

The impact of the Libyan war on poverty/migration in the EU and the EU role
Discussion led by Graciela Malgesini



- **What began as a more or less peaceful uprising is set to degenerate into a full-scale civil war.**
- **March 2011**
- Western and Arab leaders pondered whether, if the bloodshed worsens, they should enforce a no-fly zone over the country in an effort to isolate and bring down the colonel Qaddafi (rebels and Arab League agreed).
- A loose Islamist front is emerging. Old-time sheikhs and graduates schooled in Salafi pietism have teamed up with Muslim Brothers who temper their enthusiasm for sharia law with pragmatism in their dealings with non-Muslim people and governments. But all in all, the Islamists are gaining ground.
- Both hardline Islamists and secular liberals want the Americans to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya, mainly to prevent Colonel Qaddafi from flying reinforcements of African mercenaries to his base in Tripoli. They also want the West to recognise the national council. And both want a quick end to the colonel's regime.
- **From March to May 2011**
- **OTAN COALITION embarks in military intervention, first enforcing the no-fly zone, then fully presence: US, UK, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY.**
- **These countries have been selling military equipment, ships and vehicles to Lybia's dictator Qaddafi at least during the last decade.**
- **Libya is one of the biggest oil reserves in the Mediterranean. Big European and American corporations have clear interest in them.**

**WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE
FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL
EXCLUSION IN THE EU OF THE LIBYAN
WAR LED BY KEY MEMBER STATES LIKE
UK, ES, IT, AND FRANCE?**

Political effects: “resolving” crisis using military means and fueling Islamist leaders

- Attempts to resolve the crisis using military means affects the U.N. Charter and the norms governing international relations
- *“Following the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, a military strike against Libya is the third time in this century that a number of countries wielded force against a sovereign state.”*
- “Have we not learned anything from Irak and Afghanistan?”
- Coalition is criticized by Russia, India and China. Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov said the “adventure” was motivated by **“petrol and who will exploit Libya’s oil fields”**.
- Some Islamist leaders say they may face pressure to fight American troops if they became involved.

Economic effects: budget savings at risk as military expenditures raise

- USA: military campaign in Libya could wipe out budget spending cuts won by Congressional Republicans. Estimations: half a billion dollars in the first week/more than \$100 million per day . Source: <http://thehill.com/news-by-subject/defense-homeland-security/151147-cost-of-libya-campaign-could-wipe-out-gop-budget-cuts>
- France: 50 million Euros spent in the first 90 days of conflict. http://www.lemonde.fr/libye/article/2011/05/05/la-guerre-en-libye-a-deja-coute-50-millions-d-euros_1517626_1496980.html
- Spain: cost estimated in at least 43 million Euros
- EU countries involved: **increasing military expenditures will add more deficit and debt, as well as erase the “savings” coming from budget restrictions (affecting millions of citizens).**
- **With the government intent on saving billions of pounds/euros on Welfare policies, and with no clear exit strategy in Libya, just how financially sustainable is the mission?** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-12806709>

Social consequences: refugee crisis led to *an urgent reform of Schengen Treaty*

- Rationale for military intervention in Libya: “**obligation of protecting civil population**”.
- However, **Libyan refugees are not welcome and asylum seekers’ applications are massively rejected: proof that humanitarian reasons are not the key ones.**
- Recent “refugee crisis” –people escaping from Libya and other uprising North African countries– which occurred in Italian Lampedusa island led to a determination in reforming Schengen Treaty.
- Border crisis between Italy and France on “who gets the burden of accepting North African asylum seekers” accelerated the pressure for renewed controls in the Treaty.
- Germany is also interested in restricting freedom of circulation, more for labor market reasons (Polish could enter only since May 1st; Romanian and Bulgarian are still banned to enter the country freely until 2013).

Meanwhile G8 says: “We don’t have money for development cooperation” despite funds were compromised at Gleneagle Summit, 2005



- **Lundi 23 mai, les militants d'Oxfam singent les dirigeants du G8 pour les interpeller sur leurs promesses d'aide au développement.**
http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2011/05/24/aide-au-developpement-le-compte-y-est-il_1526854_3210.html#xtor=RSS-3208001?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter

Proposal of a resolution to the GA?

Some ideas

- EU involvement in the Libyan war should stop now.
- Libyan asylum-seekers should be admitted immediately, and their refugee status should be granted, until EU troops leave the country, and the military presence ceases. After that moment, they could be refused or accepted on the normal admission criteria.
- Schengen Treaty is a cornerstone of the European Project, and must not be touched and changed easily. Shared responsibility and mutual confidence are the basis of the actual unity feeling throughout Europe.
- EU can provide aid to Libya: 1) supporting peace negotiations; 2) helping Libyan civil society in post-conflict reconstruction. and humanitarian aid.
- “Euros for social spending” must not become “Euros for military spending”. Even less nowadays, when EU citizens are suffering unemployment and social difficulties, which are not attended due to cuts in social spending.
- Oil reserves and related interests can never more be the excuse for military intervention in a sovereign country.
- Only referenda supported by the majority of voters, in all Member states involved (not just their respective Deputy Congresses), might allow governments to embark on military actions abroad.