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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL PARTIES IN INFLUENCING THE CONFLICT IN LIBYA

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Abstract

Some countries and international organizations took advantage of the events that occurred in many Arab countries, or the so-called Arab Spring, to bring down the dictatorial regime, including what happened in the Libyan state, where the Libyan regime suppressed the popular uprising demanding change, and the transition to a democratic system establishes social justice and protects freedom and human rights. This gave the justification for these countries to intervene as a third party in the crisis, which complicated the crisis and made the events take a violent turn that ultimately led to the collapse of the state and the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's regime, with the help of foreign countries for the uprising through international decisions that led to the military intervention. This resulted in a civil war raging between the Libyan parties with external funding, and the inability of the internationally recognized government to play its role within the borders of the Libyan state. We seek here to find out the role that these parties played in the Libyan state and its impact on the course of events and the existing conflict.

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Introduction:-

The Arab Spring revolutions began with mass protests from Tunisia to Egypt, and Libya was expected to quickly join the wave of protests. As a result of very similar economic and political conditions. It was not long before Libya became an arena for similar protests, which raised the ceiling of protesters' demands for economic and political reforms to demand the fall of the regime. These developments were massive and rapid, leading to widespread international interaction between supporters of these peoples' aspirations and those opposed to these protests. The international interactive reality shows that political and security issues are no longer the preserve of the state alone. What happens within the state's borders receives regional and international reactions, especially with regard to security and human rights. This interaction also shows the volume and frequency of interactions in proportion to the size of the potentials and means of influence.

The stronger party acts according to its own interests, while the less powerful party acts according to the gravity of the threat, which forces it to respond to the danger according to its capabilities, size and ability to influence. So, in this we are trying to monitor regional and international reactions to the Libyan crisis that helped or justified and supported the international intervention in Libya. Regional positions played the cornerstone of the political legitimacy of the military intervention in Libya. These positions can be limited to the effective international force, the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and finally the African Union, although the latter maintained its position on military intervention in Libya. This is through the case study approach of the "Libyan state" in terms of

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the impact of this intervention, and we seek here to answer the following question: How do external forces affect the chances of resolving the conflict in Libya?

External parties intervene in Libya during the 2011 events:

Position of the League of Arab States:

The demand to practice democracy, justice, equality and human rights reform in the North African region, or as some call it the "Arab Spring", had repercussions on the relationship between the Arab League and its member states, on the one hand. And international human rights law and international standards on the one hand. While human rights were being subjected to significant and controversial violations in some Arab countries for decades before the revolution, the Arab League did not take any steps towards protecting and respecting human rights and freedoms in these countries. This was clear in the way the Arab League deals with the situations of different countries. The Arab League studies the situation in the Libyan state as well as Syria in ordinary and special sessions. It did not follow this in the events that took place in Yemen and Bahrain, despite the severity of the violations that occurred in both countries.(Wajner & Kacowicz, 2018)

In February 2011, the Arab League suspended the right of the Libyan state to participate in all institutions and meetings of the League in protest against the practices of violence against civilians, followed by a meeting of the League Council, which was at the ministerial level to discuss developments and political events in the state of Libya. Resolution 7298 was issued on March 2, 2011,(Zifcak, 2012) regarding the events in Libya.

The decision condemned the crimes committed against peaceful popular demonstrations and protests in Libya, as well as called for a ceasefire and an end to violence against protesters, and called on the authorities in the Libyan state to lift the ban on the media as well as facilitate the exit of foreigners and to reject all forms of foreign interference in the Libyan state. And the full commitment to preserving the national bond of the Libyan people, as well as inviting all countries, international organizations and all relevant institutions to provide humanitarian aid to the Libyan people. Tunisia, Egypt and all Arab countries emphasized the necessity of continuing consultations and taking the necessary measures to stop the violence, including imposing a no-fly zone. Then the violence continued, casualties increased and the indiscriminate shelling of the cities continued until the rebels began using weapons and light equipment.(Dunne & Gifkins, 2011)And a decision was issued by the Arab League dealing with political events and changes in Libya, as it was stated in Resolution No. (7360) of March 12, 2011, that the UN Security Council and the United Nations must assume their responsibilities towards the escalation of the situation in the Libyan state and take the necessary measures to impose a no-fly zone on military air traffic In Libya immediately, as well as rejecting the so-called attempts to interfere with foreign parties in the Libyan affairs.(Garwood-Gowers, 2013)

In Resolution No. 1973/2011, the Security Council condemned the acts of violence committed in Libya and referred to the decisions issued by the Arab League regarding taking all measures to protect civilians, including the imposition of a no-fly zone on the military air movement in Libya on populated areas. With the exclusion of a foreign occupation force in any way on all Libyan lands.

The African position:

Many expected that the African Union would play a major role in achieving stability in Libya and reaching consensual solutions to end the state of war that led to massive violations of human rights. Since the beginning of the Libyan uprising, the African position has been conservative, rejecting any external military intervention in Libya, preferring a diplomatic and political solution, and stressing more efforts to resolve the internal conflict.(Kasaija, 2013)

That the AU initially refrained from direct condemnation of Gaddafi, and in an attempt to put an end to this deteriorating situation it launched its initiative known as the African Union road map, which resulted from the AU formation of the five-member committee of five African countries which are Mauritania, South Africa, Mali, Congo, Uganda where the Committee was able to formulate an initiative stressing the need for an immediate cessation of all hostilities, (Abass, 2014) to open of a dialogue between the Libyan parties and to ensure an inclusive transition period leading to the adoption of political reforms that respond to the Libyan people's legitimate aspirations for democracy, political reform, justice, peace and security, as well as the social and economic development. Despite the efforts of the AU to get out of that crisis, the AU was notable to convince the Libyan opposition forces to accept the African roadmap, which led to the failure of the AU initiative.(Bartu, 2014)Despite the international

community's commendation of that initiative, including the USA, which affirmed that the AU has an important role to play in resolving the Libyan crisis, as well as the Secretary-General of the NATO proposal for a cease-fire.(Grovgui, 2011)

International Reference for International Intervention in Libya:

Following the deterioration of the security situation in Libya and the fall of many casualties and injured on both sides, there has been a clear change in the scene in favor of opponents of the regime, whether on the security, the tribal and even the diplomat levels.

Many States, international and regional bodies and organizations called to perform their humanitarian duty towards the Libyan people and to end the so-called genocide against civilians, (Croc, O & Valigi, M, 2013) in this direction the US President "Barack Obama" expressed his deep concern about the events in Libya, and said that the Libyan authorities must respond to the protesters' demands for political reform. For its part, France urged Gaddafi to stop the use of violence against demonstrators; also, the French President Nicolas Sarkozy condemned the unacceptable use of force against demonstrators in Libya, and demanded for an immediate end to the violence and called for a political solution to meet the demands of the Libyan people.(Adler-Nissen, R & Pouliot, V, 2014) Britain criticized the media blackout practiced by the Libyan authorities and called on the Libyan regime to respect human rights. (Beauregard, 2016) Italy also condemned the violence against civilians and called for its cessation. As well as Russia, that called on all parties in Libya to find a peaceful solution through the national dialogue to put an end to the deadly acts of violence sweeping Libya.(Boeke, S & de Roy, V, 2016) The European Union (EU) called upon the Libyan authorities to exercise restraint and to refrain immediately from any further use of force and violence against peaceful demonstrators NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen expressed his shock at the indiscriminate use of force against peaceful demonstrators in Libya.

From the above it can be noted how regional and international positions contributed to the support and justify the humanitarian intervention, especially after the extensive violations that they confirmed that the Gaddafi regime committed against its people, which eventually led to the adoption of a resolution authorizing the imposition of a no-fly zone on Libya. (Naime, 2012)

The role of the media:

Various media played an important role at this stage. Where the international media in all its forms and types were recruited to cover the events in Libya. Satellite channels and international news channels played a major role in pushing international opinion to demand immediate international action to halt human rights violations.(Nahed, 2015) These channels, especially the Arabic ones such as Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, played a vital role in covering events, military and field movements in the Libyan front. The Internet sites also played a role no less important than the role played by these channels through blogs and social networks of different types, as well as broadcasting video and photographs, which monitors various details of developments in Libya Several Libyan diplomats, have appeared on these channels announcing their resignations from working with Gaddafi. (Abeed, 2017) This is what the Libyan ambassador in India, for example, "Ali Al-Issawi," who in statements to the BBC accused "Gaddafi" of hiring foreign mercenaries against his countrymen.(IMS, 2011) Arab and world capitals witnessed demonstrations in which the people participated in solidarity with the protesters in Libya, they condemned the Gaddafi regime and its use of military aircraft against civilians .

Among these countries are Italy, Britain, Egypt, Qatar and Tunisia, as well as the protests that took place in front of the headquarters of the Arab League. Because of the events in the Libyan state, this stage was characterized by security chaos and excessive use of force and violence between the regime and opposition forces, which led to the deterioration of the security situation. Thus, the situation affected oil and gas production and the closure of oil export outlets, as nine international oil companies stopped working in Libya, as well as the activity of international companies in several economic and industrial fields, and seaports stopped working.(Wollenberg, A & Pack, J, 2013)

The deterioration of the security situation in Libya and the fall of hundreds of dead and injury, there has been a clear change in the political landscape in favor of the protesters, whether at the security, tribal or even diplomatic level. Voices were being raised to call on States, international and regional bodies and organizations to perform their humanitarian duty towards the Libyan people and to stop all forms of violence and killing against civilians.(Dowson-Zeidan, N, Eaton, T, & Wespieser, K, 2014)

The intervention of external parties after the fall of the Gaddafi regime:

A number of Arab countries have undergone important changes since the end of 2010, most notably in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and Libya. All of their implication and repercussions have received international attention, especially by European countries because of their interests.

In this regard, the European intervention to support change in Libya 2011, Europe, through the NATO, contributed to ending Gaddafi's rule by providing military and moral support to the opposition forces, (Weighill, R & Gaub, F, 2018) including the implementation of air strikes against Gaddafi's forces and with the support of the Arab League, which great impact on achieving changes on the ground in favor of the opposition. There is no doubt that the interest and the attempt to strengthen the role and influence of Europe in Libya motive behind the orientations of European foreign policy towards Libya. (Calvisi, 2020)

Role of the regional powers in the Libyan crisis:

The role of Gulf State:

The regional intervention or influence in events that shook the Arab region has not been consistent or equal because of number of reasons related to the nature of the Arab system itself, its connections and its relations with international forces and its agreements with these international forces.

Regional intervention or influence in the course of transformation in Libya was not limited to the Gulf States and the Arab League but also extended to other regional powers such as Turkey and Iran. (Budak, 2019) Since the beginning of the revolution in Libya 2011 and because of the propaganda machine of some of the Gulf countries especially Qatar that had lunched misleading and distorting campaign. And these countries did not hesitate forge alliances to besiege the forces of change in Libya, hoping to tilt one side at the expense of another party in pursuit of achieving its agendas in the context of the great crisis, "the dispute between some Gulf States with the State of Qatar that have been accused of supporting international terrorism in the region." In order to control the radical movements and to curb the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya, not to mention the efforts of these countries to dispel fears of the arrival of the revolution on its borders and to restrict the effect Arab Spring. (McQuaid, J & J, 2017) Above all, they determined to intervene in Libya's internal affairs after helping to overthrow the Gaddafi regime in coordination with some Western countries (the USA and France) to sabotage the revolutionary gains and distort its image. Not only did these countries lunched media and financial war aimed at countering revolutionary change in Libya, (Joffé, 2019) but went further by providing military support and equipment in the conflict between the Libyan political and military forces in favor of one party at the expense of the others, leading to further violent unrest and political and security chaos In this regard, we find that these countries have violated the arms embargo. There are many UN reports that have included how these regional powers violated the arms embargo imposed by the UNSC on Libya.

According to the latest report of the United Nations Panel of Experts issued on June 4, 2017 on Libya has explicitly referred to the UAE and other regional powers whose name was not mentioned as violating the arms embargo imposed on Libya as part of their support for their local allies of tribes and militias, thus perpetuating the sharp division between the conflicting forces fighting for power in Libya. (Mezran, K & Miller, E, 2017) In addition to the accusation leveled by the interim government in the eastern region of the State of Qatar and Turkey of supporting the militia of Libya Dawn and the extremist Islamic militias inside the country, with media and military support. Here we see that Libya has turned into a regional arena for a conflict of interests, concerns, and goals of these countries, which has transformed some Libyan political parties into tools under the control of Arab and regional countries. (Mezran & Varvelli, 2017)

Role of international powers:

It is no secret that the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was known extreme and stubborn political views and he had political and security differences with most Arab countries, European countries and the USA, all of which has serious implications on the Libyan people where economic sanctions and the air embargo imposed by the UN for many years. They had a great impact on the Libyan people, (Wehrey, 2018) when the protests erupted in 2011 on the Libyan regime. That was an opportunity for these countries to get rid of this regime, that's why these countries supported the protests. (Malito, 2017)

The European role in the Libyan crisis:

Foreign intervention in Libya as much as an opportunity that helped end the rule of the Gaddafi regime as it later became a challenge facing the Libyans to resolve their differences and achieve political stability, given the

conflicting interests of the international powers, each of which seeks to empower the pro-party and exclude its opponents, to achieve the greatest political and economic gains. (Eaton, 2018) The widespread chaos and absence of a central authority in a renewed struggle for legitimacy between the conflicting parties in the country has provided the opportunity for European countries to impose their presence on the Libyan arena under the pretext of efforts to resolve the crisis and bring the shattered country to stability and security. The Libyan file is one of the most prominent files that embodies the strength of the European role, especially Italian in the Middle East. The issue of stopping the influx of migrants and ensuring the continuity of oil and gas supplies is the most important issue that tops Europe's agenda within Libya. (Dias, 2014) Thus, the European countries seek to achieve greater political and security stability in Libya. Italy is one of the most European countries present in the Libyan arena, its separation between Libya and Italy are the waves of the Mediterranean, and historically, Libya was the most important Italian colony in Africa until the end of the Second World War. The ties between the two countries did not cease even when Libya was isolated by the sanctions imposed on it in 1992. Throughout the years of the crisis, Italy led the efforts to bring peace to its former colony and bore the burden of successive waves of illegal African migrants crossing the Mediterranean from the Libyan shores towards the shores of Lampedusa Island. Italy is keen on its diplomatic presence in the Libyan arena through frequent visits to Libya and meetings with several Libyan officials in addition to hosting several meetings related to the Libyan crisis. (Igwe, S, Abdullah, M, & Kirmanj, S, 2017) In addition to the diplomatic presence, Italy quickly strengthened its presence by sending a large field hospital with the protection of an Italian military force in the city of Misurata, and also provided protection for the entry of the GNA, (Capasso, 2020) where the government entered Libya on board an Italian frigate. As well as sending Italian naval forces to the Libyan territorial waters, under the pretext of curbing migrants across the Mediterranean and supporting the Libyan Coast Guard. The Italian parliament approved the plan for military intervention in Libyan waters at the request of the head of the GNA, Fayeze Al-Sarraj. According to the American newspaper "Politico", the real goal of Italy's interest in Libya is to protect Eni Oil Company and maintain its control of the oil trade inside Libya aside from France and Britain. (De Guttry, A, Capone, F, & Sommaro, E, 2018) On the other hand, France had a prominent role in the Libyan crisis. In late July 2017, France hosted a summit between the head of the internationally recognized reconciliation government, Fayeze al-Sarraj, and Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar. The French president has succeeded in reaching the 10-point "Paris Declaration" which shapes the Libyan future in the next stage. France is seeking to play a pivotal role in the Libyan crisis, especially following the election of Emmanuel Macron, where French diplomacy has turned to direct intervention in Libya domestically, and this French intervention comes in order to get more gains in Libya. (TAYLOR, 2019)

It hosted a summit between the head of the internationally recognized reconciliation government, Fayeze al-Sarraj, and Field Marshal France and Italy clearly recognize that the management of the irregular migration crisis is the key to resolving the conflict in Libya. Nevertheless, their interventions often serve contradicting purposes. Thus, supporting of the rival armed groups and their uncoordinated attempts at high-level peace negotiations only undermine each other efforts and lead to prolong the conflict, Italy's alliance with the Libyan armed groups has succeeded in curbing the flow of migrants entering the Mediterranean, but has also enabled these groups to weaken the nascent central government of Libya.

In addition, an estimated 670,000 migrants in Libya, or about 12.5 % of the total Libyan population, have exacerbated social tensions and made conflict resolution more complex. While Britain strives to be present in the Libyan arena politically and militarily. The visit of British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson on 23/8/2017 was an opportunity to strengthen British-Libyan relations when the head of the GNA Fayeze Al-Sarraj called for British support to lift the UN arms embargo. (Falchi, 2017) While the British minister renewed Britain's full support for the efforts of the GNA. On the other hand, according to a statement of the British Foreign Office, Johnson considered that Marshal Haftar could play a role in the political process, calling on him to abide by the commitments made during the recent Paris meetings and to respect the cease-fire and work with the new UN envoy Ghassan Salama to find a political settlement. British political moves preceded by other military, revealed by the British newspaper "Express", which stated in a report published on 6/8/2017, that units of British special forces sent to Libya to face the danger of the ISIS organization, and to deal with smuggling networks of migrants, According to the newspaper, 80 members of the special boat service, backed by 40 British troops, were deployed in Libya along with troops from the USA, France and Italy, on a covert mission to prevent ISIS from spreading to Libya. (Kostanyan, H & Blockmans, S, 2017)

It seems that Germany is seeking to be a player in the Libyan arena, especially in light of Germany's exposure to the following threats with the spread of terrorism and illegal immigration. German Ambassador to Libya Christian Bock

renewed his country's support for the political agreement in Libya and the efforts of the United Nations envoy and stressed his country's concern about the problems facing Libya, especially the issue of illegal immigration and its efforts to provide the means for assistance in this file. (Baldwin-Edwards, M & Lutterbeck, D, 2019) Germany has already announced that it will not support a project to establish camps in Libya to host migrants trying to reach European countries. Therefore, it is impossible to talk about a unified strategy for the EU countries in Libya. (von Weitershausen, I, Schäfer, D, & Wessels, W, 2020) In reality, what is on the ground is intense competition and competing interests between France and Italy, and a hesitant British policy, with an undisclosed German bias in favour of the Italian approach. (Loschi, C, Raineri, L, & Strazzari, F, 2018)

The American role in the Libyan crisis:

After the fall of Gaddafi, Washington maintained a supportive position on the efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and mediation between the Libyans, which led to the signing of a political agreement in the city of Skhirat Morocco (Skhirat Agreement) on 17/12/2015. (Abomo, 2019) It can be said that the US has not set a goal for Libya's stability or a state with certain characteristics, rather than a number of caveats have been identified, mainly related to three main files: ensuring oil flow in the international market routes so that it cannot be transferred over into entities considered hostile by Washington; Libya does not become a center of attraction, arming and financing of Washington's terrorist lists such as ISIS and al-Qaeda.

This is reflected in the support given to the military operations against the ISIS in Sirte, in which American military aircraft participated very effectively. (Mezran K. &, 2017) It also explains part of the American silence about the operations of retired Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar in the city of Benghazi. Despite escalating warnings from humanitarian organizations that may eventually lead to the accusation of Haftar and his fighters of war crimes. (Seeberg, 2018)

Finally, supporting Washington's European allies, especially Italy, over fears of an influx of migrants. These caveats have not been reflected in a strategic policy with clear objectives in Libya that would promote stability or lead to a central government capable of controlling the country and managing the state. (Malito D. V., 2019)

The Russian role in the Libyan crisis:

The Russian position towards the Arab change movement was characterized by hesitation and confusion. It took a stand against the change. This was manifested in its vote on intervention in Libya by the UNSC. It also criticized the NATO operations against Gaddafi and described it as having exceeded its mission according to the UNSC resolution to protect civilians. Where Prime Minister Putin described NATO's military operation as a "crusade. (Mezran, K. K & Miller, E, 2017) Russia is in line with the rest of the Western powers position on the Libyan file It also supports the Libyan national army and believes in General Haftar's ability to end the conflict and defeat the militias of the ISIS.

Russia's diplomatic relations with Haftar are strong and solid, as evidenced by the strengthening of the national army with weapons and military training. Noting that the military force and field experience of the Libyan army is due in part to Russian support, which corresponds to the Egyptian, Saudi and UAE positions on the support of Haftar.

In addition to building an alliance with the USA opposite to his counterpart in Russian-Iranian alliance in Syria. Putin was aware of the importance of positioning in the Libyan situation, not only for investment in oil installations or for the signing of the arms and reconstruction agreements but to use it as a political bargaining tool with the rest of the international forces in the Syrian file (Stepanova, 2018) and the re-positioning of the military in the Mediterranean region. Although Moscow announced in 2016 that it is open to all parties of the Libyan crisis, (Shay, 2019) and received a delegation from the Presidential Council of the GNA, recognized internationally, and also received delegation of military leaders from Misurata of the GNA.

Observers rule out that Russia is capable of creating a same model of Bashar al-Assad in Libya by supporting Haftar, realizing that this would be very provocative to America and its allies. As it will cause the exhaustion of the Russian economy, which is already suffering from low oil prices, and because of the huge expenditure of military intervention in Syria, which is estimated at tens of billions of dollars annually. (Varvelli, 2017)

Conclusion:-

Libya has been a victim of external interference, misconceptions and the interpretation of international decisions, since the interpretation of the decision to protect civilians in 2011, which allowed for dropping thousands of tons of

bombs, including more than 11 thousand airstrikes on various state institutions such as camps and centres. Even airports, civilian ports, electricity and communications networks; It caused the fall of a state and not just the overthrow of a regime in which no one disputes the necessity of his exit from Libya.

Years passed Libyans were living the flames of a torn civil war between a government in the east (the interim government and the House of Representatives in the eastern city of Tobruk) and the government of Tripoli (the Government of National Accord). Produced by the internationally recognized Skhirat Agreement.

The Western intervention in Libya caused the spread of armed militias and insecurity, in addition to the outbreak of a civil war raging since 2013, a war that turned the Libyan economy into a state of disability and made life difficult for citizens. Despite this catastrophe that it caused, countries such as France and Italy are still trying to intervene in order to ensure their interests and influence in Libya, and between Western intervention and civil war, the Libyan citizen still suffers daily in order to obtain some basic materials.

In addition, external regional actors, such as Turkey, Qatar, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, are feeding the cycle of violence and contributing to instability in Libya by supporting armed groups in western and eastern Libya, including extremist armed groups. Violates the arms embargo: a violation that is still documented by the Security Council's Committee of Experts, in accordance with Resolution 1970/2011 and according to reports covering 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Western countries are also seeking to take advantage of the situation. Libya has become the subject of a mediating dispute between France, which wants to extend its control over a country with huge oil reserves equivalent to 48 billion barrels, and Turkey and Italy, which considers Libya a traditional area of influence.

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