

# A VIEW TO EXTREMIST CURRENTS IN LIBYA

CONDENSED VERSION FOR POLICY MAKERS

K R O N O S

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## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*The LIFG proclaims its activity in order to fulfill the duty of Jihad in the way of Allah the Exalted and move the worshippers out of worshipping the worshippers and into the worship of the Lord of worshippers, from the narrowness of this world to the vastness of the Hereafter, and from the oppression of religions to the justice of Islam.*

*Then it was time for the LIFG to leave the state of secrecy and go to a state of publicity, due to the delicate stage that the Jihadi activity in Libya was going through. ...*

*Truly, confronting the tyrants of this age — the like of Qadhafi — has become the most necessary duty after the belief in Allah the Exalted, so that the Sharia (Islamic law) of Allah the Mighty and Supreme may rule, and so that the Muslims in Libya will enjoy their lives under the protection of this divine way and be rid of the subjugation, oppression and tyranny that they used to suffer for more than four centuries under this oppressing age. ...*

*We pledge ourselves before Allah the Blessed and Exalted to walk the path of blessed Jihad until the tyranny will fall and the religion of Allah the Mighty and Supreme will rise, and on that day the believers will rejoice in the triumph of Allah.*

### —The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group

*Excerpts from the communiqué announcing the LIFG's existence, October 18, 1995*

*The LIFG, while proclaiming its solidarity and support for the sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman, reminds all of the Muslims the right of this venerable sheikh and warns the tyrant Americans about the wrath of the Muslims, who are fed up with the American oppression that wreaks havoc upon the earth.*

### —Commander of the LIFG, Abu Abdallah al-Sadiq (Abd al-Hakim Belhadj)

*Excerpt from the LIFG's letter of support to jailed 1993 World Trade Center attack conspirator Omar Abd al-Rahman (aka The Blind Sheikh), May 31, 1997*

*The obvious American hostility against the Muslims in Sudan and Afghanistan, the killing of the innocent, the spreading of terror among the peaceful and the making of some of the civil and industrial institutions into a target without any reason or proof — all these confirm that the American government has chosen the path towards stirring up our Islamic nation, and is pleased to adopt the policy of public confrontation.*

*The LIFG — since it highly disapproves of this brutal attack and proclaims its support of the Muslims in Sudan and Afghanistan — is presenting some of the facts before the Islamic nation as evidence in regard to the fact that the U.S.A. is not only an enemy of the Mujahid sheikh Usama Bin Laden and the Islamic movements, but it is an enemy of the Islamic nation. ...*

*The U.S.A. has stood alongside the Jews, ever since their state was established and to this day, against the Islamic nation, and provided them with weapons with which millions of innocent Muslims were killed. The U.S.A. has supported them — and still does — politically in international circles and rises against any decision that does not serve the interest of the Jewish state.*

*The U.S.A. is the one that has bombarded the civil institutions and neighborhoods in Iraq, and prevented food and medicine from the Muslim people of Iraq, which has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of the sons of Iraq in the least, and Saddam Hussein is still intact. The U.S.A. is the one whose airplanes have attacked Libya, not to destroy Qadhafi, but to destroy the houses of Muslims in Libya, and it has besieged wrongfully the people of Libya so that the Muslims there will suffer. ...*

*And before this American tyranny there is no longer anything the Islamic nation in general and the Islamic movement in particular can do, besides confronting it in order to defend its religion, its territory and its honor.*

*The LIFG calls upon the Muslims to stand in the face of the American hostility in order to ward off this vicious attack against the sons of our Islamic nation, and to be warned of the poisons of the media, which is manipulated by enemies of the nation in order to tear its ranks asunder and warn its sons.*

**—Libyan Islamic Fighting Group Political Bureau**

*Excerpts from a communiqué concerning the U.S. missile strikes targeting Usama bin Laden's facilities in Sudan and Afghanistan following al-Qa'ida's 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, August 25, 1998*

*If a Muslim land is occupied, then its people should fight the occupier. Others should also help them with funds and weapons, in spirit, through prayers, and in any way possible. The Muslims are one nation.*

**—Global Muslim Brotherhood thought leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi**

*Responding to a question about whether Sharia law permitted foreign insurgents to enter Iraq to fight Coalition forces during an appearance on Al Jazeera Television, September 19, 2004*

*We are a Libyan Islamic movement that rose in our country over 50 years ago in explicit terms and with the involvement of well-known persons and leaders. It has always been primarily concerned with Libyan national affairs. The most important point for us is that the foundation of our ideology is Islam, which forms our people's identity and cultural framework of reference.*

**—Libyan Muslim Brotherhood leader Sulayman Abd al-Qadir**

*On the history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya, August 27, 2008*

*I'd like to say that the only thing I hope for is that as my life approaches its end, Allah will give me an opportunity to go to the land of Jihad and resistance, even if in a wheelchair. I will shoot Allah's enemies, the Jews, and they will throw a bomb at me, and thus, I will seal my life with martyrdom. Praise be to Allah ...*

**—Global Muslim Brotherhood thought leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi**

*During an appearance on Al Jazeera Television, January 28, 2009 (MEMRI.org translation)*

*Throughout history, Allah has imposed upon the [Jews] people who would punish them for their corruption. The last punishment was carried out by Hitler. By means of all the things he did to them — even though they exaggerated this issue — he managed to put them in their place. This was divine punishment for them. Allah willing, the next time will be at the hand of the believers.*

**—Global Muslim Brotherhood thought leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi**

*During an appearance on Al Jazeera Television, January 30, 2009 (MEMRI.org translation)*

*I hereby issue a fatwa to the officers and soldiers who can kill Mu'ammr Al-Qadhafi: Whoever among them can fire a bullet at him, thus relieving the country and the people of him, should do so. This man wants to annihilate the people, so I am protecting the people.*

*I rule that whoever can fire a bullet, and relieve us, as well as Libya and its great people, of this man's evil and danger, should do so.*

**—Global Muslim Brotherhood thought leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi**

*During an appearance on Al Jazeera Television, February 21, 2011 (MEMRI.org translation)*

*Noble people, with all your loyal tribes, continue your path, and with the aid of God, define your goal, renew your commitment, and head toward your aim without hesitation or discouragement. Toss Qadhafi off the cliff of humiliation. The price for any discouragement or hesitation will be greater humiliation and disrespect, which will last for decades. They will be darker decades than those you suffered for all those years. ...*

*This is a call to what is left of truthful Libyan scholars and well-meaning preachers, the loyal elite, the young people jealous [of their faith], to do their best to gain the best fruit from this revolution and not be taken advantage of after all these efforts and sacrifices by those traitors who go after their own interests and follow only their desires, who want to ride your efforts and exploit your blood. ...*

*Let your weapons be in your hands. Gather and store as much as you can. Beware. Beware of neglecting them or giving them up. ...*

*So let our Muslim people, who have lived and continue to live under myriad conditions of oppression, persecution, humiliation and fear, know that their true happiness and pure freedom lies in reverting back to Sharia and the path of God Almighty. ...*

**—al-Qa'ida Sharia committee member and former LIFG member Abu Yahya al-Libi**

*Excerpts from a message titled "To Our People in Libya," March 12, 2011*

*May God keep the descendants of Umar al-Mukhtar, God rest his soul, who defied with their bare chests the arrogance and tyranny of the tyrant Al-Qadhafi and his crimes. I ask God to have mercy on their martyrs; to heal their wounded; to hasten the release of their prisoners, and to grant them success in supporting their religion and their ummah. I ask god to support them in preserving their sanctities and honor; and to bless them with His glorious victory and His near relief. ...*

*We must meet the needs our brothers in Libya so that the West will not use their tragedies as a justification for intervention in Libya and occupation and hegemony upon its affairs....*

*I warn our people in Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, and everywhere against the crocodile tears that the United States sheds today for the tragedies of the Libyans, for the United States is the last with the right to talk about freedom, human rights, justice, and protection of civilians.*

*Why did the United States not move against Al-Qadhafi before the uprising of the Libyan people?*

*Was it not the United States that turned over detainees to Al-Qadhafi in its war against Islam in the name of a War on Terror, so that they could be tortured, maltreated, and killed? Among them was the martyr, as we consider him to be, the Shaykh Ibn-al-Shaykh al-Libi, and among them were the leaders of the Libyan [Islamic] Fighting Group.*

**—al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri**

*Excerpts from a message regarding the "Arab Spring," April 15, 2011*

*Now it has been revealed after the discovery of documents (in the headquarters of Libyan Intelligence) that intelligence organizations had participated and helped the Libyan Intelligence in arresting me through direct information and commissions. After my arrest in Malaysia, the Central Intelligence Agency, according to what I was told by the Malaysian security organizations, intervened and I was deported to Bangkok after I asked to leave Kuala Lumpur. I said to them: If you do not want to give me asylum, let me leave. Then they booked me on a flight to Bangkok, and there I found CIA members waiting for me. I was kidnapped immediately, and they had a secret prison at the airport. I was tortured in that place in the airport, and then I was handed over to the Libyans.*

*I believe that what I was exposed to was the direct result of what the CIA did. Now, it has been proved by these documents that the British Intelligence Organizations had a hand in this issue. I have submitted my demands (an apology and compensation) because what happened was contradictory to the human rights to which these governments claim to be committed and these governments interfere in the affairs of other governments on the pretext that they do not respect human rights.*

**—Tripoli Military Council Chairman, Libyan Islamic Movement for Change Co-founder, and former LIFG emir Abd al-Hakim Belhadj (aka Abu Abdallah al-Sadiq)**

*Discussing with investigative journalist Camille Tawil the discoveries of secret documents in Tripoli that revealed the roles MI6 and the CIA played in the rendition of Belhadj to Libya, September 19, 2011*

*Everything is negotiable between Libya and NATO, or between Libya and the United States. ... I believe that when the Libyans see that the Americans and the Europeans — they came to help them to rescue them from the hands of this brutal regime just for the sake of the humanity and the sake of the Libyan that had been captured at Qadhafi's hands for many decades — it will be in the history. Of course, it will have a different meaning if the Americans and the Europeans had been paid for what they spent.*

**—TNC Ambassador Ali Aujali**

*Responding to the question of whether the U.S. should anticipate compensation for expenses incurred assisting Libya's rebels during an interview with Fox News Channel correspondent Jennifer Griffin, October 20, 2011*

*We, as an Islamic state, determined that Islamic law is a major source for legislation, and on this basis any law which contradicts the principles of Islam and Islamic law will be considered null and void.*

**—TNC Chairman and former Qadhafi regime Justice Minister Mustafa Abdel Jalil**

*Announcing Libyan law will be based on Sharia in the post-Qadhafi era, October 23, 2011*

# A VIEW TO EXTREMIST CURRENTS IN LIBYA

*Report Prepared by Kronos Principal Michael S. Smith II*

*29 December 2011*

Delivering regime change in Libya was no small feat. For decades, secular and Islamist Libyan elements sought to remove dictator Muammar al-Qadhafi from power. Perhaps none of these groups fought so fervently to depose the so-called “Mad Dog of the Middle East” as the jihadi organization known as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, which has been designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the U.S. State Department. Today, the group’s emir, Abd al-Hakim Belhadj al-Khuwayladi,\* is said to command as many as 25,000 rebel fighters from Tripoli. As the leader of the Tripoli Military Council, Belhadj is one of the most important figures among the rebels who appear poised to assume key roles in the post-Qadhafi era. Despite early indications that the Libyan revolution might be a largely secular undertaking, and despite the fact that Belhadj was not among the rebel fighters recently appointed to serve in the cabinet of Libya’s interim prime minister, the very extremist currents that have shaped the philosophies of Libyan Salafists and jihadis like Belhadj appear to be coalescing to define the future of Libya through its upcoming elections. In consideration of this trajectory, policy makers should explore all opportunities to prevent Libya from becoming the next major base of operations for violent extremist movements that target U.S. interests.

\*aka Abd al-Hakim Balhaj, aka Abdallah al-Sadeq, aka Abu Abdallah al-Sadek, aka Abu Abdallah al-Libi, aka Abu Abd Allah al-Sadiq, aka Jamal Kaderi, aka Abdul al-Nabi, and possibly Omar Rashed

**Questions for Policy Makers, Pages 19-20**

**Examples of the LIFG’s Public Communications, Pages 21-25**

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## THE JIHADIS

The LIFG was established in South Asia in 1990 by Libyan jihadis who volunteered to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. Initially, the group was focused narrowly on toppling the “apostate” Qadhafi regime. However, once the U.S. began targeting al-Qa’ida’s interests during the late 1990s, the LIFG came to view America as the greatest threat to Islamic movements.<sup>1</sup>

Though the contingent of Libyans who fought in the Afghan Jihad was quite small compared to the numbers of fighters from other Arab states, the group’s battlefield prowess and religiosity helped its leaders establish close ties with foremost leaders of the mujahidin, including Islamic Union Movement leader Shaykh Abd al-Rasul Sayyaf.\* Indeed, upon his release from prison in Libya in 2010, LIFG deputy emir Khalid al-Sharif\*\* (arrested in Pakistan in 2003) noted his friendship with Usama bin Laden began following their first meeting in 1988.<sup>2</sup> And when he left South Asia following the fall of Afghanistan’s

Soviet-aligned government, several of the LIFG’s leaders joined bin Laden in Sudan.

During the mid- to late-1990s, the LIFG engaged the Qadhafi regime using guerilla warfare tactics its members learned during their participation in the Afghan Jihad. The group’s primary support bases within Libya were the Sanusiyya-affiliated communities in the eastern region, notably cities like Derna and Benghazi. For more than a century, this area of the country had been a stronghold of conservative Muslims. (See below Background Note)

Although focused chiefly on Libya-related concerns, long before 9/11 the LIFG’s leaders also expressed hostile views of the “tyrant” U.S. Following the cruise missile strikes on Usama bin Laden’s facilities and terrorist training camps in Sudan and Afghanistan in response to al-Qa’ida’s 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in East Africa, the LIFG’s political bureau wrote that America is not just the enemy of Usama bin Laden. Accordingly, it is the enemy of all Muslims (See enclosed translations of communiqués published on the LIFG’s website).

### Background Note

*Eastern Libya’s present day Islamist legacy appears to span back to 1853, when Algerian-born 19th Century Islamic revivalist leader Sayyid Muhammad Ibn al-Sanusi established his zawiya (place of learning) at Giarabub (Jaghub). Educated in Islamic Sufism at Fez and Islamic orthodoxy at Mecca, al-Sanusi’s teachings famously attracted students to Libya from across North Africa and Arabia. He established a religious order known as the Sanusiyya, which was heavily influenced by the fundamentalist Wahhabi order of Saudi Arabia.<sup>3</sup> Following the death of al-Sanusi in 1859, the Sanusiyya evolved from a religious brotherhood into a political and commercial enterprise with military support from the Bedouins of Libya’s interior and acceptance from the Ottomans and Turks who ruled from Libya’s coast. Al-Sanusi’s son Muhammad al-Mahdi al-Sanusi increased the number of Sanusi lodges throughout southern Libya and northern Chad, thereby expanding his filial influence over merchants and the faithful.<sup>4</sup> Later, after decades of brutal Italian rule, Libya was captured by the French and British during the North African campaigns of World War II. The Sanusiyya’s authority was restored when Sayyid Muhammad Ibn al-Sanusi’s grandson Idris Muhammad al-Sanusi became king of the United Kingdom of Libya on December 24, 1951. King Idris was deposed during the military coup led by Commander (later Colonel) Qadhafi in 1969.*

\*A mentor of 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammad and an associate of Usama bin Laden, Abd al-Rasul Sayyaf is today one of the most influential law makers in Afghanistan.

\*\*aka Abu Hazim al-Libi, aka Abu Hazim, aka Abu Hazem, aka Muhammad Dawood, aka Dawood, aka Ayyub al-Libi, aka Abd al-Wahid

<sup>1</sup>“Interview with the Spokesperson for the Fighting Islamic Group in Libya — Brother Omar Rashed.” Nida’ul Islam. April-May 1999. Translation by Keysar Trad.

<sup>2</sup>Combating Terrorism in Libya through Dialogue and Reintegration. International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (Singapore). March 2010. Accessible via [http://www.pvtr.org/pdf/Report/RSIS\\_Libya.pdf](http://www.pvtr.org/pdf/Report/RSIS_Libya.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Swami, Praveen. “Defeat the Libyan regime. And then?” The Daily Telegraph. 21 March 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8394647/Defeat-the-Libyan-regime.-And-then.html>

<sup>4</sup>Encyclopedia of African History. Kevin Shillington (Ed). Routledge. 2004

According to various accounts, the LIFG's leaders viewed the Taliban's efforts to establish an Islamic state in Afghanistan as much more realistic than bin Laden's vision of waging a global jihad against Western interests. Still, many Libyans who were members and affiliates of the LIFG would become important figures within Core al-Qa'ida, particularly after 1998, when the Qadhafi regime effectively crushed the LIFG's insurgency in Libya and forced much of the group into exile in Afghanistan and Europe, notably the U.K.

Libyans who assumed high-profile roles within al-Qa'ida include: Abu Anas al-Libi, an LIFG member who played a central role in al-Qa'ida's 1998 dual attacks on U.S. embassies in East Africa and is likely the brother of deceased LIFG Shura Council member Abu Laith al-Libi; Abu Laith al-Libi, an LIFG Shura Council member who helped lead the Taliban's defense of Kabul following 9/11 (killed in a drone strike in Pakistan in 2008); Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, an LIFG-affiliate who was tasked with commanding al-Qa'ida's defense of Usama bin Laden's last stronghold in Afghanistan following the U.S. invasion in 2001 (died in prison in Libya in 2009); Abu Faraj al-Libi, who served as Usama bin Laden's chief liaison with others in Pakistan until his capture in 2005; Atiyah Abd al-Rahman (aka Atiyatallah), an LIFG member who reportedly rose to the number two spot in al-Qa'ida in 2011 (killed in a drone strike in Pakistan in 2011); and, al-Qa'ida Sharia committee official Abu Yahya al-Libi, the brother of an important LIFG member who was released from prison by the Qadhafi regime in February 2011.

At times turbulent, the LIFG's relationship with al-Qa'ida received a great deal of attention in 2007 when LIFG Shura Council member Abu Laith al-Libi and Core al-Qa'ida deputy leader Ayman al-Zawahiri announced a contingent of LIFG Shura Council members and fighters in AfPak had joined al-Qa'ida.<sup>5, 6</sup> Distributed online via jihadi websites, their messages have been widely mischaracterized as an announcement of a merger of

the LIFG with al-Qa'ida. This, despite al-Zawahiri's clarification soon thereafter: "I did not say that [the LIFG] has joined al-Qa'ida ... However, I said that a group of the notables of the [LIFG] has joined the Qa'idat al-Jihad Group. By this, I meant to please Muslims and break the hearts of the enemies of Islam."<sup>7</sup>

Regardless of whether the LIFG formally merged with al-Qa'ida, history reveals that inasmuch as al-Qa'ida helped train and supported the LIFG's fighters the LIFG played a critical role preparing al-Qa'ida and Taliban fighters for operations targeting Western forces. Recently leaked JTF-GTMO detainee assessments reveal how the LIFG also played a key role assisting violent extremist movements with the logistical aspects of moving jihadis in and out of South Asia prior to the 9/11 attacks. And it is worth noting one leaked JTF-GTMO detainee assessment reveals that training provided at a camp in Afghanistan by an LIFG military committee official was so renowned that at least one al-Qa'ida member visited the camp for the expressed purpose of undergoing training provided by him in preparation for participation in what later became an aborted component of the 9/11 plot.

The aforementioned 2007 announcement by Abu Laith al-Libi and Ayman al-Zawahiri arrived soon after several key LIFG leaders, including LIFG emir Belhadj and LIFG Sharia official Sami al-Saadi,\* began negotiating with the Qadhafi regime while held at Libya's infamous Abu Salim prison. Through these negotiations that were spearheaded by Qadhafi's son Saif al-Islam, the regime sought a public repudiation of the premise underlining the LIFG's mission: Waging jihad for the purpose of delivering regime change in Libya was justified by Sharia — thus Islam permitted devout Muslims to assassinate Qadhafi.

LIFG members who remained at large in AfPak were clearly displeased with this situation, and cautioned jihadis to consider the dialogue between LIFG leaders and the regime was manifest by coercive measures. In an interview produced by al-Qa'ida's As-Sahab Foundation for Islamic

\* aka Abu Munther al-Saadi, aka Abu Munthir, aka Abu al-Mundhir, aka Shaykh Yusuf

<sup>5</sup> Video message by Ayman al-Zawahiri. As-Sahab. Distributed online 3 November 2007. OSC Translation

<sup>6</sup> Audio message by Abu Laith al-Libi. As-Sahab. Distributed online 3 November 2007. OSC Translation

<sup>7</sup> Second round of an open interview with Ayman al-Zawahiri. Distributed online 22 April 2008. OSC translation.

Media Publication (that was distributed via jihadi web forums in August 2007), Abu Yahya al-Libi, the brother of then imprisoned LIFG founding member Abd al-Wahab al-Qayid, advised: “we look at the issue of retractions as being a completely new idea which is part of the system of the war of ideas which is one of the fierce fronts of the confrontation between us and our enemies, the Crusaders and their underlings. So, let us deal with this phenomenon on this basis. Otherwise, we safeguard for those to whom the reactions were attributed their precedent, their Jihad, their status, and their worth, and we also take account of the circumstances of many of them in the unusual ideas which emanated from them or might emanate from them, ideas which oozed from the darkness of the prison cells and under the whips of the lashers and the policy of repression and compulsion. And perhaps you will agree with me that with ideas produced under such circumstances, you cannot attribute true conviction to their producer.”<sup>8</sup>

In 2009, former LIFG Shura Council member Noman bin Othman, a de-radicalization expert with a London-based think tank who participated as a mediator in the group’s negotiations with the regime, reported LIFG spiritual leader Sami al-Saadi said the forthcoming book containing the LIFG’s retractions was the result of “convictions, not coercion.”<sup>9</sup> However, discussing the work in October 2011, al-Saadi stated, “The conviction is there but of course, they also put pressure on us. They wanted more but we rejected them. ... They wanted us to glorify [Qadhafi] and we refused. We were subjected to many psychological and physical pressures.”<sup>10</sup>

Various LIFG leaders’ publication of this 400-plus-page book in 2009 that addressed the regime’s concerns was met with further mischaracterizations of LIFG-related

developments in the press. Moreover, the resultant misapprehensions bolstered by insufficient analysis of the LIFG’s “revisions” have likely influenced decisions made in Washington and Brussels since February 17, 2011.

Titled “Corrective Studies in Understanding Jihad, Enforcement of Morality, and Judgment of People,” the book was authored by LIFG emir Belhadj, LIFG Sharia authority Sami al-Saadi, LIFG deputy emir Khalid al-Sharif, the LIFG’s first emir, Abd al-Salam al-Douadi, LIFG founding member Abd al-Wahab al-Qayid (the elder brother of Abu Yahya al-Libi), and LIFG military commander Mustafa al-Qunayfid. Given that the book was widely depicted as a repudiation of al-Qa’ida and Islamic terrorism in general, it would seem many journalists who reported on the release of the LIFG’s revisions did not closely review the contents of this material.

For U.S. officials, the LIFG’s Corrective Studies should have raised concerns. Its authors sought to “correct” the path of true defensive jihad, not abolish it altogether.<sup>11</sup>

In the introduction section, the authors explained: “it has been the fate of the Islamic ummah in recent generations to face great conspiracies by its enemies, the Jews and Christians ... who conquered its lands, plundered its resources and desecrated its sanctities ... [In response,] many devout [Muslims] have attempted to contribute in one way or another to serving the religion and reviving the ummah. ... we wrote this book for the sake of every Muslim who sees the huge gap between what one finds in God’s book ... and the worrisome situation [experienced] today by some of the sons of Islam ... We wrote this book for every mujahid who strives for the advancement of his ummah, and is confronting the external conspiracies with his pen, tongue, money, weapon or prayers.”<sup>12</sup> Echoing the views of such radical clerics as Muslim Botherhood

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Abu Yahya al-Libi. As-Sahab. August 2007. OSC translation dated 12 September 2007

<sup>9</sup> Tawil, Camille. “Revisions by Fighting Group’ To Be Published in Summer; Response to ‘Excess’ and Al-Qa’ida Practices.” Al-Hayat. 2 July 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Tawil, Camille. “Sami al-Sa’idi tells Al-Hayah that the Libyan regime asked the LIFG to intercede to stop the revolution but after its brigades had shed mujch blood.” Al-Hayat. 11 October 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Tawil, Camille. “The Al Qaeda Organization In the Islamic Maghreb: Expansion in the Sahel and challenges from within jihadist circles.” The Jamestown Foundation. April 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Khayat, M. “The Salafi-Jihad Challenge in Libya Part II: The Role of the LIFG and Its Former Commander ‘Abd Al-Hakim Belhadj.” Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI.org) 26 August 2011. Accessible via <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5598.htm>

thought leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi — clerics whose imprimaturs were secured prior to the book's release — authors of the Corrective Studies pronounced jihad is an obligation for Muslims in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine. They argued these places are occupied by foreign military powers and therefore must be liberated through resistance in the form of violent jihad.

During 2010, the Qadhafi regime released many of the LIFG leaders and members held at Abu Salim prison. After they disbanded the LIFG, Belhadj and other former LIFG members created a new organization called the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change.<sup>13</sup> Like the LIFG, the LIMC has reportedly been operating in the U.K., the country in which the U.S. Treasury Department has claimed the LIFG raised most of its known funds.<sup>14, 15</sup>

More recently, it was reported Belhadj is supporting a political party that was established late in 2011 by one of Libya's most high-profile clerics, Ali al-Sallabi, to advance Islamist interests in upcoming elections. The party's name, The National Gathering of Freedom, Justice, and Development, is said to be a nod to both Turkey's ruling party, the Justice and Development Party, and the party organized by the Muslim Brotherhood in neighboring Egypt, the Freedom and Justice Party.<sup>16</sup>

In September 2011, LIMC political committee member Anis al-Sharif advised there are indeed doctrinal parallels between the LIFG and the LIMC. Accordingly, the majority of LIMC members "genuinely" believe in the views expressed in the LIFG's Corrective Studies.<sup>17</sup> It is not clear if the LIMC's members also embrace the contents of LIFG spiritual leader Sami al-Saadi's book that outlines the "method" of the LIFG. Published on the group's website, the work emphasizes the importance of jihad, a term which appears more than 80 times in the 172-page document.<sup>18</sup>

Various LIFG-affiliated jihadis assumed leadership roles in militias which coordinated their operations with the Transitional National Council early in the revolution. For instance, "Brother Urwah," an important LIFG member whose input was sought by LIFG leaders as they authored their Corrective Studies, returned to Libya from Iran, which he fled to from Afghanistan following the U.S. invasion in 2001. Former LIFG member Noman bin Othman reported that after joining the revolutionaries in Libya Urwah worked under the TNC as the commander of the Umar al-Mukhtar Battalion.<sup>19</sup> This 160-member rebel battalion is named for Sanusiyya military commander Sidi Umar al-Mukhtar, the so-called "Lion of the Desert" who was hanged on September 18, 1931 after helping lead a decades-long

<sup>13</sup> Mahmud, Khalid. "Abd-al-Hakim Bilhaj, Commander of the Tripoli Liberation Operation: 'The Libyan Islamic Combat Group No Longer Exists Following Decision To Permanently Dissolve It,' Says in Interview with Al-Sharq al-Awsat: 'We Have Serious Challenge To Secure Cities, Build Modern Civil Society.'" Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 15 September 2011

<sup>14</sup> al-Shishani, Murad Batal. "Are Libyan rebels an al-Qaeda stalking horse?" BBC. 31 March 2011. Accessible via <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12923579>

<sup>15</sup> Three LIFG Members Designation for Terrorism. U.S. Department of the Treasury. 30 October 2008. Accessible via <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/hp1244.aspx>

<sup>16</sup> Spencer, Richard. "Libyan cleric announces new party on lines of 'moderate' Islamic democracy." The Daily Telegraph. 10 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8879955/Libyan-cleric-announces-new-party-on-lines-of-moderate-Islamic-democracy.html>

<sup>17</sup> al-Shishani, Murad Batal. "A Look at Abd al-Hakim Belhadj's Transformation from Jihadi to Libyan Revolutionary." The Jamestown Foundation. 29 September 2011. Accessible via [http://mlm.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=38461&tx\\_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=550&cHash=b25c94855d29bb3d24afb2df1b8c6a1a](http://mlm.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38461&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=550&cHash=b25c94855d29bb3d24afb2df1b8c6a1a)

<sup>18</sup> al-Saadi, Sami. Outline of the Method of the LIFG. Accessible via <http://web.archive.org/web/20011003201212/http://www.al-muqatila.com/tareef/indix.htm>

<sup>19</sup> al-Shafi'i, Muhammad. "Bin-Uthman to Al-Sharq al-Awsat: Al-Qa'ida Has No Presence In Libyan territories; Former LFG Leader: Musa Kusa Plays Positive Role In Refuting Libyan Regime's Claims That Bin Ladin's Organization Behind Libyan Revolution." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 22 April 2011.

insurgency against Italian forces that had occupied Libya.\* Killed by Qadhafi's security forces in an ambush in April in Ajdabiya, Urwah was arrested in Iran in 2004 and released from prison alongside various al-Qa'ida members some six years later.

In February 2011, a Qadhafi regime official claimed al-Qa'ida had "established an emirate in Derna led by Abd al-Hakim Khalil al-Hasadi, a former Guantanamo detainee."<sup>20</sup> The official claimed al-Hasadi's lieutenant in nearby al-Baida, Kheirallah Baraassi, was also a member of al-Qa'ida. The following day, al-Hasadi refuted the claim he had established an emirate in Derna in a statement broadcast by Al Jazeera.<sup>21</sup>

A member of the LIFG, Abd al-Hakim Khalil al-Hasadi was never held at Guantanamo Bay, but he was detained by U.S. forces after being captured along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in 2001.<sup>22</sup> Al-Hasadi claims he was forced to move to Afghanistan after spending time in Jordan and Sudan because he was unable to attain visas to enter Europe.<sup>23</sup> The U.S. handed him over to the Qadhafi regime in 2004, which al-Hasadi says freed him in 2008.<sup>24</sup> Following his release from prison, he recruited jihadis from eastern Libya to support the insurgency in Iraq. According to al-Hasadi, some of these recruits returned to Libya and fought Qadhafi's forces in places like Ajdabiya.<sup>25</sup>

Discussing the Libyan jihadis who had also participated in anti-Coalition operations in Iraq, al-Hasadi rejected claims they are terrorists. "They are patriots and good Muslims," he said, adding: "I condemn the September 11 attacks, and those against innocent civilians in general. But members of al-Qa'ida are also good Muslims ..."<sup>26</sup> Regarding the U.S. response to the 9/11 attacks, al-Hasadi said he "did not like the attack by America (in 2001) because it was unjust" and "we hated the United States for what they did."<sup>27</sup> He added that the rebels would accept help from the U.S., "but we cannot forget what happened."

Sensitive to Western concerns, the TNC dismissed allegations that any such jihadis were directly involved with its efforts. Indeed, not long after he defected late in February, Qadhafi's secularist-leaning interior minister, General Abd-al-Fattah Yunus, who had helped the regime suppress Islamist movements, became the chief of the TNC's military forces. What's more, the spokesperson for the TNC's military forces even lauded the killing of Usama bin Laden, who he described as an enemy of the Libyan opposition.<sup>28</sup>

The tide swiftly turned soon after Gen Yunus was assassinated late in July 2011 — allegedly at the hands of LIFG-affiliated rebels part of Ismail al-Sallabi's February

\* Umar al-Mukhtar is an iconic figure in Libya's history whose namesake has been invoked by al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri on numerous occasions while discussing Libyan concerns.

<sup>20</sup> "Al Qaeda sets up 'Islamic emirate.'" Agence France-Presse. 24 February 2011. Accessible via <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/ipad/al-qaeda-sets-up-islamic-emirate/story-fn6s850w-1226011076258>

<sup>21</sup> Former Libyan Islamist leader denies plan to establish "Islamic emirate." Al Jazeera TV. 25 Feb 11. Distributed by BBC Monitoring International Reports. 25 February 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Levinson, Charles. "Ex-Mujahdeen Help Lead Libyan Rebels." 2 April 2011. Accessible via <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703712504576237042432212406.html>

<sup>23</sup> Murphy, Dan. "Why the West need not fear Libya's Islamic warriors." The Christian Science Monitor. 22 April 2011. Accessible via <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2011/0422/Why-the-West-need-not-fear-Libya-s-Islamic-warriors/>

<sup>24</sup> Swami, Praveen et al. "Libyan rebel commander admits his fighters have al-Qaeda links." The Daily Telegraph. 25 March 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8407047/Libyan-rebel-commander-admits-his-fighters-have-al-Qaeda-links.html>

<sup>25</sup> Swami, Praveen et al. "Libyan rebel commander admits his fighters have al-Qaeda links." The Daily Telegraph. 25 March 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8407047/Libyan-rebel-commander-admits-his-fighters-have-al-Qaeda-links.html>

<sup>26</sup> Bongiorno, Robert. "Noi ribelli, islamici e tolleranti." Il Sole 24 Ore. 22 March 2011. Accessible via [http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2011-03-21/reportage-ribelli-islamici-tolleranti-231527\\_PRN.shtml](http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2011-03-21/reportage-ribelli-islamici-tolleranti-231527_PRN.shtml)

<sup>27</sup> "UK Source in Libya Profiles Darnah Rebel Contingent Accused of Al-Qa'ida Links." London Independent. 30 March 2011

<sup>28</sup> Mahmud, Khalid. "Libyan Rebels Deny Any Al-Qa'ida Presence In Their Areas; Wish Al-Qadhafi Uglier Fate Than Usamah Bin-Ladin's." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 3 May 2011.

17 Martyrs' Brigade. The assailants were thought to have been exacting revenge for Gen Yunus actions against the LIFG while a Qadhafi regime official.

TNC Chairman Mustafa Abdel Jalil, Libya's present interim president, soon sacked the TNC's executive committee, citing incompetence surrounding the investigation of Gen Yunus' death. Thereafter, the overt influence of Islamist elements expanded rapidly in Libya.

Late in August 2011, Belhadj suddenly assumed power over a large contingent of Tripoli's rebel forces after a group of his fighters seized control of Qadhafi's Baba az' Azia palace. Other rebel militia leaders have described the move as an unwelcomed power play, pointing out that Belhadj had hardly participated in the revolution before this battle.<sup>29</sup> (This, despite Belhadj's decades-long relationship with the revolution's so-called spiritual guide, Qatar-based Libyan cleric Ali al-Sallabi.<sup>30</sup>)

Belhadj's first public statements following the siege of Qadhafi's Tripoli palace likened the defeat of Qadhafi's forces in Tripoli to the conquest of Mecca.<sup>31</sup> In what the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) has described as a "highly symbolic" interview, Belhadj declared his rebel fighters "want security for our country and justice and prosperity for our people... for which we

have been calling over the past 40 or 41 years."<sup>32</sup> MEMRI reported that when asked about the fate of Qadhafi and his son Saif al-Islam, Belhadj said, "They fled like rats before the rebels' military advancement." (Note: Qatari Staff Colonel Hamad Abdullah al-Marri accompanied Belhadj on the march into Tripoli on August 22. Their arrival was broadcast live by Qatar-based Al Jazeera.<sup>33</sup>)

Days later, Belhadj accompanied TNC Chairman Jalil on a trip to meet with financiers of the revolution and NATO officials in Qatar, a conservative Muslim state which had become a key supplier of arms to Libya's rebel fighters.<sup>34, 35</sup> On August 29, they urged NATO representatives and Western officials to extend NATO operations to protect civilians.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, Belhadj pledged he would disband the fighters under his command once Libya has a new government.<sup>37</sup> Ismail al-Sallabi, the brother of Ali al-Sallabi and leader of the 3,000-man February 17 Martyrs' Brigade militia that is credited with defending Benghazi, was also a member of the delegation that met with NATO officials.<sup>38</sup>

Upon their return from Doha, Jalil pointed to Belhadj's participation in the meeting with Western officials in Qatar as evidence he was someone the TNC could trust. "He doesn't pose a threat to the world's safety," Jalil advised.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Robertson, Nic. "Libya's rival military commanders fight war of words." CNN. 15 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.cnn.com/2011/10/13/world/africa/libya-rival-commanders/>

<sup>30</sup> Fitzgerald, Mary. "The quiet scholar playing a pivotal role in shaping new Libya." The Irish Times. 3 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2011/0903/1224303431024.html>

<sup>31</sup> Ayestaran, Mikel. "Emir With Ties to Al-Qa'ida Appointed Military Commander of Tripoli." ABC (Spain). 31 August 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Khayat, M. "The Salafi-Jihad Challenge in Libya Part II: The Role of the LIFG and Its Former Commander 'Abd Al-Hakim Belhadj." MEMRI. 26 August 2011. Accessible via <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5598.htm>

<sup>33</sup> Dagher, Sam et al. "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern." The Wall Street Journal. 17 October 2011. Accessible via <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650.html>

<sup>34</sup> al-Shalchi, Hadeel and Michael, Maggie. "Libya rebel commander plays down Islamist past." The Associated Press. 2 September 2011. Accessible via <http://news.yahoo.com/libya-rebel-commander-plays-down-islamist-past-122316090.html>

<sup>35</sup> Dagher, Sam et al. "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern." The Wall Street Journal. 17 October 2011. Accessible via <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650.html>

<sup>36</sup> al-Shalchi, Hadeel and Michael, Maggie. "Libya rebel commander plays down Islamist past." The Associated Press. 2 September 2011. Accessible via <http://news.yahoo.com/libya-rebel-commander-plays-down-islamist-past-122316090.html>

<sup>37</sup> Nordland, Rod. "In Libya, Former Enemy is Recast in Role of Ally." The New York Times. 1 September, 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/02/world/africa/02islamist.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>38</sup> Farge, Emma. "Libyan Islamist says interim council should quit." Reuters. 4 September 2011. Accessible via <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE78308520110904?sp=true>

<sup>39</sup> al-Shalchi, Hadeel and Michael, Maggie. "Libya rebel commander plays down Islamist past." The Associated Press. 2 September 2011. Accessible via <http://news.yahoo.com/libya-rebel-commander-plays-down-islamist-past-122316090.html>

Jalil also acknowledged to The New York Times that he got to know Belhadj during the LIFG's negotiations with the Qadhafi regime years earlier.<sup>40</sup>

Ostensibly with support from TNC Chairman Jalil, Belhadj — the leader of a jihadi group labeled a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the U.S. — was named chairman of Tripoli's TNC-affiliated military council, a large umbrella organization for various rebel militia's that has reportedly received substantial support from Qatar. In this position, Belhadj reportedly has de facto military authority over nearly a third of Libya's population.<sup>41</sup>

## THE SALAFISTS

Members of the Muslim Brotherhood have also shaped the political dimension of the 2011 revolution in Libya. Welcomed by Qadhafi's predecessor after the Muslim Brotherhood was banned in neighboring Egypt, much like the LIFG the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya was targeted by Libyan security forces under Qadhafi's iron-fisted autocratic rule.

Discussing the Libyan MB branch's history in 2008, its then exiled leader Sulayman Abd al-Qadir explained: "We are a Libyan Islamic movement that rose in our country over 50 years ago in explicit terms and with the involvement of well-known persons and leaders. It has always been primarily concerned with Libyan national affairs. The most important point for us is that the foundation of our ideology is Islam, which forms our people's identity and cultural framework of reference."<sup>42</sup>

On February 27, 2011, the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya issued a statement affirming its support of the interim government that was being organized by former Justice

Minister Mustafa Abdel Jalil, "whose patriotic stances are highly appreciated."<sup>43</sup> The Brotherhood asserted this new government should not be "subjected to any partisan or tribal considerations," demanding that it "should be formed by those who actually led the revolution on the ground. No one should be allowed to thwart the revolution." The Brotherhood further asserted, "The government should not include any members from the 1969 coup d'état or those involved in crimes perpetrated by [the] Al-Qadhafi regime against the Libyan people." The Muslim Brotherhood in Libya's general guide, Sulayman Abd al-Qadir, who fled Libya in 1995, returned to the country in early May 2011.<sup>44</sup>

While its influence has grown substantially in places like the capital city of Tripoli since it fell to rebel forces late in August 2011, MB's role in the revolution was detectable from the beginning of the uprisings vis-à-vis its global leadership's influence on Ali al-Sallabi, who became an outspoken critic of the TNC for its exclusion of Islamists once his longtime associate Belhadj became chairman of the Tripoli Military Council.

Born in Benghazi, Ali al-Sallabi is the son of an eastern Libyan banker with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1988, al-Sallabi left Libya after spending nearly eight years in prison due to charges he was aware of a plot to assassinate Qadhafi. He reportedly studied in Saudi Arabia and Sudan, spending time in Yemen before moving to Qatar.<sup>45</sup>

Ali al-Sallabi is a popular Libyan Islamist cleric who for years served as a mediator between the Qadhafi regime and the hordes of Islamists and jihadis jailed in Libya, including members of the LIFG. Al-Sallabi and Belhadj have openly worked closely together since Belhadj became chairman of the Tripoli Military Council, and his brother Ismail al-Sallabi rose to prominence early in the revolution as the

<sup>40</sup> Nordland, Rod. "In Libya, Former Enemy is Recast in Role of Ally." The New York Times. 1 September, 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/02/world/africa/02islamist.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>41</sup> Robertson, Nic. "Libya's rival military commanders fight war of words." CNN. 15 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.cnn.com/2011/10/13/world/africa/libya-rival-commanders/>

<sup>42</sup> Quds Press. 27 August 2008. Distributed in English by BBC Worldwide Monitoring 27 August 2008.

<sup>43</sup> "Libyan Muslim Brotherhood Group Supports 'Glorious Revolution.'" Hanin Network Forums. 28 February 2011. OSC translation

<sup>44</sup> "Libyan MB Controller General Criticizes Jibril." Al Jazeera. 27 September 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Dagher, Sam et al. "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern." The Wall Street Journal. 17 October 2011. Accessible via <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204002304576627000922764650.html>

leader of the influential Benghazi-based February 17 Martyrs' Brigade, members of which were allegedly involved in the assassination of Gen Yunus.<sup>46</sup>

Al-Sallabi is a contemporary of Qatar-based Egyptian cleric Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi. Often referred to as the Muslim Brotherhood's chief imam and a spiritual guide of HAMAS, al-Qaradawi is one of the world's most influential Muslim religious figures.<sup>47, 48</sup> The host of a program broadcast by Al Jazeera, al-Qaradawi is a firebrand preacher who endorses suicide bombings targeting Israeli Jews and their children, and has declared the participation of foreign fighters in the anti-Coalition insurgency in Iraq permissible under Sharia. He declined the opportunity to lead the Global Muslim Brotherhood following the death of its supreme guide in 2004.

By February 2011, Yusuf al-Qaradawi had amassed substantial wealth through his work as a Sharia advisor to many important Islamic banks and funds. Through his work in the financial sector, al-Qaradawi became the Sharia advisor to Al Taqwa Bank.<sup>49</sup> Al-Qaradawi was also reportedly a major shareholder in Al Taqwa, which was designated by the U.S. Treasury Department in November 2001 for its role as a financier of terrorist organizations.<sup>50</sup> According to the Treasury Department, Al Taqwa provided investment advice and cash transfer mechanisms for al-Qa'ida and other radical Islamic groups.<sup>51</sup> However, evidence of Al Taqwa's support of terrorist groups has not been made public. (Note:

In August 2010, the United Nations Security Council removed Al Taqwa from a list of individuals and entities associated with al-Qa'ida.<sup>52</sup> A leaked July 2009 cable from the Office of the Secretary of State reveals State was prepared to assist with the delisting of Al Taqwa, along with three other entities and two individuals from the UN's list of al-Qa'ida-affiliated individuals and entities.)

Al-Qaradawi took particular interest in Libya's 2011 revolution. On February 21, 2011, during an appearance on Al Jazeera he issued a fatwa that called for Libyan soldiers to assassinate Qadhafi:

*It is forbidden to obey the order of a human being in defiance of the Creator. If the army is ordered to attack the people with airplanes, I say that they must not do so. Rather, they should attack whoever gave them that order.*

*I hereby issue a fatwa to the officers and soldiers who can kill Mu'ammarr Al-Qadhafi: Whoever among them can fire a bullet at him, thus relieving the country and the people of him, should do so. This man wants to annihilate the people, so I am protecting the people.*

*I rule that whoever can fire a bullet, and relieve us, as well as Libya and its great people, of this man's evil and danger, should do so.<sup>53</sup>*

Rebel Islamists' malcontent with the involvements of former regime officials in Libya's interim government

<sup>46</sup> "Officer accuses fellow rebels in Libya killing." The Associated Press. 29 July 2011. Accessible via [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-07-29-libya-rebel-chief-slain\\_n.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-07-29-libya-rebel-chief-slain_n.htm)

<sup>47</sup> "Libyan Revolution Spiritual Guide Close Associate of Youssef Qaradawi." The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Report. 11 September 2011. Accessible via <http://globalmbreport.com/?p=5000>

<sup>48</sup> Johnson, Ian. A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA, and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2010.

<sup>49</sup> "Yusuf Nada Gives Interview to Muslim Brotherhood, Continues Obfuscation." The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Report. 9 September 2007. Accessible via <http://globalmbreport.org/?p=207>

<sup>50</sup> Terrorism: What you need to know about U.S. Sanctions. U.S. Treasury Department. Accessible via <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/terror.txt>

<sup>51</sup> Terrorism: What you need to know about U.S. Sanctions. U.S. Treasury Department. Accessible via <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/terror.txt>

<sup>52</sup> "10 Taliban taken of UN terror list." Agence France-Presse. 3 August 2010. Accessible via <http://news.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne%2BNews/World/Story/A1Story20100803-230121.html>

<sup>53</sup> al-Qaradawi, Yusuf. Al Jazeera TV. 21 February 2011. MEMRI translation. Accessible via [http://www.memri.org/clip\\_transcript/en/2819.htm](http://www.memri.org/clip_transcript/en/2819.htm)

appeared to reach a boiling point with the assassination of Gen Yunus, who had allegedly overseen the 1996 massacre of 1,200 Islamist prisoners at Abu Salim prison. But in hindsight it may be seen that this was just the beginning of the power plays to be made by Libya's Salafists and jihadis.

After Prime Minister Jibril was ordered to restructure the TNC's executive committee by TNC Chairman Jalil following the assassination of Gen Yunus, Ali al-Sallabi, who Saif al-Islam had referred to as "the spiritual leader" of Libya's Islamists in an interview with The New York Times, would call for Prime Minister Jibril's resignation, along with the resignations of various other liberal TNC members in a piece published by the influential Qatar-based Al Jazeera news network.<sup>54</sup>

In an interview with Al Jazeera on September 12, 2011 that was prominently featured on its website the following day, Ali al-Sallabi called PM Jibril and other liberal members of the TNC "secular extremists," and claimed they were working to usher in a "new era of tyranny and dictatorship."<sup>55</sup> He was reportedly furious that PM Jibril refused to give the Muslim Brotherhood more than one ministerial portfolio in the government Jibril was planning to create, leading TNC officials to speculate more assassinations may be forthcoming.<sup>56</sup>

Soon after the report on Ali al-Sallabi's call for resignations from TNC officials appeared on Al Jazeera's website, an anti-Islamist, anti-Sallabi rally held in Tripoli's Martyrs Square attracted only a few dozen demonstrators.

The same day, The New York Times reported Abel al-Rajazk Abu Hajar, a Muslim Brotherhood figure, was leading the Tripoli Municipal Governing Council, in which Islamists were reportedly in the majority.<sup>57</sup> The Times also noted that Belhadj "has become so much an insider lately that he is seeking to unseat Prime Minister Jibril, the American-trained economist who is the nominal prime minister of the interim government, after Mr. Jibril obliquely criticized the Islamists."

The Times further reported Adel al-Hadi al-Mishrogi, a prominent Libyan businessman who began raising money for the rebels early in the revolution, was "not convinced by the Islamists' declarations of fealty to democratic principles."<sup>58</sup> He advised a well-organized Islamist umbrella group, Etilaf, has pushed aside more secular groupings. A TNC official confirmed for the Times that Etilaf was working hard to assert its influence, adding: "And we're hearing much more from the Islamists in the media because they are more organized and they are more articulate."

The Times reported Fathi bin Issa, a former Etilaf member who became an early representative of the Tripoli council, resigned after learning the Muslim Brotherhood members who dominate the body intend to ban theater, cinema and other arts, and had proposed issuing a fatwa to ban women from driving. Fathi bin Issa told the Times, "They were like the Taliban." He argued: "We didn't get rid of Qaddafi to replace him with such people." Regarding the revolution's spiritual leader Ali al-Sallabi, bin Issa

<sup>54</sup> Kirkpatrick, David D. "Libya Allying With Islamists, Qaddafi Son Says." The New York Times. 3 August 2011. Accessible via [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/04/world/africa/04seif.html?\\_r=1&pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/04/world/africa/04seif.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all)

<sup>55</sup> Mahmoud, Khalid. "A talk with Libyan Commander Abdelhakim Belhadj." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 15 September 2011. Accessible via <http://asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=3&id=26591>

<sup>56</sup> Mahmud, Khalid. "Libya: Revolutionaries' Disagreements Impede Search for Fugitive Al-Qadhafi." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 14 September 2011.

<sup>57</sup> Nordland, Rod and Kirkpatrick, David D. "Islamists' Growing Sway Raises Questions for Libya." The New York Times. 14 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/15/world/africa/in-libya-islamists-growing-sway-raises-questions.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>58</sup> Nordland, Rod and Kirkpatrick, David D. "Islamists' Growing Sway Raises Questions for Libya." The New York Times. 14 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/15/world/africa/in-libya-islamists-growing-sway-raises-questions.html?pagewanted=all>

advised, "He is just hiding his intentions. He says one thing to the BBC and another to Al Jazeera. If you believe him, then you don't know the Muslim Brothers."<sup>59</sup>

Earlier in September, 25 clerics and religious leaders met in Tripoli and established the Tripoli Ulema League. Reporting on the creation of this body, Al-Sharq Al-Awsat noted it had been organized "to stand up to what they described as the Islamists' control and their continued attempt to dominate the daily tempo of life of the people of Tripoli."<sup>60</sup> The article continues:

*... As happened in Egypt in the wake of toppling the regime of deposed President Husni Mubarak, where the various stripes of Islamists spread their influence, Tripoli these days faces a new phase of its contemporary history, which poses a major challenge to all those who believed that toppling Al-Qadhafi's regime would usher in a serious and more democratic beginning in the country.*

*Libyan activists, writers, and media men have complained to Al-Sharq al-Awsat of what they described as the Inquisition (Mahakim Taftish) formed by the pro-Muslim Brotherhood groups, who now have the upper hand in running the affairs in the 17 February uprising coalition. A member of the coalition told Al-Sharq al-Awsat over telephone from Tripoli that the Islamists have quietly hijacked the 17 February uprising coalition's leadership, of which shaykh Ali al-Salabi is regarded as the spiritual leader. They pointed out that the Islamists' control has penetrated the first local council that was recently formed in Tripoli, triggering violent differences among the various political currents.*

*In addition to the Islamists' control of radio stations and the Awqaf Ministry, which controls and supervises all mosques in and outside Tripoli, the Islamists now control*

*the main platform in the center of the Martyrs Square, which had previously been called the Green Square, where Al-Qadhafi's supporters used to assemble and demonstrate their loyalty, raise his photos, and applaud him.*

*It is no longer possible for anyone to speak from the Martyrs Square platform unless one gets permission from the Muslim Brotherhood leaders. This situation prompted some people to wonder whether the Muslim Brotherhood leaders have decided early to turn Tripoli into an Islamic emirate. Islamists now make great efforts to encourage women not only to wear hijab and Islamic garment and head cover, but also to wear veils as the supposed Islamic Sharia garment.*

*In expression of his rejection of the domination of the Islamists, the noted Libyan journalist and activists, Fathi Bin-Issa, decided to resign his post as official in charge of media and culture in the Tripoli's local council, which is headed by Abd-al-Razzaq Abu-Hajar. This step followed his revelation to Al-Sharq Al-Awsat yesterday that he had received death threats because of his position that opposes the Islamists' efforts to control the capital Tripoli.*

Two days after Qadhafi was killed near his hometown Sirte, Prime Minister Jibril resigned.<sup>61</sup> The day following his resignation, TNC Chairman Jalil announced Libyan law will be based on Sharia: "We, as an Islamic state, determined that Islamic law is a major source for legislation, and on this basis any law which contradicts the principles of Islam and Islamic law will be considered null and void."<sup>62</sup>

Whether Libya's new constitution will reflect such values remains to be seen. But it is worth noting that in December a delegation of Brotherhood-affiliated clerics led by al-Qaradawi was invited to Libya by TNC officials.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Nordland, Rod and Kirkpatrick, David D. "Islamists' Growing Sway Raises Questions for Libya." The New York Times. 14 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/15/world/africa/in-libya-islamists-growing-sway-raises-questions.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>60</sup> Mahmud, Khalid. "Early Confrontation Between Liberals And Islamists in Tripoli; Reports On Formation of The Inquisition And Intimidation' Differences Pummel Tripoli's Local Council." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 8 September 2011.

<sup>61</sup> Pfeiffer, Tom. "Libya's Jibril sees elections within eight months." Reuters. 22 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/22/us-libya-elections-idUSTRE79L0TB20111022>

<sup>62</sup> Halevi, Jonathan D. "Did the Libyan Leadership Deceive the West?" Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. 27 October 2011.

Accessible via <http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=442&PID=0&IID=9438>

<sup>63</sup> "Qaradawi in Libya." The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Report. 12 December 2011. Accessible via <http://globalmbreport.com/?p=5445>

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 THE NEXT CHAPTER
 

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A Salafist tide is on the rise in North Africa as Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated political groups attract voters to their “moderate” platforms. Since the TNC announced late in October that Libya had been liberated from Qadhafi’s autocratic rule, Islamist parties in neighboring Tunisia, followed by Egypt have dominated popular elections.

The founders of Tunisia’s leading Ennahda Party were inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood, and the party is understood to be the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Tunisia.<sup>64</sup> Although they were aligned with extremist movements during the 1980s, Ennahda’s leaders now prefer to liken their party to Turkey’s leading party while overtly advocating for an Islamic identity and society in Tunisia.<sup>65</sup>

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party has led recent elections, trailed by the even more conservative Salafist Al-Nour Party, which has received substantially higher votes than any of the country’s secularist parties.<sup>66</sup> And It appears some two-thirds of the members of Egypt’s new parliament tasked with drafting the country’s new constitution will be Islamists.

Meanwhile, the revolution in Libya was markedly different from the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt in that its success was ultimately achieved through the mobilization of an armed insurgency. In eastern Libya, jihadis affiliated with terrorist groups like the LIFG and al-Qa’ida played prominent roles leading rebel fighters against the Qadhafi regime’s forces. And with support from the conservative Muslim country Qatar, a prominent jihadi who once led the LIFG assumed command over one of the country’s largest contingents of rebel fighters.

Various commanders of now ex-rebel fighters — many of whom are reportedly Islamists — are among the country’s political aspirants, with Tripoli Military Council chief Abd al-Hakim Belhadj perhaps foremost among them. And a key question that remains to be answered is: Will Libyans reward fighters like Belhadj with their votes?

Belhadj expressed concerns about the TNC’s management of political affairs in an oped published in Britain late in September 2011. In it, he wrote: “Our uprising marked a historic turning point; we had waited a long time and made many sacrifices for it. I remember my friends and comrades in struggle whom the Gaddafi regime killed, and the many martyrs of our people who had refused to submit to the regime’s oppression and its security agencies. The spirit of these heroes continues to remind us constantly of the need to attain justice in Libya and avoid betraying the ultimate sacrifices that they made.”<sup>67</sup> Addressing the TNC’s exclusion of Islamist elements among the interim government’s top decision makers, Belhadj related, “What worries us is the attempt of some secular elements to isolate and exclude others. Libya’s Islamists have announced their commitment to democracy; despite this, some reject their participation and call for them to be marginalised. It is as though they want to push Islamists towards a non-democratic option by alienating and marginalising them.”

Early in November 2011, Ali al-Sallabi announced the creation of The National Gathering of Freedom, Justice, and Development party, which will position candidates for Libya’s 2012 elections. As mentioned above, the party’s name is

<sup>64</sup> “Tunisian Ennahda Party, Part of the Global Muslim Brotherhood?” The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Report. 9 November 2011. Accessible via <http://globalmbrreport.org/?p=5264>

<sup>65</sup> Lewis, Aidan. “Profile: Tunisia’s Ennahda Party.” BBC. 25 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15442859>

<sup>66</sup> El Madany, Sherine. “Egypt Islamists take two-thirds of 2nd-round vote.” Reuters. 24 December 2011. Accessible via <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/24/us-egypt-election-results-idUSTRE7BN0C620111224>

<sup>67</sup> Belhadj, Abdel Hakim. “The revolution belongs to all Libyans, secular or not.” The Guardian. 27 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/sep/27/revolution-belongs-to-all-libyans>

said to be a nod to both Turkey's ruling party, the Justice and Development Party, and the party organized by the Muslim Brotherhood in neighboring Egypt, the Freedom and Justice Party. Discussing the party's platform, Ali al-Sallabi, an outspoken critic of secular liberals serving in the TNC, said, "This is not an Islamist party but a nationalist party." He then acknowledged the party's political agenda "respects the general principles of Islam and Libyan culture."<sup>68</sup> Ali al-Sallabi, who mentioned Belhadj had endorsed his new party, said he would not personally seek the presidency as a candidate in Libya's 2012 elections.

Later in November, Belhadj remained guarded when discussing the details of political maneuvering many anticipate from him and his Qatar-backed associates like Ali al-Sallabi. Asked about his interests in politics, Belhadj coyly replied, "Of course I am also interested in the coming elections just like any other Libyan who is interested in and follows Libyan affairs. We are preparing and are getting ready for the future political project."<sup>69</sup>

Although many Libya observers assert the Libyan people are mostly conservative, Islamists have not been provided a substantial presence within the TNC. While prominent Libyan revolutionary personalities like Ali al-Sallabi and Belhadj have expressed frustrations over this situation, moving forward this dynamic could actually play to their favor.

Given the immensity of the tasks ahead in the short run for the TNC, even the most minor errors can be used by Islamists to portray liberal technocrats as inept or apathetic when it comes to fulfilling the expectations of the average Libyan. Furthermore, if the TNC fails to produce a constitution which reflects the Islamic values many observers say are embraced by most Libyans, Islamist political groups could attract support from moderate Libyans. On the other hand, if this constitution too heavily reflects conservative Muslim values it could reduce the legitimacy

of any secular political movements. And when taking into account the levels of financial support one can safely forecast will flow in for Islamist parties from conservative Gulf states, it seems secularist liberal candidates will already be operating at a comparative disadvantage.

It is reasonable to anticipate increased coordination of political activities between Salafist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya and groups such as Belhadj's Libyan Islamic Movement for Change. Policy makers should remain attentive to these developments. For, in terms of U.S.-Libya relations, if these elements are able to write the next chapter of Libya's history it may indeed be one which is just as fraught with conflicts of interests as the chapter written by Qadhafi.

Identifying just what the coalescence of these interests within Libya may mean for the future requires more than an understanding of the deeply anti-Western agendas of jihadis like Belhadj alone. It is also important for officials to take a careful look at the Muslim Brotherhood, whose platform is likely to curry influence in the upcoming elections in Libya.

Presented with the assertion the Muslim Brotherhood is a vehicle for the spread of Islamist extremism some Arabists are quick to point out that the Muslim Brotherhood is not a monolith. But all too often analysts who highlight this fact limit their juxtapositions of the views expressed by Muslim Brotherhood thought leaders like Yusuf al-Qaradawi to comparisons with more nuanced views expressed by Brotherhood operatives within Western academic spheres. In so doing, they leave casual observers with the notion that al-Qaradawi's views reflect the utmost extremes of the Brotherhood's doctrine, overlooking the fact that comparing al-Qaradawi's views with those of the Brotherhood's leaders in places like Yemen will also demonstrate their point — even if at the same time demonstrating not all MB leaders are at odds with al-Qa'ida. Indeed, it will be worth monitoring the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya to determine if its leaders

<sup>68</sup> Spencer, Richard. "Libyan cleric announces new party on lines of 'moderate' Islamic democracy." *The Daily Telegraph*. 10 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8879955/Libyan-cleric-announces-new-party-on-lines-of-moderate-Islamic-democracy.html>

<sup>69</sup> Lowe, Christian and Shuaib, Ali. "Libyan Islamist commander endorses new government." *Reuters*. 28 November 2011. Accessible via <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/11/28/uk-libya-islamist-belhadj-idUKTRE7AR0QL20111128>

demonstrate the same respect for al-Qa'ida affiliates as the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen's leaders have extended them. This, despite the criticisms of al-Qaradawi and the Brotherhood that have been issued by al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri.

As it is common for the Muslim Brotherhood's public relations representatives to describe the Brotherhood as "moderate," it is important for officials to remain mindful that what may constitute a moderate Islamist view in the Middle East and North Africa may very easily be categorized as extremist here in the West.

Like the LIFG's leaders who authored the group's Corrective Studies, the Muslim Brotherhood is not focused on waging a global jihad. Yet like the LIFG's leaders who were freed from prison by the Qadhafi regime, the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership endorses waging violent jihad against foreign "occupiers" in Iraq, and against Israel. Ultimately, as Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ian Johnson notes in his 2010 book that chronicles the open source features of Western governments' calamitous collaborations with the Brotherhood, the Brotherhood's support of jihad in Israel and Iraq means it explicitly endorses terrorism.<sup>70</sup>

Just as policy makers and national security managers should diligently scrutinize the markers which offer insights of former LIFG leaders' political ambitions they should also carefully assess the extents to which our own interests will permit us to work with Salafists in Libya. Officials may also want to carefully consider whether some of the Salafist-jihadis who are assuming prominent roles in Libya should be apprehended due to their involvements with such entities as the LIFG and/or al-Qa'ida, which are still designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the U.S. That is, before

these elements realize the opportunity to advance their jihad to the next logical stage, which could entail mobilizing violent extremists for operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, and possibly Europe and elsewhere in the West.

## A VIEW TO WORST CASE SCENARIOS

On September 3, 2011, rebels discovered secret documents in the Tripoli offices of the regime's external security forces that revealed the post-9/11 cooperation between the Qadhafi regime, MI6, and the CIA.<sup>71</sup> These documents reportedly demonstrate how British and American intelligence organizations worked with the regime in coordinating the renditions of LIFG emir Belhadj and LIFG spiritual leader Sami al-Saadi to Libya.<sup>72</sup>

Discussing these findings with journalist Camille Tawil later in September, Belhadj remarked, "I believe that what I was exposed to was the direct result of what the CIA did. Now, it has been proved by these documents that the British Intelligence Organizations had a hand in this issue. I have submitted my demands (an apology and compensation) because what happened was contradictory to the human rights to which these governments claim to be committed and these governments interfere in the affairs of other governments on the pretext that they do not respect human rights."<sup>73</sup> Days before these documents were discovered, Belhadj told *The New York Times*, "If one day there is a legal way, I would like to see my torturers brought to court."<sup>74</sup>

Sami al-Saadi advised journalist Camille Tawil he was not tortured by the CIA.<sup>75</sup> But he says he was subjected to both psychological and physical torture while held at

<sup>70</sup> Johnson, Ian. *A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA, and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010.

<sup>71</sup> "US/UK: Documents Reveal Libya Rendition Details." Human Rights Watch. 8 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/08/usuk-documents-reveal-libya-rendition-details>

<sup>72</sup> Chulov, Martin. "MI6 knew I was tortured, says Libyan rebel leader: Abdul Hakim Belhaj says MI6 helped CIA arrest him and send him to Libya for torture." *The Guardian*. 5 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/05/abdul-hakim-belhaj-libya-mi6-torture>

<sup>73</sup> Tawil, Camille. "Belhaj to Al-Hayah: We Want a Civil State that Encompasses the Islamists and the Seculars." *Al-Hayat*. 19 September 2011.

<sup>74</sup> Nordland, Rod. "In Libya, Former Enemy is Recast in Role of Ally." *The New York Times*. 1 September, 2011. Accessible via <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/02/world/africa/02islamist.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>75</sup> Tawil, Camille. "Sami al-Sa'idi tells Al-Hayah that the Libyan regime asked the LIFG to intercede to stop the revolution but after its brigades had shed much blood." *Al-Hayat*. 11 October 2011

Abu Salim prison, where two of his brothers were killed during the 1996 massacre that claimed the lives of some 1,200 Islamist prisoners. He was apparently rearrested after the revolution took shape, and freed from prison following the fall of Tripoli to rebel fighters. Al-Saadi told the British press, "Whenever they felt I was withholding information they would beat me and subject me to electric shocks."<sup>76</sup>

In October 2011, it was reported al-Saadi had filed suit against the British government for its role in his family's rendition to Libya.<sup>77</sup> Weeks later, it was reported Belhadj was also taking legal actions against the British government, which he claims was complicit in his "illegal" rendition to Libya and the torture he says he endured following his capture in 2004.<sup>78</sup>

These actions are likely a prelude of things to come between Belhadj and his associates and the West, and it is naïve to estimate lawfare will be the most ambitious tactic Belhadj and his jihadi cohorts are willing to employ now that they have achieved their goal of removing Qadhafi from power. Indeed, Belhadj and his fighters have

already begun exporting their combat expertise to confront another government they deem an adversary: The Assad regime in Syria.

Late in November 2011, it emerged that Belhadj had made an (ostensibly) official trip to Turkey to meet with Free Syria Army leaders in Istanbul and on Syria's border with Turkey.<sup>79</sup> The source of this account shared that Belhadj discussed the prospect of sending troops to train Syrian revolutionaries. It was also reported that Turkish officials participated in the meetings between Libya's delegates and Syrian oppositionists who had visited Libya earlier in the month to hold preliminary meetings focused on channeling arms to Syrian fighters.<sup>80</sup> Discussing the matter, an official from Belhadj's Tripoli Military Council was quoted as saying, "Bashar sent Gaddafi weapons when he was fighting us. There are hundreds of people who want to go to fight in Syria, or help in other ways if they can."<sup>81</sup> (See below Background Note)

Belhadj's desire to position Libyan fighters as players in the situation in Syria reflects a boldness of aspirations which should be cause for concern among officials both

### Background Note

*Prior to embarking on this trip to meet with Syrian oppositionists in Turkey, Belhadj was briefly detained by rebel fighters from Zintan who provide security at Tripoli International Airport due to their concern he was carrying forged travel documents.<sup>82</sup> Belhadj was released when Libya's interim president, TNC Chairman Jalil, intervened and demanded Belhadj be allowed to leave the country to participate in an important trip to visit injured Libyan rebel fighters who were receiving medical care in Turkey.<sup>83</sup> A month earlier, Libya's TNC became the world's first government to acknowledge the Syrian National Council as Syria's legitimate government.<sup>84</sup>*

<sup>76</sup> Cobain, Ian et al. "How MI6 deal sent family to Gaddafi's jail." The Guardian. 9 September 2011. Accessible via <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/sep/09/how-mi6-family-gaddafi-jail>

<sup>77</sup> Cobain, Ian. "Libyan dissident tortured by Gaddafi to sue Britain over rendition." The Guardian. 6 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/06/libyan-dissident-tortured-sues-britain>

<sup>78</sup> "Libyan Rebel Suing UK Over Alleged Rendition Role." The Associated Press. 19 December 2011. Accessible via <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=143973963>

<sup>79</sup> Sherlock, Ruth. "Leading Libyan Islamist met Free Syrian Army opposition group." The Daily Telegraph. 27 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8919057/Leading-Libyan-Islamist-met-Free-Syrian-Army-opposition-group.html>

<sup>80</sup> Sherlock, Ruth. "Libya's new rulers offer weapons to Syrian rebels." The Daily Telegraph. 25 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/8917265/Libyas-new-rulers-offer-weapons-to-Syrian-rebels.html>

<sup>81</sup> Sherlock, Ruth. "Libya's new rulers offer weapons to Syrian rebels." The Daily Telegraph. 25 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/8917265/Libyas-new-rulers-offer-weapons-to-Syrian-rebels.html>

<sup>82</sup> Lowe, Christian and Shuaib, Ali. "Libyan Islamist commander endorses new government." Reuters. 28 November 2011. Accessible via <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/11/28/uk-libya-islamist-belhadj-idUKTRE7AR0QL20111128>

<sup>83</sup> Spencer, Richard. "Libyan Islamist leader detained as tensions grow between rival factions." The Daily Telegraph. 25 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8916831/Libyan-Islamist-leader-detained-as-tensions-grow-between-rival-factions.html>

<sup>84</sup> Chulov, Martin and Weaver, Matthew. "Libya leads world in recognising Syrian opposition's right to rule." The Guardian.

in the West and nearby Israel — even if regime change in Syria may help contain Iran. For, as articulated in the LIFG's Corrective Studies, Belhadj has called on Muslims to wage jihad against neighboring Israel.

In consideration of this development, it is appropriate for the USCIB to assess whether Belhadj's interest in participating in such conflicts reflects the influence of al-Qa'ida leaders like Usama bin Laden, who originally envisioned creating an army of jihadis that could be utilized to defend and advance certain religio-political interests.

While Belhadj's interest in the situation in Syria indicates his focus in the post-Qadhafi era will not be limited to Libyan affairs, officials should also be concerned about what may take shape within Libya if Belhadj and the extremist elements he is associated with claim power through the country's upcoming elections.

Should Salafists and jihadis like Belhadj assume control of Libya they will have at their disposals the means to significantly shape the security environment throughout North Africa and possibly well beyond. Particularly if, either by official or unofficial policy, they follow in the footsteps of the Taliban in Afghanistan by allowing members of al-Qa'ida and affiliated movements to use Libya as a safe base of operations. And given China's rigorous pursuits of extraction opportunities in Africa, Libyan jihadis like Belhadj have every reason to feel confident there will be a sustainable market for their country's oil even if their actions alienate Libya from much of the global community.

Libya is of such strategic interest to Core al-Qa'ida's leadership that it was kept out of the operational purview of the terror network's Maghreb franchise. Apart from the fact Usama bin Laden viewed Qadhafi as a prospective ally in al-Qa'ida's efforts to counter Western interests in the Middle East, according to former LIFG Shura Council

member Noman bin Othman, Ayman al-Zawahiri considers Libya to be "directly tied to Egyptian affairs since it can, in his view, affect the jihadist political situation in Egypt."<sup>85</sup> Perhaps it was for this reason that in April 2011 al-Zawahiri called on jihadis to prepare to mount an insurgency against any Western forces that might occupy Libya: "I would like to alert my Muslim brothers in Libya, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, and the rest of the lands of Islam that if the United States and the NATO forces interfere in Libya, it will be necessary for their neighbors in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and the rest of the Muslims to go forth to fight all the mercenaries of Al-Qadhafi and the Crusaders of NATO."<sup>86</sup>

It is unclear whether Belhadj and his associates are pleased with al-Zawahiri's interest in Libya. But there are indications the presence of al-Qa'ida will be welcomed by militia groups in at least one major city as late in 2011 an al-Qa'ida flag was flown above a Benghazi courthouse that is considered the seat of the revolution.<sup>87</sup> Of course, now that the emir of a terrorist group whose members have for years been closely associated with al-Qa'ida is a major stakeholder in Libya's future it is likely al-Zawahiri and Core al-Qa'ida military officials under his command will be keen to rekindle their relations with jihadis who were members of the LIFG.

On the other hand, assuming Belhadj and his associates will retain official positions in Libya following its 2012 elections, even if they do not foster safe havens for members of al-Qa'ida and affiliated movements Belhadj and other jihadis in Libya could create a HAMAS-like entity to help Islamists advance Salafist interests throughout Africa by force. Influential clerics like Ali al-Sallabi and Muslim Brotherhood officials in neighboring countries would no-doubt welcome the establishment of a special operations unit in Libya with a mandate similar to that of

19 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/19/libya-recognises-syrian-opposition-right-rule>

<sup>85</sup> Tawil, Camille. "Al-Hayat Serialization on Al-Qa'ida. Part 5 of 6: The joining of the Salafist Group contributes to the release of the stranglehold over Al-Qaida." Al-Hayat 28 October 2010.

<sup>86</sup> al-Zawahiri, Ayman. "The Fifth Episode: Message of Hope and Glad Tidings to Our People in Egypt." As-Sahab. Distributed online 15 April 2011. OSC translation.

<sup>87</sup> "Libya: Al Qaeda flag flown above Benghazi courthouse." The Daily Telegraph. 1 November 2011. Accessible via <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8861608/Libya-Al-Qaeda-flag-flown-above-Benghazi-courthouse.html>

Iran's Qods Force (ie. fund, train, and equip Islamic terror groups) in order to assist HAMAS with its operations targeting Israeli interests. This unit might also target Western states like Italy, which Belhadj's Libyan Islamic Movement for Change decried a friend of Qadhafi in a statement issued in February 2011 to criticize Western states for failing to address Qadhafi's forceful response to the uprisings in Libya.<sup>88</sup>

Should they assume power over Libya, extremists could also create myriad security problems for Israel, Europe, and possibly the U.S. by facilitating the continued smuggling of weapons out of Libya. ( In November 2011, an AQIM official indicated al-Qa'ida's North African franchise is exploiting the upheaval in Libya, collecting weapons left unattended by officials.<sup>89</sup> It has also been reported that black market arms dealers have been smuggling such weapon as Russian-made heat-seeking shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles out of Libya toward Gaza via Egypt. Antiaircraft missiles smuggled out of Libya were becoming so readily available on the Sinai Peninsula that by October 2011 the price for one had reportedly dropped from \$10,000 to \$4,000.<sup>90</sup>)

Dually, the proliferation of arms within Libya poses significant problems for Libya itself. Aside from the tons of weapons Qatar has shipped to Libyan rebel fighters like those under the command of Belhadj, throughout the revolution militias clearly had ample opportunities to stock-pile arms by raiding weapons storage facilities left unprotected by the Qadhafi regime, one of Russia's top arms clients.<sup>91</sup> Late in October, Human Rights Watch reported large weapons depots were also left unsecured by the TNC.<sup>92</sup> Thousands of crates of rocket-propelled

grenades, including RPG-7 shells for tank cannons, artillery and mortar projectiles, antiaircraft rounds, and other munitions were reportedly strewn across the open desert near one site. These weapons were apparently removed from storage facilities in anticipation of possible NATO airstrikes, then left for the taking.

Demobilizing Libya's rebel militias does not appear an easy task. Clashes have erupted between several of these groups since Qadhafi's fall, and longstanding tribal rifts could make calls for disarming local militia groups which now provide security unpopular in many areas of the country. In December 2011, the special representative of the UN secretary-general for Libya acknowledged that while the security situation in Libya has "largely stabilized," there is still potential for localized clashes to escalate. He explained, "This is partly because of numerous, sometimes rival, revolutionary formations, lacking fully effective coordination mechanisms among them, or between them and the government," adding: "This situation is further complicated by the tensions that exist in part because of historical local conflicts between communities, which the former regime had exacerbated and exploited to its advantage."<sup>93</sup>

This environment makes Libya ripe for exploitation by violent extremist movements. Given these conditions, if politically aspirant jihadi rebel fighters like Belhadj fail to claim official authority via Libya's 2012 elections they might mount an insurgency in Libya that could yield devastating consequences for the greater region.

Strong political polling data in Libya is scant, rendering the degree of popular support Belhadj and other extremists are capable of raising an important known unknown. Still,

<sup>88</sup> "Libya: Islamists call on Air Force to bomb Gaddafi." Al-Sharq Al-Awsat. 23 February 2011. Accessible via <http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=24268>

<sup>89</sup> Ferran, Lee and Momtaz, Rym. "Al Qaeda Terror Group: We 'Benefit From' Libyan Weapons." ABC. 10 November 2011. Accessible via <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/al-qaeda-terror-group-benefit-libya-weapons/story?id=1492379>

<sup>90</sup> Fadel, Leila. "Smuggled Libyan Weapons flood into Egypt." The Washington Post. 12 October 2011. Accessible via [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/libyan-weapons-flooded-egypts-black-weapons-market/2011/10/12/gIQA2YQufL\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/libyan-weapons-flooded-egypts-black-weapons-market/2011/10/12/gIQA2YQufL_story.html)

<sup>91</sup> "Russia to upgrade 200 Soviet-era tanks for Libya." RIA Novosti. 7 July 2010. Accessible via [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100707/159723546.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100707/159723546.html)

<sup>92</sup> "Libya: Transitional Council Failing to Secure Weapons." Human Rights Watch. 25 October 2011. Accessible via <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/10/25/libya-transitional-council-failing-secure-weapons>

<sup>93</sup> "New Libyan govt faces 'dual challenge.'" Xinhua. 23 December 2011. Accessible via [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011-12/23/content\\_14313697.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011-12/23/content_14313697.htm)

there are ample indicators rebel fighters like Belhadj have developed varying degrees of proprietary notions regarding Libya's future. What's more, these elements will most likely oppose the establishment of a Libyan government that is friendly toward the West.

Groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood are likely to support jihadis like Belhadj should they seek roles in Libya's next government. For, as MB's Libya chapter put it in February 2011, Belhadj and other jihadis are among the Libyans who can claim they "actually led the revolution on the ground."

Presently, it appears Ali al-Sallabi and Belhadj are attempting to formalize a Salafist-jihadi nexus in Libya to enhance both interest groups' positions in Libya's upcoming elections. Their maneuvering should be closely monitored by national security managers tasked with advancing America's interests in the Middle East and North Africa. And in consideration of this apparent de facto political partnership between Libyan Salafists and jihadi elements, working with the Brotherhood in Libya could become tantamount to lending support to either HAMAS or the Taliban in Afghanistan prior to the 9/11 attacks.

While one would imagine Washington has learned ample lessons from coordinating covert operations with jihadi groups, it seems the prudence of working with the Brotherhood continues to be contemplated. A recent CIA report titled *Muslim Brotherhood: Pivotal Actor in European Political Islam* notes: "MB groups are likely to be pivotal to the future of political Islam in Europe ... They also show impressive internal dynamism, organization, and media savvy." While the report's authors acknowledged European intelligence services "consider the Brotherhood a security threat and critics — including more pluralistic Muslims — accuse it of hindering Muslim social integration," they concluded that "MB-related groups offer an alternative to more violent Islamic movements."<sup>94</sup>

The Global Muslim Brotherhood may not be a violent movement. However, this analysis appears to ignore the fact that one of the world's most lethal Islamic terror groups, HAMAS, is an offshoot of the Brotherhood. It also

ignores the fact that MB thought leaders like Yusuf al-Qaradawi have explicitly encouraged jihadis to attack Americans and our allies, Israel chief among them.

While membership in the Brotherhood may represent an alternative to membership in a violent extremist group, the growth of the Brotherhood is unlikely to reduce the spread of violent extremism, particularly in places like Libya. Although the Brotherhood does not encourage Muslims to commit acts of terrorism in its organizational namesake, its mouthpieces like al-Qaradawi nevertheless do proselytize interpretations of Islam and Sharia which imbue their followers with the sense it is their duty to violently oppose Western interests, notably the spread of Western values in Islamic territories.

It is conceivable the situation in Libya will become quite toxic if extremists like Belhadj or his associates who are affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood assume leadership roles in the country's next government. Policy makers in Washington must therefore carefully calculate whether terrorists like Belhadj should be allowed to pursue opportunities to advance their agendas as either official members of Libya's next government, or as militant proxies of the next regime. Western officials should also remain mindful that the Muslim Brotherhood is not a monolith, and, given that he studied in Sudan, Ali al-Sallabi, who is certain to influence the political dimension of the post-Qadhafi era, may encourage Libya's next government to adopt a posture that is just as radical and anti-Western as that of the Brotherhood's leadership in places like Yemen.

Developing stronger situational awareness solutions will be the key to averting a scenario in which the West fosters opportunities for extremist groups to transition Libya into the next major base of operations for militant Islamist movements. Apprehending terrorists like Belhadj and known al-Qa'ida members and affiliates who were extradited to Libya and are now members of Libyan militias may also help prevent Libya from becoming a major incubator for Islamic terrorism. Additionally, policy makers must examine past mistakes made by working with Islamists in order to avoid repeating them in Libya.

<sup>94</sup> Johnson, Ian. *A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA, and the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2010.

## QUESTIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

*The following is a set of questions Kronos assesses may be useful to policy makers when discussing Libya-related concerns with representatives of defense and intelligence organizations.*

Is the administration providing the intelligence community the resources needed to fully manage our interests in Libya and elsewhere in North Africa?

What are our current interests in Libya and elsewhere in North Africa? What changed since the Arab Spring?

Should the LIFG remain on the FTO list?

Given that the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change appears to be the LIFG with a different name, should the LIMC be placed on the FTO list?

Has the presence of al-Qa'ida-affiliated militants grown in Libya since the revolution began?

Has intelligence indicated Belhadj is among the rebel commanders who coordinated operations with al-Qa'ida members during the revolution?

To what extent is the TNC demonstrating a willingness to cooperate with U.S. counter-terrorism operations?

It has been reported that a flag bearing al-Qa'ida's brand has been flown above a courthouse in Benghazi. Are members of al-Qa'ida openly working to establish emirates in Libya?

Have any al-Qa'ida members been captured in Libya since the revolution began? If so, has the TNC provided Western intelligence access to them?

Has the TNC welcomed covert efforts to prevent the trafficking of arms in Libya to groups which target Americans and our allies in the Middle East and Africa?

Reports indicate weapons smuggled out of Libya could be used in attacks on Israel. What kinds of weapons have terrorist groups seized during the revolution, and have any of these weapons been used to attack Americans and our allies?

What is known about the smugglers and smuggling routes of the arms?

What happened to Libya's chemical and biological weapons stockpiles?

Is it likely that Libyan Islamists will receive the same levels of popular support that Islamists have garnered in elections in neighboring Tunisia and Egypt?

What is the role of tribalism in Libya?

Should the U.S. encourage a power-sharing equilibrium between the major Libyan tribes?

Given that Libyan Islamic radicals were heavily involved in the jihad in Iraq against U.S. and coalition forces, should we be concerned about Libyan volunteers being sent to Syria to fight with rebels against the Syrian government?

Should they claim power in Libya's upcoming elections, is it assessed Libyan Islamists may either officially or unofficially offer up Libya as a safe haven for wanted terrorists like Abu Yahya al-Libi and other members of al-Qa'ida?

## A VIEW TO EXTREMIST CURRENTS IN LIBYA 20

Should they claim power in the country's upcoming elections, is it assessed Libyan Islamists may either officially or unofficially provide support to HAMAS and other terrorist groups which target Israel?

Should they claim power in the country's upcoming elections, is it assessed Libyan Islamists may either officially or unofficially provide support to jihadi groups which target American interests in Afghanistan and/or Iraq?

Is Libya's Maliki school of Islam influenced by Wahabbism or Salafism? Please define the difference.

How compatible is the Maliki school of Islam with radical schools of Islamic thought embraced by violent extremist movements?

Are Ali al-Sallabi's views as extreme as those espoused by Yusuf al-Qaradawi?

What is known about relations between Ali al-Sallabi and the leaders of HAMAS?

Is Libya a likely new venue for the growth of violent extremism?

Does the Global Muslim Brotherhood's agenda entail the establishment of a veritable caliphate in North Africa?

Does the Global Muslim Brotherhood intend to establish entities similar to HAMAS in North Africa that will be used to militarily advance Salafist interests in Africa?

Should Belhadj and other LIFG members stand trial for the roles they have allegedly played supporting the Taliban and al-Qa'ida?

What is the role of the British government in dealing with Libyan Islamic radicals?

Should frozen Libyan assets be returned to Libya if LIFG members become part of the government?

## **Regarding the Proclamation of the LIFG Activity in Libya LIFG Communiqué #1\***

Praised be Allah, Master of the worlds, and prayer and peace be upon the Lord of messengers, our lord Muhammad, and upon all of his family and companions;

The LIFG proclaims its activity in order to fulfill the duty of Jihad in the way of Allah the Exalted and move the worshippers out of worshipping the worshippers and into the worship of the Lord of worshippers, from the narrowness of this world to the vastness of the Hereafter, and from the oppression of religions to the justice of Islam.

Then it was time for the LIFG to leave the state of secrecy and go to a state of publicity, due to the delicate stage that the Jihadi activity in Libya was going through.

Moreover, the LIFG proclaims that it is responsible for the blessed Jihadi actions that broke out since the month of Muharram in 1416 Hijri (Namely, June 1995 A.D.) in all of the areas of Libya.

Truly, confronting the tyrants of this age — the like of Qadhafi — has become the most necessary duty after the belief in Allah the Exalted, so that the Sharia (Islamic law) of Allah the Mighty and Supreme may rule, and so that the Muslims in Libya will enjoy their lives under the protection of this divine way and be rid of the subjugation, oppression and tyranny that they used to suffer for more than four centuries under this oppressing age.

The elimination of this kind of heretic regime and the deliverance of the Muslim Libyan people from their suffering could not have been done without wound and pain, casualties and material losses, but all the goodness is in acting by this divine decree. Allah the Exalted said: “Jihad is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know” [Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 216].

The LIFG directs its call to the Muslim Libyan people to renew the repentance to Allah the Exalted and to straighten up in His way, and to obligate themselves to His rules, and to separate themselves from this heretic regime that has renounced the religion of Allah the Exalted, subjugated the people, encroached upon their rights and wished to destroy all the values and principles they had.

Moreover, the LIFG calls to the Muslim people, upon whose territory a battle broke out between true and false, between the worshippers of The Merciful and the supporters of The Devil, until they will assume their place in this battle next to the Mujahidin and not next to the tyrant oppressors.

And a full greeting in every sense of brotherhood, affection, mutual support and friendship is sent to all the Mujahid factions that came in the defense of Islam and the oppressed among the Muslims anywhere in our Islamic world, in order to return to our nation its glory and fame and to take vengeance on those who have hurt its honor and sold its sacred things.

We pledge ourselves before Allah the Blessed and Exalted to walk the path of blessed Jihad until the tyranny will fall and the religion of Allah the Mighty and Supreme will rise, and on that day the believers will rejoice in the triumph of Allah.

LIFG — General Policy:

A Muslim group that prepares itself to fight the enemies of Allah the Exalted and the first among them — the tyrants that rule without ordain from Allah — so that there will not be any discord and the religion will be entirely to Allah.

\* Obtained by Kronos Advisory, LLC. Translated by CeifiT of Israel.

## **Regarding the Proclamation of the LIFG Activity in Libya** **LIFG Communiqué #1\* *Continued***

The faith, the comprehension and the manner: The ideology of the Sunna and the venerable forefathers among the companions and their followers and those who follow them by doing good — all of whom followed the indication of the sign in faith or in practice, alongside focusing upon the comprehension of reality in order to implement the rule of Allah upon it.

The goal and the target: Pleasing Allah the Mighty and Supreme and acting to raise His religion and to give Him a firm position on earth.

The means: Following the decree of Allah the Exalted to do Jihad on His behalf and invoking Him by means of a group with a leader and a commitment to listen, obey and fight.

Method of action:

Preparing the people thoroughly.

Benefiting from the principle of secrecy in action according to what the legal interest dictates.

Spreading awareness and spirit of Jihad and inciting the believers to fight.

Standing in support and friendship towards all the fighting factions wherever they are.

Not trusting any oppressing authority and relying, beside Allah the Exalted, upon independent resources in funding the Jihadi process, and Allah gives the success.

*Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> of Jumada Al-'ula, 1416 Hijri — corresponding to the 18<sup>th</sup> of October, 1995 A.D.*

\* Obtained by Kronos Advisory, LLC. Translated by CeifiT of Israel.

## **A Letter of Support from the LIFG to the Sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman *aka the Blind Sheikh* \***

Praised be Allah, Master of the Worlds, and the end is (best) for the righteous, and no hostility but to the oppressing, and I testify that there is no god beside Allah, protector of the pious, and I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, Faithful keeper of the promise;

Allah the Exalted said in the sacred Hadith: "I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine" — related by al-Bukhari.

The wisdom of Allah, the Praised and Exalted, demanded that the earth will not be devoid of a basis for pilgrimage and that this impeccable nation will not agree to exchange the religion of Allah the Exalted or conceal the signs and right guidance which Allah has sent down.

At this time, when the multitudes turn away and others keep silent about the truth for fear or ambitious desire, there remain steadfast voices that call the multitudes of our Islamic nation to return to the path of Allah the Praised and Exalted without paying any attention to the pain and tribulation they have suffered.

For the tribulation is a divine practice, through which Allah can distinguish between true and false, and by which He elevates the states of the Mujahidin on His behalf. Allah the Exalted said: "Alif Lam Mim. Do men think that they will be left alone on saying: We believe, and not be tried? And certainly We tried those before them, so Allah will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars" [Surat Al-ankaboot, verses 1-3].

And among those is our Mujahid sheikh, Omar Abd al-Rahman, may Allah release him, who refused to sell his religion for an earthly price, and Allah wished that his words will remain alive in the minds of those who knew him or were educated by him, and despite the fact that Allah the Praised and Exalted has taken from him the duty of Jihad, still his stances and efforts will remain a live lesson for all who carry the knowledge in particular, and for the sons of our Islamic nation in general.

As for those who oppressed our Mujahid sheikh and did not respect his erudite rank, nor his old age, nor his illness, nor his blindness, despite the fact that they speak boastfully of human rights — they do not know that by doing that they humiliate an entire nation, which sees in the likes of the sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman a true example, a divine invoker and a Mujahid commander — we consider him thus, and we do not vouch for anyone before Allah.

The LIFG, while proclaiming its solidarity and support for the sheikh Omar Abd al-Rahman, reminds all of the Muslims the right of this venerable sheikh and warns the tyrant Americans about the wrath of the Muslims, who are fed up with the American oppression that wreaks havoc upon the earth.

And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.

—Commander of the LIFG, Abu Abdallah al-Sadiq (Abd al-Hakim Belhadj)

*25<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, 1418 Hijri — corresponding to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, 1997 A.D.*<sup>77</sup>

\* Obtained by Kronos Advisory, LLC. Translated by CeifiT of Israel.

## Regarding the American Hostility Against Sudan and Afghanistan LIFG Communiqué #14\*

Praised be Allah, Master of the Worlds, and the end is (best) for the righteous, and no hostility but to the oppressing, and prayer and peace be upon the messenger, mercy for all creatures, our lord Muhammad, and upon all of his family and companions;

I find shelter in Allah from the accursed Devil: "As for A'ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: Who is mightier than us in power? Could they not see that Allah Who created them, He was mightier than them in power? And they denied Our revelations. Therefore We let loose on them a raging wind in evil days, that We might make them taste the torment of disgrace in the life of the world. And verily the doom of the Hereafter will be more shameful, and they will not be helped" [Surat Fussilat, verses 15-16].

The arrogant American government has committed an historic folly that confirms the depth of the entanglement that has hurt it recently, and strengthens the feelings of enmity and loathing and vengeance in the minds of the Muslims towards the American demonstration of strength, which deals with others only through the logic of force.

The obvious American hostility against the Muslims in Sudan and Afghanistan, the killing of the innocent, the spreading of terror among the peaceful and the making of some of the civil and industrial institutions into a target without any reason or proof — all these confirm that the American government has chosen the path towards stirring up our Islamic nation, and is pleased to adopt the policy of public confrontation.

The LIFG — since it highly disapproves of this brutal attack and proclaims its support of the Muslims in Sudan and Afghanistan — is presenting some of the facts before the Islamic nation as evidence in regard to the fact that the U.S.A. is not only an enemy of the Mujahid sheikh Usama Bin Laden and the Islamic movements, but it is an enemy of the Islamic nation.

The U.S.A. has stood alongside the Jews, ever since their state was established and to this day, against the Islamic nation, and provided them with weapons with which millions of innocent Muslims were killed. The U.S.A. has supported them — and still does — politically in international circles and rises against any decision that does not serve the interest of the Jewish state.

The U.S.A. is the one that has bombarded the civil institutions and neighborhoods in Iraq, and prevented food and medicine from the Muslim people of Iraq, which has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of the sons of Iraq in the least, and Saddam Hussein is still intact. The U.S.A. is the one whose airplanes have attacked Libya, not to destroy Qadhafi, but to destroy the houses of Muslims in Libya, and it has besieged wrongfully the people of Libya so that the Muslims there will suffer.

The U.S.A. is the one that has prevented weapons from the Muslims in Bosnia while issuing it to the Serbs.

The U.S.A. is the one to have an envoy in the area of the Balkan declaring that its (the U.S.A.'s) goal is to destroy the Kosovo Liberation army, which made the Albanian Muslims victims of the Serbian hostility so that the tragedy of Bosnia may repeat itself.

And before this American tyranny there is no longer anything the Islamic nation in general and the Islamic movement in particular can do, besides confronting it in order to defend its religion, its territory and its honor.

The LIFG calls upon the Muslims to stand in the face of the American hostility in order to ward off this vicious attack against the sons of our Islamic nation, and to be warned of the poisons of the media, which is manipulated by enemies of the nation in order to tear its ranks asunder and warn its sons.

\* Obtained by Kronos Advisory, LLC. Translated by CeifiT of Israel.

**Regarding the American Hostility Against Sudan and Afghanistan**  
**LIFG Communiqué #14\* *Continued***

If the U.S.A. relies upon its airplanes, fleets and missiles, we are relying upon Allah alone — from Him we will receive help, support and aid.

May Allah help whoever helps Him. Truly Allah is powerful and Mighty.

—The Political Bureau of the LIFG

*Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Jumada Al-ula, 1419 Hijri — corresponding to the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, 1998 A.D.*

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