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**Libya: Engaging in diplomatic initiatives for conflict prevention and resolution, and promoting governance based on principals of democracy, accountability and transparency in public institutions, and the rule of law that are basic to reducing the number of vulnerable members of society**

Libya has been undergoing a radical social experiment for the past thirty years. War has always been a part of life in Libya. In 1934 Italian forces invaded Libya for land and the bloody guerilla war was ongoing for the next ten years. In 1969 Libya underwent a revolution and soon fell under the control of Muammar Qaddafi, producing a unique political system. Oil is a major source of wealth for the country and a few citizens live luxurious lifestyles while others suffer through abuse and corruption caused by the abuse of human rights by the government.

Libyan families typically consist of eight or more members. They reckon kinship patrilineally and the household is usually based on blood ties between men. A household typically contains a man, his wife, his single and married sons with their wives and children, his unmarried daughters, and sometimes other relatives including a widowed or divorced mother or sister. When the father passes away, each son will then ideally establish a household of their own to begin the cycle again.

In Libya, food in every day life is simple and reflects the peasant and nomadic ways of life. Cooking styles in Libya are very similar whether in an urban or rural setting; sedentary or nomadic. The main course almost always consists of a one-pot dish. One of the most common foods eaten in Libya is couscous. Couscous, also known as cracked wheat, is the national dish of Libya. It is very commonly prepared in a spicy sauce of hot peppers, tomatoes, chick peas, and seasonal vegetables. Meals are always eaten out of a communal bowl. Meals are very important symbolically. Most meals are meager and simple with the consumption of meat kept to a minimum. Meals are ended with three glasses of green tea. The preparation and consumption of which is a distinct ritual.

There are two universities located in Libya. Along with several technical schools, and a well-developed primary and secondary school system. By the mid 1980s, 1,245,000 students had enrolled in primary and secondary education: 54 percent were males and 46 percent were female. Around this period, the government had also claimed to have constructed 32,000 new classrooms, while the number of teachers also increased from 19,000 to 79,000. In 1969, university enrollments also showed a dramatic increase from 3,000 students to more than 25,000 during the 1980s, with female enrollments amounting to 25 percent of total enrollments. In Libya, education is free and students of universities also receive generous stipends. Even with the large improvements being made in the Libyan education system, the country still lacks technical expertise in many areas. This especially affects the military where skilled personnel to adequately maintain its weapons systems is lacking. Most of the doctors, dentists, and pharmacists are foreign nationals. Sixty percent of the top bureaucrats and 40 percent of the Libyan workforce are expatriates.

As the revolutionary regime continued to use its oil income to improve the health and welfare of the Libyan citizens, further expansion and improvement followed. The number of doctors and dentists was increased from 783 in 1970 to 5,450 in 1985. The doctors were attached to a comprehensive network of health care facilities that dispensed free medical care to all Libyan citizens. During these same years, increases were also registered in the number of clinics and health care centers. Efforts to “Libyanize” health care professionals began to show results in the mid 1980s. Approximately 33 percent of all doctors were nationals in 1985, as opposed to only 6 percent a decade earlier. The incidence of new cases of

tuberculosis was cut in half between 1969 and 1976. Twenty-two new centers for tuberculosis care were constructed between 1970 and 1985. In Tripoli and Benghazi the streets were kept scrupulously clean and the drinking water was of good quality. Since 1970, officials listed almost 1,500 wells were drilled and more than 900 reservoirs were in service in 1985. 9,000 kilometers of potable water networks, 44 desalination plants, and 28 sewage treatment plants were also constructed.

The increase in prosperity also brought with it a large-scale change in occupation. The amount of people working in agriculture greatly declined, but there was a sharp increase in laborers and clerical, sports and recreation, and transportation workers. In the countryside, the 1960s ushered into existence a period of rural prosperity when many nomadic families became sedentary to take advantage of steady wage employment. Traditional Libyan economy has continued to shrink as the oil economy continues to grow. By 1997, agriculture accounted for 7 percent of the economic sector, while industry accounted for 47 percent and services accounted for 46 percent.

Libya, like many other countries, have grocery stores in their bigger cities. Most Libyans will purchase groceries on their way home from work by just simply pulling over to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables from a market stall or stop by the local market located in town.

Some luxurious homes will have a large rectangular courtyard with elaborate gardens and fountains. Usually if a family does possess a garden, it's completely enclosed, as is the private world of the immediate family.

A major barrier to improving agricultural productivity is the lack of income it provides. Even though agriculture is the second-largest sector in the economy, Libya is dependent on imports for most food products. Climatic conditions and poor soil also greatly affect farm output, and domestic food production meets only 25 percent of the demand. While output is limited by domestic conditions, income and population growth has greatly increased food consumption. Low rainfall plays as another factor in affecting Libya's agricultural industry. The country's primary agricultural water source is the Great Manmade River. The amount of arable land makes up a mere 1.03 percent of total land area, while permanent crops make up another 0.19 percent of land.

The current instability of Libya's government greatly affects the citizens' employment and wage. With the Libyan Revolution, which has been going on since the fifteenth of February 2011, citizens are not safe when outdoors. They risk being used as human shields or being caught amidst the gunfire between Qaddafi loyalists and rebels. This makes it hard for Libyan citizens to report to work and earn a living. The war has also forced trading with other countries and food imports to a screeching halt. The trade barriers that had been lifted in 2004 by the Bush administration, when Libya seemed to be upholding its pledge of abandoning its nuclear chemical and biological weapons efforts, have been revoked. This has made access to food markets and adequate nutrition extremely difficult. In many cities, the grocery shelves remain empty and bare as the war between the rebels and loyalists wages on.

After the outbreak of political violence in February of 2011 oil production, which accounts for 95 percent of export earnings, was stopped. This action took a great toll on the country's economy and much of the country's income over the years has been lost to waste, corruption, conventional armaments purchases, and attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction. Qaddafi also tried to increase his influence in Africa and elsewhere by making large donations to developing countries. The mismanagement of the African economy by the government has led to high inflation and increased import prices. This has resulted in the decline of the standard of living in Libya from 1990 to 2003.

The present status of the revolution in Libya with Qaddafi in hiding is in bad condition, but with the overthrow of Qaddafi's dictatorship just on the horizon, this situation could drastically improve within the

next decade. Women's rights are also vastly improving. Before the revolution, women's rights were greatly limited. The country ranked 91st out of 102 countries for gender equality. With the revolution underway, many women are asking, "Is this not our revolution too?" Lots of women's dreams may soon come true, and we could very well be seeing female ambassadors and ministers within the next ten years.

The effects of war on the environment and surroundings can be devastating and irreversible. The rebuilding of towns, cities, and surrounding areas after the aftermath of war can be very costly. When the revolution has come to an end and Qaddafi's dictatorship is overthrown; lifestyle in Libya should improve a great amount. Trade can be resumed, oil production can once again take place, and the grocery shelves will be abundant once more with food. The destruction can be cleaned up and reconstruction of towns and cities could begin.

If the government reforms into a democracy run by the people, the lives of future generations will be altered. The lives of women will see the most improvement. New opportunities will open up and the citizens will have a greater part in the government's decisions. Communities and cities will be improved by having more resources for the citizens of Libya.

The future for the country of Libya would be best off if the government were to transition to a democracy. Education should take place to teach future employees of the government on how to make educated decisions and how to invest and spend the country's money in a way so that it benefits every citizen of the country instead of just a few choice people. They should try to improve cooperation with other countries to increase the amount of exports and to strengthen the Libyan economy. Agricultural education could also teach the citizens new techniques and strategies in order to increase crop yields and production of food. Libya should also focus on strengthening their bond with the organization, United Nations, to assist in international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and achievement of world peace.

On the 16th of September of 2011, the General of the United Nations voted to give Libya's seat in the world body to the former rebels' National Transitional Council. This vote means that a senior council official will be able to join world leaders and speak for Libya as its representative. A new United Nations mission in Libya was also unanimously approved. This decision unfroze the assets of two major oil companies.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada also said that he wishes to have a three-month extension on the mission whose aim is to protect civilians from Moammar Qaddafi's forces. The mission was due to end on September 27. Rebel forces, that led the uprising against Qaddafi, are in control of the city of Tripoli; but the fighting of the war is ongoing and Qaddafi still remains at large. Harper says that Canada will continue to participate in the mission until the threat of Qaddafi's forces is eliminated from the country. Canada plans to ask parliament for a three-month extension on their mission; but the country is pretty optimistic that they will achieve their objective before the end of the timeline. The United Nations established a United Nations Support Mission in Libya to help co-ordinate international efforts in Libya once Qaddafi's reign is over.

No policy can completely eliminate war-induced hunger, but strategies could be put forth aiming at mitigating the effects of war. The only effective policy to avoid war-induced hunger is to promote policies that might help prevent armed conflicts from occurring. The policies should include government co-operation dealing with the management of food aid and its distribution to the people who need it most.

Since the crisis in Libya first set in, the United States government has strongly supported international and non-governmental organizations meeting humanitarian needs in Libya and those who have fled across

its borders. As well as providing support, they have also provided 47 million dollars in humanitarian assistance. The United Nations World Food Program has also received help in responding immediately to food requirements of the Libyan citizens who have fled Libya's borders to Tunisia and Egypt. The USAID Office of Food for Peace has donated 10 million dollars to World Food Program (WFP) to help alleviate the economic impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable communities in Tunisia and Egypt. The first shipment that was received in Alexandria, Egypt and was transferred onwards for Libya contained 560 metric tons of vegetable oil and 270 metric tons of pinto beans. This quantity of food will go toward helping to support World Food Program (WFP) distributions targeting 600,000 beneficiaries in Libya.

The Security Council has accepted a new resolution to help promote Libya's recovery from the recent war and to help support its transition from a dictatorship to a democratic government. The new three-month mission trip, suggested by the United Nations, will assist Libyan efforts to restore security and the rule of law, protect human rights, and undertake an inclusive political dialogue towards setting up a democratic government. Although some policies will remain the same, the authorities of Libya will now be able to pursue a freshly reenergized Libyan economy. Libya has endured war and hardships throughout its entire existence as a country, but with a little support, education, and humanitarian aid this country could greatly exceed its potential.

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