. GOWDY. Well, that's what's so confounding, Mr. Chairman, is the State Department knew it wasn't a video, the CIA knew it wasn't a video, and for those that are a little bit slow, they repeated the word "not" twice. The military knew it had nothing to do with a video. But that brings us to the White House. And I know, Mr. Chairman, initially we were told that the White House had nothing to do with the drafting points, that Mike Morell is the one who sanitized those and changed the word terrorist to extremist and changed it from attack to demonstration and did whatever he could to cast the administration in the most favorable light. We thought that it was just Mr. Morell doing that, until we got an email from Ben Rhodes, Mr. Chairman.

Goal number one: to convey that the United States is doing everything we can to protect our people and facilities. I'm glad that this is dated September 14, 2012, Mr. Chairman, because it sure as hell was not their goal before September 11. We have had hearing after hearing about the failure to provide security at our facility in Benghazi. So I'm glad that that was their goal after four of our fellow Americans were murdered, but it sure as hell was not their goal beforehand or they would not have refused to provide security to that facility.

Goal number two: to underscore that these protests are rooted in an Internet video and not a broader failure of policy. And therein we have our answer. The goal was to do everything we can to deflect attention away from this feckless foreign policy we have in the Middle East that isn't working. Remember the mantra, Mr. Chairman—Al Qaeda is on the run, GM is alive, Osama bin Laden is dead, Al Qaeda is on the run—when really they're standing at the front door of our facility in Benghazi getting ready to murder our Ambassador and burn it down.

And then yesterday, Mr. Chairman, you may remember the White House—I'm going to edit out all the stumbling and stammering that Jay Carney did, I'm just going to give you the nuts and bolts of what he said—is that this memo I just made reference to has nothing to do with Benghazi.

Well, I find that interesting because of the third point, and I know I'm out of time, Mr. Chairman, but the third goal was to show that we are resolute in bringing people who harm Americans to justice. If that's not talking about Benghazi, where else did we have people harmed other than Benghazi, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman. And our goal is to bring people to justice, too.

We now recognize the gentleman from Texas for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And, General, I appreciate your service. Thank you for your service. Appreciate your being here today.

In your testimony you talked about your training and natural impulse as a member of the American military is to run towards the gunfire. And we have heard testimony today about what we should have done, and we're kind of unclear about what we could have done and whether or not we had the forces that could have gotten there in time. I'm going to say we definitely should have tried.

But as an American citizen, I'm not asking you to give away any secrets, as an American citizen, does it trouble you that we can't respond in a timely manner to threats to an American Embassy anywhere in the world.

General LOVELL. That's part of the reason I sit here today, sir.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Thank you very much. I think it's something we should all be concerned about.

Let's talk a little bit about your role the evening of the Benghazi attacks. You talk about you fight your way to the train, and the brave men and women in Libya did in running toward the sound of the guns. You also say that outside of Libya there were discussions going on about how to respond to the attack and that these folks also fought the way they were trained. Are you referring to the AFRICOM headquarters with that comment?

General LOVELL. AFRICOM headquarters—

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Right.

General LOVELL. —and interagency interactions.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. All right. So you wrote, "The predisposition to interagency influences had the military structure—in the spirit of expeditionary government support—waiting for a request for assistance from the State Department." That kind of sounds like bureaucratise of saying that the military that night was not its own master as far as taking steps to go to the rescue of the Americans in Benghazi but were waiting for directions from the State Department. Would that be a fair assessment?

General LOVELL. That characterization is part of what's in that comment, yes.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. That just seems crazy. We have got Americans who need help. You ought to be able to hop on an airplane, and they could have been ordered to stand down if the situation warranted that. I know General Ham was in Washington that night

and left his deputy commander as the senior most officer at AFRICOM. Was he consulting the State Department about what to do during the attacks at Benghazi?

General LOVELL. The Admiral worked tirelessly to do that.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Obviously, we didn't have much of a response there.

Let me go to Ms. Schake. I apologize if I mispronounced your name. In your testimony you talked about in the Arab spring how we should be focusing on helping these countries out. You look at the track record that we have under the Obama administration with nation building. You look at Iraq. A lot of blood, a lot of treasure shed in Iraq. Yet we see Al Qaeda flags flying in Fallujah. We have seen instability all throughout that region. You look at the civil war going on in Syria. Obviously, I mean, it's hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys without a playbook, but we draw a red line and step back from it.

We can even go over into Crimea and see some problems. Are we sure we really want to be involved in that based on our track record there?

Ms. SCHAKE. I share your skepticism about the administration's choices in the Middle East. It does seem to me that one of the fundamental mistakes the Obama administration is making is they act as though taking action is something that sets in motion all sorts of consequences, but that taking no action means we have no moral responsibility for any consequences. And as I think Daveed's testimony made really clear, there are consequences for what we have not done in Libya, and Mali is bearing them out at the moment, Libya is bearing them out at the moment. And the gap between what the administration claims it is achieving and what we are actually doing in the region is encouraging people to take—

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I'm almost out of time, and I had one more question for General Lovell.

The U.S. intervention in Libya was constrained by the White House's strict prohibition of boots on the ground. Do you think that limited boots on the ground and that policy might have been one of the driving forces in the fact that we didn't send a response there to Benghazi?

General LOVELL. Well, I would say if there were boots on ground and there were marines in uniform as part of a security team that were around any of the State Department facilities, I would say that would intimidate most that were going to try to make an attack. And boots on the ground are the best and only way to hold the ground, if that's what you're looking to do.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Thank you very much.

I just want to point out quickly before I yield back, Mr. Chairman, that as we investigated embassy security together, some of the key factors that are considerations are the willingness and ability of the host country to provide security. And I think that's a common understanding at the State Department. At a time a government is undergoing change both the ability and willingness to provide security for embassies should be severely in question, and that should be an indication to immediately prepare to take care of ourselves. And maybe we could have avoided the loss of life in

Benghazi had we followed our own directives in evaluating the ability and willingness of the host country.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

We now go to the gentleman from Arizona, Dr. Gosar.

Mr. GOSAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

General Lovell, now, you were the deputy commander of Operation Odyssey Guard, which you describe as the missions to help the State Department reestablish the Embassy in Tripoli, Libya. Can you describe what the mission involved?

General LOVELL. Yes. The mission involved being supporting to the desires of the Ambassador, Ambassador Cretz, and there was a 16-person DOD team that was in place working directly for him. Our job was to help monitor that situation as well, even though they worked for the State Department. We also worked to help plan for any other activities that might be developing in that particular area. We worked with a group to help with the EOD, for example, in one of the areas, and we also helped to provide some of the watch and communication when other senior U.S. officials visited the country.

Mr. GOSAR. How would that differ in a normal protocol under military jurisdiction?

General LOVELL. Well, we, as a JTF deputy commander—

Mr. GOSAR. Does it change the chain of command any?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir. Absolutely. That's the point I was getting to, absolutely. The SST team worked not for DOD, it worked for Department of State, and there were no other forces on the ground specifically that belonged to us.

Mr. GOSAR. In your testimony that the State Department was in the lead, as we just confirmed, for the effort to get back Libya on its feet, one of the things this committee has encountered in its investigation of the State Department's conduct in Libya is the overwhelming focus on normalization, whether it be the attempt to reduce security personnel at the diplomatic facilities, or so-called normal levels or attempt to view the government of Libya as normal host nation partners capable of providing meaningful protection like my colleague from Texas just talked about. Did you encounter this normalization philosophy in your dealings with the State Department during Operation Odyssey Guard?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir, I did.

Mr. GOSAR. Could you elaborate a little bit on that?

General LOVELL. Yes. For instance, a desire to create a new normal within this environment was basically redefining what I would consider a suboptimal situation.

Mr. GOSAR. Would you consider it hostile?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir.

Mr. GOSAR. Go ahead and continue.

General LOVELL. The hostile environment that we were dealing with, yeah. Our interaction certainly was not with our interagency counterparts. But to keep a low profile by the American Government and the U.S. military in that environment at the time we weren't deploying our forces. There was no Marine security detachment, et cetera, some of the other things that you might have seen in place in other areas where you'd consider a normal type of an environment that was secure.

And I guess that's what it really comes down to, is how much security are you willing to—how insecure are you willing to be and still be present is really what it comes down to. And let's face it, our diplomats take risks every day, but in certain situations. It's always measured risk. And when we measure risk in an environment whereby some yardsticks it comes out, the measurement comes out short, and it seems to be hostile, you know, if it looks hostile and it smells hostile, it probably is a hostile environment.

Mr. GOSAR. Well, you complement, you make this worse, because we had an email in regards to what Al Qaeda was looking to do. Number one, take out the British Embassy, consulate, the international Red Cross, and then Benghazi, the consulate. We accomplished that, too, your intelligence. So wouldn't that have heightened the awareness that we were in a fractionalized, more hostile environment?

General LOVELL. You just described it, yes.

Mr. GOSAR. So, I mean, this is absurd to me. I mean, I'm talking to a man that's spent his life on the defense of our country. Are you aware of any other operation that was this disjointed in your career, the flagrant—

General LOVELL. In my career and in my experience, this operation absolutely in terms of the—yeah, no, sir, no.

Mr. GOSAR. So, I mean, you just made a comment just earlier that the best force is to put our forces there in a fragmented aspect, that's the best deterrent. So without those, aren't you inviting an attack?

General LOVELL. You very well could be through your own vulnerability.

Mr. GOSAR. Yeah. Okay. What was AFRICOM's role in Libya after Odyssey Guard ended? Did Libya receive any sort of heightened monitoring—

Chairman ISSA. The gentleman's time has expired, but you can finish quickly.

Mr. GOSAR. Yeah. Did Libya receive any sort of heightened monitoring after Odyssey Guard ended?

General LOVELL. Most certainly, as some of the other panelists have stated here today, we absolutely had a keen watch from a CT perspective, absolutely, as well as also just helping to monitor things going on in the nation in general.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. GOSAR. Thank you.

Chairman ISSA. We now go to the gentleman from Florida, Mr. DeSantis.

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, can you explain the significance of the fact that the J2 shop at AFRICOM wasn't just the intelligence shop, but the intelligence and knowledge development shop?

General LOVELL. Yes. As I also provided in the written statement, the IKD, Intelligence and Knowledge Development Division, was the nomenclature used to identify what would be a typical J2 shop in other commands. Later on it became a J2 shop but retained a knowledge development piece. Knowledge development also has more to do with many sources that may be unclassified, open-source type reporting, et cetera. So you are trying to bring in and

coalesce a more comprehensive intelligence picture utilizing knowledge.

In a command and in a theater of operations such as Africa where you have a great need for intelligence and information but not many resources to go get it, using open source and other types of things could be your best source of information in some instances.

Mr. DESANTIS. So in that position you were able to observe the interplay between the military and the State Department as it relates to those issues, correct?

General LOVELL. The exchange of information, others as well, our three letter partners.

Mr. DESANTIS. In terms of the military response, I mean sometimes people, and we have had other hearings and they've said, well, look, we would not have been able to get there in time. And my response has always been once you know that you have men in contact, you don't know how long the whole enterprise is going to last. I mean, once the first word that we have problems at this annex, it could have lasted 12 hours, 24, 48 hours. So the idea that somehow looking back in hindsight and saying, oh, well, we didn't marshal forces, we wouldn't have gotten there in time, that just doesn't satisfy me. Am I wrong in that?

General LOVELL. No, sir, I don't believe you are. It's one of the motivating factors for me to be here in this environment right now, so that we don't do this again.

Mr. DESANTIS. And my thing is, is you guys are waiting for the State Department, and State Department said we need to help these guys. And even if you ended up getting there a little bit late, I think it matters to the American people that there was the effort made and that we were willing as a Nation to devote the resources we had to try to save those men. I think it would matter to those families that that was done. And so I appreciate you coming here today.

I mean, it seems to me this whole idea with the video, this deception that was propagated to the American people, one, it actually hurt the counterterrorism efforts, we have heard on this committee, immediately after. Libyans were upset with us because they had actually tried to take action against terrorists and here we're saying it's just a video and trying to downplay the fact, our own administration, that it was a terrorist attack. It actually I think brought more attention to the video throughout the Islamic world and gave Islamists a pretext to pursue more violence.

And so you have a situation where the American people, based on the emails we have seen in this investigation, and the families of the fallen were deceived about who perpetrated that attack and have not been level with about our government's response. And so to this day, and we spend a lot of time talking about who did what in the White House and the emails, that's very important because the truth matters, but even to this day the perpetrators have not been brought to justice at all. I mean, if forces really couldn't have made it there in time to prevent these Americans from being killed, then at least we would like to see the administration avenge their death by bringing these terrorists to justice. And yet to this day, this has just been something that has happened, and we have not

responded in kind, and I think that that really is something that bothers me to this day.

So I thank the witnesses for coming, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman ISSA. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. DESANTIS. Yes.

Chairman ISSA. General, as the 2 shop, you weren't doing operational. So I don't want to get into the operational side. But from an intelligence standpoint, you earlier said that you knew, and I'll paraphrase, from the get-go that this was not a video inciting some sort of a demonstration but, in fact, a terrorist attack. That is correct?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Chairman ISSA. And when you knew it, did the deputy, the Vice Admiral, did he know it?

General LOVELL. Most certainly. We kept him—I worked directly for him.

Chairman ISSA. And to your knowledge, did General Carter Ham then know it back on stateside?

General LOVELL. He certainly should. He was in the NMCC.

Chairman ISSA. And from your experience long time in the military, it is reasonable to assume that the Secretary of Defense also would have known what each of you in the chain of command knew since he was standing by General Ham?

General LOVELL. That's the way it should work, sir.

Chairman ISSA. So is there any conceivable way at 3:00 in the morning Libyan/Stuttgart time, is there any conceivable way that anyone could reasonably be promoting the YouTube video from the White House or from anywhere in the know in government?

General LOVELL. If they were in the know, with relative information that we were putting out, no, sir.

Chairman ISSA. So for someone to do that at 3:00 in the morning Stuttgart time, they would have to either not know what you, your boss and your boss' boss knew and presumably people above him, or they would have to be working contrary to what was known?

General LOVELL. That's correct.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you.

We now go to the gentlelady from Wyoming, Ms. Lummis.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I'm late to this hearing, but I have the advantage of your written testimony, so if these questions are a bit redundant, forgive me. But some things caught me in your written testimony. You said, "We didn't know how long this would last"—"this" meaning the attacks on 9/11/12—"We didn't know how long this would last when we became aware of the distress nor did we completely understand what we had in front of us, be it a kidnapping, rescue," or a protracted hostile engagement.

Can you elaborate on that? What was it like watching from Stuttgart, watching what was happening in Benghazi?

General LOVELL. And I further went on to say or any or all of those things. It was a situation where we were very much in the hunt for information from the J2 shop perspective so we could give the commander, the vice on station and the commander back in D.C., the best information possible.

So for us, we were very much on the trail through chat rooms, et cetera, using the mechanisms—not to go into it too deeply—but using the mechanisms that are out there for an intelligence organization to formulate understanding based upon facts. That's what we pursued, and we provided that to our on-scene commander, the Vice Admiral, as well as up-channeled that and sent it across to other organizations so that we were sharing to the maximum extent possible in order to help build that picture of understanding and flesh it out even further. It's not good enough to know what's going on right there. We need to find attribution so that then you can take action. You want actionable intelligence.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Okay. And at what point did you know that no assets were going to be sent to Benghazi that night, no special ops, no units?

General LOVELL. It began to become more and more evident. As the morning went on, it appeared as though that was to take place. But it even continued on further as we tried to help, you know, FBI and others get in there after, if you will, the death of those Americans, to go into the pursuit mode. As I just described, actionable intelligence is what you provide to an operator.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And who was making the decisions not to go in, not to respond?

General LOVELL. That would be, from my perspective, it appeared that it was up-channeled beyond the Department of Defense, somewhere outside of DOD. We respond to civilian leadership, and that's what we would be looking for, civilian leadership.

Mrs. LUMMIS. So normally those kinds of decisions would be made after the military conferred with civilian leadership in Washington?

General LOVELL. Yes. Now we're into my boss' boss' business, but indeed that would be who he would be talking with.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Okay. And that would be the normal chain of discussion?

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Okay. Did you assume that those discussions were going on, those discussions between the military chain of command, the State Department, the Defense Department, and the White House?

General LOVELL. Absolutely. And the reason I can state it emphatically is because part of what we did as an intelligence organization, and all intelligence organizations, you're looking for what's the next step so you can ferret out the next best pieces of information and fact to help inform so that those operations can be effective.

Mrs. LUMMIS. In your military experience, what would have been a more normal response in the middle of the night, 3 a.m. Stuttgart time, when you knew you had an Ambassador down and later in the night you knew you had personnel on the CIA annex roof and there was an exchange of fire? What would you have expected in your military experience to happen?

General LOVELL. Go, go, go.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And when did it become apparent to you there would be no go?

General LOVELL. As the morning progressed and we had some people moving at some points in time, they're asked to stop midway through some of their deployments reaching Europe, et cetera, or other locations. It did not appear to us that there was any momentum behind it to make it happen.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And how many of you were together in Stuttgart watching this unfold?

Excuse me, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. [Presiding] Go ahead.

Mrs. LUMMIS. My time has expired, General. Thank you.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. General, I now recognize myself for 5 minutes. I want to complete the thought from Congresswoman Lummis. I know you care deeply about our military family. You are one. We have parents, loved ones, brothers, sisters. What would you say to the mother of one of the people that was killed? Did we, did the military, did the Pentagon, did the United States of America do everything it could to save those people?

General LOVELL. I would say sorry for your loss and your sacrifice. We should have done more, whether it was in preparation prior to or execution at the time, even if we simply just burned gas in airplanes moving people.

We have to have the confidence of the American people that provide us with their sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, moms and dads, and continue to fill the uniforms and to fill those civilian positions that are so key and so brave as well out there in harm's way. We have to ensure that we rebuild the trust. This is Bob Lovell talking to you now. We have to rebuild their trust. It's a big part of why I want to be here, because we need to say to them, we should have done more, and we owe it to the memory of those four people that are fallen and to those that were hurt and wounded.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Could we have done more?

General LOVELL. Sure, we could have done more.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Secretary Hillary Clinton whispered, evidently, according to one of the mothers, whispered in the ear, said it was the video that had done this. Is that true?

General LOVELL. Absolutely not, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. When did you think it was over? When were Americans in harm's way? When were they safe?

General LOVELL. They're still not safe today, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. When did you think the fight was over?

General LOVELL. We're still there.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. That night, though, September 12, while we still had people in Benghazi, when was the fight over?

General LOVELL. When the people from Benghazi finally made their way back and were extracted back to Tripoli.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Your opinion, your vantage point there in Libya, was Al Qaeda on the run?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. What was going on with Al Qaeda September 11, September 12, in the months leading up to that? Were they on the run?

General LOVELL. No, sir. They were actually, affiliates and other Islamic extremists, were actually responsible for the perpetration of these attacks.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Are they growing in strength, shrinking in strength?

General LOVELL. My estimation would be that they were growing in strength, in number and in capability.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. My understanding is that your shop, J2, AFRICOM, on September 14, 17 hours, 17 hours before the Ben Rhodes email, they actually produced a document to my ranking member and other people on this committee, the front of this email is stamped Secret, but the second page, I believe, is not classified. It's not stamped with anything. In deference, I'm not putting it out there, but what I do hope this committee does, what I do hope the American people can see for themselves is what the military intelligence thought was happening there in Libya, and clearly, they put this out saying it says multiple times, I've read it myself. It says Al Qaeda. It says Ansar al-Sharia. It says AQIM. And that this was sent to the State Department as the best intelligence that you had, to the State Department, as to what happened at the attack and what the attack profile might look like if we wanted to counter. Do you have knowledge of this document? Are you familiar with this document, and as I described it, would that be an accurate representation?

General LOVELL. Not seeing the document itself, but I will certainly comment on the information that you just characterized and, yes, that was the picture that we were working with. Those were the facts we were working with.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. And to my fellow colleagues here, again, the facts as we know them, the military intelligence, folks sharing with the IC community, sharing with the State Department, they believed that it was Al Qaeda, AQIM, Ansar al-Sharia, that was responsible for this attack. That was the best information. Those were the facts as we have them. My time is expired.

I now recognize the ranking member, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. General, first of all, I want to thank you for your testimony. As I sit here and I listen to many witnesses as a lawyer, I could tell that this is something that is very important to you, and I thank you for coming forward. And you talked about the military and how we have to protect them and our State Department people and certainly, and I agree with you a million percent. And one of the things that I've done as a member of this committee is also try to protect the integrity of the people who come before us. We have had General Ham, Admiral Leidig, Admiral Losey, and they came to different opinions, and that's okay. They're probably watching this right now, and I want to make sure that just as you, I'm sure, feel very strongly about your opinion, I want to make sure that you're saying what I think you're saying, so that they are clear, because they are men who have given their lives for our country, too. And so I just want to ask you a few things.

I want to go to you, because it seems like you're saying one thing in response to questions from this side of the room and another thing in response to questions from the other side of the room. In your written testimony to the committee you said this, "The discussion is not in the could or could not in relation to time, space and capability. The point is we should have tried." But when Mr.

Connolly was asking you questions, you said you were not in the chain of command. You said you weren't really talking about Benghazi, but about the future, and you said that you agreed with the Republican chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Buck McKeon, who said that the military did, in fact, try. So let me just go through the specific steps the military took on that night and ask you whether they are accurate because, again, we have got people here like General Ham who've testified before us and given statements that maybe give different opinions.

First, Chairman McKeon found that our military, including General Ham, General Dempsey and others, authorized two Marine fast platoons in Rota, Spain to prepare to deploy. Do you agree that this did, in fact, occur? Did that happen? Do you know?

General LOVELL. That they moved forward, yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes or no?

General LOVELL. Yes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Second, Chairman McKeon found that a special operations unit assigned to the European command known as Commander's In-extremis Force, CIF, which was training in Croatia was ordered to move to a U.S. Naval air station in Sigonella, Italy. Do you dispute that?

General LOVELL. No, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And, third, Chairman McKeon found that a special operations unit in the United States was also dispatched to the region. You don't dispute that, do you?

General LOVELL. No.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So I'm afraid I just don't understand why you are testifying here today under oath that the United States military did not try to help the night of the attacks, and how do you explain that? And if I'm misstating you, correct me.

General LOVELL. Yes, I did not say that they did not try the evening of those attacks.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So what did you say? I'm sorry. Again, I know General Ham is watching this, so I want him to be clear.

General LOVELL. I'm not disputing any of their actions or testimony in that. What I'm speaking to is as a Nation, we should try to do more, that the preparations prior to, the capability and capacity that we put forward in order to deal with situations such as this, so that in the future as we find ourselves out there in a expeditionary government environment or just in places around the world that we have provided as much military capacity and capability as we can muster so that we can support the people and have their backs in these situations. My testimony was not to counter the previous statements—

Mr. CUMMINGS. I just wanted to make sure we were clear. That's all. And so we all agree that we would have liked, all of us would have liked the military to have responded more quickly, and changes have been made to allow the military to respond faster, but the facts are that the military did mobilize forces. It did act and it did try. So will you concede that point now that you have been presented with the actual evidence? I mean, so you agree that they did try?

General LOVELL. I have always stated that they had tried and acknowledged that. My point is that there is more that we should

be able to do, and if there is a further line that we can move towards, if across the interagency, this is spoken about in the way that you described it to me, sir, as a DOD issue. This is not about a DOD issue. This is an interagency issue, and that's what we really need to look at here. And I respect absolutely what the House Armed Services Committee put together, but they looked at it from a DOD perspective. We need to look, and why I came to this body was because I felt that it looked more broadly across the spectrum of all of the agencies. And the fact of the matter is, that's the perspective we need to have so that we can see exactly across the board how did we interact? How did we behave? How did that translate into action? And most importantly in many situations, inaction. As we have heard from some of my colleagues here, inaction can, at times, even be worse so that we can do that in the future in a different way, but we need a comprehensive across-the-board interagency view so that we can move ourselves forward into those next steps.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Again, I want to thank you very much.

General LOVELL. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ISSA. [Presiding.] Mr. Cummings, would you yield for a question. I'm trying to understand. All of the units that you mentioned were deployed to Tripoli. None of them were ever headed to Benghazi. You know that; right?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes.

Chairman ISSA. So when it comes to what was done for the people dying in Benghazi, none of those were going to help them. They weren't activated for the people dying in Benghazi.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, I asked him what I wanted to ask him, and he was very clear, and I appreciate it.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. We now go to the gentlelady from Wyoming, Ms. Lummis.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I yield such portion of my time to Mr. Chaffetz as he wishes to use.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming. To follow up on the chairman's point, General, and to point the ranking member is trying to make. We had two fast teams that in a public setting General Ham has said can respond within hours. And I think that begs the question why, why, did the fast team go into Tripoli and it took them almost 24 hours to get there, 24 hours? These people operate on an end plus just a few hours, and yet it took them 24 hours. I think that begs the question.

The other thing is it's very clear that the fast team was not intended to go engage in the fight. That's not what a fast team does. It's not what they're engaged to do. It's not what they train to do. They go in to secure an embassy. If you want to put somebody in the fight, somebody who's going to go extract people who are under the gun, there are other troops and other types of assets that you would put in there. But these people were not put into place to go into Benghazi. And the CIF, the Commanders In-Extremis Force, again, begs the question. This fight started as 9:40 p.m. The General has just said it was six something in the morning before they were able to get out of Benghazi. It was so bad in Tripoli that they had to evacuate the embassy in Tripoli and go to another secure facility.

So, again, did they try to do what they were ordered to do? I think the General is absolutely right. Were they ordered to engage in the fight in Benghazi? The answer is unfortunately no. That's the question. That's the concern.

General, do you have any comments about what I said? Is there anything that you would disagree with, take issue with or want to further comment on?

General LOVELL. No, sir, I would not.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. What about the idea that the fast team is getting ready to deploy? People are dead. We're taking a fire. We're in a fight. Why did the fast team have to change clothes out of their military uniforms and into civilian clothes? Do you have any knowledge about that?

General LOVELL. The knowledge I have I was not directly related in, but I watched the conversation ensue in the room. It was a sensitivity to the impact potentially in Libya.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Well, what do you think about it? What do you think about it?

General LOVELL. Sir, at that point in time, someone must have thought it was a great idea to have Marines be out of uniform potentially to go in there, but I like Marines in uniform and Marines to—

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Why do they wear a uniform?

General LOVELL. Pardon me, sir?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Why? Why do they wear a uniform?

General LOVELL. Why wouldn't they?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Why do they wear a uniform?

General LOVELL. They wear a uniform because without saying a word, it's the visual symbol of the United States of America, the United States Marine Corps and what it's represented for hundreds of years.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. The outrage here is we got to fight. We got Americans dying. And somebody at the State Department it looks like wanted them to change their clothes because they didn't want them going in there with the American flag. They didn't want them going in there wearing the American uniform. They wear it to carry ammunition, to carry weapons. They do it so they know who's on who's side. And it took them almost an hour later to get them to engage because they wanted them to look better. That's the outrage. General, do you have any other personal comment? You've been in the military for more than 33 years. Why, how, have you ever seen that happen before? We're in the fight. How does that make you feel?

General LOVELL. I don't want to see that happen again. If Marines are our choice, and they're going forward, they're in uniform because they're our Marines. We have other forces that can go places that aren't wearing that uniform.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. And they were going to Tripoli, correct? They weren't going to Benghazi.

General LOVELL. That's right.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I'm sorry?

General LOVELL. Yes, sir. That's correct.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. That were headed where?

General LOVELL. They were going into Tripoli.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. They weren't even going to Benghazi. That's the point. I thank the gentlewoman for her time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Reclaiming my time. General, I have one last question. It's about a gentleman named Andrew Shapiro. This is someone who is a former Assistant Secretary of State, former Senate staffer to former Secretary Clinton, played a prominent role in coming out to AFRICOM and providing guidance on what the military would do with respect to Libya. Did Mr. Shapiro's prominence seem odd to you given your military experience?

General LOVELL. He was in the Pol-Mil Bureau. The Pol-Mil Bureau was active with Africa Command, especially through our J5 shop. His area was influential in that we would certainly need to coordinate what it is that we were doing with that interagency partner, and he did come to the command and interact with members in the command.

Mrs. LUMMIS. My time is expired. I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman ISSA. I thank the gentlelady. We now go not gentleman from Arizona, Dr. Gosar.

Mr. GOSAR. General Lovell, in your testimony you described the new normal in Libya was a formerly intact country now fractured and divided along many lines. Was there anything normal about the so-called new normal in Libya after Qadhafi, and could you elaborate on that?

General LOVELL. Normal, by my definition, would be a functioning government that has intact a political process, a prospering economy, and a military that's disciplined and able to fend for the defense of the nation. That, as we have heard here today, the Libyans continue to struggle with as they move forward.

Mr. GOSAR. But particularly after the fall of Qadhafi, it becomes more chaotic. Would you agree?

General LOVELL. Absolutely.

Mr. GOSAR. Now, in your role as intelligence, could you highlight what you knew beforehand about eastern Libya? What were you predisposed as far as following intelligence?

General LOVELL. Well, in eastern Libya, obviously that's where, for us, some of the rebel activity at the time began. Much of what we also watched in that area was who were, what we would consider the good guys and the bad guys. What really were the roles that those forces were in that were militias or others. When you are in the J2 shop, you're continuously trying to identify, especially forces that are not part of government forces, you are trying to discern all the time how friendly to our viewpoint are those types of forces, so we spent a lot of time on eastern Libya as well other areas around the country because it's so fractionalized by militia groups and entities that have varying interests.

Some can be interested in their community being a safe place to live and prosper and can be fairly what we would consider benign in their viewpoint, but then there are others where we would look at them, and we would consider them extremists, whether they would be Islamist extremists or others, so constantly trying to keep track of what was going on around the country, not just even in that particular portion.

Mr. GOSAR. But in that portion, would you consider maybe a hot bed?

General LOVELL. A hot bed, absolutely, that's where the strongest part of the revolution came from.

Mr. GOSAR. So a normal CEO, or somebody that's receiving this intelligence, has got to put higher priority on that; right?

General LOVELL. That's one of the areas in that country to put the high priority on, absolutely, yeah.

Mr. GOSAR. I want to go back to the Accountability Review Board from 1999 in Nairobi, Kenya. I mean, we outlined specifics that should have been in place, so the State Department should have known. I mean, we just had Admiral Pickering, who was part of that discussion, sitting here in front of this committee earlier. They should have known, because if we had have followed those protocols, we wouldn't have had this catastrophe. Do you believe this event was totally preventable, in Benghazi?

General LOVELL. Totally preventable?

Mr. GOSAR. Yep.

General LOVELL. No, not totally preventable. We're dealing in an environment—let me clarify my answer. The reason I don't believe it's totally preventable is because we're dealing in a hostile environment, in an environment where we're dealing with extremist organizations.

Mr. GOSAR. I guess let me qualify that.

General LOVELL. Okay.

Mr. GOSAR. Given the information that should have been normally going up the chain for somebody to make a decision, this was preventable?

General LOVELL. Oh, in order to perhaps not even expose yourself and be there.

Mr. GOSAR. Exactly. Are you familiar with the term "malpractice"?

General LOVELL. I certainly don't want to have it happen to me, yeah.

Mr. GOSAR. Well, I mean, I'm a dentist impersonating a politician, so I mean, America doesn't understand a lot of our jargon, and what happens is when an executive who is in charge of facilitating knows that the Inman Standards of a consulate do not meet those qualifications, that they're on a hot bed of activity, they knew something was coming along those lines, that you should have prevented this, would you consider this malpractice?

General LOVELL. By the definition that you gave, I would go along with that.?

Mr. GOSAR. Ms. Schake?

Ms. SCHAKE. I am hesitant, to be honest. And the reason is because of the confidence I place in the good judgment of Ambassador Chris Stevens, who made a set of choices himself about his engagement, his trip to Benghazi, and while I absolutely agree with you that the State Department should have been paying more attention to the growing jihadist threat and the growing militancy of militia in Benghazi, I would not want to take away from an American ambassador the ability to assess risk of accomplishing his mission or putting himself in harm's way, which I think Chris Stevens did a lot of in Benghazi to tragic effect.

Mr. GOSAR. But doesn't he also have the impugned liability to those that are surrounding him as well?

Ms. SCHAKE. That's an excellent question.

Mr. GOSAR. Yeah. Last one, Mr. Ross.

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Since I wasn't in the room, I can't speak to whether it was or not.

Mr. GOSAR. But given the circumstances of what we have seen played out by the information, there was definite neglect.

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. I think we see a lot of deficiencies, both in terms of what happened at the time and particularly—

Mr. GOSAR. And leading up to.

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Both leading up to what happened at the time and also thereafter the response. As you know, sir, malpractice is a very steep standard, so I couldn't speak to that, but the deficiencies are clear.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentlemen and yield.

Chairman ISSA. I thank all of you, and I'll yield myself my final 5 minutes.

General, and this really applies in some ways to all of you, but I'm going to concentrate on the General for a moment. General, when I was on active duty, I did joint exercises, had the opportunity to serve with a lot of other services, and they used terms like JAMFU and JAFU and all kinds of terms. They may not be as popular today, but they generally stood for joint Army-Air Force foul-up. Not always that way. Joint Army-Marine foul-up. But in your case, this wasn't about the joint command that's known as AFRICOM, this was about interagency.

If I understand you correctly, on 9/11, leading up to it with the normalization policy, but on 9/11, with the assets that were available in and out of Libya, you had a State Department, to a certain extent, under Mr. Shapiro, under somebody who had special authority for one country in Africa while near east, the rest of it was run by other people. You had one country, Libya, that was being run by a different group of people, and you mentioned this earlier. And they determined whether or not you got to go. Is that correct?

General LOVELL. When you say "got to go," you're talking about the—

Chairman ISSA. If Deputy Assistant Secretary, I guess he is, Andrew Shapiro, if he had called the Deputy Combatant Commander and said we need you to put all assets on the target, would you have been taking action at that command in concert with the European command to begin moving assets toward Benghazi sooner?

General LOVELL. From my perspective working as a staff officer there in J2 as I saw what was going on surrounding, it appeared to me that had the State Department made such a request within the authority that existed on the part of the Combatant Commander, they could have done more.

Chairman ISSA. And within the joint—

General LOVELL. That's my understanding.

Chairman ISSA. Right, and within the joint interagency arrangement, you saw before, during and after 9/11, 2012, the decision on movement, if I understand you correctly, did not belong to the Department of Defense. It belonged to the Department of State.

General LOVELL. There are certain things a Combatant Commander can do, but a greater sense of interaction and what it is

that would happen within that country, absolutely, consultation with Department of State would have been warranted.

Chairman ISSA. So in your opinion, the Vice Admiral, General Ham, yourself, nobody out of Stuttgart had the authority to unilaterally launch combatant aircraft or personnel?

General LOVELL. Combatant Commander has certain authorities, absolutely. How coordinated they would be with the outcome desired by the State Department and the executive within our Nation, that's where that Combatant Commander has that dialogue along with the Secretary of Defense to ensure that we take the right action?

Chairman ISSA. Basically put a suit and tie on, dress nice, and hide your weapons to go in as Marines, to take a little liberty with the order that was given to get out of your uniforms before going into Tripoli, that was a State Department decision. That would not, to your knowledge, have been a Combatant Commander decision?

General LOVELL. I wouldn't think a Combatant Commander would say that, but it's not a typical approach to take with Marines that you're sending forward into harm's way, in my experience.

Chairman ISSA. Well, you know, we're an armed service, and if you show a heavy assault rifle or a machine gun, generally the uniform just emphasizes who you are because you're showing what you can do. The fast team did have a number of weapons.

In your opinion, now I'll have you take off the September 11th hat, as a retired long-serving military officer who saw the relationship and the arrangements that existed for Africa at the African Command relative to how decisions were made to go or not go in support of Americans in harm's way, would you insist on material changes in how we do business so that there could be faster response in the future?

General LOVELL. Sir, one of the very first things I would look at would be the capacity and capability that's afforded to the Combatant Commander that would be immediately at his disposal. That is absolutely necessary just given the sheer size of the continent itself and the number of governments that exist on the continent, the number of countries. So many things can happen on that continent in any of those countries, and it can be anything from a need for a neo evacuation to, you know, use of force and power, anywhere along that spectrum.

First and foremost would be to properly, or equip to the best extent possible, agreed there were other arrangements with CENTCOM and UCOM, et cetera, and we have finite resources, and we're doing the best we can. I understand that. But in this instance, it seems focused on this particular command, I would look and say if we're asking for them to do more and to ensure that we have got the backs of all of our Americans around the continent and we're partnering with the African partners that we have there on the continent, we certainly need these types of resources in locations proximate to where they would have to be engaged.

Chairman ISSA. Thank you. Any other witness have anything else? In that case, I'd like to thank the witnesses for taking time out of their busy schedules to appear before us today, and we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:26 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD



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Policy Brief • September 2013

QUARTERLY JOURNAL: INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene

BOTTOM LINES

- **The Conventional Wisdom Is Wrong.** Libya's 2011 uprising was never peaceful, but instead was armed and violent from the start. Muammar al-Qaddafi did not target civilians or resort to indiscriminate force. Although inspired by humanitarian impulse, NATO's intervention did not aim mainly to protect civilians, but rather to overthrow Qaddafi's regime, even at the expense of increasing the harm to Libyans.
- **The Intervention Backfired.** NATO's action magnified the conflict's duration about sixfold, and its death toll at least sevenfold, while also exacerbating human rights abuses, humanitarian suffering, Islamic radicalism, and weapons proliferation in Libya and its neighbors. If Libya was a "model intervention," then it was a model of failure.
- **Three Lessons.** First, beware rebel propaganda that seeks intervention by falsely crying genocide. Second, avoid intervening on humanitarian grounds in ways that reward rebels and thus endanger civilians, unless the state is already targeting noncombatants. Third, resist the tendency of humanitarian intervention to morph into regime change, which amplifies the risk to civilians.

By Alan J. Kuperman

This policy brief is based on "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign," which appears in the Summer 2013 issue of *International Security*.

A MODEL INTERVENTION?

Many commentators have praised NATO's 2011 intervention in Libya as a humanitarian success for averting a bloodbath in that country's second largest city, Benghazi, and helping eliminate the dictatorial regime of Muammar al-Qaddafi. These proponents accordingly claim that the intervention demonstrates how to successfully implement a humanitarian principle known as the responsibility to protect (R2P). Indeed, the top U.S. representatives to the transatlantic alliance declared that "NATO's operation in Libya has rightly been hailed as a model intervention." A more rigorous assessment, however, reveals that NATO's intervention backfired: it increased the duration of Libya's civil war by about six times and its death toll by at least seven times, while also exacerbating

human rights abuses, humanitarian suffering, Islamic radicalism, and weapons proliferation in Libya and its neighbors. If this is a "model intervention," then it is a model of failure.

FLAWED NARRATIVE

The conventional account of Libya's conflict and NATO's intervention is misleading in several key aspects. First, contrary to Western media reports, Qaddafi did not initiate Libya's violence by targeting peaceful protesters. The United Nations and Amnesty International have documented that in all four Libyan cities initially consumed by civil conflict in mid-February 2011—Benghazi, Al Bayda, Tripoli, and Misurata—violence was actually initiated by the protesters. The government responded to the rebels militarily but never intentionally targeted civilians or resorted to "indiscriminate" force, as Western media claimed. Early press accounts exaggerated the death toll by a factor of ten, citing "more than 2,000 deaths" in Benghazi during the initial days of the

uprising, whereas Human Rights Watch (HRW) later documented only 233 deaths across all of Libya in that period.

Further evidence that Qaddafi avoided targeting civilians comes from the Libyan city that was most consumed by the early fighting, Misurata. HRW reports that of the 949 people wounded there in the rebellion's initial seven weeks, only 30 were women or children, meaning that Qaddafi's forces focused narrowly on combatants. During that same period, only 257 people were killed among the city's population of 400,000—a fraction less than 0.0006—providing additional proof that the government avoided using force indiscriminately. Moreover, Qaddafi did not perpetrate a “bloodbath” in any of the cities that his forces recaptured from rebels prior to NATO intervention—including Ajdabiya, Bani Walid, Brega, Ras Lanuf, Zawiyah, and much of Misurata—so there was virtually no risk of such an outcome if he had been permitted to recapture the last rebel stronghold of Benghazi.

The conventional wisdom is also wrong in asserting that NATO's main goal in Libya was to protect civilians. Evidence reveals that NATO's primary aim was to overthrow Qaddafi's regime, even at the expense of increasing the harm to Libyans. NATO attacked Libyan forces indiscriminately, including some in retreat and others in Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte, where they posed no threat to civilians. Moreover, NATO continued to aid the rebels even when they repeatedly rejected government cease-fire offers that could have ended the violence and spared civilians. Such military assistance included weapons, training, and covert deployment of hundreds of troops from Qatar, eventually enabling the rebels to capture and summarily execute Qaddafi and seize power in October 2011.

THE INTERVENTION BACKFIRED

The biggest misconception about NATO's intervention is that it saved lives and benefited Libya and its neighbors. In reality, when NATO intervened in mid-March 2011, Qaddafi already had regained control of

most of Libya, while the rebels were retreating rapidly toward Egypt. Thus, the conflict was about to end, barely six weeks after it started, at a toll of about 1,000 dead, including soldiers, rebels, and civilians caught in the crossfire. By intervening, NATO enabled the rebels to resume their attack, which prolonged the war for another seven months and caused at least 7,000 more deaths.

The best development in postwar Libya was the democratic election of July 2012, which brought to office a moderate, secular coalition government—a stark change from Qaddafi's four-decade dictatorship. Other developments, however, have been less encouraging. The victorious rebels perpetrated scores of reprisal killings and expelled 30,000 mostly black residents of Tawerga on grounds that some had been “mercenaries” for Qaddafi. HRW reported in 2012 that such abuses “appear to be so widespread and systematic that they may amount to crimes against humanity.” Ironically, such racial or ethnic violence had never occurred in Qaddafi's Libya.

Radical Islamist groups, suppressed under Qaddafi, emerged as the fiercest rebels during the war and refused to disarm or submit to government authority afterward. Their persistent threat was highlighted by the September 2012 attack on U.S. facilities in Benghazi that killed Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three of his colleagues. Even more recently, in April 2013, a vehicle bomb destroyed half of the French embassy in the capital, Tripoli. In light of such insecurity, it is understandable that most Libyans responding to a postwar poll expressed nostalgia for a strong leader such as Qaddafi.

Among neighboring countries, Mali, which previously had been the region's exceptional example of peace and democracy, has suffered the worst consequences from the intervention. After Qaddafi's defeat, his ethnic Tuareg soldiers of Malian descent fled home and launched a rebellion in their country's north, prompting the Malian army to overthrow the president. The rebellion soon was hijacked by local Islamist forces and al-Qaida, which together imposed

sharia and declared the vast north an independent country. By December 2012, the northern half of Mali had become "the largest territory controlled by Islamic extremists in the world," according to the chairman of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Africa. This chaos also spurred massive displacement of hundreds of thousands of Malian civilians, which Amnesty International characterized as "Mali's worst human rights situation in 50 years."

Sophisticated weapons from Qaddafi's arsenal—including up to 15,000 man-portable, surface-to-air missiles unaccounted for as of 2012—leaked to radical Islamists throughout the region. NATO's intervention on behalf of Libya's rebels also encouraged Syria's formerly peaceful protesters to switch to violence in mid-2011, in hopes of attracting a similar intervention. The resulting escalation in Syria magnified that country's killing rate by tenfold.

LESSONS

NATO's intervention in Libya offers at least three important lessons for implementing the responsibility to protect. First, potential interveners should beware both misinformation and rebel propaganda. If Western countries had accurately perceived Libya's initial civil conflict—as Qaddafi using discriminate force against violent tribal, regional, and radical Islamist rebels—NATO would have been much less likely to launch its counterproductive intervention.

The second lesson is that humanitarian intervention can backfire by escalating rebellion. This is because some substate groups believe that by violently provoking state retaliation, they can attract such intervention

to help achieve their political objectives, including regime change. The resulting escalation, however, magnifies the threat to noncombatants before any potential intervention can protect them. Thus, the prospect of humanitarian intervention, which is intended to protect civilians, may instead imperil them via a moral hazard dynamic. To mitigate this pathology, it is essential to avoid intervening on humanitarian grounds in ways that reward rebels, unless the state is targeting noncombatants.

A final lesson is that intervention initially motivated by the desire to protect civilians is prone to expanding its objective to include regime change, even if doing so magnifies the danger to civilians, contrary to the interveners' original intent. That is partly because intervening states, when justifying their use of force to domestic and international audiences, demonize the regime of the country they are targeting. This demonization later inhibits the interveners from considering a negotiated settlement that would permit the regime or its leaders to retain some power, which typically would be the quickest way to end the violence and protect noncombatants. Such lessons from NATO's use of force in Libya suggest the need for considerable caution and a comprehensive exploration of alternatives when contemplating if and how to conduct humanitarian military intervention.

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RELATED RESOURCES

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alan J. Kuperman is Associate Professor of Public Affairs in the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Austin. During 2013–14, he will be a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace, in Washington, D.C.

ABOUT *INTERNATIONAL SECURITY*

International Security is America's leading peer-reviewed journal of security affairs. It provides sophisticated analyses of contemporary, theoretical, and historical security issues. *International Security* is edited at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and is published by The MIT Press.

For more information about this publication, please contact the *International Security* editorial assistant at 617-495-1914.

FOR ACADEMIC CITATION:

Kuperman, Alan J. "Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene." Policy Brief, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, September 2013.

Belfer Center
for Science and
International Affairs

Harvard Kennedy School
79 JFK St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

TEL: 617-495-1400
FAX: 617-495-8963
<http://www.belfercenter.org>

Libya's guns free-for-all fuels region's turmoil

By MAGGIE MICHAEL
— Mar. 22, 2014 2:58 PM EDT

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — At the heart of the Libyan capital, the open-air Fish Market was once a place where residents went to buy everything from meat and seafood to clothes and pets. Now it's Tripoli's biggest arms market, with tables displaying pistols and assault rifles. Ask a vendor, and he can pull out bigger machine guns to sell for thousands of dollars.

Libya, where hundreds of militias hold sway and the central government is virtually powerless, is awash in millions of weapons with no control over their trafficking. The arms free-for-all fuels not only Libya's instability but also stokes conflicts around the region as guns are smuggled through the country's wide-open borders to militants fighting in insurgencies and wars stretching from Syria to West Africa.

The lack of control is at times stunning. Last month, militia fighters stole a planeload of weapons sent by Russia for Libya's military when it stopped to refuel at Tripoli International Airport on route to a base in the south. The fighters surrounded the plane on the tarmac and looted the shipment of automatic weapons and ammunition, Hashim Bishr, an official with a Tripoli security body under the Interior Ministry, told The Associated Press.

In a further indignity, the fighters belonged to a militia officially assigned by the government to protect the airport, since regular forces are too weak to do it.

Only a few weeks earlier, another militia seized a weapons' shipment that landed at Tripoli's Mitiga Airport meant for the military's 1st Battalion, Bishr said. Among the weapons were heavy anti-aircraft guns, which are a pervasive weapon among the militias and are usually mounted on the back of pickup trucks.

The weapons chaos has alarmed Europe — just a short distance across the Mediterranean — and the United States. At a conference in Rome this month, Western and Arab diplomats, including U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, pressed Libyan officials to reach some political consensus so the international community can help the government collect weapons and rebuild the military and police.

The problem is that Europe and the U.S. simply don't know who to talk to in Libya, a Western diplomat in Tripoli told the AP.

"It's about whether they are capable of receiving the help," he said, speaking on spoke on condition of anonymity to talk about the discussions at the conference. He pointed to an international effort to build storage houses in which to collect weapons in the western Libyan

town of Gharyan. That project has stumbled, he said, because of the problem of determining "who is in charge and whom we work with."

The 42-year rule of Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi left the country without solid political institutions. Since his fall and death in the 2011 civil war, the instability has only spiraled. The rebel brigades that formed to fight him have turned into powerful militias, many based on tribe, region, city or even neighborhood, that often battle each other as they carve out zones of control. Some have hard-line Islamist or even al-Qaida-inspired ideologies.

The militias outgun the military and police, which were shattered in the civil war. The government has to hire militias to take up security duties at airports, seaports, hospitals and government buildings. A militia assigned to protect oil facilities in the east turned around and took over the facilities last year, demanding greater autonomy for the country's eastern region, and the vital oil industry has been virtually shut down since.

Libya's politicians are themselves deeply divided, broadly into an Islamist-led and a rival bloc, each backed by allied militias, turning politics into an armed conflict. Militias, for example, have besieged parliament to force passage of particular laws and once briefly kidnapped the former prime minister.

Highlighting the divisions, Libya sent two separate delegations to the Rome Conference, one headed by then-Prime Minister Ali Zidan, the other by his rival, Islamist parliament chief Nouri Abu-Sahmain. Soon after the conference, lawmakers led by Islamists succeeded in removing Zidan in a no-confidence vote.

Several officials told the AP that the government does not know how many weapons there are in Libya, a country of 6 million people.

Saleh Jaweida, a lawmaker on parliament's National Security Committee, said that all figures are speculation but that a plausible estimate is between 10 million to 15 million light weapons — up to an assault rifle — and not counting heavier caliber weapons or armor.

Many of the arms came from the arsenals of the Gadhafi-era military and police, which were looted during the civil war and after the collapse of his rule. Another source is the large amount of weapons shipped to the rebels during the eight-month uprising, largely from Gulf Arab nations.

The hundreds of militias around the country absorb as much weapons as they can because no group knows how well armed rival groups are, creating a climate of "mutual fear," Bishr said.

There is also a strong domestic market for weapons among the public for personal protection. Nearly every household is believed to have at least one gun, but usually it's several.

The Fish Market is one main source in Tripoli — located only steps from the capital's historic Red Castle, where Gadhafi delivered a speech from the ramparts during the 2011 uprising, threatening to open his arsenal to the public and turn Libya into "a red fire."

Smuggling abroad is also big business. Abdel-Basit Haroun, a former top intelligence official, said tribes and militias that control the eastern, western, and southern borders are engaged in arms smuggling.

A 97-page report released in March by United Nations Panel of Experts said weapons that originated in Libya were found in 14 countries, often reaching militant groups. The report said smuggling is mainly from Libyan militias' arsenals.

Sophisticated man-portable, ground-to-air missile systems, known as MANPADS, have reached four conflict zones, including Chad and Mali.

"Fears that terrorist groups would acquire these weapons have materialized," the report said.

A MANPADS that militants in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula used to shoot down an Egyptian military helicopter this year originated in Libya, it said.

Libyan weapons were also found in Somalia, the Central African Republic and in parts of Nigeria where the militant group Boko Haram operates, it said.

In Niger, weapons used in the country's first suicide attack — last May — were typical of the Libyan arsenals and appear to have been smuggled in through Mali.

Another major destination for Libya's weapons is Syria. The report said investigators found that Qatar has been using its air force flights to transport weapons from Libya and eventually to Turkey, from where they are passed to rebels in Syria. The report said Russian-made weapons bought in 2000 by Gadhafi's regime were found in the hands of Islamic militant rebels in Syria.

"In a very real sense, Libya is exporting its insecurity to surrounding countries," wrote one of the authors of the report, Brian Katulis, a senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress.

Efforts by Libya to control the weapons traffic have gone nowhere. In a Catch-22, militias say they cannot surrender their weapons until there is a proper military and police force to keep security in the country, yet the regular forces cannot be rebuilt when militias have so much power.

Under the Libyan government's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program, some 160,000 militiamen have been registered under the Interior Ministry's Warriors Affairs Agency. A small portion of them have given up their weapons and demobilized. But most have been assigned various security tasks in an attempt to rope militias under state aegis.

Zuhair al-Ugli, the head of communications for the Warrior Affairs Agency, said there is no mechanism for dealing with the tide of guns.

"The state is paralyzed in collecting the weapons," he said.

Abdul Rahman AlAgeli, a security coordinator in the prime minister's office, said the government is "effectively drowning" and that authorities have "not demonstrated any tangible vision" for demobilizing and disarming militias.

Authorities are divided on how to deal with the militias. Some see them as the only hope for providing security for the next few years until formal security services are rebuilt, while others say the militias must be disarmed for stability, he wrote in an online presentation hosted by the Canadian-based Centre for Security Governance think tank.

The problem is, young Libyans in militias have no incentive to hand over their weapons, which are their only source of security and their only "bargaining power vis-a-vis the new political order." If they disarm, they would effectively surrender power to a military and police force they distrust, without guarantees of reforms, he wrote.

"Disarmament in any context is never merely an issue of weapons reduction, but rather a social contract between the people and its government," he wrote.

print

NATO's "Humanitarian Intervention" in Libya: Transforming a Country into a "Failed State"

By [Iskandar Arfaoui](#)

Global Research, April 05, 2014

Url of this article:

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/natos-humanitarian-intervention-in-libya-transforming-a-country-into-a-failed-state/5376660>

Humanitarian intervention or just another imperialist campaign?

In 2011, Western politicians such as US President Barack Obama, British Prime Minister David Cameron and other members of the NATO alliance praised what they believed was a successful campaign to oust the murdered Muammar al-Gaddafi. Three years later, this Western intervention has created another failed state, yet Western leaders refuse to admit their mistake. Libya is now run by extremist militias, the same people that were supported and armed by the West to carry out the illegal regime change operation. Right now, Libya's parliament agrees on little, its interim government has no army to enforce security let alone impose its will, and a new constitution meant to forge a sense of nation remains undrafted. For many Libyans, who were duped into trusting and supporting Western intervention, life has now become unbearable. Libya has descended into a scramble over the future shape of the nation, with ex-rebel commanders, former exiles, Islamists, tribal leaders, and federalists all jostling for position.

Libya is now a failed state

In Benghazi, in the country's east, three key ports have been seized by a group of former oil security forces who defected with their leader Ibrahim Jathran, a former Gaddafi fighter, last summer. They want more autonomy for the region. The two most powerful groups in the country are the militias west of the capital, one in the mountain town of Zintan and the other in the port city of Misrata. Bristling with weaponry and a sense of entitlement, the rivals both claim the mantle of champions of the revolution. Each brigade is loosely allied to competing political factions, and neither shows any sign of disarming or falling in behind the government in Tripoli. Ultimately, Libya has no authoritative government or any legitimate institutions.

Violence is also rife in Libya. Car bomb attacks take place frequently. The Libyan future remains highly uncertain at present, with several scenarios plausible: partition based on fundamental ethnic and regional enmities, essentially creating two polities, one centred in Benghazi, the other in Tripoli; a perpetuation of tribal rivalries with governing authority appropriated by various militia, and likely producing a type of low-intensity warfare that creates chaos and precludes both meaningful democracy and successful programs of economic development; or a failed state that becomes a sanctuary for transnational extremist violence and then becomes a counter-terrorist battlefield in the manner of Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Mali, the scene of deadly drone attacks and covert operations by special forces.

One fact is clear however – the West opened another can of worms when it intervened in Libya. Similarly to Iraq and Afghanistan, the false feeling of superiority has led the

Western powers to create another state where people have no hope for a better future. If the West was truly serious about humanitarian assistance, it would have pro-actively helped Libya to re-build and get back on its feet. Instead, Libya has been left to wither away by itself, which begs the question – was the Libyan intervention really about protecting civilians, or was it just another geopolitical and imperialist campaign to remove a leader who opposed the Western economic system. Before his bloody assassination, Gaddafi had pledged to fund three ambitious African projects — the creation of an African investment bank, an African monetary fund and an African central bank. Africa felt that these institutions were necessary to end its dependence on the IMF and the World Bank.

It is probable that Gaddafi's plans to disassociate Libya from the IMF was the main reason for Western intervention. We must therefore remember one fact: the Libyan case has illustrated once again that Western interventions cannot be trusted and do not work, and in fact, cause more harm than good. For this reason it is imperative to continue to oppose NATO and any future imperialist campaigns.

Alexander Arfaoui is the founder of Global Political Insight, a political media and research organisation. He has a Master's degree in International Relations. Alexander works as a political consultant and frequently contributes to think-tank and media outlets.

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West Should Have Put Boots on the Ground in Libya, Says Former Prime Minister

March 25th, 2014
05:15 PM ET

By Mick Krever, CNN

Western countries exercised "bad judgement" in failing to put troops on the ground during the Libyan revolution, Former Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan told CNN's Christiane Amanpour in an interview that aired Tuesday.

"There was bad judgement on [the] part of the West for not putting too many troops on the ground," Zeidan said through an interpreter.

Amanpour clarified whether he believed that, in retrospect, he wished that the West had "put boots on the ground, forces to maintain security."

"Any means to have security will be accepted in Libya," he said. If Libya wants stability, "we should have forces that are part of the United Nations, regional or Middle Eastern troops, or countries that have relations or connections in Libya – and if this takes place under the international community, under the United Nations, it will be accepted."

Three years after Moammar Gadhafi was forced from office and killed, control of Libya is largely in the grip of militias.

Zeidan himself was forced from office by a parliamentary vote earlier this month and fled the country.

He insists that he is still the prime minister.

"The situation requires a few arrangements, and I will go back there," he said.

"How are you going to go back," Amanpour asked, "What are you going to do?"

"I will return to Libya in a normal way ... Through an airport or an airplane."

"I did not commit any crime that requires me to be arrested. There are forces from within the army – legitimate forces – in the country that will protect me. And I am supported by a segment of the population that will be behind me."

The poster child for instability in Libya is Ibrahim Jadran, a 30-something militia leader who controls a large swath of eastern Libya, including crucial oil ports.

A week ago U.S. Navy SEALs took control of a commercial tanker that had been seized by three armed Libyans.

Jadran, who has been trying desperately to defy the Libyan government and sell the oil he controls on the international market, claimed that the tanker had been legally hired.

In an interview with Amanpour in January, Jadran said the Libyan government was one of the "most corrupted" in the world.

He is demanding autonomy and profit sharing for eastern Libya, which he calls by its Roman name, Cyrenaica.

Is there any chance that Cyrenaica could break away from Libya, Amanpour asked, as Crimea has from Ukraine?

"This will not happen in Libya," Zeidan said. "You have extremist elements ... but once these issues are resolved I think the situation will become much better."

Libya became the focus of world attention in September 2012, when U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stephens and three other Americans were killed in an attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi.

The attack became, and remains, a political football, in the United States.

Nobody was ever arrested for the killings.

"There is weakness in the security agencies and the intelligence groups," Zeidan said by way of explanation.

"The intelligence apparatus was destroyed after the revolution," and "there are people who wanted the security apparatus to be weak."

"However, the government was cooperating with the U.S. and achieved some results on the ground. But we hope that the perpetrators can be arrested in order for us to reach the truth."

Chaffetz
5/1/14

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 12:46 PM
To: Nuland, Victoria J; [REDACTED] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [REDACTED] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F; Mills, Cheryl D;
Cc: [REDACTED] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [REDACTED] Maxwell, Raymond D; [REDACTED] NEA-LIBYADESK; NEA-DAS-DL; [REDACTED] Gordon, Philip H; [REDACTED] Jones, Beth E
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
SMARTCategory: Working

From AA/S Jones:

I spoke to Libyan Ambassador Aujali at about 9:45am and told him that we would like him to help ensure that our wounded in the hospital in Tripoli are not disturbed by the investigation that Libyan officials are apparently beginning to conduct. I said we appreciate the Libyan desire to conduct an investigation, but I vehemently stressed the importance of allowing our wounded to recover in peace without the slightest disturbance. I thanked him for the excellent care that [REDACTED] told us the wounded are receiving from Libyan doctors.

I also emphasized the importance of Libyan leaders continuing to make strong statements. Aujali noted that his President and Prime Minister had apologized publicly to the American people and the families of the victims. When he said his government suspected that former Qaddafi regime elements carried out the attacks, I told him that the group that conducted the attacks - Ansar Al Sharia - is affiliated with Islamic extremists.

Aujali said the people of Libya are shocked by the attacks and deeply saddened by the loss of Chris Stevens: "He is the man of Libya." He said he fervently hopes that this attack will not affect the relations between our two countries. The Libyans sincerely appreciate what the United States has done and is doing in Libya.

I informed him that it was too dangerous for our personnel to remain in Benghazi and let him know that we have pulled everyone out.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Jones, Beth E
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 9:51 AM
To: Nuland, Victoria J; [REDACTED] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [REDACTED] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F; Mills, Cheryl D;
Cc: [REDACTED] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [REDACTED] Maxwell, Raymond D; [REDACTED] NEA-LIBYADESK; NEA-DAS-DL; [REDACTED] Gordon, Philip H; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

Good news: [REDACTED] just called to report that our wounded in the hospital in Tripoli are doing much better. Libyan doctors have apparently served them very well so far.

[] also said the Libyan PM, Prosecutor General and Attorney General arrived at the hospital this morning (DC time). According to [] source in the hospital – the Embassy nurse – the Libyan officials plan to begin carrying out an investigation about the attack in Benghazi last night. [] said he is headed to the hospital immediately to shield the wounded from any attempts to interview them.

In the meantime, those selected for evacuation are gathering for the ride to the airport

From: Jones, Beth E

Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 6:58 PM

To: Nuland, Victoria J; [] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F; Mills, Cheryl D

Cc: [] (@state.gov); NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [] Maxwell, Raymond D; [] Dibble, Elizabeth L; []

NEA-LIBYADESK; NEA-DAS-DL; [] Gordon, Phillip H; []

Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

[] just provided the following update about the three Embassy buildings in Tripoli:

- All 33 COM (State) personnel in Tripoli are accounted for and currently they are all at the Residential Compound.
- The [] has approximately 33 people as well, and they are all there.
- No one is currently at the Embassy itself.

I passed on U/S Kennedy's recommendation that the personnel all move together to one compound in Tripoli; [] said that suggestion made good sense and that he would discuss with the COS as to which compound is the most secure.

Other points:

- [] said he has closed the Embassy tomorrow, and no one will travel from the residential compound into town except, as necessary, for him, the RSO and the DATT.
- [] and the RSO held a Town Hall meeting in the last half hour to reassure the Embassy staff; they remain calm and are responding well.
- [] has requested police protection for the Residential Compound and the [] at the moment, the police are protecting the Embassy. He is checking now on what the extra protection situation is with the Residential Compound and the [] [] is in touch with the militias with which it works to ensure extra protection.

In Benghazi:

- [] is working with the COS to make sure he is aware of reports that another mob has gathered in Benghazi headed for the [] They will ensure extra protection there, too.

From: []

Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:55 PM

To: [] Nuland, Victoria J; [] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F; Mills, Cheryl D

Cc: [] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; []

Maxwell, Raymond D; [] Dibble, Elizabeth L; [] NEA-LIBYADESK; NEA-DAS-DL; [] Gordon, Phillip H; []

Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

I just spoké again to [redacted] who himself spoke again to the offices of the Libyan President and Prime Minister, asking them to provide firefighting equipment to the Benghazi compound. He said the PD shop at Embassy Tripoli has found postings on Facebook indicating that the "Tripoli Council" plans to carry out an attack on Embassy Tripoli. He said he was promised increased police protection but it had not yet materialized.

[redacted] said his team reports that the extremist group Ansar Al Sharia has taken credit for the attack in Benghazi. He heard reports that the February 17 Brigade is currently engaged in a running battle with Ansar Al Sharia; he asked the offices of the President and PM to pursue Ansar al Sharia.

On working to locate Ambassador Stevens, the RSO team and militia are still on compound, which is 50 acres - [redacted] expressed the hope that Ambassador Stevens is in hiding somewhere on the compound. The PO's residence is still on fire.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:32 PM
To: Nuland, Victoria J; [redacted] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [redacted] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F; Mills, Cheryl D
Cc: [redacted] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [redacted] Maxwell, Raymond D; [redacted] Dibble, Elizabeth L; [redacted] NEA-LIBYADESK; NEA-DAS-DL; [redacted] Gordon, Phillip H;
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

The fighting has stopped, DCM [redacted] just confirmed to me. He also confirmed one fatality [redacted] - a TDY'er from The Hague - has died. His body has been recovered. The five ARSOs are accounted for, but they're still trying to find the Ambassador. The Principal Officer's residence is still on fire with toxic smoke.

I have spoken to A/S Gordon and Liz Dibble is contacting the Charge at The Hague, [redacted] to inform them.

From: Nuland, Victoria J
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:25 PM
To: [redacted] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [redacted] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Kennedy, Patrick F
Cc: [redacted] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [redacted] Maxwell, Raymond D; [redacted] Dibble, Elizabeth L
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

We just asked NEA for hold lines for press. We are getting besieged.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:15 PM
To: [redacted] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [redacted] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Nuland, Victoria J; Kennedy, Patrick F
Cc: [redacted] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [redacted] Maxwell, Raymond D; [redacted] Dibble, Elizabeth L
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

+Cheryl Mills

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 5:13 PM
To: [redacted] Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [redacted] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Nuland, Victoria J; Kennedy, Patrick F
Cc: [redacted] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [redacted] Maxwell, Raymond D; [redacted] Dibble, Elizabeth L
Subject: RE: Libya update from Beth Jones

Just spoke again with [redacted], who confirmed the party includes Ambassador Stevens plus three, not plus four. [redacted] has been in contact twice with the Libyan President's office and twice with the Libyan PM's office; their offices assured him they are fully engaged and consider themselves personal friends of Ambassador Stevens. [redacted] has been coordinating with the [redacted] who has learned from the QRF about the status of the compound - currently they are clearing the compound and working to access the party.

I also urged Libyan Ambassador to the U.S. Aujali to engage on this immediately at the highest level.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 4:49 PM
To: Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; [redacted] (S); S_SpecialAssistants; Sullivan, Jacob J; Nuland, Victoria J
Cc: [redacted] NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; [redacted] Maxwell, Raymond D; [redacted] Dibble, Elizabeth L
Subject: Libya update from Beth Jones

All:

Beth Jones just spoke with DCM Tripoli [redacted], who advised a Libyan militia (we now know this is the 17th Feb brigade, as requested by Emb office) is responding to the attack on the diplomatic mission in Benghazi. The QRF is in the compound, engaging the attackers, taking fire, and working its way through the compound to get to the villa, where Ambassador Stevens is in safe haven for extraction. The ARSO is also there in the compound. [redacted] spoke with Amb Stevens by phone 20 minutes before my call (which was about ten minutes ago. [redacted] will talk to the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, and then speak with the Foreign Minister. I have spoken to [redacted] who is also in touch with its QRF contacts to ask for engagement. Embassy is sending medical assistance to Benghazi to be on stand-by.

More updates to follow.

[redacted]

[Redacted]
From: [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 10:26 PM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN); [Redacted]
(USUN)
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Sensitivity Code: Sensitive
SMART Category: Working

[Redacted]

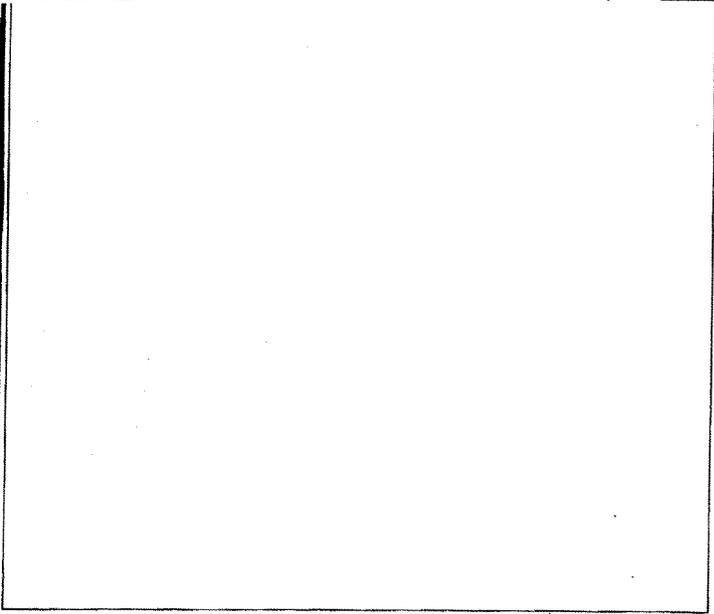
SBU
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS 02/05/2014 -
Class: Secret - Reason: 1.4(A), 1.4(D), 1.4(G)
- Declassify on: 09/13/2037

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 9:45 PM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN); [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

[Large redacted area]

C05415279 U.S. Department of State - Doc# C05415279 - Produced to HOGR - May 2014

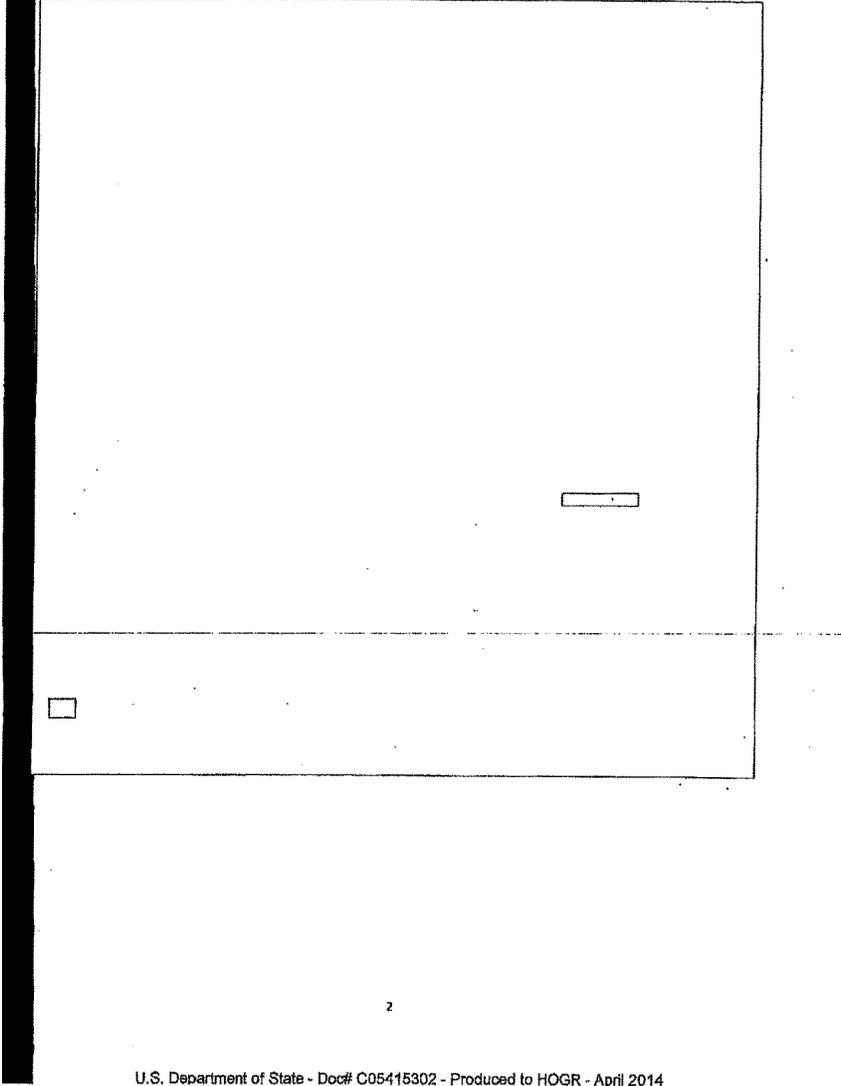


[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Sunday, September 16, 2012 1:19 PM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN); [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

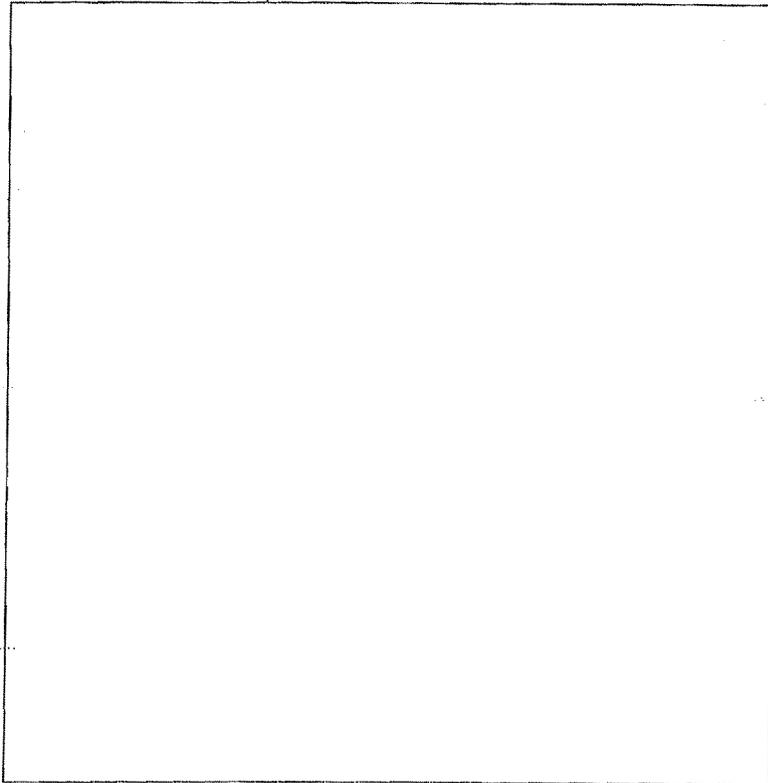
[Redacted]

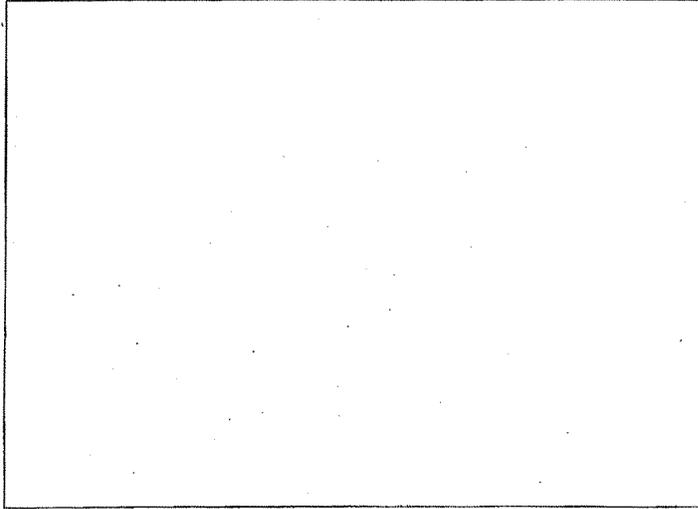
Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS 02/05/2014 ~ Class:
Confidential ~ Reason: 1.4(A), 1.4(D), 1.4(G), B6 ~
Declassify on: 09/15/2037



Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS 04/10/2014 ~ Class: Secret ~
Reason: DSCG 11-1 ~ Declassify on: 09/17/2037

From: Ryu, Rexon Y
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2012 10:11 AM
To: Oat-Judge, Siobhan C
Cc: Pelofsky, Eric J; Catalano, Elisa; Graff, Corinne; Ahmed, Salman (USUN); DiCarlo, Rosemary A (USUN); Pelton, Erin E
Subject: [REDACTED]





CLASSIFICATION: SECRET//NOFORN
Sensitive

Printed By: Rangarajan, Taara A
Page 2 of 2

[Redacted]

From: Rice, Susan E (USUN)
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 7:30 PM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Re: [Redacted]

Thx

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 07:21 PM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN)
Subject: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

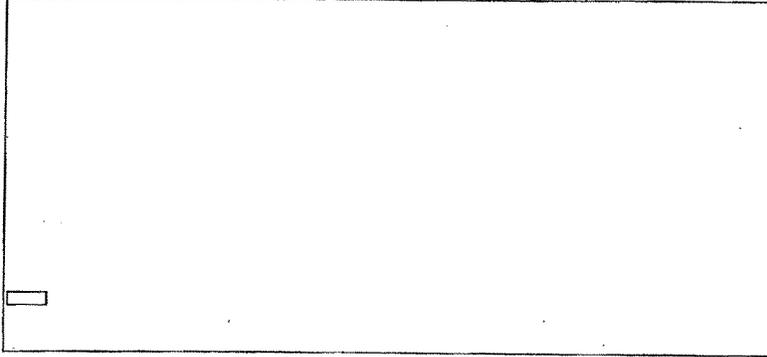
[Redacted]

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS 04/16/2014 ~ Class: Confidential ~ Reason: 1.4(D), 1.4(G), B1 ~ Declassify on: 09/12/2032

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 3:49 PM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN)
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 10:59 AM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 10:46 AM
To: Rice, Susan E (USUN)
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: [Redacted]

SBU
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: [Redacted] [mailto:[Redacted]]@who.eop.gov
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 10:43 AM
To: [Redacted]@nctc.gov; McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@ucla.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: [Redacted]

Thank you for working this, as the most important thing is having a public baseline – informed by the facts – that we can all point to. We are well synched up with [Redacted] as well.

From: [Redacted]@nctc.gov [mailto:[Redacted]]@nctc.gov
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2012 10:40 AM
To: McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@ucla.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: McDonough, Denis R. [mailto: [Redacted]@nss.eop.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 10:09 PM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]@nctc.gov [mailto: [Redacted]@nctc.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 8:33 PM
To: [Redacted]@dnl.gov; McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]@ucia.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@dnl.gov; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] [mailto: [Redacted]@who.eop.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 8:15 PM
To: [Redacted] McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: Re: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]@dni.gov (mailto:[Redacted]@dni.gov)
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 08:03 PM
To: [Redacted]@nctc.gov; McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov <[Redacted]@nctc.gov>; [Redacted]@ucla.gov
[Redacted]@ucla.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov <[Redacted]@nctc.gov>; [Redacted]@dni.gov <[Redacted]@dni.gov>; [Redacted]@state.gov <[Redacted]@state.gov>
Subject: Re: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] (mailto:[Redacted]@who.eop.gov)
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 07:56 PM
To: McDonough, Denis R. <[Redacted]@nss.eop.gov>; [Redacted]
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@who.eop.gov; [Redacted]@state.gov
[Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: McDonough, Denis R.
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 7:52 PM
To: McDonough, Denis R.; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@ucla.gov; [Redacted]
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

I thought he was on my earlier response.

From: McDonough, Denis R.
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 7:49 PM
To: [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@ucla.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O.; [Redacted]@nctc.gov; [Redacted]@dni.gov; [Redacted]@state.gov
Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/09/some-administration-officials-were-concerned-about-initial-white-house-push-blaming-benghazi-attack-on-mob-video/>
Sep 27, 2012 6:13pm

Some Administration Officials Were Concerned About Initial White House Push Blaming Benghazi Attack on Mob, Video

Even before Defense Secretary Leon Panetta contradicted the initial story about the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, today, Obama administration officials told ABC News they were concerned after the White House began pushing the line that the attack was spontaneous and not the work of terrorists.

Events were too uncertain, and suspicions had been aroused, officials said.

Panetta today said that the attack that killed four Americans on the anniversary of 9/11 was not only carried out by terrorists — it was pre-meditated.

"As we determined the details of what took place there and how that attack took place," Panetta told reporters, "it became clear that there were terrorists who had planned that attack."

The White House first suggested the attack was spontaneous — the result of an anti-Muslim video that incited mobs throughout the region.

"Let's be clear, these protests were in reaction to a video that had spread to the region," White House press secretary Jay Carney said on September 14.

When ABC News pressed Carney on whether that included the Benghazi attack, in which U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other American men were killed, Carney said, "we certainly don't know. We don't know otherwise. We have no information to suggest that it was a preplanned attack."

On THIS WEEK on September 16, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice said, "our current best assessment, based on the information that we have at present, is that, in fact, what this began as, it was a spontaneous — not a premeditated — response to what had transpired in Cairo. In Cairo, as you know, a few hours earlier, there was a violent protest that was undertaken in reaction to this very offensive video that was disseminated. We believe that folks in Benghazi, a small number of people came to the embassy to — or, to the consulate, rather, to replicate the sort of challenge that was posed in Cairo. And then as that unfolded, it seems to have been hijacked, let us say, by some individual clusters of extremists who came with heavier weapons... And it then evolved from there."

White House officials acknowledge that assessments have changed over time as intelligence has been confirmed, but they insist that no information was given in bad faith and there was no attempt to downplay the attack.

But sources told ABC News that intelligence officials on the ground immediately suspected the attack was not tied to the movie at all. The attackers knew where to get Ambassador Stevens after he'd fled to a so-called safe house half a mile away. That building was hit with insurgent mortars — suggesting the terrorists knew what they were doing.

As of Thursday afternoon, officials from the Obama administration were not even 100 percent certain that the protest of the anti-Muslim film in Benghazi occurred outside the U.S. diplomatic post.

In a closed-door briefing with top officials, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper described the mortar attack on the safe house as suggesting that the terrorist attack was one of opportunity, not pre-meditation, since the mortars were not used to attack the consulate earlier in the day.

Campaigning in Virginia Beach today, President Obama seemed eager to paint the terrorist threat as waning. "Al Qaeda's on the path to defeat," he said. "Bin Laden is dead."

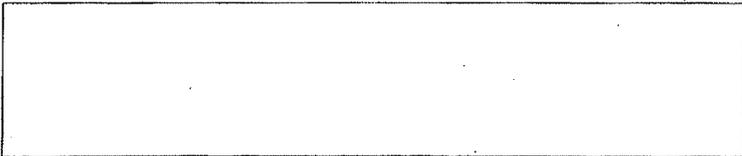
But the Daily Beast's Eli Lake on Wednesday reported that intelligence officials said "the early information was enough to show that the attack was planned and the work of al Qaeda affiliates operating in Eastern Libya." "There was very good information on this in the first 24 hours," one of the officials told Lake. "These guys have a return address. There are camps of people and a wide variety of things we could do."

It's certainly possible that intelligence officials wouldn't want the terrorists to know that the U.S. knew about them, but that does beg the question as to why White House officials seemed to strongly suggest the attack was merely the work of an unruly mob.

President Obama has repeatedly said the investigation is on to find the killers and bring them to justice. But as first reported by CNN, ABC news has learned that the FBI — which has been dispatched to Libya to take the lead in the investigation — has not even reached Benghazi yet.

This is largely due to safety concerns. Indeed, as of Thursday, senior State Department officials said that the diplomatic presence in Libya — which was already down to emergency-level staffing — would be further reduced.

From: [redacted]@dnf.gov [mailto:[redacted]@dnf.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 7:47 PM
To: [redacted]@nctc.gov; McDonough, Denis R. [redacted]@ucla.gov
Cc: Brennan, John O. [redacted]@nctc.gov; [redacted]@dnf.gov; [redacted]@state.gov
Subject: Re: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm



From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 12:12 PM
To: [redacted]@nss.eop.gov; [redacted]@nss.eop.gov; [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]@who.eop.gov; [redacted]@who.eop.gov; [redacted]

Subject: RE: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 11:23 AM
To: [Redacted]@nss.eop.gov;
Cc: [Redacted]@who.eop.gov;
Subject: Re: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

[Redacted]

From: McDonough, Denis R. [mailto:[Redacted]@nss.eop.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 10:57 AM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Brennan, John O. <[Redacted]@who.eop.gov>
Subject: FW: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

Hey, guys,

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, September 27, 2012 10:15 AM
To: DI-Who-Press: [Redacted] Carney, Jay;

[Redacted] McDonough, Denis R.
[Redacted] Power, Samantha J.

[REDACTED] Plouffe, David; [REDACTED]

Subject: FOX News: US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/09/27/us-officials-knew-libya-attack-was-terrorism-within-24-hours-sources-confirm/>

US officials knew Libya attack was terrorism within 24 hours, sources confirm

*Published September 27, 2012
FoxNews.com*

URGENT: U.S. intelligence officials knew from Day One that the assault on the U.S. Consulate in Libya was a terrorist attack and suspected Al Qaeda-tied elements were involved, sources told Fox News -- though it took the administration a week to acknowledge it.

The account conflicts with claims on the Sunday after the attack by U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice that the administration believed the strike was a "spontaneous" event triggered by protests in Egypt over an anti-Islam film.

Sources said the administration internally labeled the attack terrorism from the first day to enable a certain type of policy response, and that officials were looking for one specific suspect.

In addition, sources confirm that FBI agents have not yet arrived in Benghazi in the aftermath of the attack.

Read more: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/09/27/us-officials-knew-libya-attack-was-terrorism-within-24-hours-sources-confirm@tcrz27qBxvslDz>

From: Rhodes, Benjamin J. ([redacted]@who.eop.gov)
Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 8:00 PM
To: Vega, Dag; NSG Deputy Press Secretary; Plouffe, David; Pfeiffer, Dan; Carney, Jay; Palmieri, Jennifer; Earnest, Joshua R.; Govashiri, Feriat; Ledbetter, Howf J.; Selak, Dawn; Brundage, Daniel; Pelton, Erin; Ahassani, Mehd K.
Subject: RE: PREP CALL with Susan: Saturday at 4:00 pm ET

Goals:

- To convey that the United States is doing everything that we can to protect our people and facilities abroad;
- To underscore that these protests are rooted in an Internet video, and not a broader failure of policy;
- To show that we will be resolute in bringing people who harm Americans to justice, and standing steadfast through these protests;
- To reinforce the President and Administration's strength and steadiness in dealing with difficult challenges.

Top lines:

- Since we began to see protests in response to this Internet video, the President has directed the Administration to take a number of steps. His top priority has been the safety and security of all Americans serving abroad.
- First, we have significantly increased security at our diplomatic posts around the globe, with additional resources from across the government. The safety and security of our personnel is paramount and under constant review.
- Second, we have reached out to governments in the region to make sure they are cooperating closely with us, and meeting their obligations to protect diplomatic facilities as best they can. For instance, we've seen cooperation from Yemen and Egypt cooperate significantly after President Obama called those leaders.
- Third, we've made our views on this video crystal clear. The United States government had nothing to do with it. We reject its message and its contents. We find it disgusting and reprehensible. But there is absolutely no justification at all for responding to this movie with violence. And we are working to make sure that people around the globe hear that message.
- Fourth, we've encouraged leaders around the globe to speak out against the violence, and you've seen very important statements in the Muslim world by people like Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey, President Morsi of Egypt, and others who have condemned the violence and called for a peaceful response.
- I think that people have come to trust that President Obama provides leadership that is steady and statesmanlike. There are always going to be challenges that emerge around the world, and time and again he's shown that we can meet them.

Q: Are you concerned that our relationship with Egypt and other Muslim countries is quickly deteriorating? Is the Arab Spring now about hatred of America? Did President Obama lose the Arab World?

I think we need to step back a bit. The Arab Spring was about people across the region rising up to demand their basic rights. The protests we've seen these last few days were sparked by a disgusting and reprehensible video.

The fact is, this is a time of extraordinary change in the Arab World. But we've been able to build cooperative relationships with these new governments.

You saw that in Libya, where there's been full cooperation with the United States and an outpouring of support for Chris Stevens and the work that he did.

You saw that in Egypt, where President Obama was able to call President Morsi directly, which led to the Egyptians calling for calm and providing much more security at our Embassy.

So this part of the world has been faced with unrest many times in recent decade. But we're going to keep moving forward, and we believe that strong U.S. leadership can lead to a region that is more stable and more responsive to the people.

Q: Have you failed to articulate a policy for dealing with the Arab Spring?

You have heard the President articulate a very consistent set of principles and support for universal rights as the Arab Spring has unfolded. We support the process of nonviolent political and economic change and reform in the region. Of course, that process will look different in different countries.

There are countries where that transition has occurred, like Egypt, Yemen and Tunisia, and we're working to help them consolidate their democracies, deal with security needs, and stabilize their economies.

In other places like Syria that are still in throes of revolution, we have opposed the brutality of the regime and are supporting the aspirations of the people.

While this process unfolds, this President has left no doubt that he will continue to protect our other interests - destroying al Qaeda, bringing our men and women in uniform home from Afghanistan, and strengthening our leadership in the world.

But the Arab Spring is going to take time to play out. This is an enormous change. And that is why we need to stay focused and firm on behalf of our principles, as the President has done.

Q: What's your response to the Independent story that says we have intelligence 48 hours in advance of the Benghazi attack that was ignored? Was this an intelligence failure?

We are not aware of any actionable intelligence indicating that an attack on the U.S. Mission in Benghazi was planned or imminent. The currently available information suggests that the demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US Consulate and subsequently its annex.

Q: Can you explain to us again the President's comment about why Egypt was not an ally?

Egypt is a critical partner of the United States. As you know, the President had an important conversation with President Morsi about the need to protect our embassy and personnel in Cairo, and the need to denounce the violence.

President Morsi expressed his condolences for the tragic loss of American life in Libya and emphasized that Egypt would honor its obligation to ensure the safety of American personnel. The President is very appreciative for the statement President Morsi made and for the actions he's taken to date to secure our Embassy.

This was not an effort to change our relationship with Egypt in any way. We have had a long-standing partnership with Egypt, and have supported their transition to democracy. We are now working to build our relationship with what is obviously a new government.

If Pressed: I'm not here to get into a long exchange about diplomatic terminology. The President has made it clear that Egypt is a close partner of the United States, and that we have expectations that the Egyptian government will meet its obligations to protect our facilities.

Q: Romney's advisor said that these protests wouldn't have happened under President Romney?

Well I'm not here to talk politics. Events abroad are unpredictable. Foreign policy challenges emerge no matter who is President. And I think that people have come to expect steady, statesmanlike leadership from this President on national security, and his response to these protests is no different.

Israel / Iran

IRAN

Q: Is there a split between the United States and Israel on redlines? What are the U.S. redlines with Iran?

The President has been clear that he is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and that all options are on the table in pursuit of that goal. We share the same objective as the Israelis, and there is no daylight between us on that matter of stopping Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

The question of when we would consider a resort to military action involves multiple variables and would be shaped by conditions on the ground. We will continue our unprecedented security consultation and cooperation with the Israelis as we move forward.

This President is not going to take military action unless it is absolutely necessary. But I think the Iranians know full well that he is committed to preventing them from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Q: Did the President rebuff Prime Minister Netanyahu's request for a red line?

The President has always been clear about his red line. He is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and that all options are on the table in pursuit of that goal. We share the same objective as the Israelis, and there is no daylight between us on that matter of stopping Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Q: Why did the President refuse to meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu at UNGA?

President Obama is in frequent contact with the Prime Minister, as you would expect given his commitment to Israel's security and the range of challenges in the region. And when they need to speak to each other - they do so. We also talk regularly to our Israeli counterparts at all levels of government.

Just the other day, when reports of tension came up in the press, the President was able to pick up the phone and call the Prime Minister and speak to him for an hour. They agreed on their commitment to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. And they agreed to stay in close contact in the days to come.

They did look at whether it would be possible to meet. But the fact is, they're just not going to be in New York at the same time – the President will be there at the beginning of the week, Bibi will be there at the end of the week. So their schedules just don't match up.

If pressed: Did he seek a meeting in Washington?

My understanding is there wasn't a request to meet in Washington. What I know is that they're not in New York at the same time during UNGA. I don't have any other scheduling updates, but I am certain that they'll remain in close contact.

From: Vega, Dag

Sent: Friday, September 14, 2012 7:11 PM

To: Rhodes, Benjamin J.; Vitor, Tommy; Plouffe, David; Pfeiffer, Dan; Carney, Jay; Palmieri, Jennifer; Earnest, Joshua R.; Govashiri, Feriati; Ledbetter, Howell J.; Selak, Dawn; Brundage, Daniel; [redacted]@state.gov; Alhassani, Mehdi K.

Subject: PREP CALL with Susan: Saturday at 4:00 pm ET

We plan to hold a call on Saturday at 4:00 PM ET to help prepare Susan for her interviews on the Sunday shows. She will appear on all of them.

Here are the numbers:

Phone Number: 202-395-6392

Access Code: 498-3561

Here are the promos.

NBC MEET THE PRESS

Obama's Foreign Policy Test

The race between President Obama and Governor Romney has entered new territory as the deadly attack on a U.S. consulate and the continuing anti-American protests overseas have forced foreign policy back into the spotlight. How does the Obama administration plan to respond? Plus, is the U.S. still a reliable ally to Israel against Iran? U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice will join us.

ABC THIS WEEK

After four Americans were killed Tuesday, including U.S. ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens, in an assault on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, questions remain about what sparked the violence – a controversial anti-Islamic film, or a planned attack by Al Qaeda militants? As American embassies throughout the region remain under fire, did the U.S. do enough to prevent attacks in Libya, Egypt, and Yemen? How will the ongoing protests and violence across the region impact U.S. relations and standing in the Middle East?

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice speaks to ABC News senior White House correspondent Jake Tapper, Sunday on "This Week."

CBS FACE THE NATION

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice

The latest on what's happening abroad and what it means for the region and the international community with U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice.

FOX NEWS SUNDAY

Anti-US protests are spreading across the Arab world days after a deadly attack on the consulate in Libya. What should the US involvement be in the trouble region? Chris Wallace discusses the situation with Susan Rice, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

September 12, 2012

ACTION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: NEA – Beth Jones

SUBJECT: (U) Condolence Letter to the Family of Sean Smith, Information Programs Officer Serving in Benghazi, Libya

Recommendation

(U) That you sign the attached letter of condolence for Sean Smith, the American staffer who died in an attack on U.S. Mission Benghazi September 11, 2012.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

Background

(SBU) Mr. Sean Smith, who was serving at U.S. Mission Benghazi as IMO on TDY from The Hague, died during an attack on the mission September 11. At least 20 armed extremists, members of Ansar al-Sharia, set fire to the Principal's Office, allegedly retaliating to videos posted on the internet of a film deemed insulting to Islam. The 17 February Brigade, which guards the Mission, and RAO's QRF (from a nearby compound), responded to the attack. No other mission staff members were killed in the attack. Ambassador Stevens [fill in]

Attachment:

Proposed Condolence Letter

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

Approved: Acting Assistant Secretary Beth Jones

Drafted: NEA/MAG - [redacted] ext. [redacted] and cell: [redacted]

Cleared: NEA/FO - [redacted]
NEA/FO - [redacted]
NEA/MAG - [redacted]
NEA/MAG - [redacted]
D(B) - [redacted]
D(N) - [redacted]
P - [redacted]
S/P - [redacted]
NEA/EX - [redacted]
S/ES-CR - [redacted]
DS - SBultrowicz
M/DGHR - [redacted]
L - [redacted]
L/DL - [redacted]



United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Date September 12, 2012

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

ACTION MEMO FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: NEA – Acting Assistant Secretary Beth Jones

SUBJECT: (SBU) Recommendation that you call the mother and sister of Ambassador Chris Stevens to convey condolences on his death.

Recommendation

(SBU) That you agree to call Chris Stevens' sister [redacted] and his mother [redacted] to convey condolences at your convenience. Chris' father is traveling in Europe and is not easily reached by phone. We have communicated with the family so far only through [redacted] his sister. He also has a brother.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

Background

(SBU) Ambassador Stevens died during an attack on U.S. Mission Benghazi on September 11. He was in Benghazi for a few days to meet local officials and conduct outreach with Libyan civil society groups. At least 20 armed extremists, members of Ansar al-Sharia, set fire to the Principal Officer's Office, allegedly acting in retaliation for a U.S.-produced film deemed insulting to Islam. The 17 February Brigade, which guards the Mission, and RAO's QRF (from a nearby compound), responded to the attack. IMO Sean Smith was also killed in the attack; as of 0300, it appears that two RAO personnel may also have been killed. An evacuation of U.S. personnel from Benghazi has been completed. The remains of the Ambassador and IMO Smith have been returned to Embassy Tripoli with the Benghazi evacuees, in preparation for return to the U.S.

Attachments:

Tab 1 – Biographical Information for Ambassador Stevens

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

Approved: NEA AA/S Beth Jones

Drafted: NEA/MAG - [redacted] ext. 74 [redacted] cell 202- [redacted]

Cleared: NEA/MAG - [redacted] (ok)

Last Edit: 20121101

Comprehensive Timeline of Events - BenghaziSource Material

This timeline is constructed from DVR footage of the U.S. Special Mission Compound (USSMC) and U.S. Special Mission Compound Annex (Annex) from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as well as FBI interviews conducted with relevant parties in the days immediately following the events, logs of events maintained by the Tactical Operations Center at U.S. Embassy Tripoli and at the Diplomatic Security Command Center (DSCC), and the DSCC phone logs. No further information has been utilized. All information sources for events are listed in the far right column. This document is a draft working product unless expressly indicated otherwise. This document is Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES) and should not be utilized for follow-on analysis unless expressly indicated. All labels, identities, and assumptions are subject to change.

Time References

Analysis of both DVR systems indicates that the Annex DVR system's timestamp is 02 minutes and 04 seconds behind the timestamp for the USSMC. For accuracy, the time adjusted to the USSMC system has been provided in the "Synched to USSMC" column. In addition, a comparison of observed sunrise with recorded sunrise by the U.S. Naval Observatory, while imprecise, does provide assurance that times provided by both DVR systems are accurate to within a few minutes of real time. (Recorded Sunrise: 0622 Observed through treeline by Annex Camera 5: 0628 on Sep 12, 2012)

September 11-12, 2012

DVR Time (Local)	Synched to USSMC	Location	Event	Source
1939.26		USSMC	2 Individuals (presumed to be Ambassador Stevens and Turkish dignitary) walk through garden north of Villa C to Gate C1.	USSMC 12
1940.08		USSMC	Vehicle departs to East (presumed to be Turkish dignitary).	USSMC 8
1941.34		USSMC	Individual (presumed to be Ambassador Stevens) returns from Gate C1 through garden to Villa C vicinity.	USSMC 12
2010.09		USSMC	Motorcade vehicle enters compound from Gate C1 (presumed to be British security team).	USSMC 12
2027.26		USSMC	Four individuals depart USSMC (presumed British security team).	USSMC 12
2102.50		USSMC	Supreme Security Council truck arrives at C1.	USSMC 8
2142.14		USSMC	Supreme Security Council truck departs C1 Gate. Occupant(s) never exit vehicle.	USSMC 8
2142.20		USSMC	2 local National Guards (Blue Mountain Libya) seen fleeing south from Gate C1.	USSMC 4

2142 - 2202 Approx		USSMC	[redacted] moves to Villa C. Places Ambassador STEVENS and IPO Sean SMITH into safe haven	[redacted]
2142.43		USSMC	2 LNG run to Villa B followed by [redacted] and [redacted] run to Office. [redacted] runs to Villa B.	USSMC 6, 1
2142.53		USSMC	1st Explosion near C1 Gate	USSMC 12
2143.20		USSMC	20-30 armed intruders seen moving right to left on road outside compound near C1 Gate	USSMC 4
2143.50		USSMC	Armed intruders seen on compound	USSMC 12
2144.00		USSMC	2nd Explosion near C1 Gate	USSMC 8
2144.58		USSMC	[redacted] and [redacted] attempt to move to Villa C but see multiple armed intruders blocking Alley. They return to Villa B and barricade inside.	USSMC 6, [redacted]
2145-2232 Approx		USSMC	[redacted] and [redacted] remain inside Villa B	[redacted]
2144.58		USSMC	Armed intruders seen in Alley between Villa B and Villa C	USSMC 5
2145		Tripoli	RSO Tripoli notified of attack	Tripoli TOC Log
2145.38		USSMC	Embassy Vehicle Stolen and C3 Gate left Open	USSMC 10
2146.33	2148.37	Annex	Annex Personnel begin donning body armor	Annex 8
2147.13		Tripoli	ARSO [redacted] (Tripoli) calls DSCC for 1 min, 3 sec	DSCC Call Record
2148.36		USSMC	2 Attackers dragging 1 LNG - probable wound to leg.	USSMC 9
2150.27		USSMC	2 armed intruders find 1 LNG hiding behind TOC	USSMC 2
2154.13		USSMC	1 armed intruder makes first unsuccessful attempt to breach TOC.	USSMC 1
2157.13		USSMC	1st Fireball at QRF / Guest House	USSMC 4
2201.23		USSMC	2nd Fireball at QRF / Guest House	USSMC 12
2202.07		USSMC	Heavy smoke at location of Villa C suddenly visible from Alley.	USSMC 5
2202.25		USSMC	Heavy smoke suddenly visible from Camera 9 mounted on Villa C.	USSMC 9

2202-2235 Approx		USSMC	[redacted] becomes separated from STEVENS and SMITH in Villa C due to smoke. [redacted] receives SAF upon exiting via window. [redacted] searches Villa C multiple times and ultimately retreats to Villa C rooftop.	[redacted]
2202.42		USSMC	Multiple armed intruders breach Villa B.	USSMC 1
2203.20	2205.24	Annex	2 Vehicle motorcade (armored) departs Annex. Mercedes G-Series Wagon and Mercedes Sedan. Presumed departure of Annex QRF Team	Annex 6, 8, 13, 14
2203.59		USSMC	Multiple armed intruders make second unsuccessful attempt to breach TOC. (Note: TOC is not breached during the attack)	USSMC 1, 6
2208.11		USSMC	Presumed tracer rounds seen streaking by. [redacted] reports receiving tracer fire from beltfed machine gun.	USSMC 6, [redacted]
2205.00 - 2209.10		USSMC	The majority of armed intruders on compound appear to exit out of Gate C1.	USSMC 9, 12, 6, 1
2214.00		USSMC	Last armed intruder seen by camera on compound moving past Villa C toward Gate C1	USSMC 9
2215		Benghazi Unknown	Annex QRF en route and taking fire	Tripoli TOC Log
2217.29		USSMC	[redacted] moves from TOC to Villa B	USSMC 1, 6
2232.59		USSMC	[redacted] and [redacted] move Villa B to TOC to get FAV.	USSMC 1, 6
2235.25		USSMC	[redacted] and [redacted] drive FAV from TOC to Villa C.	USSMC 6, 5
2236.95 - 2237.05		USSMC	[redacted] and [redacted] attempt entry to Villa C	USSMC 12
2238		USSMC	17 February Martyrs' Brigade arrives at compound	Tripoli TOC Log
2239.26		USSMC	DS Agents interact at Villa C w/ Unknown male - possible 17 February QRF Member	USSMC 9
2240.00		USSMC	Multiple armed LN arrive at Villa C. Likely members of 17 February Martyrs' Brigade.	USSMC 9
2241.50		USSMC	FAV moves back to TOC (to retrieve gas masks).	USSMC 6, 5, 9
2243.22		USSMC	FAV returns from TOC to Villa C (presumably with gas masks).	USSMC 6, 5, 9

2247.22		USSMC	Dark Colored Vehicle parks at C1 exterior. Presumed to be 1st of 2 Annex QRF elements. Footage after indicates personnel (likely militia) holding north side perimeter	USSMC 4
2248.30		USSMC	2nd of 2 Annex QRF elements enters compound on foot through C3 Gate. Footage after shows personnel (likely militia) holding south side perimeter.	USSMC 10
2249.32 - 2307.15		USSMC	DS Agents, Annex QRF, and 17 February Martyrs' Brigade members attempt search and rescue of Vilg C.	USSMC 12
2236.34		USSMC	Annex QRF element and 17 February Martyrs' Brigade members enter TOC after [redacted] opens door.	USSMC 1
2258.17		USSMC	[redacted] departs TOC w/ 2 USG laptops.	USSMC 6
2301		USSMC	Sean SMITH reported KIA	Tripoli TOC Log
2304.07		USSMC	Annex QRF members x2 depart TOC with unknown equipment (possible encryption device for ClassNet laptops)	USSMC 6
2305.25		USSMC	USSMC Exterior Lighting goes offline	USSMC 12
2307.45		USSMC	Dark Colored SUV moves onto compound through C1 Gate - likely Annex QRF SUV - FAV Mercedes G-Series Wagon staging for evacuation.	USSMC 4
2310.00		USSMC	Unknown explosive detonates several meters interior to C3 Gate.	USSMC 10
2312		USSMC	Annex QRF reported inside compound.	Tripoli TOC Log
2316.24		USSMC	Dark Colored SUV (presumed to be FAV Toyota Land Cruiser containing 5x DS Agents + body of Sean SMITH) departs C1 Gate heading east.	USSMC 4
2316.39		USSMC	Dark Colored SUV (presumed to be FAV Toyota Land Cruiser containing 5x DS Agents + body of Sean SMITH) crosses camera POV heading west.	USSMC 4
2317		Benghazi Unknown	All DS Personnel w/ SMITH depart compound en route to Annex. FAV receives SAF	Tripoli TOC Log
2318.42		USSMC	Multiple SAF and small explosions in vicinity of C3 Gate	USSMC 10

2319.07		USSMC	Large dark colored SUV (presumed to be FAV Mercedes G Series Wagon containing Annex QRF Team) departs C1 Gate heading east.	USSMC 4
2319.24		USSMC	Multiple Individuals (presumed to be February 17 Martyrs' Brigade Militia members) depart C1 Gate on foot.	USSMC 10
2319.52		USSMC	RPG launched through open C3 Gate.	USSMC 10
2320.37		USSMC	Multiple SAF continues.	USSMC 10
2320.50		USSMC	Unknown explosive detonates directly interior to C3 Gate.	USSMC 10
2320.51		USSMC	RPG launched through open C3 Gate.	USSMC 10
2321.47	2323.51	Annex	Multiple SAF continues.	USSMC 10
2323.44		USSMC	Unknown explosion - exterior to C3 Gate	USSMC 10
2324.22		USSMC	Unknown explosion - exterior to C1 Gate	USSMC 4
2330		Annex	Dark Colored Toyota Land Cruiser arrives at Annex. Presumed to be 5x DSS Agents from USSMC	Annex 6, 8, 13, 14
2330-0530		Annex	Camera 10 for the C3 Gate goes offline	USSMC 10
2336.24	2338.28	Annex	Unknown explosive round (possible mortar?) recorded passing overhead of Gate C1 and impacting in vicinity of north road near Villa A.	USSMC 4, 7
2340.52	2342.56	Annex	reports arrival at Annex	Tripoli TOC Log
2342.56		USSMC	Annex receives sporadic SAF and RPGs	Annex 6, 8, 13, 14
2345.46	2347.50	Annex	Mercedes G Series Wagon returns to Annex	Annex 10
2345.53		USSMC	Possible flare or tracer round passes overhead to North	USSMC 6
		USSMC	Possible flare or tracer round x2 passes overhead - moving west to east.	Annex 8
		USSMC	Mercedes G Series Wagon moved to physically block primary entrance into Annex.	USSMC 9

2346.54		USSMC	Armed intruders approach TOC, loot FAVs	USSMC 6
2348.40		USSMC	Camera 6 for USSMC TOC goes offline	USSMC 6
2349.09		USSMC	A mix of armed and unarmed intruders enter TOC	USSMC 1
2351.42 onward		USSMC	Armed and Unarmed intruders begin removing gear and papers from TOC.	USSMC 1
2354.40		USSMC	QRF / Guest House shows new or renewed fire.	USSMC 4
2355.40		USSMC	Camera 9 covering the C3 Drive goes offline	USSMC 9

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0001.24		USSMC	FAV Toyota Land Cruiser stolen from vicinity of TOC	USSMC 1
0003.17 - 0031.33		USSMC	Cameras 1, 4 go offline for approx 28 min	USSMC 1, 4
0032.49	0034.53	Annex	Individuals moving in far east field	Annex 3
0032.53	0034.57	Annex	SAF originating (probable) NE	Annex 3
0033.15	0035.19	Annex	SAF destroys flood light near NE corner	Annex 3
0034.27	0036.31	Annex	Individual approach perimeter wall from east field.	Annex 2
0034.35	0036.39	Annex	Possible IED or RPG near NE perimeter corner	Annex 3, 4, 10, 2, 5
0034.38	0036.42	Annex	Armed Unknown Individual approaches perimeter wall from east field.	Annex 3
0035.08	0037.12	Annex	Armed Unknown Individual departs perimeter wall from east field.	Annex 3
0035.51		USSMC	Flash of Light visible - east side of TOC. Likely beginning of vehicle fire.	USSMC 1
0037.02		USSMC	Unknown event occurs inside TOC (likely beginning of fire) which causes large crowd of intruders to attempt to flee the building.	USSMC 1
0037.07		USSMC	1st of 3 explosions from within Villa C	USSMC 12
0037.25		USSMC	2nd of 3 explosions from within Villa C	USSMC 12
0037.45		USSMC	3rd of 3 explosions from within Villa C	USSMC 12
0037.45		USSMC	Smoke visible emanating from TOC	USSMC 1
0038.16		USSMC	Camera 12 for C1 Drive goes offline	USSMC 12
0038.16 - 0039.48		USSMC	Camera 1 goes offline for 1 min, 32 sec.	USSMC 1
0038.22	0040.26	Annex	Flashlight by white sedan in east field and SAF near NE corner of perimeter wall	Annex 3, 10
0039.33	0041.37	Annex	Sustained SAF and unknown explosive shot impacts on east side of perimeter wall. Again at 0039.57	Annex 3
0043.59		USSMC	Large explosion in vicinity of Villa B	USSMC 1

0045.07		USSMC	Large explosion in vicinity of Villa B	USSMC 1
0048.18		USSMC	Intruder disables Camera 5	USSMC 5
0052.38		USSMC	White Crewcab Pickup (probable Toyota Hilux) heading to SW - towing black SUV (possibly Mercedes G5)	USSMC 1
0057.47	0059.51	Annex	Flashlight visible on tree line in east field.	Annex 3
0059.50		USSMC	Small white subcompact car turns around between TOC and Villa B.	USSMC 1
0108.38	0110.42	Annex	Likely RPG fired from east field. Likely strikes Bldg B.	Annex 3, 2
0110.31	0112.35	Annex	SAF impacts on east side of perimeter wall	Annex 3
0111.03	0113.07	Annex	SAF near NE corner of perimeter wall	Annex 3
0111.15	0113.19	Annex	Annex Cameras 11 and 13 go offline	Annex 11, 13
0111.30	0113.34	Annex	Likely Wire-Guided Munition hits compound from east field.	Annex 3
0111.50	0113.54	Annex	Possible Rocket or returned fire from Annex personnel impacts near white sedan in east field.	Annex 3, 2
0112.11	0114.15	Annex	Sustained SAF	Annex 3, 2
0146.50	0148.54	Annex	Dark, small SUV/Hatchback staged due east of Annex on south road; vehicle drives by at 0148.30, U-turns, and drives by again before departing camera view.	Annex 6
0149.19	0151.23	Annex	Unknown individual - white T-shirt, blue running pants, emerges from villa	Annex 1, 6, 12
0150.42	0152.45	Annex	Unknown individual from villa meets unknown male - white capri, white tanktop, carrying cell phone. This 2nd individual walks down to Annex and back at 0153.35	Annex 1, 6, 12
0156.24	0158.28	Annex	Multiple individuals seen moving through sheep herd due north of Annex. Probable surveillance. No weapons visible. Cellphones in use.	Annex 10
0203		Benghazi Unknown	U.S. Embassy receives call from unknown individual stating that individual matching Ambassador's description is currently in hospital.	Tripoli TOC Log
0203-0415 Approx		Annex	[redacted] tasks [redacted] to obtain info on possible location of STEVENS at hospital	[redacted]
0238.18	0240.22	Annex	Annex personnel drop glow stick in front of main entrance.	Annex 14
0415		Benghazi Unknown	[redacted] notifies [redacted] that STEVENS is KIA	[redacted]

0503.00	0505.04	Annex	Unidentified LN Motorcade (Likely Feb 17 Martyrs' Brigade) arrives and parks in front of annex. 10-12 vehicles, some with markings and police lights. Approx. 6 AmCIBs - armed and w/ body armor. Presumably the QRF-Medical Team from Tripoli.	Annex 6, 14
0515.31	0517.35	Annex	Motorcade car alarms appear to go off. Drivers remove vehicles from the scene with great haste (likely due to sound of mortar launching or arriving.)	Annex 1, 6, 12
0515.36	0517.40	Annex	Likely first mortar impacts against exterior of north perimeter wall.	Annex 4, 5, 7, 9
0515.56	0518.00	Annex	Cameras 1, 3, 4, 2, and 10 go off line	Annex 1, 3, 4, 2, 10
0515.57	0518.01	Annex	Likely second mortar impacts against or just inside of north perimeter wall.	Annex 5
0516.04	0518.08	Annex	Multiple tracer rounds pass east to west along north perimeter wall.	Annex 5
0516.17	0518.21	Annex	Likely third mortar impacts interior of compound, likely impacts on/near Bldg C.	Annex 5, 7
0516.28	0518.32	Annex	Likely fourth mortar impacts interior of compound.	Annex 5, 7, 8
0516.36	0518.40	Annex	Likely fifth mortar impacts against exterior of north perimeter wall.	Annex 5, 7, 9
0516.48	0518.52	Annex	Camera 8 goes off line	Annex 8
0516.49	0518.53	Annex	Likely sixth mortar impacts interior of compound. Camera 7 catches path of either a component or tracer round.	Annex 5, 7, 9
0554.58	0557.02	Annex	Partial damage visible to Bldg. C	Annex 9
0614.00	0616.04	Annex	Probable Feb 17 Martyrs' Brigade Militia motorcade arrives and stages in front of Annex. Approx. 30-60 vehicles, including technicals w/ mounted weapons.	Annex 6, 14.
0632.33	0634.37	Annex	Annex personnel evacuate in Annex vehicles w/ LN motorcade support. 8 vehicles including a flatbed and pick up truck with KIA and WIA.	Annex 6, 14
0635.40	0637.44	Annex	Heavy smoke suddenly visible from vicinity of Bldg. C	Annex 7
0635.50	0637.54	Annex	Annex Vehicle (Toyota Hilux Pickup) departs Annex alone w/ 2 black gear bags.	Annex 14

				[redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] DSCC Chronological Log
0731		Benghazi Airport	1st Aircraft departs Benghazi with [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted]	DSCC Chronological Log
0825		Benghazi Airport	[redacted] receives body of STEVENS at Benghazi Airport	[redacted] DSCC Chronological Log
0838		Tripoli	1st Aircraft arrives Tripoli	DSCC Chronological Log
0954		Benghazi Airport	2nd Aircraft departs Benghazi with [redacted] and bodies of SMITH and STEVENS	[redacted] DSCC Chronological Log
1133		Tripoli	2nd Aircraft arrives Tripoli	DSCC Chronological Log

This timeline gives preference to time/date stamps over interview recollections where they conflict.

Mica
5/1/14

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

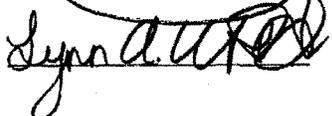
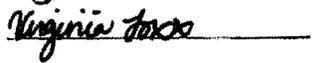
Dear Mr. President:

March 11, 2014 marks a year-and-a-half since the September 11, 2012 terrorist attacks on the U.S. compounds in Benghazi, Libya that led to the deaths of four Americans, including Ambassador Christopher Stevens. To date, your Administration has failed to apprehend or bring to justice those associated with these attacks. It is disgraceful that those responsible remain at large.

You promised the families of the deceased and the American public to "bring to justice the killers who attacked our people." Unfortunately, those who committed these murders remain at large. The United States of America cannot allow terrorists to kill its citizens with impunity, and it is long overdue that those responsible are held accountable.

We ask that you act immediately and use whatever necessary resources to find, arrest and bring to justice those responsible for these attacks.

Sincerely,


Scott Garrett

David Weber

Paul Cox


Scott Garrett

David Weber

Paul Cox

Cc: The Honorable James Comey, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Jack Kingston

Adrian Amster

Richard Hudson

C.W. Bondcamp Jr

Earl Brown

Don Renshell

John Smith IL-16

Jack Ritz PA-16

John D. Norton CO-3

Arthur Scott GA-8

John O. Thompson PA-05

John R. Baker IN-04

Norma Lee Lottman

Bob Fiers

Chris Collins

Jill Miller

Lynn Jackson

Bob Wagner VA-9

Debbie NA-04

John H. ... NC-02

John ... GA

John ... AR-2

Bob ... FL-12

Walter ... HI-16

Robert ... TX-1

Bob ... (TX-72)

Edward Chitt

Howard Coble

DC

Ralph M. Hall

Don

Joe Duncan

General

Pat Woodall

Paul Shuler

Delroy MO-07

Bill Hirsch

Michael A. Hinson

John Fleming

JP

Thomas Massie

Maisha Blackburn

Kerry Ventresca

Lu Bonetto

Bill Ray

Blake Farenthold

Mike

Leovara Lence

Frank R. Wolf

Myt Fink

Statement for the Record

Congressman Matt Cartwright

***Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Full Committee Hearing
on: "Benghazi, Instability, and a New Government: Successes and Failures
of U.S. Intervention in Libya"***

May 1, 2014

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The tragedy in Benghazi was a sad moment for our nation, as four brave American citizens lost their lives in service of their country. The events of that day deserved and received careful investigation, and I like many Americans took a great interest in the congressional hearings on the matter. Shortly after the attack, Secretary Hillary Clinton convened an Accountability Review Board (ARB) to examine the facts and circumstances of the attack. I personally interviewed the co-chairs of the ARB, Admiral Mike Mullen and former U.N. Ambassador Thomas Pickering. The Oversight and Government Reform Committee held additional hearings that provided opportunities for Gregory Hicks, a Foreign Service officer and ex-Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya, to recount the events of the night, and ARB Co-Chairs Mullen and Pickering and family members of Benghazi victims Sean Smith and Tyrone Woods to testify.

We will move forward with efforts to prevent future tragedies like Benghazi, while never forgetting the courage of the four men who bravely sacrificed their lives serving our country. Ambassador Chris Stevens, former Navy SEALs Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods, and State Department employee Sean Smith represented the best of America, and they will surely continue to inspire others to serve their country, advance U.S. interests, and promote the cause of democracy and human rights abroad for years to come. As we continue to mourn their loss, I along with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle remain committed to ensuring that those who perpetrated this heinous attack on our facilities and personnel be held accountable. I sincerely hope that we will learn from the events in Benghazi so as to prevent further tragedies abroad.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back.