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**Libyan foreign policy: A study of policy shifts in
Libya's nuclear programme**

Ahmed Yusef Ben Aessa

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College of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to analyse and explain Libya's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability and the factors that ultimately influenced Qaddafi's regime to dismantle the nuclear weapons programme. Driven by the core motive to deter external threats to its security and the desire to become a regional power, Libya for over three decades sought to acquire nuclear weapons, but failed to obtain them 'off the shelf'. From the 1970s until 2003, Libya sought to acquire key elements of nuclear components. After many years Qaddafi transformed his foreign and security policies, which for several decades had resulted in rogue behaviour on the part of the state machine. This transformation applied to the ideological motivations that had generated the regime's aggressive approach in the realm of international relations. Focusing on the Libyan case study, in three different periods has allowed the key factors influencing Libya's pursuit of nuclear weapons capability and simultaneously its decision to denuclearise, to be unravelled.

The empirical findings demonstrate that external and internal pressure provides a satisfactory explanation for the reorientation of Libya's policies. This thesis confirms that Qaddafi's regime dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme in 2003 was influenced by the domestic factors such as public pressure, and external factors such as stringent economic sanctions, international isolation and the very genuine threat of military action. This in turn reflected the fact that the Libyan case can be better explained from a realistic point of view. Indeed, the study found that the reaction of the Libyan government was not a response to the regional and international norms, but it was rather a consequence of domestic and external pressure. By arguing this, denuclearisation occurs when regimes comes under internal and external pressure, particularly from powerful actors by using coercion tools such as international isolation, economic sanctions and threat of military action. This thesis contributes to broader theoretical debates surrounding non-proliferation and denuclearisation. This study concludes that states can give up their nuclear weapons programmes under certain internal and external factors.

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Dedication

To my parents Yusef & Hamida and to my beloved wife Marwa

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DECLARATION

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AL Arab League
- ANC African National Congress
- ASU Arab Socialist Union
- AU African Union
- BPM Bureaucratic Politics Model
- BR Barcelona Process
- BR Brigade Rosse
- BMG Baader-Meinhof Gang
- CEN-SAD Community of Sahel-Saharan States
- CFR Council of Foreign Relations
- CIA Central Intelligence Agency
- CW Chemical Weapons
- CWC Chemical Weapons Convention
- ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States
- EC European Commission
- ESS External Security services
- ETA Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
- EU European Union
- FAS Federation of American Scientists
- FSLN Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
- GNNPR Global Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime
- GPC General People's Congress
- GCC Gulf Co-operation Council
- HEU Highly Enriched Uranium
- IGAD Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
- IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency
- ICJ International Court of Justice
- IOs International Organisations
- IR International relations

• IISS	Institute for International Strategic Studies
• ILSA	Iran Libya Sanction Act
• IRA	Irish Republican Army
• LAF	Libyan Air Force
• LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
• LNAs	Libyan National Alliances
• LONC	Libyan National Oil Company
• LSE	London School of Economics
• MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
• NAC	National Association of Cyrenaica
• NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
• NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
• NFSL	National Front for the Salvation of Libya
• NGOs	Non-government Organizations
• NPR	Non-proliferation Regime
• NPT	Nonproliferation Treaty
• NWP	Nuclear Weapon Proliferation
• NWFZ	Nuclear Weapons Free Zone
• OAU	Organization of African Unity
• OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
• OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
• PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
• PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
• PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
• RAF	Rote Armee Fraktion
• RAM	Rational Actor Model
• RCC	Revolutionary Command Council
• RCs	Revolutionary Committees
• ROs	Regional Organisations
• START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
• TNRC	Tajura Nuclear Research Centre
• TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership

- TT Tlatelolco Treaty
- UAE United Arab Emirates
- UN United Nations
- UNGA United Nations General Assembly
- UNSC United Nation Security Council
- USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- UK United Kingdom
- US United States
- USLO United States Liaison Office
- UTA Union de Transports Aériens
- WB World Bank
- WTO World Trade Organisation
- WMD Weapons of Mass Destruction
- WWI World War One
- WWII World War Two

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

“In 1946 the English poet W. H. Auden penned the Age of Anxiety, in which he lamented the hopelessness and universal disorder in the world. Auden was responding to the wholesale carnage and bleak aftermath of the Second World War, as well as to the recent introduction of an entirely new weapon of mass destruction. For Auden and others living in the shadow of the atomic bomb, the future was uncertain, fearful, and dangerous.”

(Reiss, 2004:3)

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate the causes of Libya’s foreign policy shift and denuclearisation in 2003. In this regard this thesis tries to answer the following three main questions: *What were the factors behind Libya’s desire to obtain a nuclear weapons programme? What were the causes of Qaddafi’s regime transformation and concessions to denuclearise? What are the effective tools to persuade states such as Libya to dismantle their nuclear weapons programme?* By answering these questions, this thesis aims to provide a better understanding of Libya’s motivations to acquire nuclear weapons and the conditions behind its denuclearisation. The systematic analysis of the Libyan case will provide important lessons which could be generalised in this regard (e.g. eventually implemented for other cases, especially ones with similar characteristics).

Libya attempted to buy a ready-made nuclear bomb on various occasions, and whilst such attempts ended in failure, the Libyan regime did obtain some equipment and sensitive technology which could have facilitated the production of nuclear weapons. It was only after many years, on 19th December 2003, that the Libyan government, under the Qaddafi regime, publicly declared its decision to abandon its entire nuclear weapons stockpile and long range missiles capability. The regime’s official announcement maintained that the decision to relinquish its nuclear weapons programme was of ‘its own free will’. Additionally, Libya pledged to abandon all related equipment and materials, and to remain completely free from unconventional weapons. The regime agreed to reduce its long range missiles to just 300km, and to allow full and transparent verifications by the concerned agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Organisation for the Prohibition of

Chemical Weapons (OPCW). This decision to dismantle Libya's nuclear programme astonished several observers and policy-makers concerned with nuclear weapons proliferation (Hart and Kile, 2005:629).

The spread of nuclear weapons is a great obstacle to international peace and security. Especially, the Middle East and North Africa represent one of the most unstable regions, and at the present time there are still active states such as Iran and some of the Gulf countries, that are trying to acquire nuclear weapons in order to face the Iranian nuclear threat or its expansionist policies (Cirincione, 2005:17).¹ Other countries such as Saudi Arabia and Algeria also aspire to acquire nuclear weapons for the same reasons (Solingen, 2007:3). In fact, nuclear weapons pose a security threat to world peace and security, especially in troubled regions such as the Middle East and North Africa which have been prone to nuclear weapons proliferation and conventional war for a long time.

From the discussion thus far, it is evident that the subject matter of this study is extremely important to world peace and security. Developing countries are not exempt from the race to acquire nuclear weapons, and there are still states pursuing nuclear capability. The Libyan regime was well known for its ambition to acquire such capability as it had been evident since Qaddafi first came to power in 1969. Despite the fact that Libya is a signatory to the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), it did nonetheless, seek to launch a nuclear weapons programme in violation of that treaty; and the decision of the Libyan government to dismantle its nuclear stockpile demonstrated a major change in Libya's security and foreign policies after almost three decades. Indeed, Libya's policies under Qaddafi's regime were known to be aggressive and adventurous. The main outcome of this policy attitude was that for several years Libya was under international and multilateral sanctions, and international isolation, and in some instances it was threatened with force by the international community. Such response by the international community towards Libya reflected the fears of the potential threat of autocratic regimes using nuclear weapons and the dire consequences of such action on international peace and security. In fact, undemocratic countries and their regimes are more prone to conventional wars, including nuclear ones. Accordingly, denuclearisation is an essential step towards securing regional and global peace and stability (Cordesman, 1991:1).

¹ (i.e. Iran had similar motives in the past regarding its nuclear ambition as it had to counter the Iraqi nuclear threat).

It should be underlined that there are different paths of nuclear restraint and denuclearisation success. On the one hand, there are countries that surrendered their nuclear weapons or reversed their policy to acquire nuclear weapons (i.e. Brazil, Argentina, Ukraine, South Africa, Taiwan, and Iraq, etc.) due to several encouragements such as security guarantees, economic incentives, change in the security environment, democratisation, and national identity. On the other hand, there are those that were induced to renounce their nuclear aspirations and give up the nuclear path under various pressures (i.e. the threat of the use of force), such as Iraq and Libya.

Despite the fact that considerable scholarly work has been conducted regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons (i.e. Waltz and Sagan, 2003; Hymans, 2006) the analyses to date have mainly focused on powerful states, and little attention has been given to developing countries. Even the studies carried out to understand the motivations of developing states in their acquisition of nuclear weapons were mainly focused on India and Pakistan and the historical conflict as well as the arms race between them (i.e. balance of power). Indeed, there is no systematic and empirical analysis for the motivations of nuclear proliferation and denuclearisation of other developing states including South Africa, Iran, North Korea and Libya. Although certain scholars (see for example, Solingen, 2007; Bahgat, 2008; Rublee, 2009; Bowen, 2006), have provided important insights and comprehensive analyses concerning the nuclearisation and denuclearisation of Libya, such contributions have been incomplete since they have not addressed all the factors that precipitated the dismantlement of Libya's nuclear weapons programme (i.e. diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions, threat of military force, and external pressure). This thesis aims to consider these omissions, and provide a more systematic analysis, by exploring a wider range of factors which have greatly influenced Libya's political behaviour. Within this context, the basic argument of this thesis is that *Libya would not have given up its nuclear weapons programme without the influence of the combination of multiple internal,² regional,³ and external factors.⁴*

In order to introduce the above argument, this chapter is divided into four sections. The first is devoted to a literature review concerning the rise of the nuclear weapons phenomenon since the end of WWII. The rationale behind this is to determine the main gaps in existing literature, how this thesis intends to fill these, and thus find a remedy to the current

² Internal factors (i.e. domestic pressure, ideology, regime type, and oil).

³ Regional factors (i.e. regional isolation and containment).

⁴ External factors (i.e. economic as well as military sanctions, international isolation, and threat of military force).

shortcomings. The chapter then discusses the most relevant IR theories (i.e. realism and constructivism) for explaining Qaddafi's regime reorientation, and policy shift regarding its foreign and security policies, specifically its nuclear weapons programme dismantlement in 2003. Although constructivism can provide an important explanation and enhance the existing understanding of the matter, this is only partial, and realist accounts are believed to be more appropriate for appreciating the motivations underpinning nuclearisation, and the factors associated with denuclearisation. Indeed, there are some scholars, such as Hochman (2006) and Rublee (2009), who have considered that Libya's policy reorientation and denuclearisation in 2003 were due to the Qaddafi regime's respect for international treaties, and institutions, and both regional and international norms. Albeit that such explanation can help to understand some aspects of the shift in the Libyan behaviour, the present study argues otherwise. In fact, by looking at the political leadership, the nature of the regime, and its response to the external pressure, it seems that realism is more applicable and relevant than the constructivist approach. Realist accounts considering factors such as compliance, coercion, sanctions, isolation, enforcement, and security threats, squarely fit the Libyan case. The third section discusses methodological issues, whilst the last part of the chapter describes how the argument of the study will be manifested in the rest of this thesis.

Indeed, realism remains a controversial theory with its different variants. Traditional realism is known for having the capability to analyse and explain certain events and state behaviour. However, critics such as (Tannenwald, 2005; Rublee, 2009; Hyman, 2007 and Hochman, 2006) regard realism as unfit to explain some events such as state behaviour, policy change and specifically denuclearisation. The theoretical contribution of this thesis is that the behaviour and the policies of the Libyan regime were influenced by internal, regional and international factors. In order to compel rogue or autocratic states to dismantle their nuclear stockpile, prevent the development and the acquisition of nuclear weapons can be attained by means of using the realist paradigm (i.e. international pressure, threat of military action, economic sanctions and isolation).

As for the empirical contribution, the thesis has manifested that in the analysis of the three different periods between 1969 until 2003; the Libyan regime complied when the external pressure of the international system and the powerful states was in various forms (i.e. sanctions isolation and threat of military action) exerted on Libya and its institutions. The domestic pressure had also increased in the second period during Qaddafi's rule (opposition groups and LIFG). Although the realist accounts can explain to a very large extent the

behaviour of Qaddafi's regime regarding the acquisition of nuclear weapons and dismantlement, it fails to explain some aspects of the Libyan case as will be discussed in the theoretical framework and the results of the empirical chapters.

1.2 Literature Review

Previous studies that have analysed cases of nuclear weapons reversal in general have identified several motives regarding the change in states' nuclear policies. The issue of nuclear weapons dismantlement has been explored in nuclear politics, international politics, and international security. Countries that had nuclear weapons, or have the capacity to build the nuclear bomb within a short period of time, rarely give up such weapons. The literature reviewed suggests that there are several incentives that apply to nuclear weapons dismantlement such as economic encouragements, regime change, national identity, change in the external security environment, regional agreement to renounce nuclear weapons such as in Latin America where there is a 'Nuclear Weapons Free Zone' (NWFZ), and new international norms which persuade states against the development of nuclear weapons (Paul, 2000, 102 & 103; Bergner, 2012, 91 & 93). Furthermore, the question of nuclear weapons dismantlement has been a prominent subject in international relations, but it can be argued that the literature has not been completely developed.

It should be noted here that the number of countries that possess nuclear weapons, have weapons-related programmes, or aspire to acquire nuclear weapons, decreased between the 1960s and 2005. For example, in the 1960s, there were 23 countries that had either acquired nuclear weapons, conducted research on nuclear weapons, or considered nuclear weapons acquisition, these being: the US, USSR, UK, France, China, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, India, Egypt, Italy, Japan, Norway, South Africa, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Romania. In the 1980s, the number of countries that had nuclear weapons or were developing them decreased to 19 (i.e. Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Israel, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Pakistan, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, UK, US, USSR, and Yugoslavia). By 2005 there were only eight nuclear weapons states: the US, USSR, UK, France, China, Israel, India, and Pakistan. Additionally, North Korea has manufactured a few nuclear devices, and Iran is suspected of having an active nuclear weapons programme (Cirincione, 2005:20).

In order to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology in the 1960s, the international community negotiated the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT was signed in 1968, by the US, Russia, China, United Kingdom, and France, which are now acknowledged as the nuclear states, and it came into force in 1970.⁵ The efforts made were meant to reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the future. Additionally, the aims of the NPT are to cease any nuclear arms race, to promote co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and achieve complete disarmament. To date, the NPT has 189 signatory states. It is also important to underline here, the fact that three non-NPT states, Israel, India, and Pakistan have acquired nuclear weapons (Bergner, 2012:84). Only one country has acquired nuclear weapons after acceding to the NPT, and this is North Korea which became a signatory to the NPT in 1985 and subsequently obtained nuclear capability. Israel, India, and Pakistan never joined the NPT.

With regard to the views expressed by political and security analysts, they are various and generally diverging. Indeed, proponents of the NPT argue that the regulatory framework it promotes is effective in tackling nuclear weapons proliferation and weapons technology while others maintain that the NPT regime is ineffective for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, as in the case of North Korea. Furthermore, Iran may also follow suit and ignore the NPT (Hymans, 2006:6; Bergner, 2012:85). The influence and the effect of the NPT can be a crucial factor in nuclear decision-making or nuclear reversal. However, the lack of enthusiasm of some states that refuse to comply with the NPT, in particular the autocratic regimes which have acceded to the treaty (i.e. North Korea, Libya, and Iran), is discouraging.

In fact, there are some scholars investigating the phenomenon of nuclear weapons, but of these only a few have explored the motivations of states' denuclearisation decisions. For example, Paul (2000), Campbell et al. (2004), Rublee (2009 and 2012), Kamrava (2012), Solingen (2007 and 2012), and Reiss (1988), have considered cases of nuclear weapons dismantlement. Their studies attributed the reversal of nuclear weapons to different motives, and identified a set of primary factors that are common in cases of denuclearisation. The above-mentioned scholars agree that one of the most prominent factors is the improvement in state security. The second finding is related to the change in political systems. For such states, the transformation from autocratic regimes towards democratic ones decreases the desire for nuclear weapons acquisition. Thirdly, the external security guarantees are considered to

⁵ China and France did not adhere to the NPT until 1992.

represent another important factor in this regard. For instance, the external security guarantee which is provided by the US reduces the aspiration of a state to obtain nuclear weapons. These contributing factors discourage states from seeking to acquire nuclear weapons (Cortright and Vayrynen, 2010:51). In fact, those states that have dismantled their nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons programme had different motives regarding their decisions to give up the ultimate weapon or discontinue the development of their nuclear programmes. Accordingly, each case had its own dynamics, and Libya's denuclearisation in particular, was affected by external actors. Indeed, scholars such as Jentleson and Whytock (2005), and Alterman (2006), who have analysed Libya's disarmament, maintain that the impact of the powerful states such as the US and Britain, was effective alongside other factors such as international sanctions and diplomatic isolation imposed by the UN and other powerful actors.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, Kiernan (2011:1) maintains that "when states do disarm, they base their nuclear decisions on their own highly subjective needs". Indeed, Libya opted for an exit strategy from several issues that were associated with Qaddafi's regime. The first three decades of Qaddafi's autocratic rule created concerns domestically, regionally, and internationally. The regime's failed adventures regionally and internationally, had left Qaddafi with no options to avoid economic sanctions, international isolation, and threats to his regime's survival. One of the main priorities of the Libyan regime throughout the last two decades of Qaddafi's rule was to end the international perception that Libya was a rogue state. In fact, Libya realised that a pre-requisite to any rapprochement with the powerful states (the US in particular, and the international community in general), was to accept responsibility for its previous actions and policies. It is worth noting that the United Nations, the US, Britain, and France, all demanded that Qaddafi's regime comply with the United Nations Security Council resolutions and transform the direction of its foreign and security policies (Takeyh, 2001).

1.3 Theoretical Debate

The theoretical discussion is a vital component in any study as it can unveil the ambiguity surrounding the puzzle being explored. According to Frankel and Davis (1993:1), "[t]heory ... is essential to policy. There is no way to comprehend reality in any meaningful fashion

without the aid of a theory”. Further, Lavoy (2006:438) argues that “academic theories can be of use to national security practitioners if they impart relevant knowledge about the outside world”. In similar fashion, Paul (2000:3) maintains that “[i]n fact, theories are very important tools in analysing a particular policy, as they can shed light on ambiguous policies. It is important to link the leading theories of IR with the practice.” The reason why academics, analysts and observers study the spread of nuclear weapons is that such weapons enhance the likelihood of war between states and regions. States fear that the possession of nuclear weapons by their neighbours may prompt them and other countries to react to such nuclear weapons (Brown et al., 2010). Thus, the spread of nuclear weapons motivates states to participate in nuclear armament programmes.

Several scholars of nuclear disarmament such as Reiss (1988), Solingen (2007, 2012), Paul (2000), Sagan (1997, 2003), and Campbell et al. (2004), agree that this phenomenon is the result of various motivations. One such motivation is domestic pressure, which can play a crucial role. However, this is not the only decisive factor in nuclear reversal, and especially in the Libyan case this was not prominent, since domestic political participation was very weak due to the ban on political parties, syndicates, and trade unions that was imposed by the political system of Qaddafi regime. It was in fact, regional and external factors that had more influence on the shift in the Libyan regime’s policies.⁶ This argument is supported by various scholars such as Solingen (2012:3), who observes that international relations’ literature on sanctions and nuclear weapons proliferation has given little attention to the domestic effects of sanctions, and ignored external attempts to affect the target states’ nuclear stance. Libya is considered as a rentier state with a weak economy that depends entirely on oil and gas exports. Hence, with only one real source of revenue, Qaddafi’s regime was significantly influenced by international actors who were seeking political co-operation. Indeed, such regional and external factors can wield a great deal of pressure. In the case of Libya, Qaddafi’s regime was heavily affected by external pressure in the form of international sanctions, international isolation, and the threat of force (as was the case with Iraq). It is these pressures that were the genuine reasons for the change in Libya’s foreign and security policies, and in particular for its decision to give up its nuclear ambitions and long-range missiles. The compliance of the Libyan regime with the international demands reflects the appropriateness of realism. Indeed, the fears by Qaddafi’s regime that it might face the same

⁶ It should be noted that the impact of the domestic factor had changed after the mid 1990s as will be seen in chapter 4 and 5.

fate as Iraq influenced it to comply with the UNSC resolutions and the demands of the international community.

Realists argue that states pursue nuclear weapons in order to survive in the anarchic self-help system. States need to protect their national interests in the anarchic international system where there is no governing authority. Realists also believe that countries seek military capability to obtain power and prestige, and to defend their territory from outside aggression. In the absence of a governing authority, realists maintain that countries would not generally denuclearise as there is no guarantee that they will not be attacked (Paul, 2000:6). Indeed, “[r]ealists ... believe that states should not ordinarily forgo their right to manufacture weapons that may deter potential adversaries and increase their own power and prestige. If they do so, it should be only because of constraints imposed by the structure of the international system” (Paul, 2000:7). Nonetheless, despite the fact that realism may offer a better explanation regarding the motivation to acquire and dismantle nuclear weapons programmes, constructivist theory is considered by a number of scholars as an important approach in this regard. For example, Rublee (2009:4) maintains that non-proliferation norms are considered significant in nuclear decision-making. In fact, social norms and the international social environment influence nuclear weapons decision-making, especially when there is an international norm against nuclear weapons.

In a similar manner, Sagan (2003) argues in his response to Waltz (2003), that, although in the 1990s there were new entrant states in the nuclear field, there is still a glimpse of hope regarding the non-proliferation efforts. Indeed, South Africa dismantled its nuclear weapons during the government of F W de Klerk, Argentina and Brazil terminated their nuclear weapons programme, and three former states from the former Soviet Union negotiated the end to their nuclear stockpiles, and signed the Non-proliferation Treaty. The success of the non-proliferation cannot be guaranteed but should nevertheless, be supported, encouraged, and rewarded (Waltz and Sagan, 2003:182). From this scholarly perspective, the compliance of states is a result of their respect for international and regional norms (i.e. adhering to NPT), which prohibit the attainment of nuclear weapons. It is clear that the above-mentioned states had different incentives to disarm (i.e. international pressure, economic sanctions, domestic pressure, and respect for international and regional norms). An important note that should be underlined here is that these cases of denuclearisation were the result of regional and international norms against the acquisition of nuclear weapons, except for the instance of

South Africa which was the outcome of a combination of international pressure and sanctions.

However, applying the constructivist approach in the Libyan case can be misleading for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Libyan concessions regarding the country's nuclear programme in 2003 were not due to the intention of Qaddafi's regime to respect international norms against nuclear weapons, or the wishes of international institutions such as International Atomic Energy (IAEA). This can be seen in the history of the Libyan regime which violated the NPT after ratifying it in 1975 due to its desire to obtain sensitive materials for its nuclear project. Secondly, and as will be shown in the empirical chapters, the transformation of Libyan security policy, in particular the dismantlement of the non-conventional weapons and long-range missiles, was the result of the Qaddafi regime's compliance with demands by powerful states such as the US and UK (following long and secret negotiations which seem to have started during Clinton's Administration), rather than requests from the IAEA. Thirdly, the nature of the political system, being one of the most authoritarian regimes in the world, in contrast to the democratic political systems arguably in place in other states mentioned, makes it unlikely that the regime would naturally want to co-operate with international actors and show respect for international norms. On the contrary, there is much evidence that authoritarian regimes tend to break such rules, rather than respect and abide by them. Fourthly, in Libya's case, Qaddafi was widely known for his disrespect of international rules and norms and was seen to comply with powerful states and the UN only under international pressure (i.e. he ended Libyan intervention in Chad, handed over the Lockerbie suspects, ended the support for outlawed movements, stopped meddling in neighbouring countries, and accepted responsibility for the regime's previous actions).

Undoubtedly, nuclear non-proliferation is considered a vital step for the peace and the security of the world, and as shown in the cases of Brazil and Argentina, and in states of the former Soviet Union (i.e. Ukraine and Belarus), it is possible to achieve voluntary denuclearisation. However, the current international and regional climate relating to the arms race shows that efforts to acquire nuclear weapons are on the increase in several regions around the world. The Middle East is still threatened with an arms race between the Gulf countries and Iran or between the North African countries (i.e. Algeria and Morocco) (Mallard, 2008:465). Moreover, the Libyan case of denuclearisation was not voluntary as stated publicly by Qaddafi's ex-foreign minister Abdulrahman Shulgum, and the Libyan state's media. In fact, Libya's decision to denuclearise in 2003 was the result of different

factors, most importantly external pressure which accumulated due to Qaddafi's failed adventures and antagonistic policies.

This behaviour echoes that observed by Reiss (1988), who studied several countries (South Africa, Sweden, India, Japan, South Korea, and Israel), and maintained that non-proliferation can succeed if states seeking to acquire nuclear weapons are deterred by international economic sanctions and international isolation. According to Reiss (1988:249-251), domestic pressure or domestic politics discouraged only countries such as Sweden, and Japan from pursuing nuclear weapons, whereas other countries such as South Korea, South Africa and Israel did not have the same domestic pressure to persuade their governments not to pursue nuclear weapons.

1.4 Methodology

This study seeks to understand the motives for Libya's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability since Qaddafi came to power in 1969. It assesses the nuclear path followed by the Libyan regime, and examines its eventual decision to give up its nuclear weapons programme, identifying the main influences upon the Qaddafi regime calculations. As has been noted in the previous sections, there is a scarcity of comment within the literature regarding the motivations of developing countries to acquire and dismantle nuclear weapons, and this is particularly so in respect of Libya. Accordingly, this study adopts the case study approach in order to explore the argument that Libya's motivations to obtain nuclear weapons and simultaneously dismantle its nuclear weapons programme were fuelled by a variety of factors. The selection of Libya as a case study is valuable since it provides a clear picture for three reasons. The first relates to the understanding of regional and international circumstances which motivate states to seek to acquire nuclear weapons, and simultaneously the understanding of regional and external factors which encourage states to dismantle their nuclear weapons programmes. The second is that the Libyan case can be considered as a real test of the influence of external factors on the nuclearisation and denuclearisation of Libya (i.e. UN, powerful states, and economic sanctions). And the final reason for its suitability is the type of political regime and its political leadership which sought to acquire nuclear capability, and subsequently dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. These factors are not only important in understanding the motivations of nuclearisation and denuclearisation of the Libyan case, but have the potential to provide valuable lessons to the nuclear weapons

proliferation phenomenon. In other words, it can play a role in explaining the motivations of other cases in this regard such as India, Pakistan, Iran, Syria and North Korea and what are the relevant policies to deal with such cases?

Despite the importance of the Libyan case, the literature in this field remains undeveloped, particularly with regard to Libya's foreign security policies and its nuclear weapons during the period of Qaddafi's autocratic regime. As argued by Obeidi (2004:1), "there are problems and obstacles related to the security studies field in general and in Libya in particular. Because of the sensitivity of these topics, the scholars in the Arab countries in general and in Libya in particular have been reluctant to deal with or explore such areas". In fact, research on Libyan foreign policy in general and national security specifically, was considered a risky matter in the reign of Qaddafi's regime. Indeed, the regime would not have easily tolerated any criticism regarding the personality of Qaddafi, his political system and policies.

It is important to state that when the researcher first applied to the University's Research Ethics Committee for approval to conduct the fieldwork, the Libyan uprising erupted, and therefore such approval was refused in order to comply with the University's safety regulations. However, eventually approval was obtained after the collapse of Qaddafi's regime, and at that point the researcher assumed it would be relatively easy to gain access to the desired interviewees. That assumption was not fully borne out since some individuals who had worked for decades in the regime as ministers, ambassadors, and officials, were reluctant to speak, fearing that they would be prosecuted like their colleagues who had also served in this way. Indeed, had the Qaddafi regime still been in power, it would have been virtually impossible to secure access to the very people required to gain answers due to the sensitivity surrounding the issues of security and foreign policy. And in fact, irrespective of the demise of Qaddafi's regime, some individuals were still reluctant to be interviewed. Such attitudes were, and remain, perfectly understandable as the security situation was quite volatile at the time of the interviews. Hence, great thanks are extended to all the interviewees for their bravery and their participation in interviews at such a critical time.

In order to explain the shift in the Qaddafi regime's behaviour in the last decade of its rule, it is essential to investigate the environmental influences, seen in the form of domestic, regional, and external factors. Indeed, the study depends upon primary resources (i.e.

interviews and documents from Libya) with a view to triangulating the evidence acquired.⁷ Accordingly, it starts by analysing official documents such as public statements from Qaddafi's government, documents from the United Nations Security Council, the NPT, the IAEA, and various other institutions such as the AU and the EU. The study also relies on a number of academic journals (*The Nonproliferation Review*, *Foreign Affairs*, *International Security* and *Contemporary Security Policy*). Moreover, several newspapers were considered such as the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, and *Al-Hayat* an Arab newspaper, published in London. Additionally, the thesis relies on secondary sources such as Arab and Libyan newspapers, documents, personal accounts and books.

The data obtained from these resources was utilised and developed during the interview sessions. The researcher prepared a number of questions before the interviews, which were devised to fill the gaps in the existing literature. The semi-structured interviews conducted in summer 2012 were in fact, the most valuable aspect of this research study since they involved personal contact by the author in Libya with former senior officials within the Qaddafi's regime who were personally involved with, or had knowledge of, the nuclear weapons programme. This enabled the disclosure of important first-hand data (previously unpublished) from individuals who had served for many years in different cabinets during Qaddafi's regime. Clearly, these interviewees were able to provide much illumination on some of the questions generated by this research study, and offer their informed accounts of the transformation of the Libyan regime's attitudes towards foreign and security policies, and in particular the concessions made by Libya in terms of denuclearisation, during the last decade of Qaddafi's rule.

The data from the interviews is analysed and translated into English to obtain the most valuable outcome for the study. Furthermore, whilst interviews were scheduled with several academics, diplomats, and officials, when the security situation deteriorated it was not possible to travel to certain cities. Libya's post war circumstances made the whole interview process extremely difficult. As a Libyan national, and a native speaker of the Arabic

⁷ The 'triangulation' process is vital in academic research and social sciences. Accordingly, it is deemed as a strategy for enhancing the validity of research findings, increasing confidence in accuracy and eliminating biases. See the article by Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) entitled "Triangulation Research Method as the Tool of Social Science Research", *BUP Journal*.

language, there was no language or cultural barrier presented to the researcher in any aspect of the interview exercise. Indeed, this ‘insider’ status allowed the researcher to approach several former officials and gain access to their time and opinions. Moreover, this study differs from other research in that it is the first study to assess Libya’s nuclearisation and denuclearisation activities, since the collapse of Qaddafi’s regime in 2011. This means that the participants were free from the constraints existing prior to that time, associated with the threat of personal repercussions carried out by the former regime’s security agencies.

It should be noted that some individuals who were directly involved in the negotiations concerning Libya’s dismantlement of its nuclear programme in 2003 were not available for interview during the fieldwork in Libya in 2012 due to their arrest by Libya’s new interim authorities. For example, most of the official figures from Qaddafi’s regime (e.g. Musa Kussa, and Abdulrahman Shalgum Abdel Ati Obeidi, Abdalla Senusi, Mohamed El-Zway, and Abuzaid Durda), all of whom had great knowledge of the secret negotiations between Libya and the powerful states, were either in custody or had fled the country. Accordingly, there may be some limitations of the evidence obtained in the study due to the inability to interview some few former officials, and the general situation in Libya at the time which remained unstable after the collapse of Qaddafi’s regime. Although the interviewees who did participate were reluctant to provide their names, it is unlikely that this request for anonymity had any effect upon the information given to the researcher during the interview sessions, all of which were held in locations to suit the interviewees’ preferences.

Nonetheless, the rationale for choosing Libya as a case study was robust, and this was purely the fact that Qaddafi’s regime that had sought nuclear weapons in the early 1970s, was the same regime that dismantled the nuclear programme and shifted Libya’s security and foreign policy after years of distrust and antagonism. The investigation uncovers the reasons for the change in Libya’s behaviour in the late 1990s, and in particular in 2003, and explores the calculations made by Qaddafi’s regime, who for years opposed the West and their interests in the region and further afield. As a single case study, this focus on Libya is able to contribute to international relations theory (IR), nuclearisation, denuclearisation, and foreign policy. Moreover, Libya resembles other proliferating countries such as Syria or Iran as they have similar regimes, and it is possible that the outcomes of the study can be generalised in some measure to these countries. That said, it is recognised that as a single case study, Libya demonstrates some unique contributing factors, and that each and every case will be

characterised by some different incentives to change course from one of nuclear proliferation to one of denuclearisation.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six substantial chapters, these being the introduction, theoretical framework, three empirical chapters, and the conclusion. Following this introduction, the study constructs the theoretical framework. In doing this, it starts by establishing a background regarding the phenomenon of nuclear weapons since the production of the first atom bomb, and its development in 1945 by the US. This is followed by the literature on nuclear weapons proliferation and nuclear weapons reversal to determine what motivations exist regarding the acquisition of nuclear weapons in general, and whether there have been any attempts at the regional and/or international level to deal with the ambitions of some states in this respect. More specifically, the chapter focuses on important insights from various scholars such as Waltz, Mearshmer, Campbell, Solingen, Rublee, Bahgat, Sagan, Lavoy, and Paul, who have been involved in, and who have written extensively about, the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Additionally, the theoretical chapter explores several cases of denuclearisation, and reviews the literature on countries such as South Africa, Ukraine, Taiwan, Iraq, Brazil, and Argentina. Scholars such as Paul (2000), Campbell et al. (2004), and Bahgat (2008) have argued that the motivations of the mentioned states to acquire nuclear weapons or dismantle them could be explained by realist assumptions (i.e. security, balance of power, regional rivalries, and/or internal and external pressure). However, other scholars such as Rublee (2009), and Hyman (2006), have different perspectives, considering that states are influenced by regional and international norms. The chapter then focuses on Libya as a case study. In this regard, the study assumes that Libya's nuclearisation and denuclearisation was influenced by internal, regional, and external factors. Indeed, and as is shown in the empirical chapters, the Libyan foreign and security policies have shifted due to the impact of the factors mentioned above.

The third chapter is dedicated to the Libyan Foreign and Security Policy, and covers the period from 1969 when Qaddafi came to power, until 1981. There are many reasons for choosing this time scale. Firstly, in 1979 the US designated Libya as a state sponsor of terrorism and this categorisation had a number of implications for the regime's behaviour.

Secondly, the first direct military confrontation between Qaddafi's regime and the US was in 1981 over the Gulf of Sidra. Thirdly, the behaviour of the regime at this time was different from in other periods as will be seen in the next chapters. The first section of this chapter gives a historical and geographical overview of Libya in general, it summarises the colonial periods, and then covers some aspects of debate concerning Libya's independence, and its politics during the monarchical period. Accordingly, it opens with a historical background to Libyan politics since its independence in 1951, focusing particularly on Qaddafi's regime and the reasons behind its nuclear ambitions. Despite the fact that this period examines the era after Qaddafi came to power, it is essential to shed light on the policies of the monarchy and what led to the removal of the royal regime from power. Thereafter, the chapter charts the change in Libyan politics from 1969. It starts by providing the background to the 1969 coup and its motivations, and proceeds to discuss the development of the Qaddafi regime's political system. The chapter then focuses on the start of the Libyan nuclear programme. More precisely, it looks at the incentives behind the regime's intention to obtain, at any cost and by all means, nuclear weapons. In this regard, the chapter considers all multiple factors (i.e. internal, regional, and external), which affected the direction of Libyan policies in this particular period.

In similar fashion to the previous chapter, the fourth chapter covers the period between 1982 and 2000. The rationale behind this timeframe is that several issues occurred during this particular period. For instance, Libya's support for terrorism reached its peak during this period (i.e. the Berlin disco bombing, the Lockerbie bombing, the bombing of UTA the French airliner, and the killing of the British police officer, Yvonne Fletcher). In the same period, the US imposed economic sanctions and conducted a limited airstrike in April 1986 on Libya. Furthermore, the UN implemented economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and requested Qaddafi's regime to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions (UNSC). As a response to the global pressure, the Libyan regime handed over the Lockerbie suspects and started to approach the US for discussions regarding its (the regime's) irresponsible policies and unconventional weapons programme. This period begins by highlighting the evolution of the nuclear programme and explaining the various reactions to it, both internal and regional, as well as the influential external responses. For example, it considers the reaction to Libya's policies which was concretised through the imposition of economic and military sanctions on the regime. It also assesses the extent to which these actions affected Libyan policies. Indeed,

the study examines a whole range of internal, regional and external factors. In doing so, it evaluates Qaddafi's regional and international policies and their consequences on Libya.

Additionally, the regime's support for internationally-outlawed organisations in neighbouring countries and in other spheres such as Latin America, is explored. An important section of the chapter sheds light on opposition groups to the Libyan regime and their impact on Libya's domestic policies. Moreover, the chapter examines the response of the international community to the regime's policies and actions regarding several issues such as the cases of the Lockerbie affair, the UTA incident, and the killing of the British policewoman, Yvonne Fletcher. This examination includes the imposition of US unilateral sanctions and UN multilateral sanctions, and Libya's response to and compliance with, to the tools of coercion used by the international community. Despite the influence of the internal, regional, and international factors, the regime continued to develop its nuclear weapons programme to a degree which raised the fears of not only its neighbours, but also the international community as a whole.

In conjunction with chapters three and four, the fifth chapter covers the period from 2001 until 2003. This timeframe is explored in depth due to the fact that important events which apparently influenced Qaddafi's policies, took place within it. One such event was the seizure of a ship *BBC China* loaded with nuclear components whilst en-route from Dubai to Libya. The second event was the revelation of the A Q Khan network and its illegal nuclear dealings with several countries including Libya. Accordingly, these events were classed as evidence of Libya's nuclear weapons programme. Moreover, the events of 11th September 2001, as well as the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, played important roles in the shift of Qaddafi's position. Consequently, the regime was persuaded to comply with most of the UN resolutions, halting its support for terrorism and reorienting its foreign and security policies. Indeed, a substantial change was noticeable during this period, not only with the dismantling of Libya's nuclear programme, but also with a significant evolution of Libyan foreign policy. This, in reality, was due to several factors, which the study explores by initially considering the foundation of the concession to disarm and renounce all unconventional weapons. In this regard, the characteristics of Qaddafi's regime transformation at the national, regional, and international levels, are examined. Despite the fact that domestic and regional factors had played an important role in Libya's political change, it is argued that the external/global factors were more influential in forcing the Qaddafi regime to adapt new policies on both

levels (internal and external). Indeed, the effects of the external factors are considered to have remained constant for several years by the international community, especially since the regime opted for aggressive and belligerent foreign and security policies in the regional and international arena. It should be underlined that the Qaddafi regime approached the international community, and particularly the US, to ease the economic and military sanctions as well as the international isolation, and to lighten the threats of force to change the regime's behaviour. The ongoing constraints on Libya's behaviour applied by the powerful actors and the international community had a strong impact on Libya's policy reorientations and eventual denuclearisation in 2003.

At the domestic level, the Qaddafi regime adopted new domestic policies of appeasement aimed at improving the image of the leadership and changing the view of the population regarding Qaddafi's rule (i.e. economic reforms, release of political prisoners, and pardon of the opposition figures). At the regional level, the regime transformed its hostile policies and adopted more lenient ones with neighbouring countries in the region. As is shown in detail in Chapter Five, the regime's behaviour and ideology concerning its regional neighbours had changed from meddling in African politics to promoting peace and stability. At the international level, a fundamental shift occurred in the regime's behaviour in which the country started to comply with UN resolutions and the demands of individual states such as the US, the UK, and France. This behavioural change could be attributed to a number of issues such as the extremely negative international perception of Libya after the Lockerbie affair, the Berlin disco bombing, the bombing of UTA the French airliner, the killing of the British policewoman, Yvonne Fletcher, and most importantly, the declared international need for co-operation in the 'war on terror' enacted in the aftermath of the 11th September 2001 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York and on the Pentagon headquarters. Qaddafi's government became willing to try to resolve these issues. One important outcome of the softening of the regime's attitudes towards the international political arena was the sharp increase in foreign investment and economic exchange between Libya and the rest of the international community. Hence, it can be understood that Libya's desire to atone for the past behaviour and the negative image that had been associated with the Qaddafi regime for more than three decades, led to an improvement in international perceptions of the regime and in a willingness to deal with the country.

Another important element to be underlined at this point is the fact that powerful states such as the US and Britain, persuaded attitude change within the Qaddafi regime by offering material incentives (i.e. lifting sanctions, ending isolation, and allowing foreign investment) for it to give up its nuclear weapons programme. The most relevant and influential factor leading to Libya's dismantlement in this respect in 2003 was that negotiations concerned with it were with the powerful states rather than with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These powerful states, the US and Britain, compelled Libya to dismantle its unconventional weapons stockpile and all-long range missiles in its possession. The timing of these negotiations is an important factor, and this is investigated within the chapter in order to gain some understanding of why Libya approached the US and Britain to make progress on the disarmament. Questions arise such as: what were the Qaddafi regimes motives to give up its nuclear programme; what forced the regime to take another direction in its foreign and security policies, including the nuclear programme; was the invasion of Iraq a coercive factor for Qaddafi (as claimed by George Bush and Tony Blair); or were the attacks of 11th September a decisive factor in Qaddafi's decision to change the direction of his irresponsible policies? These questions will be answered in the subsequent empirical chapters.

The last chapter is devoted to a discussion of the scholarly contribution of this thesis. It should be noted that the results of the empirical chapters are explained separately due to the fact that there was variation not only in the behaviour of Qaddafi's regime but also in the factors which influenced it. It starts by discussing the main empirical contribution. In this regard, it is evident that there are many reasons why states pursue the acquisition of nuclear weapons, and equally many reasons why they decide to abandon such programmes and dismantle their non-conventional weaponry. In particular, a response to external pressures is seen to be a deciding fact. The analysis of the Libyan case suggests that the fear of having force used against the country, as for example as happened in Iraq, may well have played a significant role in persuading Qaddafi's regime to suspend its nuclear weapons programme and surrender its long-range missiles. Indeed, the systematic analysis of the Libyan case can be generalised as an effective model for other similar cases such as Syria and Iran. The second section of the chapter is dedicated to the theoretical contribution. In brief, although the constructivist approach can provide answers to important questions regarding the abandonment of nuclear weapons programmes, referring mainly to the pressure for states to respect regional and international norms, and the subsequent need for nuclear weapons-free zones, the realist approach is actually the most appropriate. Libyan compliance is shown not

to have been the outcome of the regime's respect for regional and international norms regarding the expected behaviour of moderate states, but rather of its fear of further economic and military sanctions, greater international isolation, and potentially the same destiny as Iraq.

To sum up, the primary drivers for the change in Libyan politics in the fourth decade of Qaddafi's rule, were in fact influenced and affected by a set of contributing factors. Overwhelmingly, external factors were influential in promoting the transformation of the Qaddafi regime's attitudes in relation to its foreign and security policies. In this respect, it is clear that the effects of external constraints that had been brought to bear upon Libya as a means of bringing the country into line with the international community, were substantial, as the global pressure, international isolation, unilateral/multilateral sanctions, coercion, and threat of military force all combined to force the Libyan regime to change its outlook and deeds. Indeed, the Qaddafi regime's compliance with powerful states such as the US and the UK, international institutions (i.e. IAEA), and the rest of the international community was crucial and instrumental in allowing Libya's return to the international community. Other contributing factors to the shift in Libyan policies can be seen as relating to regional and domestic imperatives. In fact, Libya had to amend its regional policies by co-operating with its neighbouring countries (i.e. security) and re-directing its political reorientation towards the African continent instead of towards the Arab World. Additionally, domestic factors exerted some pressure during the last decade of Qaddafi's rule with the emergence of the reformists' camp, led by one of Qaddafi's sons and other figures such as Ghanem and Mahmud Jibril, which had attempted to make economic improvements through changes to economic policy, involving a move away from the state-controlled and socialist-inspired economy to a more liberal one. The response of the Libyan regime regarding the dire economic situation, unemployment, and under-development varied. For instance in mid-2000, after the sanctions were lifted, the Libyan government persuaded several international companies to invest in different sectors of the economy, and employ local people in a bid to reduce youth unemployment. Additionally, various international companies entered the Libyan market to boost the Libyan economy, develop the oil sector, and develop the country's infrastructure.

In order to fully understand the motivations behind Libya's pursuit of nuclear weapons, and their subsequent dismantlement, the next chapter explores the issue of nuclear politics through the existing literature. It examines several cases of nuclearisation and

denuclearisation as well as theories of international relations, realism, and constructivism. This examination subsequently allows for the development of a systematic framework with which to investigate the Libyan case empirically throughout different periods. In turn, this investigation provides important lessons regarding the motivations for pursuing a nuclear programme and then abandoning it.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

Since they were developed in the middle of the 20th century, nuclear weapons have become central to all debates in international security, and the spread of such weaponry is considered a significant topic in the study of international relations (IR). Essentially, the motive for such attention by scholars and analysts is the fact that nuclear proliferation may lead to a nuclear war since when more states possess nuclear weapons, the likelihood that one state may use them against another can increase. Moreover, nuclear weapons proliferation increases the risk of unintentional accidents. Not surprisingly, therefore, the issue of nuclear weapons proliferation by and among more states, has generated a debate between nuclear optimists and pessimists about the likelihood of war, including nuclear war.⁸

With the production of the first atomic device in the United States and its use over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the world witnessed the destructive effect of new weaponry, and realised the potential significance of the atom bomb in future conflicts. Accordingly, the possession or otherwise of nuclear weapons has played a crucial role in world politics and international security, especially during the peak of the Cold War, the Cuban crisis in 1963, providing a vivid example. The US development and its use of the atomic bomb in August 1945 prompted the Soviet Union to develop its own nuclear weapons, and this move in turn, motivated other powerful countries such as the UK, France, and China to engage in the arms race and develop their own nuclear weapons. These five nuclear-weapon states are officially known as the nuclear club (US, Russia, UK, France, and China), and were subsequently followed by other undeclared nuclear weapon states (e.g. Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea). Such expansion in nuclear weapons subsequently inspired or reinforced the will of other countries to obtain such weapons - Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Libya being examples.

The role of nuclear weapons is to deter potential adversaries or foreign aggression towards states, to balance the power of other states, and to protect state security. However, when states seek to nuclearise and acquire unconventional weapons, regional and international

⁸ The contribution of Kenneth Waltz and Scott Sagan to the optimism-pessimism debate on nuclear weapons. Scott D Sagan and Kenneth N Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A debate Renewed* (New York: W W Norton: 2003).

stability is threatened and the possession of nuclear power becomes a menace. That said, many countries view nuclear weapons as essential to their security, since they are considered as a tool of survival in the absence of a governing authority in the world system (Paul, 2000:6). Consequently, the spread of nuclear weapons is one of the gravest concerns threatening world peace and security in the modern and contemporary history of IR. And moreover, despite the theory that nuclear weapons may sustain the balance between states, the theft of such nuclear materials or nuclear bombs by terrorists, and their eventual use, raises concerns over nuclear weapons proliferation. Indeed, as new states obtain nuclear weapons, so too will there be a greater probability that terrorist groups may get their hands on them (Campbell et al., 2004:26; Kroenig, 2010:189).

In the aftermath of World War II, the arms race between the most powerful states (i.e. the USA and the USSR) created a motive for other states to acquire nuclear weapons in order to balance and protect themselves from outside aggression. This was particularly the case in developing countries (Cordesman, 1991:3). Several regions around the world sought to acquire nuclear weapons (i.e. Northeast and Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the African continent), and some other countries are still keen to obtain such weaponry, as for example in the Middle East. Indeed, this particular region has been prone to nuclear weapon proliferation and conventional war for a long time (Miller, 1989:390), having sought to acquire nuclear weapons from the early 1960s right up to the present time. Globalisation facilitates this process, as developing countries are able to communicate with other countries that can provide the materials to help them acquire nuclear weapons, all justified on the basis that their possession will deter hostilities from neighbouring states and enable a better balance of power (Kamrava, 2012:10; Solingen 2012:24).

However, even if such attempts by states to develop nuclear weapons fail, inter-state conflict can still be caused, and preventive attacks on nuclear sites and facilities may increase as adversarial states seek to sabotage other states' nuclear programmes. Such an example was seen in 1981 when Israel attacked the nuclear reactor at Osirak in Iraq, and in 2007 when it attacked a nuclear facility in Syria. The US also intended to bomb North Korean nuclear facilities in the 1990s (Spector and Cohen, 2008). Additionally, fearing its neighbour's nuclear ambitions, Iraq sent a jet fighter to attack an Iranian nuclear reactor, and an Iranian aircraft attacked the Osirak nuclear reactor near Baghdad, just nine months before Israel did the same. Moreover, in the late 1980s, the US and Israel threatened to bomb unconventional weapons facilities in Libya (Miller,

1989:390-394); and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was fuelled by the suspicion that Iraq was developing nuclear and chemical weapons in defiance of UN resolutions.

The first section in this chapter is dedicated to understanding the causes of nuclearisation and denuclearisation, and focuses particularly on the Libyan case. This is followed by an identification of the environmental factors (internal, regional, and external) which influenced Libyan policy in this regard. The third section considers the main relevant IR theories and approaches to the analysis of the nuclear weapons field in general, and explores the extent to which these theories can be applied to Libya. And the final section introduces the case of this study, indicating that the focus will be on three different phases within the period of the Qaddafi regime since these three different phases demonstrate influences by different factors and led to various results.

In order to fully comprehend the phenomenon of nuclear weapons, it is essential to consider the incentives which push states towards acquiring such weaponry. This requires an exploration of the contributing factors which shape nuclear decisions and motivate states, such as the nature of the political system, the military apparatus, the technological establishments, and security. This is undertaken in the next section, which takes a global approach to the issue.

2.2 Background to the Phenomenon of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation

The first decades of the development of nuclear weapons were characterised by the race between several powers to acquire the most powerful weapon. In 1945, the United States was the only power to possess the atomic bomb, and it did indeed use this in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. This strategy was not intended solely to destroy two Japanese cities, but was in fact directed against the country as a whole (Schelling, 2008:17). The possession of such a weapon served as an incentive for other states to acquire nuclear power, and as the Cold War unfolded, the Soviet Union broke the monopoly on atomic weapons held by the US, and developed its own atomic bomb in 1949. Soon afterwards, the United Kingdom crossed the nuclear threshold and developed its own atomic bomb in 1952, being followed by France in 1960, and China in 1964. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council formed the club of those possessing the atomic bomb in 1964, becoming known as the five nuclear weapons states (Maerli and Lodgaard, 2007:1).

Initially, the US atomic bomb was developed to counter any German project, especially in the military domain, and then later to guard against hostile moves by the Soviet Union. However, once the bomb was available to the US, it became viewed as a legitimate, strategic weapon to use against any enemies of the US (Freedman, 2003:15). Likewise, the Soviet Union considered nuclear power as forming a strategic weapon which could deter outside threats, especially from the US, NATO, and/or other powers. Moreover, it was also perceived as a legitimate weapon for use in the case of limited war as a means of deflating the threat of conventional war when facing a stronger adversary (Santoro, 2010:33). As for the British doctrine, nuclear weapons were considered essential to prevent potential threats such as those emanating from Nazi Germany during WWII. The same concerns were expressed in the Cold War period - this time against the Soviet Union and its allies. France also shared similar beliefs to those of Britain, regarding the importance of having nuclear weapons as being to deter outside attacks and guarantee national security. Accordingly, nuclear weapons were seen by France as a deterrent against foreign aggression or invasion.⁹ The Chinese dogma with regard to nuclear weapons was based on three principles: “effectiveness, counter-deterrence and sufficiency”. Although China claims to have the smallest arsenal of the nuclear weapons states, it stresses that its capability must meet the national security imperatives and protect its territory in defensive and retaliatory situations (Santoro, 2010:29-36).

As already noted, other states such as South Africa, Israel, Iran, and North Korea, also decided to pursue nuclear power to protect their own security interests. However, the decisions in this respect provoked desires from neighbouring countries to also enjoy nuclear capability and this merely added to the number of states willing to acquire nuclear weapons. This attempt to proliferate such armaments was perceived as a genuine threat to world peace and security. One reason for this perception was that nuclear power was considered a source of nuclear war between states. And another related to the potential consequences of the theft of nuclear materials/weapons by terrorist groups (Marks, 2009:325).¹⁰ The increase in states seeking nuclear weapons still represents a major concern, particularly in a high conflict environment or in troubled regions such as the Middle East and North Africa.

⁹ Possessing nuclear weapons was seen by France as a key solution to its security problems. The concept was deeply embedded in the minds of its leaders.

¹⁰ The more states possessing nukes, the more likely they will be tempted to use them (Hanson, 2008:606). Nuclear weapons are considered the most destructive weapon that mankind has invented. They can destroy big cities if used. Hence, they are regarded as dangerous weapons, especially when they fall into the wrong hands.

However, there are scholars in the IR field such as Waltz¹¹ and Mearsheimer¹² who argue that nuclear weapons kept the peace during the tensions of the Cold War era, and affirm that they are actually tools for stability between states (Sagan and Waltz, 2003:5; Mearsheimer, 1985:20). Indeed, both Waltz (2003) and Mearsheimer (1985) regard nuclear proliferation as beneficial to world peace and security.

In order to address the threats resulting from nuclear weapons proliferation, in 1968 the international community established the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which came into force in the early 1970s.¹³ The purpose of the NPT is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons (Bergner, 2012:84), which as Lavoy (2006) observes, has been a top security issue for the US since the development of such weapons in the 1940s. Subsequently, there have been many efforts by the US and other countries to dissuade states from pursuing nuclear capability (Lavoy, 2006:433).

Not surprisingly, the phenomenon of nuclear weapons proliferation has been the focus of various international debates in different forums such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the European Union (EU), and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). And the questions which have dominated the discussions have been related to the perceived need to acquire nuclear weapons as well as their utility to states.

In this great debate, two paradigms dominate: “more may be better” for scholars such as Waltz, who regards nuclear weapons as a sign of stability because deterrence will work, and “more may be worse” by Sagan who considers nuclear weapons as a source of instability for peace and security (Waltz and Sagan, 2003:1).

The early realist perspective (post-World War II) concerning the necessity of possessing nuclear weapons, was met with intense scepticism amongst the powerful states and the international community. Accordingly, the leading powers such as the USA and the rest of the international community, decided to work towards nuclear non-proliferation through persuasion and pressure such as was the case with Germany and Japan (Bahgat, 2008:2). However, a number of countries received nuclear assistance from nuclear weapons states, as

¹¹ For more details see: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons.

¹² For more details see: Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence in Europe.

¹³ Five states are recognised by the NPT: the US, Russia, UK, China, and France. India, Pakistan and Israel have not yet been officially recognised by the NPT.

happened when France provided assistance to Israel from 1959 until 1965, and China assisted Pakistan in the 1980s. Subsequently, Pakistan provided nuclear assistance to North Korea, Iran, and Libya (Kroenig, 2010:1), demonstrating a mushroom effect as the assisted states become those providing help to enable others.

In contrast, however, several countries such as Australia, Sweden, Taiwan, South Africa, Brazil, and Argentina decided to dismantle their nuclear weapons/nuclear weapons programme and chose not to develop further nuclear capability. Different reasons can be identified for such changes in policy, for example internal political changes, sanctions, the inability to sustain the cost of such programmes, the damage they caused to the economy, and a change to state identity (Burgess, 2010).¹⁴ Additionally, other states such as Iraq and Libya, were forced by external pressures to withdraw from their nuclear weapons programmes.

Another category represents those states which had nuclear programmes but refrained from pursuing nuclear weapons capability. For instance, the decision of Argentina to give up its nuclear weapons programme came after a careful reconsideration of its security. In this respect, the perception among Argentinian policy-makers was that the security environment had changed, and that occurred after they lost the Falkland war against Britain, a nuclear power state, in 1982. Argentina concluded that the threats to its regional and international security had diminished and that it was more important to develop close co-operation with Brazil rather than an atomic bomb. Accordingly, co-operation between South American states was viewed as an enhancement to the security of all regional states. As for Brazil, its decision to abandon its nuclear weapons programme was based on similar reasoning to that of its neighbour Argentina, the perception being that a general improvement in the region's security environment was evident. Both the Argentinian and Brazilian governments formed the opinion that the acquisition of nuclear weapons would have undermined their economic and security interests. And as noted by Bergner (2012: 91-95),¹⁵ the NPT was not the main motive for the reversal of nuclear policies in either country.

¹⁴ There are also states such as Ukraine that viewed nuclear weapons as counterproductive to their security and new identity. See Steven (2008) "Identity Politics and Nuclear Disarmament" for more details on Ukraine nuclear disarmament.

¹⁵ The Treaty of Tlatelolco Prohibits Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. It stipulates: "Latin American parties not to acquire or possess nuclear weapons, nor to permit the storage or deployment of nuclear weapons on their territories by other countries." Article available online at: <http://www.armscontrol.org/documents/tlatelolco>

Some former states of the Soviet Union, such as Ukraine,¹⁶ Kazakhstan,¹⁷ and Belarus,¹⁸ dismantled their nuclear stockpiles soon after their disengagement from the USSR, opting for a state free from nuclear weapons. For instance, by mid-1994, Ukraine had given up its nuclear arsenal, which had been considered the third-largest stockpile in the world. Such a move reflected the fact that Ukraine was constructing a new identity for itself after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and hence it opted for a new state with a new image. The success of the above cases in denuclearisation is attributed to several reasons, such as abiding by regional and international norms, pursuing a new identity, *desovietization*, adopting new security policies, distancing themselves from the former arms race, and adhering unconditionally to the NPT (Steven, 2008).¹⁹

In South Africa, the denuclearisation decision was due to factors such as isolation, sanctions, and change in the security environment (Burgess, 2010).²⁰ This latter case presents similarities with Libya, with the exception of factors such as the change of power in the country, and the reduction of threats. To summarise the above discussion, it appears that there were differing rationales for dismantling nuclear weapons, such as internal factors (i.e. domestic pressure to nuclearise, cost benefit of nuclear programme, and pressure from the country's nuclear establishment), regional factors (i.e. change in the regional security, and end of regional rivalries), and external factors (i.e. international pressure, effect of powerful states, isolation, and sanctions by the UN). To further this argument, the discussion now concentrates on the Libyan case.

¹⁶See Dunn J F Dunn, "The Ukrainian Nuclear Weapons Debate" March 1993, Soviet Studies Research Centre. The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. On 16 July 1990, the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet (Verkhovna Rada) adopted a "Declaration of State Sovereignty" by a majority of 355 to four. Article IX of this document, dealing with the "External and Internal Security" stated, inter alia: "The Ukrainian SSR solemnly proclaims its intention to become in future a permanently neutral state, taking no part in military blocs and holding to three non-nuclear principles: not to accept, produce or acquire nuclear weapons". Article available online at: <http://www.fas.org/news/ukraine/k16.html>

¹⁷Aida Abzhaparova (2011, 1552) maintains that Kazakhstan was affected by the new identity as a sovereign and non-nuclear state. Constructing new identity requires 'desovietization' and denuclearisation of the state of Kazakhstan.

¹⁸Amy F Woolf (Nuclear Weapons in the Former Soviet Union: Location, Command, and Control). The removal of nuclear weapons from Belarus initially did not provoke controversies like those in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. In February 1993, the parliament in Belarus gave its approval to START I, and agreed that Belarus would accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear state. During debate on the treaties, some members of parliament suggested that Belarus seek compensation for its weapons, but the Chairman of the parliament, Stanislav Shushkevich, refused to place conditions on Belarus' approval of START and the NPT. See article available at: <http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/crs/91-144.htm>

¹⁹The countries cited benefitted economically and in terms of security following their decision to denuclearise.

²⁰See Stephen F Burgess (2010) for more details on South Africa's nuclear policies.

Libya's shift in its security policy in general, and its nuclear weapons programme in particular, is the main issue to be addressed by this study. To understand the reasons behind the decision to denuclearise, it is relevant to go back to the origins of Libya's decision to acquire nuclear capability. Hence, the subsequent sections address the Libyan desire to obtain nuclear weapons and the factors behind the later decision to give up the programme.

2.2.1 Reasons for Nuclear Weapons Proliferation

As already identified, there are various underlying motives for states to pursue nuclear weapons, such as to enhance security and prestige, to equalise the balance of power, and to reduce the perceived threat from adversaries. Certainly, states seek to acquire nuclear weapons in order to secure themselves from foreign aggression in an anarchic international system where there is no central authority. Additionally, states need to survive external threats and establish a balance of power in relation to hostile neighbours. Consequently, some states view nuclear weapons as being essential to their survival (Paul, 2000:5).

Nonetheless, nuclear weapons are known to be among the most dangerous weapons ever conceived by human beings; a single nuclear device can cause destruction on a scale far greater than any other kind of weaponry. Fortunately, it is difficult to acquire or manufacture nuclear weapons, but despite the obstacles in this respect, countries have managed to obtain nuclear capability and refused to become signatories to the NPT (Cirincione et al., 2005:5-8).²¹ North Korea, for example was the first country to conduct three nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013, after India and Pakistan conducted their nuclear tests in the late 1990s. Indeed, there is a suspicion that North Korea may conduct a fourth nuclear test (Rosett, 2014).

As for Iran's nuclear programme, the West suspects that Iran will develop nuclear weapons, and amid these growing concerns about Iran's nuclear activities, the six world powers (Russia, China, Britain, France, and Germany) led by the United States, held talks in Geneva with Iran and reached an interim agreement in November 2013 after several years of standoff. The six world powers agreed to support limited uranium enrichment for Iran's nuclear

²¹ Apart from the five states of the nuclear club acknowledged by the NPT, others such as India, Pakistan, and North Korea refused to accede to the NPT, while Israel is still denying it has nuclear weapons.

programme, in return for economic incentives such as the easing of sanctions,²² and the end to the hostilities between Iran and the international community. The final phase of negotiation was scheduled to end by 20th July 2014,²³ but no agreement to suspend Iran's nuclear activities by July 2014 was reached and the negotiations have been extended. In fact, the six world powers and Iran met again on the 16th of October in Vienna, Austria, for another round of tense and serious negotiation, but without reaching a compromise. The deadline of the formal negotiations has been extended until 24th of November 2014. The US has refused to extend the talks after the November deadline. If the major powers and Iran did not strike a deal on the 24th of November, the sanctions on Iran will resume.²⁴ The agreement of the six world powers with Iran for limited uranium enrichment to its nuclear programme demonstrates an acceptance of Iran's nuclear posture and the development of its nuclear programme.

For Reiss (1988:248) "the decision over whether or not to acquire nuclear armament in turn can be best understood when placed in the larger framework of a country's domestic and foreign policy objectives". Reiss (1988:258) also highlights that:

The motivations to acquire the technological capability which could allow the country to build nuclear weapons ... and the motivations to actually acquire weapons are very different. A country's nuclear development may be motivated by many factors ... all these motivations, however, are distinct from those which will impel a country to test and deploy nuclear weapons.

The author considers that a confusion often arises regarding these two types of motivation. States that seek nuclear technology may not intend to use it for nuclear weaponry,²⁵ for example, a state may seek to improve its image and envisage nuclear capability as a symbol of its modernity and prestige. Reiss believes that these different motivations and the way in which they operate to shape a state's nuclear policy deserve more attention.

²²In 2013 the major powers have suspended some sanctions and released \$4 billion from overseas accounts to Iran.

²³ See, *The Guardian Newspaper*, "US and Iran to hold direct talks in Geneva over nuclear programme", 7th June, 2014), available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/07/us-iran-direct-nuclear-talks-geneva>

²⁴ Solomon, J. (2014) "Oil's Fall, Militants' Rise Color Iran Nuclear Talks", 16th October, 2014, article published by the *Wall Street Journal*. Available at: <http://online.wsj.com/articles/oils-fall-militants-rise-color-iran-nuclear-talks-1413492207>

²⁵ Indeed, Reiss (1988) makes the point that some states seek the technical capability in order to use it for peaceful energy, and that they do so because they have insufficient domestic energy resources to meet their needs, and because they might not want to rely on foreign assistance.

Sagan (1996) proposed three models for understanding the incentives of policy-makers who pursue the nuclear weapons policy option. He contends that nuclear weapons are important for national security, domestic policies, and the bureaucratic apparatus, and that they function as a sign of a state's modernity and reinforce state identity (Sagan, 1996:55). The first model he identified is known as the security model which enhances national security against external threats.²⁶ In this analysis, the objective of policy-makers is to obtain nuclear weapons as a deterrent against adversaries or any potential security threats. If states do not have this option available to them, then they seek to ally themselves with a nuclear power in order to benefit from the protection offered by that relationship. However, the credibility of such extended deterrence might provoke retaliation (Sagan, 1996:57).

Moreover, nuclear weapons might also be a deterrent against conventional military threats, or could act as a coercive tool to effect changes in the status quo.²⁷ Sagan (1996) indicates that nuclear proliferation is a response both to the fear of being attacked by conventional weaponry, and nuclear weapons. He observes that prior to the first nuclear weapon designed by the USA there had been no need for nuclear arms.²⁸ However, the use of nuclear weapons by the USA in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was considered by the Soviet Union as the start of a new era by the Soviet Union, and in order to balance the American power, the USSR realised that its own acquisition of nuclear capability was its highest priority. Indeed, upon hearing of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Stalin was explicit, as noted by Sagan (1996:58), who quoted him as saying: "A single demand of you comrades ... Provide us with atomic weapons in the shortest possible time. You know that Hiroshima has shaken the whole world. The balance has been destroyed. Provide the bomb – it will remove a great danger from us".

The second model proposed by Sagan (1996) is the domestic model, which envisages nuclear weapons as a political tool to enhance domestic and bureaucratic interests inside the state. This model shows that domestic actors play an important role in the proliferation of nuclear weapons,²⁹ by supporting or discouraging the government's effort to seek unconventional

²⁶ He argues that states exist in a self-help system, anarchy, and must therefore take steps to maximise their security.

²⁷ According to Sagan, Israeli and Pakistani decisions to develop nuclear weapons are based on defensive motivations for countering the threat of conventional weapons. In the case of Iraq and North Korea, the author argues that their intentions are rather based on "offensive coercive threat motivation" (Sagan, 1996:57).

²⁸ Sagan underlines that American nuclear capability had arisen from the dedication of massive efforts and resources to found an appropriate technological and organisational establishment to support a responsible nuclear programme.

²⁹ These actors emerge from past case studies of nuclear weapons proliferation.

weapons.³⁰ The author identifies three types of actors - the state's nuclear apparatus,³¹ military officials,³² and political figures.³³ When domestic actors form coalitions and influence the government's decision-making process through political pressure, or through the control of information, a pro-nuclear weapons decision becomes possible. For Sagan (1996:64), "there is no well-developed domestic political theory of nuclear weapons proliferation that identifies the conditions under which such coalitions are formed and become powerful enough to produce their preferred outcomes". In Libya's case, the domestic pressure was very weak, particularly in the first empirical period (1969-1982) where its influence was weaker than other regional and external factors. As will be discussed in the second empirical chapters, the influence of the domestic factor had increased gradually. However, it was not the only decisive factor.

The third model proposed is the norms model, which emphasises the significance of norms regarding states' nuclear choices. According to this model, the decision to go nuclear or not becomes symbolic and thus shapes and reflects the identity of the state. Consequently, states' behaviour is not based only on leaders' concern for national security, but also on norms and shared beliefs concerning what behaviours are legitimate and acceptable in international relations.³⁴ However, despite the existing literature in the law and ethics of nuclear weapons, there is still insufficient attention paid to 'nuclear symbolism' and the progress of international norms related to nuclear weapons (Sagan, 1996:73-76).³⁵ Although Sagan's norms model can explain some nuclear decisions of some states (i.e. democratic countries and developed states), it cannot explain the decision of autocratic states such as Libya, Iraq, and Iran. As will be shown later, the constructivist approach can provide answers to some parts of the puzzle but it has its own shortcomings, whereas realism is more relevant both in Libya's nuclearisation and its denuclearisation.

As for the contrasting paths between the Middle East and Asia, Solingen (2007:276) states that "leaders and ruling coalitions, relying on or promoting inward-looking bases of support

³⁰ Whether obtaining nuclear weapons serves national security or not, it is expected at least to serve some domestic actors inside the state's bureaucratic or political interests.

³¹ Officials in state laboratories and civilian reactors.

³² These military actors might be the air force or the navy.

³³ In particular, those in favour of nuclear weapons acquisition.

³⁴ Existing norms relating to restraint in possession of nuclear weapons, like the NPT, could not have been produced without the support and encouragement of the most powerful states in the international system. However, when that effort was successful, these norms shaped states' identities and beliefs: even influential actors became restrained by the norms they had produced.

³⁵ Sagan (1996) argues that in the early sixties, nuclear testing was prestigious but today it is considered not legitimate.

have had greater tolerance - and in some cases strong incentives - for developing nuclear weapons".³⁶ She agrees with Sagan's (1996) findings that the nuclear decision is a direct consequence of political coalitions, and that it is generally the outcome of careful, rational consideration that reflects the ruling coalitions' desire for domestic survival.

Solingen (2007) provides an insight into the incentives and motivations that have driven East Asian and Middle Eastern states to first acquire nuclear weapons and then abandon them.³⁷ She observes that states consider it imperative to secure nuclear capabilities for their survival and enhanced power, and this might be applicable to most cases in the Middle East, inspiring nationalistic ideals among populations. Those nuclear weapons programmes, as highlighted by Solingen (2007), are fuelled more by concern about regime survival than by state insecurity.

The greater significance of regime survival over state insecurity emerges as a result of the consideration of domestic factors by political leaders and ruling coalitions, in their thinking about nuclearisation. As Solingen stated, countries in favour of internationalisation, and engaging in the global economy, avoid the costs of nuclearisation, because the domestic factor supports world integration, whereas leaders who refuse internationalisation or the idea of joining the world economy,³⁸ "incur fewer such costs and have greater incentives to exploit nuclear weapons as tools in nationalist platforms of political competition and for staying in power" (Solingen, 2007:5). The political survival of Qaddafi's regime played an important role in persuading Qaddafi to make concessions regarding Libya's policies in particular its nuclear programme. However, the political survival was not the only motivation since other motivations had made an impact on Libya's foreign policy, such as end external threats, retain the regime (i.e. appeasement, compliance with the international community, and powerful actors, and at the internal level, reforms to liberalise the economic sector and improvements in socio-economic welfare). Indeed, Qaddafi's regime feared the external threats to Libya's national security and regime survival more than the domestic pressures. The fear of the regime was more from outside than from internal populations. For example, Saddam's regime which was similar to Qaddafi's toppled due to the external invasion in 2003.

³⁶ Despite a stable security environment, the policies of different states may vary significantly with the time due to internal economic and political change.

³⁷ See Solingen (2007) *Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in Asia and the Middle East*.

³⁸ For instance, leaders who oppose world political and economic integration have a strong motivation to exploit nuclear weapons in order to gain a nationalist platform to stay in power.

On the issue of nuclear armament, Hymans (2006) points out that it is leaders' belief systems rather than objective environmental variables that actually trigger their actions. He identifies the oppositional-nationalist type of leader who considers his/her nation to be facing an external enemy, and therefore, opts for nuclear weapons. In this respect, he states that "oppositional nationalists develop a desire for nuclear weapons that goes beyond calculation, to self-expression. Thus, in spite of tremendous complexity of the nuclear choice, leaders who decided for the bomb tend not to back into it" (Hymans, 2006:2). As regards to Libya, Qaddafi in the early 1970s made a decision to acquire nuclear weapons and after almost three decades he made concessions to dismantle Libya's nuclear weapons programme.

Bahgat (2008) offers important insights on the issue of why states pursue nuclear weapons in the Middle East,³⁹ noting that the decision to go nuclear is complex and cannot be addressed by a single model, being instead much more the result of a range of incentives reinforcing each other. The first motive is globalisation and technological imperatives, and in this respect Bahgat (2008) observes that whilst in the twentieth century the transfer of nuclear materials had been limited, in the era of globalisation, the market for military nuclear materials has expanded and despite the restrictions in nuclear technology and materials, there is more demand and supply, creating its own black market (Bahgat, 2008:4).⁴⁰ This assessment of Bahgat's confirms that the existing international and institutional pressures concerning denuclearisation are not effective in preventing nuclear proliferation. For instance, the IAEA does not have sufficiently strong tools to enforce disarmament upon states suspected of developing nuclear weapons or to force states to comply with the NPT. Additionally, the insufficient intelligence capabilities and technological resources to prevent or punish NPT violators only serve to weaken and undermine the IAEA.

The second approach is the influence of leadership, and when seeking solutions to questions regarding proliferation, the belief systems of the policy-makers should be considered. Important roles are enacted by political leaders and political elites when pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons, and these must be addressed, particularly where states experience substantial changes or have weak political institutions.⁴¹ Several studies have been

³⁹ See Bahgat's "*The Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East*".

⁴⁰ Bahgat mentions Khan's network which "demonstrated the presence of a large international nuclear smuggling network".

⁴¹ Bahgat contends that the role of Middle Eastern leaders is very significant in the proliferation of nuclear weapons e.g. Nasser in Egypt, Saddam in Iraq, Qaddafi in Libya, Pahlavi in Iran, and Ben-Gurion in Israel.

conducted by scholars such as Reiss, Lavoy, Byman, and Pollack⁴² on the changing attitudes of nuclear weapons states, and their various findings have all included reference to the roles played by leadership and political elites, which are seen to be of immense importance in national policies (Bahgat, 2008:5). The third point relates to internal dynamics, and it is acknowledged that domestic politics, involving states' nuclear institutions, might affect nuclear proliferation. In fact, such dynamics are considered one of the most important components in nuclear decision-making. Fourthly, national pride and prestige are powerful psychological influences in the issue of whether a state decides to acquire nuclear weapons.⁴³ The fifth incentive is security, which is considered the most motivating factor for states, especially in regions like the Middle East.⁴⁴ Therefore, any approach which tries to answer the nuclear question should address the nation's technological capability and the domestic, regional, and international dynamics which come into play.

Campbell et al. (2004) argue that one incentive is regional and/or global security. Such insecurity leads to systemic rivalries leading a state to consider a policy of nuclearisation if it has a neighbour with nuclear capabilities, as was the case with Pakistan which pursued a nuclear programme following India's nuclear achievements.⁴⁵ Accordingly, the impact of nuclear weapons proliferation in regional spheres can provoke a reaction from neighbouring countries to acquire the same capability. And clearly, one of the main reasons to try to stop countries such as Iran, North Korea, and Iraq from acquiring nuclear weapons, is to prevent their neighbours from following in their footsteps and escalating the nuclear threat (Campbell et al., 2004:24-26).

As shown already, regional and international developments are not the only factors encouraging nuclear proliferation - domestic politics can also have a very important influence on a state's decision to reconsider nuclear weapons. Campbell et al. (2004:27) note that the national security apparatus, ministries, and military organisations are all key domestic factors in the decision-making regarding nuclearisation. They highlight the vital role of the Indian populist movement in India's 1998 nuclear test, while in Pakistan, it was the military apparatus which affected the choice for the nuclear programme.

⁴² Cited in Bahgat (2008:5).

⁴³ National pride is believed to explain the situation in the Middle East at the heyday of the Arab Nationalism of states such as Egypt, Iraq and Libya.

⁴⁴ For instance, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the instability in the Arabian Gulf are sources of anxiety for the political leaders.

⁴⁵ Campbell argues that regional insecurity may motivate a nuclear state's neighbour to acquire nuclear capability. See Campbell's '*The Nuclear Tipping Point, why states reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*' (2004).

The authors also argue that the availability of the required technology is another factor. In this age of globalisation, there is the potential to transfer nuclear materials as advanced techniques have been developed in nuclear research meaning that there are no longer technological or knowledge barriers, and this may facilitate a state's acquisition of nuclear capability.⁴⁶ Information about bomb design is readily available and the most complicated aspect of bomb-making is obtaining fissile materials, but these materials are becoming easier to acquire. Indeed, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, its former states were suspected to be the main potential source for nuclear materials despite the huge efforts by the US, Russia, and other states to prevent this. Large quantities of bomb-grade material were dispersed throughout a large area and are difficult to account for. However, the accessibility of fissile materials is not sufficient to motivate a state to pursue a nuclear weapons programme (Campbell et al., 2004:28).

Another identified factor is the breakdown of the non-proliferation regime (NPR); certainly, nuclear powers such as India, Pakistan, and Israel that are not party to the NPT significantly undermine the non-proliferation regime. It is believed that "the non-proliferation regime has been battered by the reality of newly emergent nuclear weapons states, but what is also critically important is the lack of real consequences for those countries that have defied the international community" (Campbell et al., 2004:24).

Accordingly, there are loopholes and defects in the NPR since it was unable to make states comply with its regulations, as in the case of North Korea. The lack of appropriate "verification and enforcement mechanisms" by the IAEA, due to shortages in funding, intelligence abilities, and other essential resources, means that it is unable to properly identify, prevent, or penalise states that violate the NPT. Indeed, the ineffectiveness of existing non-proliferation instruments in deterring aspirant nuclear weapon states has been highlighted by the development of nuclearisation programmes in North Korea, Iran, and Syria. It is true that the IAEA can refer non-compliant countries to the UNSC which is able to impose sanctions. However, "political calculations have often caused deadlock at the UNSC, enabling nuclear rogues such as Iran to defy successive, fairly weak UN sanctions resolutions with virtual impunity".⁴⁷

⁴⁶ This argument was supported by Ogilvie-White, who stated that one of the main causes of the spread of nuclear weapons is the availability of nuclear technology. If states have the know-how to the required nuclear technology, they increase their chances to produce nuclear weapons (Ogilvie-White, 1996:44).

⁴⁷ See The Global Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime. Report available online at: <http://www.cfr.org/arms->

After considering the various incentives which states may encounter for developing nuclear programmes, it is important to examine the incentives that subsequently encourage them to reverse their initial decisions and actions.

2.2.2 Reasons for Denuclearisation

Explaining the motives for nuclear non-acquisition is of immense significance in foreign and security policy. According to Paul (2004:4), “contexts and situations matter significantly in explaining the nuclear choices of nation-states”. He argues that “whether a non-great-power state acquires or goes without nuclear weapons is determined largely by the level and type of security threats that faces and the nature of interactions or conflicts with its key adversary and allies in its immediate geostrategic environment” (Paul, 2000:4). From this perspective, the decision of Libya to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme in 2003 reflected the change in the Qaddafi regime’s security calculations after the mid-1990s.

The incentives for the dismantlement of nuclear programmes have been considered by several researchers.⁴⁸ Solingen (2007), for instance, explains that domestic considerations are essential in any state’s decision to acquire or give up nuclear weapons. She argues⁴⁹ that decisions not to travel down the nuclear path are made by leaders who seek better economic integration and want to avoid the political costs of acquiring nuclear weapons.⁵⁰

However, this analysis might not explain Libyan policy reorientation, since Solingen (2007) suggests that nuclear reversal results from domestic conditions such as economic stagnation and domestic grievances, and whilst it is true that Libya did suffer under economic sanctions for decades, these conditions cannot represent the only factors behind Libya’s decision to dismantle its nuclear programme in 2003. Certainly, Libya did have to liberalise its economy, but the timing of the announcement to dismantle was such as to demonstrate a clear link between that action and Libya’s fear of the potential threat of a military attack similar to the one in Iraq. In fact, the regime sought to lift the international sanctions but in order to do so, it had to reconsider its security strategy and reorient its foreign policy by complying with the

[control-disarmament-and-nonproliferation/global-nuclear-nonproliferation-regime/p18984](#)

⁴⁸ Scholars such as Solingen, Harrison, Steven, Sagan, Reiss, Bahgat, Campbell, and Herman and Peters.

⁴⁹ Solingen examined nine cases of nuclear trajectories in the Middle East and East Asia.

⁵⁰ Unlike the leaders who refuse to integrate, with the global economy, and prefer to pursue the nuclear option.

powerful states such as the US and the UK as well as the international community.⁵¹ These reforms were pre-requisites of Libya's reintegration within the international arena. But Libya had also to change its behaviour in all aspects, especially politically, militarily, and economically. Other factors, such as the domestic dynamics, were not expected to play a decisive role in the regime's nuclear decision-making.

Harrison (2006) contends that economic incentives, the normalisation of relations, and security assurances are vital to persuade states such as Iran and North Korea to denuclearise. However, the dismantlement of a state's nuclear programme cannot be achieved unless regional security concerns are resolved. For instance, Iran might accept the suspension of its weapons-grade uranium enrichment if it were able to receive assurances about its regional security (Harrison, 2006:2). Harrison (2006) also argues that a better outcome could be gained if the United States were to support regional nuclear-free zones. He maintains that if the US does not change its security assurances to North Korea and Iran regarding the use of nuclear weapons, it will be difficult to convince these states to forego their nuclear weapons programmes.

In a study of identity politics and nuclear disarmament in the Ukraine, Steven (2008) argues that the country's disarmament was due to a crisis of national identity after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Additionally, Ukraine wanted to disassociate itself from the previous Soviet regime's nuclear policies. Commenting on this, Steven (2008:62) states that:

most Ukrainian leaders could not conceptualize that Russia or the United States as real security threats made the offer of carrots and the threat of sticks workable in the Ukrainian case. Ukraine was experiencing a profound political and economic crisis at the same time it was trying to construct new national and state identities and consolidate a new state.

For Steven (2008), neither Iran nor North Korea has been confronted with the same identity problem encountered by Ukraine. Therefore, the fact that both of these countries are experiencing economic stagnation is insufficient to produce the same outcome as in Ukraine. Furthermore, neither Iran nor North Korea has reacted to benefits and threats, and it is predicted that if security concerns are not addressed by external actors, Iranian and North Korean disarmament will not be seen in the near future unless a change occurs in the domestic political situation as in the Ukrainian case in the 1990s. The limitations in the

⁵¹ Such as the elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, to end its support for terrorism, to respect human rights, and implement moderate policies.

ability to obtain sensitive technology have not prevented countries with weak economic status such as Pakistan and North Korea from pursuing nuclear weapons, and whilst technological constraints might pose some difficulty for states seeking nuclear weapons, these would not be entirely prohibitive if those states were to face security concerns (Steven, 2008:49-62).

A study of South Korean and Taiwanese rollback of their nuclear weapons by Hersman and Peters (2006), found that security assurances and pressure from the United States were key factors in these countries' abandonment of their nuclear capability. Furthermore, the decisions of both states to dismantle their nuclear programmes were linked with the perception of their security relationship with the US. South Korea and Taiwan have obtained security support and protection from the US for a long time. If either of them were to develop nuclear weapons, the US would withdraw its military, political, and economic aid to both countries. The amount of trade and economic assistance received from the US is extensive, and its loss could seriously endanger these countries' economies. Such an outcome demonstrates the influence of the US in Taiwan's and South Korea's decisions to abandon their nuclear weapons programmes (Hersman and Peters, 2006:548).

Investigating the Middle East, Bahgat (2008) has suggested certain factors that contribute to the decision by states to reverse their nuclear weapons programmes. He identifies the economic, diplomatic, and military measures used by the international community to place pressure upon countries suspected of nuclear weapons proliferation. Additionally, he highlights that the decision to relinquish nuclear ambition is a strategic move, and that technological and economic hurdles influence the decision.⁵² The decision to dismantle the nuclear programme occurs when the leadership is convinced that the state will function better economically, diplomatically, and militarily without it. Three key factors could cause a nuclear programme reversal. A change in the economic and political orientations of the state may lead to reconsideration of certain political and economic aspects; for example, an economic shift from the public sector to the private sector can lead to more trade and investment (Bahgat, 2008:10).

United States policy regarding nuclear behaviour has played a significant role bilaterally and collectively, especially in creating the Non-Proliferation Policy. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is considered as a threat to US national security, particularly in a region like the

⁵² However, states with a technological capability, if they consider nuclear weapons essential for their survival, will resist potential economic obstacles.

Middle East where the US has strategic economic interests (Bahgat, 2008:14; Campbell et al., 2004:20).⁵³

Campbell et al. (2004) argue that it is not one single factor that would bring a nuclear disarmament decision, but rather a combination of various influences, which are mutually-reinforcing and serve to persuade a state to dismantle its nuclear programme. The first factor they identify is the direction of US foreign and security policies. According to Campbell et al. (2004:20), “[t]he most important ingredient in a new international calculation of the attractiveness - or perceived necessity - of acquiring nuclear weapons is the question of the future direction of US foreign and security policy”. This factor is considered very significant when planning to acquire nuclear weapons.⁵⁴ The features of this policy include the American nuclear deterrent, American security guarantees, and rhetorical commitment to global non-proliferation policies and regimes. Changes in these areas would lead states that had relinquished their nuclear ambition to reconsider their nuclear status. They contend that the US is expected to deal with tough security problems that its friends and allies might face. If the required actions are not convincing, the allies and friends may well seek their security from outside the US umbrella. So, whilst US policy is not the only factor in the security calculation, it is probably the most important one.⁵⁵ For instance, if the US takes action against the North Korean programme, it will reassure South Korea and Japan and prevent them from considering the development of nuclear weapons programmes themselves (Campbell et al., 2004:22). The absence of agreements between the US and other states does not oblige the former to intervene in cases of deliberate aggression, as can be seen from the case study explored within this thesis. Indeed, the tension between US and Libya, particularly concerning Libya’s attempts to acquire nuclear weapons was great, but there was no nuclear attack by the US as is discussed when reporting the outcomes of the empirical work.

Without doubt, the debate on the causes of denuclearisation sheds some light on the reasons why a state would surrender its nuclear weapons programme, but not all cases of nuclear dismantlement can be explained by the factors considered, and as the literature on denuclearisation demonstrates, each case is unique and reflects domestic, regional, as well as international dynamics at specific times. What can be drawn from the above discussion is that

⁵³ Hence, the US gives more importance to its Non-Proliferation Policy.

⁵⁴ Security commitments from the US to partners and allies such as Egypt, Germany, and South Korea would prevent those states from going nuclear because they look to American policy when considering nuclear calculations.

⁵⁵ The most powerful state’s actions and policies can influence the whole world and have effects on regional security, economic stability and international norms and practices (Campbell et al., 2004:20).

when Libya dismantled its nuclear programme, various contributory influences were seen to exist which together might explain why it embarked on a reversal of its nuclear ambitions at that particular point in history.

2.3 Internal and External Factors

It was evident that different perspectives existed concerning Libya's shift in nuclear policy and these, not surprisingly, led to different conclusions being drawn. However, what can be said is that only partial analyses have been conducted, and the failure to undertake a comprehensive approach to the Libyan case might well explain the disagreements in the existing literature. The originality of this study consists in its attempt to provide the literature with a consideration of those multiple factors - internal, regional, and international factors – all of which might have affected Libyan policy-making in this area.

2.3.1 Internal Factors

Internal factors usually play a significant role in most states' decision-making policies. However, their influence on developing countries, such as Libya, appears to be less important than regional and international ones. In fact, domestic politics have greater effect in democratic states than in undemocratic ones because the authoritarian nature of undemocratic regimes pays little attention to opposition groups or political parties, if they exist. Accordingly, it is assumed that Libya's domestic politics played only a weak role in persuading the Qaddafi regime to reorientate its policy concerning its nuclear ambitions. And of course, this can be attributed to the absence of political parties or a recognised political opposition in the country.⁵⁶

Secondly, the ideology of Qaddafi's regime was an important internal factor. Qaddafi shared the belief of developing leaders such as Nasser, Nkrumah, Castro, and Nehru for whom colonialism was a continued threat to their national security. Accordingly, Qaddafi's ideology was an incentive to build nuclear weapons. Contrary to the first internal factor, this one is

⁵⁶ The Libyan regime prohibited the establishment of political parties.

believed to have been more effective in encouraging the political regime and convincing Libyan citizens of the need for a nuclear deterrent for any outside threats.

The third internal factor is related to Libyan natural resources. In fact, the availability of large quantities of oil and gas in the early years of Qaddafi's rule gave him the means to acquire conventional armaments and eventually to establish a nuclear weapons programme. Similar to the ideological incentive, this availability of finance played a crucial role in allowing Qaddafi to pursue his ambitions to obtain nuclear capability.

2.3.2 Regional Factors

The second category of factors are those at the regional level, and these are seen to play a substantial role in any state's policy. In fact, the Libyan decision to launch and later abandon the nuclear weapons programme was affected by several regional factors. For instance, Libya's peripheral states, such as Egypt under Sadat, and Sudan under Numeiry, were considered a threat by Qaddafi's regime.

During the Cold War, Libya's neighbouring states had to choose between an allegiance to the Western bloc led by the US or to the Eastern bloc led by the former Soviet Union. Regional rivalries in North Africa and the Middle East were a significant contributor to the decision to pursue a nuclear weapons programme. Additionally, the desire for leadership in the region was a decisive element in the acquisition of armaments. Given these two different circumstances – the rivalries, and Qaddafi's personal ambitions – the Libyan government was persuaded to consider Libya's neighbours as potential enemies. In fact, there were fears that the bordering states of Libya, particularly Algeria and Egypt, had interests in attacking and overthrowing the regime. The best example confirming the fears of Qaddafi is found in the US secret document, dated 19th October 1976 (almost nine months before the Egyptian attack on Libya in 1977), which was declassified in 2006, and in which it was stated:

The prospect of an Egyptian military attack on Libya was discussed with FCO officers during highly useful consultation on October 16. British swung much closer to what we understand to be current US intelligence assessment that Sadat may attack Libya as part of attempt to overthrow Qadhafi. ... British who feel that Sadat must be so aware of the political and military problems involved that the purpose of the Egyptian build up on the border is ... two FCO officers in separate conversation with EMBOFF

used the phrase “to shake the tree and see what falls out”. If Sadat really does intend to launch a conventional military attack, British experts are puzzled by his apparent underestimation of the political and particular military difficulty involved.⁵⁷

The second regional factor is related to the Arab/Israeli conflict.⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, the Arab countries were concerned about Israel’s nuclear capability, and such a fact induced them to find a way to create a balance to this.⁵⁹ In fact, the military race was not only between Arab states and Israel, but also between Arab regional states as mentioned above. Therefore, this factor seems to have had substantial influence in the formulation of Libyan security policy in the regional sphere.

2.3.3 External Factors

The third category of motivations for the shift in Libya’s nuclear policy is represented by a number of external factors. First and foremost, the impact of international and regional organisations such as the UN, EU, and NGOs on small states may vary. Indeed, the UN issued numerous resolutions against Libya.⁶⁰ To a lesser degree, the EU also issued several resolutions against Libya on different matters. Indeed, as will be discussed in detail in the empirical chapters, the UN response to the Libyan case had an important role in precipitating the shift in the Libyan regime’s policies.

The second external factor is related to the impact of powerful states on Libya.⁶¹ Since the establishment of the UN,⁶² the victors of WWII holding permanent seats in the UN Security Council have been able to wield huge influence on international as well as regional issues.⁶³ The proliferation of nuclear weapons is one of the main concerns of the permanent security members of the UNSC. In the Libyan case, all the UNSC had explicitly intervened either in favour of Libya (China and Russia) or against it (the US, the UK and France).

⁵⁷ The full document can be found in Margaret P Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 May 2006 available at:

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/createpdf?rid=269449&dt=2082&dl=1345>

⁵⁸ It should be noted that several wars had erupted between Arab states against Israel, such as those in 1949, 1956, and 1973.

⁵⁹ Iraq and Syria, in particular.

⁶⁰ For instance, the UN imposed economic sanctions on Libya for almost eight years.

⁶¹ Most significantly the permanent members of UNSC: the US, China, Russia, France, and the UK.

⁶² In the aftermath of World War II.

⁶³ Through the right of veto system.

However, the degree of influence exercised by these actors on Libyan policies varied. For instance, the most dominant state actor was the US, and as will be seen later, the US pressure upon Libya seems to have been the most influential one throughout. Therefore, the role of powerful states will be considered as another external factor influencing Libyan policy. Clearly, as shown by the above-mentioned factors, powerful states had an impact on Libyan policies, as those states sought to guarantee their own national interests.

The third factor is related to the impact of collective action by the international community against states suspected of nuclear weapons proliferation, such as Iraq. The researcher believes that such an element was indeed influential in forcing the shift in Libyan nuclear policy since Qaddafi witnessed the consequence of Iraq's defiance in the face of the international accusation that it possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Libya did not want to be next and consequently, the Qaddafi regime opted for co-operation and compliance with the West's demand for it to dismantle its nuclear programme rather than confront the world community.⁶⁴ Accordingly, the Libyan shift regarding its nuclear weapons programme is very likely to have been affected by the invasion of Iraq and the fear of similar military intervention.

2.4 International Relations Theories

To help understand and explain the policy change, it is useful to consider International Relations (IR) theories, since the existing debate in academia and policy circles regarding nuclearisation, denuclearisation, and how to predict future nuclear proliferators, has centred on the dominant IR theories. These theories embody a diverse and broad range of conceptual approaches, some of which originated from IR, while others have their roots in disciplines such as economics and sociology. However, they can all be identified by the inclusion of factors that give emphasis to leadership, material interests, military power, and/or ideological beliefs.

In terms of the dominant paradigms of IR, the realist theory is considered because nuclear weapons, as realists argue, are essential for states if they wish to maximise their power and chances of survival. Realists argue that the anarchic structure of the international system based upon self-help, places states in the position where they must seek their own security,

⁶⁴ Especially when Libya was considered a danger to world peace and security.

and that nuclear weapons thus become the ultimate deterrent. Undoubtedly, the desire for security remains the most common explanation for nuclear weapons proliferation (Nye, 2009:266).

However, constructivism is also examined, since the proponents of this approach argue that it is capable of explaining how culture, beliefs, and ideas shape the foreign policies of states. Constructivists maintain that political leaders are not only motivated by material power and interests, but also by identity, beliefs, and culture. For instance “America worries more about one North Korean nuclear weapon than 500 British nuclear weapons, or why war between France and Germany, which occurred twice in the last century, is no longer considered possible today” (Nye, 2009:7). Moreover, constructivists argue that the development of a taboo against the use of nuclear weapons since 1945 has assisted in strengthening the effectiveness of treaties and institutions (Tannenwald, 2005). Nevertheless, whilst the constructivist approach does provide some explanatory power in respect of Libya’s nuclearisation and denuclearisation, the realist assumption seems to offer the best analysis of the Libyan case, and particularly in respect of the first two decades of Qaddafi’s rule.

Nuclear weapons have been a focal point in the field of international relations, with prominent scholars such as Waltz, Sagan, Feldman, and Solingen for example, writing extensively on this issue. These IR theorists were concerned about finding an explanation for both the acquisition and abandonment of nuclear weapons; these are matters of great significance in international relations on a global scale. However, the study of nuclearisation and denuclearisation has particular relevance for unstable regions like the Middle East/North Africa where states are still seeking to secure their territories. Libya, in particular, has been identified for decades as a trouble-maker and was suspected of militarising itself by amassing unconventional weapons.

From the understanding provided by an overview of theoretical approaches, the chapter examines two specific schools of thought. Firstly, there is that offered by realists who argue that states want to develop nuclear weapons to enhance their power and that they tend to adopt defensive strategies to protect their security. Secondly, there are the constructivists who argue that nuclear weapons enhance a state’s modernity and identity in the international arena.

2.4.1 Realism

The realist perspective takes the view that nuclear weapons are acquired because of their value as a deterrent to threats. As noted by Burchill et al. (2009:31), “[p]olitical realism, *realpolitiik*, power politics, is the oldest and most frequently adopted theory of international relations”. Fundamentally, whilst realism has different versions, it places emphasis on the constraints on politics inflicted by the egoism of human beings and the anarchy which rules political life.

Realism is a school of thought that describes international relations in terms of power. Classical realism has dominated the study of international relations since the 1940s and is based on the assumption that states are driven by the desire to seek power, an innate motivation for human beings. States have a desire for power, or what Morgenthau calls “a limitless lust for power” (cited by Mearsheimer, 2001:19). This means that states always look for opportunities to dominate other states, and hence, are inherently aggressive.

Classical realism provides a mixture of influence from human nature and international anarchy. Hobbes (1651) makes three simple assumptions these being that: men are equal, they interact in anarchy, and they are motivated by ‘competition, diffidence, and glory’. The combination of these assumptions leads to war of all against all. Men are not different in the sense that the weakest can inflict harm and can kill the strongest secretly or in association with others. Antagonism is intensified by seeking competition and glory. Hobbes identifies the logic of interaction, an ideal type model of pressures and tendencies, stating “when equal actors interact in anarchy, driven by competition, diffidence, and glory, generalized violent conflict can be predicted” (Burchill et al, 2009:35).⁶⁵

Keohane (1986) notes that political realism is founded upon three key assumptions, these being: firstly, states are key units of action; secondly, they seek power, either as an end in itself or as means to other ends; and thirdly, they behave in ways that are, by and large, rational and therefore comprehensible to outsiders in rational terms. The author claims that these premises do not, by themselves, constitute a basis for the science: they do not establish propositions linking causes with effects. He argues that the assumptions of realism can be found in the first chapter of Thucydides’ book which develops his explanation of the

⁶⁵ The above expose about Hobbes perspective has been taken from Burchill et al. (2009:35).

Peloponnesian war: “[t]he real cause I consider to be the one which was formally most kept out of sight. The growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedaemon, made war inevitable” (cited by Keohane, 1986:7). According to Keohane’s explanation, the Libyan pursuit of nuclear weapons was spurred by its intention to become a regional as well as international power.

2.4.2 Neorealism (Structural Realism)

Neorealism as a theory is an effort to describe both the behaviour of individual states and the characteristics of the international system as a whole. Sovereign states are the essential components of the international system and are treated as the main actors in international politics. Therefore, the theory concentrates primarily on great powers, because these states shape international politics and also cause the deadliest wars (Mearsheimer, 2001:17). Neorealists treat states as black boxes and consider there to be no differences between them, because all great powers act according to the same incentives regardless of their culture, political system, or who governs the state. The basic explanation of the behaviour of states, as has been argued by neorealists, is the distribution of power in the international system and the place of a given state within that distribution. The calculations concerning power dominate states’ views, and states compete for power among themselves (Mearsheimer, 2001:18).

Neorealists claim that the general insecurity of international anarchy leads states to worry not only about how they evaluate their absolute gains, but about how well they fare compared to other states (relative gains). This latter concern makes co-operation difficult, even though states share common interests, because if all states involved in the co-operation gain from working together there is always the fear that one or more states will defect from co-operation and gain more, relative to other states. For Waltz (1979:105), relative and absolute gains can be seen as follows:

When faced with the possibility of co-operation for mutual gains, states that feel insecure must ask how the gain will be divided. They are compelled to ask not ‘will both of us gain?’ but ‘who will gain more?’ If an expected gain is to be divided, say, in the ratio of two to one, one state may use its disproportionate gain to implement policy intended to damage or destroy the other. Even the prospect of large absolute gains for both parties does not elicit their co-operation so long as each fears how the other will use its increased capabilities.

The argument proposed by Waltz is that war becomes less likely as the costs involved rise in relation to possible gains. The imbalanced development of forces in new nuclear states makes a preventive strike more likely and might invite it (Sagan and Waltz, 2003). Waltz argues that the deployment of nuclear weapons enhances state security more than does the conquest of territory. A deterrent strategy leaves the state in a position where it can avoid fighting other states in order to enhance its security, and therefore, eliminates the cause of war.

The structure of the international system leaves no choice for states to survive unless they maximise their chances of achieving their goals by expanding their power base and thus ensuring their survival. As Waltz (1979:105) claims, “in any self-help system, units worry about their survival and the worry conditions their behaviour”. To implement their objectives and goals, the units in a system of anarchy must move forward by whatever means they have available to them, whether these be co-operation, collaboration, or war. Without such efforts, states are in fact promoting their own destruction as political units. In this respect, self-help is one of the necessary conditions in an anarchic structure.

The model of behaviour, as Waltz (1979) argues, becomes apparent from the ‘structural constraint of the system’. The need to survive is considered as the main reason for self-protection in a world where the security of states is not guaranteed. Waltz (1979:91-93) explains this, saying:

The survival motive is taken as the ground of action in a world where the security of states is not assured, rather than as a realistic description of the impulse that lies behind every act of state. The assumption allows for the fact that no state always acts exclusively to ensure its survival. It allows for the fact that some states may persistently seek goals that they value more highly than survival; they may, for example, prefer amalgamation with other states to their own survival in form. It allows for the fact that in pursuit of its security no state will act with perfect knowledge and wisdom (Waltz, 1979: 91-93).

Waltz’s explanation of the state within the structure of the international system is that it strives for survival by ensuring its security among other states, but anarchy may pose certain constraints to reward or impose penalties for that kind of behaviour.

There are differences between realism and neorealism. Unlike realism, which views states’ actions as influenced by their self-interested nature, neorealism claims that structure drives states’ behaviour. The structure of the international political system is defined first by its

organising principle, which is anarchy, where every state (as units in the system) has a similar interest in survival. The second defining principle - units' capabilities to pursue their interest - is not equally distributed.

The other difference between realism and neo-realism is related to the view of power held by the two schools of thought. Classical realists argue that power is both a means and an end, and that rational state behaviour is simply to build up the most power it can. For neorealists, power means the increase of military capability and the ability to use this capability to coerce states in the system. Realists believed that anarchy is the given condition of the system and that states act in response to it according to their size, location, domestic politics, and leadership quality; neorealists on the other hand, assume that anarchy defines the system and that states react to it according to their power capability (Grieco, 1988:487).

Elman (1996:7-8) criticises Waltz' argument and challenges the merits of neorealism, claiming that "neorealist theories cannot explain the relative stability of the cold war world; neorealist theories failed to predict, and now cannot explain, the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union; and neorealist theories are unable to predict the future of international relations". In fact, the neorealist predictions regarding the continuity of the competition in the bipolar system were not met, since one of these powers collapsed politically and economically. In this regard, Wohlforth (1994-1995:96) argued that:

The end of the Cold War was caused by the relative decline in Soviet power and the reassurance this gave the West. Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev may have had many reasons for competing with the United States, ranging from genuine fear to ideological conviction, but a necessary condition for competition was their perception that they had the capability to do so. Gorbachev may have had numerous reasons for seeking to withdraw from the rivalry with the United States, but a necessary precondition was the perception of reduced capability to continue competing.

It is worth noting that neorealism has two versions - Defensive and Offensive realism. Defensive realism, which was laid out by Waltz (1979), maintains that states will be at risk if they attempt to maximise their power, because the system will punish them for such efforts to increase this. If a state accumulates too much power, other states will have strong incentives to balance against it and consequently, will make that state more vulnerable. Offensive realism, which was developed by Mearsheimer, takes a different position. It maintains that states have to obtain as much power as possible because gaining much power will enhance

the chances of a state's own survival. Indeed, offensive realism goes a step further in considering how much power states should gain. It argues that states must enhance their power when the opportunity allows this, and that hegemony should be the final goal because this assures the survival of the state (Dune et al., 2007:72-75).

Due to its emphasis on issues of security, power, and state survival, neorealism appears to be one of the most relevant theories to understand the shift in Libya's policies, and can certainly be useful in analysing the initial phase of Libyan foreign and security policy after 1969. Neorealists argue that survival is the main aim of every state. Additionally, they consider foreign aggression or invasion as a threat to most states, and that as states are believed to be rational, they must naturally seek their survival. Realists also assume that states have relative military capability and that they do not know the intentions of their neighbouring states. The assumptions of neorealism are able to explain the Libyan case, and in particular, its foreign and security policy. Moreover, the use of neorealist theory can clarify the policies of the Libyan state in the early period of Qaddafi's regime. Specifically this can be seen in an analysis of military armament, conflicts with neighboring countries, and Libya's alliances with some states. Another important approach considered by various scholars in international peace and security studies is constructivism, which is now discussed.

The next section will discuss the third strand of realist theory 'neoclassical realism' which emerged in recent years and is championed by a number of scholars.

2.4.3 Neoclassical Realism

Neoclassical realism is the third emergent school of realism. It seeks to describe the grand strategies of individual states as opposed to international outcomes. Neoclassical realism aims to "explain why, how, and under what conditions the internal characteristics of states,⁶⁶ intervene between their leaders' assessment of international threats and opportunities, and the actual diplomatic, military, and foreign economic policies those leaders are likely to pursue" (Lobell et al: 2009:4).

Neoclassical realism is an important new version of the realist theories of international relations because it focuses on the interaction of the international system with the internal dynamics of states, arguing that the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven

⁶⁶ The extractive and mobilization capacity of politico-military institutions, the influence of domestic societal actors and interest groups, the degree of state autonomy from society, and the level of elite or societal cohesion.

first and foremost by that country's relative material power. Yet it contends that the effect of power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systematic pressures should be interpreted through intervening unit-level variables, such as elite and decision-makers' perceptions and the state structure (Rose: 1998).

Neoclassical realists reveal that there is no instant or ideal transmission belt linking material capabilities to foreign policy behaviour. The choices of foreign policy are conducted by the political leaders and elites, and it is their perceptions of relative power that matter, not the quantities of physical resources. Further, political leaders and elites do not have complete freedom to deal with resources (Rose: 1998).

The neoclassical realism school looks upon the earlier theoretical work of neorealism such as that of Waltz and Giblin, without sacrificing the practical insights about foreign policy and the complexity of statecraft, found in the earlier work of classical realism of Morgentau, Kissinger, Wolfer and others. Neoclassical realism, like other strands of realism, believes that politics is a continuous struggle among diverse states for material power and security in a world of scant resources and pervasive ambiguity. Anarchy, which is the absence of governing power, is one of the main causes of international conflicts and antagonism. The incentive of states is the struggle for survival by providing the security for themselves (Lobell et al: 2009).

The concept of neoclassical realism is based in the complex relationship between state and society found earlier in classical realism, but adds also the central thread of systemic constraints and the choices found in neorealism (Lobell et al: 2009). Neoclassical realism presents a 'top-down' model of the state, which indicates that systemic forces eventually motivate external behaviour. It envisages the state as exemplified by a national security executive, which consists of the top government and the ministers and bureaucrats in charge of making foreign security policy. The executive or elite figures, situated at the juncture of the state and the international system, with access to highly valuable information from the state's political and military organisations, are the most capable to comprehend constraints and assess the national interest (Lobell et al: 2009). The military and political figures in a state evaluate the situation based upon the undisclosed information they attain without the agreement of domestic society either to endorse or implement those policies. Contrary to other schools such as liberalism and Marxism, neoclassical realism does not take into account the demands of various societal interest groups or economic groups. Rather, leaders identify

the state's national interests and conduct foreign policy founded upon their consideration of relative power and other states' intentions.

The neoclassical realists realise that many states' regimes do not function as 'unitary' actors. Elite consent or disagreement regarding the nature and the dimension of international threats, constant internal tensions and divisions within leadership, social cohesion, and regime vulnerability to abrupt collapse, all inhibit the state's ability to react to systemic pressures (Lobell et al: 2009). In neoclassical realism, the state is not considered as a unitary actor, as in neorealism. Neoclassical realism identifies the elite officials' calculations and perceptions of relative power and domestic limitation as intervening variables between international pressure and the state's external policies. Relative power establishes the parameters for how states, or those in positions functioning on their behalf, define their interests and take up specific ends (Lobel et al: 2009). Neoclassical realists define the state's extractive and mobilisation capacity as an important intervening variable between systemic imperatives and the actual foreign defence policies that states pursue. Nevertheless, mobilisation and extractive capacity are not the purpose of a state's officials or the structure of the regime power base. Furthermore, ideational factors such as ideology and nationalism can play an influential role in assisting the leadership to obtain, mobilise and lead societal resources and draw support amidst its power base (Lobell et al: 2009).

A Neoclassical Realism Model by Lobell (2009) further raises the question of how states perceive international threats, what domestic actors are the most important in threat definition, and what happens when domestic actors disagree on the nature of the threat. Lobell claims that neoclassical realist scholars consider this strand of realism as a theory of foreign policy. Neoclassical realism explains the foreign and security policy of great powers, but it can also describe characteristics of regional and small powers, developing countries, and even failed states. It also includes the external and internal variables in the model presented. While the shifts in power within the international system bring threats, so too does the sub-systemic or regional and domestic environment. Furthermore, neoclassical realists consider power as central to political life (Lobell: 2009).

The relevant actors within the state in the neoclassical realist model are identified by Lobell (2009). Neoclassical realism makes various assumptions regarding the state, one being the presumption that the foreign policy executive (FPE) is a cohesive group of central decision-makers. They realise that state leaders function at the intersection of the domestic and

international systems, and can involve the international arena for domestic purposes, or conversely, marshal domestic opinion for international ends. Neoclassical realists believe that the FPE is mainly concerned with advancing the security or power of the entire nation. Nevertheless, aspects such as political and social cohesion, public support for foreign policy objectives, and the type of government and administrative efficiency, all affect the state's ability to exploit the nation's power. Due to this issue, some neoclassical realists differentiate between state power and national power. Moreover, "foreign policy choices are made by state leaders and it is their assessment of threat that matters. State leaders occupy critical positions in an administration, are the sole authoritative foreign policy makers and are responsible for the national security and the formation of long-term grand strategies" (Lobell et al: 2009:56).

Christensen (1962) argues that national power is not the outcome of the state or society, but rather the compatibility of both in dealing with external challenges. He argues that if political leaders are major figures, the state can prevail in tackling the pressure from society, and thus the nation's policy will match with the leader's chosen strategies. If the society is coherent and knowledgeable about the policy, there would be no opposition to the opted strategies. He notes that if the nation is influential politically, to a certain extent it shapes coalitions to press for policies within the national security interests (Christensen: 1962:21).

Schweller (2006) seeks to address the occurrence of under balancing, where states have either failed to recognise a threat to their own security or where they have recognised the threat but have not balanced against it in a reasonable manner. He identifies his work as fitting in with the neo-classical realist school of thought rather than classical realism or structural (neo) realism. He writes "this book fits squarely within the new wave of neoclassical realist research, which emerged in the early 1990s and posits that systemic pressures are filtered through intervening domestic variables to produce foreign policy behaviour" (Schweller: 2006: 6).

Moreover, neoclassical realists maintain that structural theory does not usually offer sufficient understanding or prediction. Schweller (2006:6) believes that "states often react differently to similar systemic pressures and opportunities, and their responses may less be motivated by systemic-level factors than domestic ones". He focuses on the behaviour of policy-making elites, aiming to provide a theory of foreign policy concerned with human agency, and then offers a theory which "centres on the behaviour and choices of policymaking elites" at the unit level. He identifies four domestic conditions which infringe

upon whether a state is likely to balance or not against an accumulation of power by offering a series of constraints and opportunities for state behaviour: elite consensus/disagreement, elite cohesion/fragmentation, social cohesion/fragmentation, and regime and government vulnerability.

From this it is clear that Schweller's analysis will not be restricted to one particular level.⁶⁷ The author distinguishes four types of balancing: appropriate balancing; overbalancing (hyper-balancing) which is a result of misperception; nonbalancing (inaction, normal diplomacy, buck-passing, bandwagoning, appeasement, engagement, distancing, or hiding); and underbalancing (inefficient balancing).

It seems that there is little difference between nonbalancing and underbalancing, given that underbalancing is said to occur "when the state does not balance or does so inefficiently" (Schweller: 2006:10). The implicit distinction seems to be that nonbalancing is a descriptor of other options which could be adopted, whereas underbalancing is the absence of any action or failure to adopt appropriate action. Nonbalancing may pay off for the state, but it is difficult to conceive of an example where underbalancing could be an effective policy choice (Schweller: 2006).

For Schweller, there are diverse reasons explaining why states react to changes in their peripheral environment and thus alter the preference of the relevant actors and the structural characteristic of the society and the government that comprise restraints and opportunities for actors.⁶⁸ Besides structural-level causes, there are certain unit-level factors which are capable of describing various outcomes in the international arena.

He notes that "states do not make policy; governments through their leaders do" (Schweller: 2006:46-47). Firstly, there are the elite's "preferences and perceptions of the external environment"; secondly, there is a decision to be made about which of these preferences and perceptions "matter" in the policy-making process; thirdly, the "domestic political risks associated with certain foreign-policy choices" must be taken into account; and finally, the

⁶⁷ This point is clarified when he indicates that "[s]tructural imperatives rarely, if ever, compel leaders to adopt one policy over another; decision-makers are not sleepwalkers buffeted about by inexorable forces beyond their control. This is not to say, however, that they are oblivious to structural incentives. Rather, states respond (or not) to threats and opportunities in ways determined by both internal and external considerations of policy elites, who must reach consensus with an often decentralised and competitive policy process" (Schweller:2006:5).

⁶⁸ The actors might prefer one action over another according to their environmental operating structures which lead to one or another political outcome (Schweller, 2006:46).

“variable risk-taking propensities of national elites” feature as an indication of what chances the elites are prepared to take. Although different perceptions of an external actor (or threat) may exist within the elite community however, not all will have an impact on the policy-making process.

Neoclassical realism is similar to other strands of neorealism, but it takes more into consideration the domestic factors. The type of government is very important when analysing a policy change of any state. Although this strand of realism can explain the changing behaviour of other states, however, the Libyan case is different from other cases. The domestic factors in Libya’s case are rather weak and did not play major role in the shift of security policy of Qaddafi’s regime. It is worth underlining, that the Libyan political system during Qaddafi’s era did not allow the domestic to function normally. The absence of unions, syndicates, political parties and oppositions prevented their participation and contribution in the Libyan politics.

2.4.4 Critical reflection of realism

The realist theory has dominated international relations since World War II. Realists see international anarchy fuels conflict and competition among states and decreases their desire to cooperate where there are common interests. Realists maintain that international institutions are not capable of constraining influence on cooperation between states (Mearshiemer, 2006:1). However, several scholars agree that realism has its own limitations, as it can explain some events but not all of them. For instance, neoliberals argue that despite the fact the realist theory has some explanatory power especially regarding national security, neoliberals claim that international political economy is in fact neoliberal preserve (Grieco, 1988: 485-504). The realist accounts regarding the shift of states policy and behaviour is considered by a number of scholars as insufficient to explain a policy change. For example, a change in foreign and security policies of state such as Libya could be better explained by the constructivist tenets (i.e. adhering to regional and international norms, change in a rogue and antagonistic behaviour).

Moreover, constructivism has its own explanatory power regarding understanding the motivations of acquiring nuclear weapons and dismantling nuclear stockpile, particularity after the end of the Cold War where regional and international norms spread around the globe. For example, the norms of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peaceful co-existence and the political and economic cooperation either at the regional or international levels.

Despite the importance of these accounts either by constructivism or neoliberal institutionalism, the realist theory ignores the effect of institutions and regional and international norms. It focuses only on the threat of the use of force and other punishment instruments to explain the denuclearisation process.

2.5 Constructivism

Constructivist theoretical tenets – namely the importance of ideas over material forces and the socially-constructed nature of identities and interests which are not given by nature – are now commonly accepted by IR scholars (Wendt, 1999:1). Constructivism is a relatively new approach that emerged to explain the dynamic, contingent, and culturally-based condition of a social world. It has key implications for the understanding of knowledge and how to achieve it. Additionally, it emphasises the relationship between nature and human knowledge (Carlsnaes et al., 2002:96).

Constructivism was driven by three elements. Firstly, a motivation came from the effort to reassert the pre-eminence of individual conceptions of theory and world politics. Secondly, there was no sufficient explanation of the end of the Cold War by neorealists and neoliberals, none of whom predicted or realised the shift in the global order. Thirdly, the rise of new scholars in the 1990s saw the possibility for innovation in the development of the theory. The failure of rationalism also motivated those scholars to reflect on issues that were largely seen through the lenses of neorealists and neoliberals, including the control of WMDs, the role of the nature of strategic culture, and the implications of anarchy (Burchill et al., 2009:219).

Wendt (1999) takes states to be agents rather than an aggregation of actors, because states are treated by actors within them (and externally with relation to them) as if they existed, and thus their identity is socially constructed. These constructed agents are recognised in the reality of international politics – the recognition of ‘state personality’ under international law (Wendt, 1999:10). Wendt is specifically interested in examining the structural influences rather than domestic factors, on the identities of states.⁶⁹ He accepts the conditions of international anarchy and the evident ‘self-help’ international system, but deviates from neorealists on the basis that ‘self-help’ is not a direct consequence of anarchy in and of itself,

⁶⁹ ... In order to keep the focus clearly on the international system.

but is instead generated by the fact that states are “egoists about their security” (Wendt, 1999:18).

Constructivism is recognised for its ability to comprehend important elements of international politics, and this is possibly because there is more than one version of the concept, thereby enabling different perspectives to be used. Moreover, Wendt (1999:193) acknowledges that “constructivism is not a theory of international politics. Like rational choice theory, it is substantively open-ended and applicable to any social form - capitalism, families, states, etc.” However, they all have a general concern with how ideas define international structure, how this structure forms the identities, interests, and foreign policies of states and also, how state actors and non-state actors reproduce the structure and transform it (Checkel, 1998).⁷⁰

Adler (2002) observes that constructivism is now joining the ranks of realism and neoliberalism as models for the analysis of international relations. Three levels of understanding comprise constructivism: Firstly, constructivism is considered to be a metaphysical stance concerning the reality of scholars’ ability to acquire knowledge and interpret reality from that. Secondly, constructivism is a social theory about the role of knowledge and the knowledgeable agents in the construction of social reality. It is thought to be a social theory within which the roles of inter-subjectivity and social context, the co-constitution of agent structure, and the nature of governance and society, can be understood. Thirdly, constructivism is an empirical IR approach that builds on the previous two layers and that is established on a social, ontological, and epistemological basis. Constructivists within this paradigm have developed this new approach regarding the role of identity, norms, and understanding in the formation of national interests, which offers insights about institutionalisation and international governance, and about the social construction of new territorial and non-territorial transnational regions (Carlsnaes et al., 2002).

Constructivists are concerned with how the objects and practices of social life are composed and constructed. Wendt and Fearon (2002) have pinpointed four characteristics in constructivist thinking about social objects and practices as follows:

First, constructivism is centrally concerned with the role of ideas in constructing social life. Second, constructivism is concerned with showing the socially constructed nature of agents or subjects. Third, constructivism

⁷⁰ Scholars of constructivism working with contemporary international relations argue that the structures of world politics are social rather than material (Checkel, 1998).

is based on a research strategy of methodological holism rather than methodological individualism. Fourth, what ties the three foregoing points together is the concern with constitutive as opposed to just casual explanations” (Cited in Carlsnaes et al., 2002:57-58).

Indeed, these characteristics might have explanatory power in respect of various political phenomena, including nuclear weapons proliferation. However, applying them in the current case study will not be sufficient, since dictatorial regimes do not respect such characteristics in their policy formulation.

Checkel (1998) argues that constructivists have succeeded in adding constructivism to the theoretical debate in IR. They deal with issues related to identity and interests that are often confined to neorealist-neoliberal debate, and theorists using this approach have stressed that “their sociological approach leads to new and meaningful interpretations of international politics” (Checkel, 1998:325). According to constructivism, states’ identities shape their conceptions of interests. Constructivism is not worried about levels of analysis *per se*, but is concerned primarily with conceptions of how the social and political world works. It is regarded as a social inquiry on the basis of two assumptions rather than a theory, the first assumption being that: “[t]he environment in which agents/states take action is social as well as material; second, this setting can provide agents/states with understandings of their interests (it can ‘constitute’ them)” (Checkel, 1998:325-326).

Constructivists focus on the relations between domestic, social, and legal norms, and the identity and interests of the states. Checkel (1998:326) states the following:

Consider nuclear weapons - the ultimate material capability. Constructivists argue that it is not such weapons themselves that matter. After all, the United States worries very little about the large quantity of nuclear weapons held by Britain; however, the possibility that North Korea might come into possession of even one or two generates tremendous concern.⁷¹

Constructivism stresses three propositions of social life that shed more light on world politics than do their rival rationalist hypotheses. Firstly, the structure can shape the behaviour of both social and political actors, whether individuals or states. The idea is embraced that

⁷¹ So, it can be seen that constructivists worry about the kind of actor that has such weapons, not about the weapon itself. This might illustrate the situation in the Middle East, where some states are considered eligible to possess nuclear weapons without global concern arising, whilst others cannot because of their poor standing within the international community.

normative or ideational structures are just as important as material structures. Constructivists contend that systems of shared ideas, beliefs, and values also have structural characteristics and that they exert a powerful influence on social and political action. The reason why constructivists have emphasised these structures is their belief that “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of a shared knowledge in which they are embedded” (Reus-Smit, 2009:220).

For instance, the US, Canada, and Cuba exist in close proximity to each other, but the balance of military power cannot explain that the US is closer to Canada, and an enemy of Cuba. Ideas about identity, logic of ideology, and the established structures of friendship and hostility provide the material power between Canada and the United States, and Cuba and the United States, with totally different meanings. Secondly, constructivists contend that understanding how non-material structures form actors’ identity is essential because identities shape interests and action. They argue that the knowledge of how actors develop their interests is vital to explain a wide range of international political phenomena. The formation of interests in constructivism focuses on the social identities of individuals and states. Thirdly, constructivists argue that agents and structure are equally constituted. Normative and ideational structure shape the identities and interests of actors, but those cannot exist if there are no knowledgeable practices undertaken by those actors (Burchill et al., 2009).

Normative and ideational structures are viewed as shaping the actors’ identities and interests through three means: imagination, communication, and constraint. Constructivists assert that non-material structures influence what actors see as the realm of possibility, such as how to act, what is perceived as a limitation to their actions, and what potential strategies might achieve their objectives. Normative and ideational structures make their influence through communication. States and individuals seek to defend their behaviour, and in so doing, usually appeal to established norms of legitimate conduct (Burchill et al., 2009).

Rublee (2009:3) presents a constructivist explanation of why states dismantle their nuclear weapons programmes,⁷² arguing that “constructivism indicates that multilateral institutions can socialize states and transform their basic preferences so that nuclear weapons are no longer a necessary or acceptable part of national defense”. For Rublee (2009), there is an international norm against nuclear weapons proliferation through institutions such as the NPR

⁷² See Rublee (2009) in ‘*Nonproliferation Norms*’.

and NPT, and this global social environment can exert major effects on state behaviour and nuclear decisions.

The impact of norms and values on non-proliferation may contribute to the understanding of the issue. Accordingly, norms may influence state behaviour in the sense that nuclear weapons may not be valuable to a state as they may be accompanied by negative images of a state's identity as well as its security. Rublee (2009) has argued that the Libyan government sought to reintegrate with the international community after more than two decades of isolation. In this regard, she observed that Libya tried to approach the US from the 1990s to negotiate its nuclear programme but that American policy-makers were not keen to participate at that time because the settlement of the Lockerbie affair was its top priority. She concluded that Libya had partially responded to the norms through the social environment (Rublee, 2009:165-168).

Although the constructivist approach can shed some lights on the response of the Libyan regime, it cannot provide a better explanation due to the fact that the regime on many occasions was reluctant to comply and obey international norms (i.e. peaceful co-existence and non-intervention in the internal affairs of member states). Moreover, the regime rejected in some instances the UNSC's resolutions. For example, the Libyan government breached the air travel embargo imposed on the regime. The argument of Hurd (2004: 19) lends another support to this argument, the author contended that following the accusation of the Megrahi connection with the Lockerbie bombing, Libya decided not to comply with the various UN resolutions, and the sponsors of those resolutions - the United States, Britain and France - viewed Libya's non-compliance as "defiance of the will of the international community" (Hurd, 2004:19).

The Libyan response was not to argue the illegitimacy of the UN resolutions, but rather to challenge each resolution separately and to claim that the incident had not been examined through the judicial channels before the sponsors provided their evidence. Libya also argued that the investigators had not examined all the documents, thereby pointing out that punishment implemented before an extensive judicial hearing breached the fundamental norms by which most domestic and international judicial systems function. Libya contended that the issue of Lockerbie should be referred to the Montreal Convention of Civil Aviation rather than the United Nations Security Council because all parties to the case had signed and ratified that treaty (Hurd, 2004).

Barnett (2008:165) argues that states desire legitimacy in order to be seen as part of the wider international community, specifically saying:

They believe that their actions are driven by the will of the values of the broader international community. There is a direct relationship between their legitimacy and the cost with a course of action: the greater legitimacy the easier time they will have convincing others to cooperate with their policies, if their legitimacy is less their action would be more costly. The world orders are shaped and maintained not only by great powers' preference but also by changing understandings of what constitute legitimate international order.⁷³

Furthermore, the nuclear taboo has created constraints on the development and use of nuclear weapons. Tannenwald (2005:8) maintains that the nuclear taboo is “a de facto prohibition against the first use of nuclear weapons”. According to her, the nuclear taboo enhances the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and can be used as a tool to deter nuclear proliferation. The nuclear taboo created a normative perception for the non-use of nuclear weapons. Tannenwald argues that the nuclear taboo emerged from the grass-roots and state-level who opposed nuclear weapons. These movements used the UN and other organisations as a platform to encourage states to denuclearise and call for a reduction of the nuclear policies weapons. The discourse evidence of these movements was backed by international law and international conventions. The nuclear taboo is considered a strong norm regarding nuclear weapons. Tannenwald draws on the constructivist tenets to show how the nuclear taboo created a norm regarding nuclear proliferation and against the use of nuclear weapons (Tannenwald, 2005). To sum up, the nuclear taboo is a vital norm since its emergence, but it would unlikely influence the policies of states who feel threatened and whose survival is at stake. For instance, North Korea joined the NPT, but later suspended its membership due to fear that it would be attacked in future. Additionally, Iran is one of the countries attempting to nuclearise, yet the international taboo of the proliferation of nuclear weapons did not change its desire.

The nuclear taboo does not compel autocratic states to forgo the desire to acquire nuclear weapons or to use them. Indeed, North Korea, Iran, and Libya would have unlikely been influenced by the nuclear taboo, since the peripheral environment does not encourage such states to be affected by the unstable regions such as the Middle East and North Africa which are prone to conventional and non- conventional conflict. Therefore, the impact of the nuclear

⁷³ See Michael Barnett in (Baylis et al., 2008:165).

taboo on the above mentioned states is very weak, as they can evade sanctions and constraints.

Wendt (1992) observes that the identity of the state informs its interests and actions. He makes a distinction between the social and shared identities of the state on two grounds, the first referring to the status, character, and personality that the international society offers to a state; and the second to internal human, material, ideological, and cultural reasons that make a state what it is. Furthermore, Barnett (1998) stated that Arab states find themselves worn out between interests and identity. For instance, Arabism was one of the common identities among Arab states, yet the Arab league and the Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab Maghreb Union failed to convene the Arab summit to call for the withdrawal of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Despite the fact that individual states had called for a cessation of Iraq invasion, they had failed to issue a resolution. In this regard, Barnett maintains that “the steady demise of pan-Arab organisations suggests a decline in the centrality of Arab identity (Barnett, 1998: 18). Despite that most of the Arab states have membership in one of the oldest organisation, the Arab League and have several similarities such as identity, Language, culture and religion, they have failed to coordinate their policies collectively. Individually, the Arab states were not united, for instance Qaddafi did not approve the US led coalition to Liberate Kuwait from Iraqi troops at the Arab League debates. The Libyan regime drew (in consultation with Jordan and Sudan) a road map to peace, but this step was not welcomed by the rest of the Arab states, especially the Gulf countries (St John, 2014:145). This indicates that the Arab government did not unanimously agree on the first Gulf war.

The influence of norms on Libya’s identity after 1969, given such causes as Pan-Arabism and Islam, which were not high on the Libyan agenda prior to the military coup, is readily seen. In addition, Libya also tried to unite with Egypt and Syria following the 1969 when Qaddafi came to power. Although these attempts at unity were not successful, they reflected Libya’s identity as an Islamic, Arabic and African state. However, regional rivalries, leadership and insecurity among Arab countries were more important to the Libyan regime and its neighbours. In this regard, political interest, leverage, power and security were overwhelmingly apparent in Qaddafi’s regime behaviour with several Arab and neighbouring countries. Arabism and Islamism were used as tools to mobilise the public opinion and support the regime’s policies.

The identity of the Middle East is bounded by religious and ethnic similarity. Libya's identity is intermixed with Arab, Islamic, and African orientation. After Qaddafi seized power in 1969 he became involved with Arab nationalism, Islam, and Africa. The early phase of Qaddafi's rule shaped the state's ideological infrastructure, with the establishment of the Arab Socialist Union in 1971. Libya's political development was in fact influenced by Nasser's revolution in 1952.⁷⁴

In this respect, Obeidi (2001:47) states:

School was the most significant factor in creating an Arab nationalist feeling in Libya. Egyptian ideological propaganda through the mass media also affected Libyan youth during the 1950s and 1960s, especially Radio *Sawt al-Arab* (The Arab Voice) in Cairo, which transmitted the political values of the 1952 revolution and Nasser's political speeches directly to most Arab countries.

Obeidi highlights that Libyans saw Nasser as their hero: his picture could be seen everywhere, and due to the influence of the Egyptian revolution, the Libyan revolution could be considered as a product of the great Arab revolution. Indeed, the Libyan regime at the outset of the revolution followed Nasser's ideology and policies (Obeidi, 2001).

The Libyan regime used Arab nationalism as one of its revolutionary pillars. Qaddafi promoted the Arab nationalist ideology since it was a shared identity for Middle Eastern and North African countries. The rise of the Pan-Arab identity in the 1950s reflects the advances in education and literacy brought about by Egyptian teachers in the Arab World, in addition to the shared cultural, artistic, and religious traditions. In fact, the shared values among Arab states (i.e. religion, language, history, and culture), particularly Egypt, had their influence in shaping the Libyan identity. Despite the fact that Libya shares some values with Islamic and Arab countries, the intention of Qaddafi to become a regional power and obtain nuclear weapons was more significant than a shared identity and joined interests with the neighbouring countries. The conflicts between Libya- Egypt in 1977 and Libya-Chad in 1980s can be considered as good examples in this regard. Moreover, the aggressive behaviour of Qaddafi's regime and in particular Qaddafi himself with some monarchical Arabic regimes

⁷⁴ The Egyptian influence can be traced back to the beginning of the 1950s: common religious, linguistic, and ethnic bonds were present in the newspapers and magazines which travelled from Egypt to Libya. Even in the field of education, curriculum and teaching staff were brought from Egypt, which influenced students in the ideology of the Egyptian revolution, in particular Arab nationalism.

reflected the actual intention of Qaddafi to be a regional as well as international figure on the expense of Islamic and Arabic identity.

2.6 Review of Nuclear and IR Approaches

After a careful review of nuclear approaches and IR theories, it can be expected that realism and constructivism might explain, to a certain extent, the reversal of Libya's nuclear weapons policy. Accordingly, elements of each approach are considered as a means to explore this major change in Libyan foreign and security policy. However, the realist theory seems to be the most appropriate approach to understand and explain the Libyan regime's behaviour concerning the reversal of its foreign and security policies in this respect.

The realist perception of nuclear weapons is expected to provide the most accurate explanations for the Libyan case. Under Qaddafi, the Libyan government was quite different from other types of government. The same leader who was non-compliant with international institutions and the international community, and who sought for decades to acquire nuclear weapons, was surprisingly the dominant figure of the same government that totally changed these foreign and security policies. The factors promoting the shift in this respect were attributed to several influences, such as international pressure, the threat of force by the international community, and international sanctions.

The Libyan regime signed and ratified the NPT but continued to pursue a covert nuclear programme. Some approaches such as the domestic model might explain certain cases but they do not offer a satisfactory explanation of why Libya's security and foreign policy was completely reformulated. There was no change to the Libyan leadership for 42 years, during which time various ideologies (i.e. Arabism, Islamism and Africanism) were used to implement policies that could strengthen its power.⁷⁵ Insecurity in general, regional insecurity, and the triumph of Arab nationalism drove the Libyan leadership to pursue its nuclear programme, and characterise its foreign policy to a certain extent.

⁷⁵ Especially in the early years of the revolution, Qaddafi used Arab and Islamic discourse to implement nationalist ideology in the region which sought to merge Libya, Egypt and Sudan. Pan-Arabism was a common theme in Libyan rhetoric, which followed the Egyptian path of mobilising the masses and adding support to the idea of Arab nationalism. But at some stages, pan-Arabist nationalism was in decline due to damage to individual states' interests.

More relevance in the analysis seems to be possible by considering the realist perspective, since this believes in self-help and anarchy, and acknowledges that nuclear weapons thus become an essential tool for state survival and security. Realist scholar John Mearsheimer (1994:11-12), argues that “[t]he greater the military advantage one state has over other states, the more secure it is”. Realism can explain why states pursue nuclear programmes. Hence, it will be used to analyse the Libyan situation, and specifically, why Libya had to seek nuclear capability from the early stages when Qaddafi came to power. The issue of security was one of the main concerns for Qaddafi in the early phase of the 1969 revolution, when memories still existed of the brutality of Italian colonialism, and Libyans believed they were not completely independent since US and British military bases were still on Libyan soil.

Authors such as Maria Rost Rublee (2009), and Dafna Hochman (2006), understand and explain the Libyan behaviour through a constructivist perspective, considering the transformation as a result of its new government commitment to regional and international norms. However, the realist account remains more appropriate for appreciating the shift in the Libyan position; by considering the US and Europe as exerting pressure for this change, it is anticipated that the Libyan response was indeed the result of these external factors which convinced the regime to make concessions regarding its nuclear policy. This in turn, reflects the Libyan fear of military invasion along the same lines as in Iraq, which is a stance that would feature as one of the underpinnings of a realist analysis.

Exploring the strength of the contributory factors in the Libyan case presents a useful model to understand first, the motivations to acquire nuclear weapons, and then the decision to dismantle them. This is what the present study aims to achieve.

2.7 Different Interpretations of the Libyan Case

There are various explanations for the shift in Libyan nuclear policy, such as those focusing on the effects of external developments and influences associated with the post-September 11th agenda, and the war on Iraq. St John (2004) argues that the Libyan shift was due to economic stagnation as the country’s economic and oil wealth was heavily affected by the sanctions, and also due to a change in the political discourse in general and in the foreign policy, in particular. The reasons for this reorientation have been reiterated by Jouve (2004), who reports that Qaddafi’s incentive to collaborate with the West was entirely disconnected

from the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.⁷⁶ Nor were Libya's isolation or lack of diplomatic ties the sole reasons for its transformation in the direction of peace. Qaddafi said to Jouve (2004:105-106) that he was driven mainly by the market economy and his desire to obtain for his country a better place among the international community.

It was true that economically Libya was not healthy. Libya was, in fact, subjected to international sanctions for several years,⁷⁷ and this situation might have influenced the Libyan calculation to disarm and change its political behaviour. The will to compromise on several issues upon which the regime had previously remained steadfast, such as fulfilling the demands of the Security Council resolutions, demonstrates that there was a desire on the part of Libya to comply with the West, and indeed the international community, rather than to confront it. And it was this change in political behaviour through co-operation that ultimately led to the dismantling of Libya's nuclear weapons programme.

Moreover, the changing reality of the security environment after September 11th 2001, led by the US administration, and which targeted states harbouring terrorists and developing chemical and biological weapons, might be considered as a contributing factor. Certainly, an important initiative was the establishment of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) which prompted the interception of a ship loaded with nuclear components going to Libya in October 2003. It is probable that the seizure of this ship accelerated the Libyan nuclear dismantlement.

After decades of international pressure, accompanied by several factors ranging from sanctions, isolation, and threat of military action, the Libyan regime expressed a genuine desire to re-join the moderate states, by complying with the demands of the UN Security Council and the powerful states. Libya had reached a point where it was necessary to return to the international community, enhance its economy, revitalise sectors such as crude oil, gas and infrastructure, and end its bad behaviour worldwide.

Richard Hass (1999:5) observed similarities between Iran, Iraq, and Libya, noting that "Libya in some ways resembles both the Iraq and Iran cases. Libyan terrorism provided the inspiration for considerable common policy; explicit UN Security Council backing further facilitated transatlantic co-operation". Certainly, the political and economic isolation of Libya

⁷⁶ Jouve's statements are based on conversations between him and Qaddafi, published later in a book.

⁷⁷ This pressure had been present during the nineties through the combination of multilateral sanctions and isolation and continued until late 2004.

and the use of sanctions were agreed by the international community, after the Libyan involvement in the bombings over Lockerbie and Niger.

At this time, the US was successful in building anti-Libyan measures with its allies and the international community. However, the US and Europe had different views on how to handle Libya. Prior to the Lockerbie and UTA bombings, the allies of the US in Europe during the 1980s were reluctant to follow the Americans due to the fact that Libya was a strategic economic partner for Europe. However, later the US, Europe and the international community were able to agree on a form of sanctions.

It appears from the above discussion that the different interpretations of various scholars cannot be redundant, but they do not cover many important aspects in detail such as the historical context and its repercussion on Libyan policies. Moreover, considering the regional and international context in interpreting the Libyan case can provide a complete picture of the circumstances surrounding Libya's attempts to acquire and dismantle nuclear weapons.

2.7.1 Libyan Foreign Policy

The period between 1969 and 1981 represents the first phase of the case study of this thesis. During this first period, several factors can be identified as influences upon Libya's ambition to acquire nuclear weapons, these being: the geopolitics of the Cold War, the building up of a strong military armament, strengthening Libyan leadership regionally, seeking to match the power of enemies, insecurity and finally deterrence. All of the above elements can be considered as important drivers which encouraged not only Libya, but also other states such as Iraq, Syria, North Korea, and Iran, to attempt to acquire nuclear weapons. Accordingly, it will be useful to understand Libyan motivations in order to formulate a generalised approach to further cases. Regarding the theoretical debate, it is expected that the realist analysis would have more relevance than other theories, and certainly in the above-mentioned period.

2.7.2 Libya, the Sanctions and the Development of its Nuclear Programme

The second period chosen for its significance covers about two decades (1981-2000), and represents Libya's antagonism with the international powers. During this phase, several events involving Libya occurred, resulting in the imposition of economic sanctions by the

UN. This period also witnessed serious clashes between Qaddafi's regime and the US, which ultimately caused the US to conduct air strikes on Libya's main cities and Qaddafi's headquarter. This in turn prompted the Libyan regime to accelerate its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, due to its fear about similar attacks in future. Additionally, other incidents occurred during the same period such as the killing of a British police officer by Libyan agents, the Lockerbie affair, the UTA bombing, and the Berlin disco bombings. Accordingly, analysing the change in Libya's policy at this specific time was due to a number of internal, regional and external factors.

2.7.3 The Last Decade; Negotiations and Dismantlement of Libya's Nuclear Programme

This section examines in depth, Qaddafi's dencuclearisation concession made in December 2003. In fact, this period was rich in terms of internal and external events that affected the choices made by Qaddafi's regime. The technological developments in the shadow of globalisation had led to an increase in the internal pressure which was believed to be weak in the previous periods investigated, thereby illustrating a variation in the factors influencing Libyan policy from one period to another. The second important element in this phase was seen in the aftermath of the removal of Saddam Hussein from power, with all its many consequences. There is no doubt that this particular issue placed another pressure upon the Libyan regime to conform to international demands. And the desire on the part of Qaddafi to end Libya's isolation and to get the sanctions lifted in order to attract foreign investments and improve the country's negative reputation and image at both regional and international levels, served as another vital element forcing the shift in policy. The more recent events in Libya (i.e. the uprising in 2011) show that on the long-term basis, and despite Qaddafi's different strategies, he was not able to prevent the fall of his regime.

Chapter Three: Libyan Foreign Policy from 1969 to 1981

3.1 Introduction

The last chapter provided an overview of the existing literature about why states seek to acquire nuclear weapons and what subsequently motivates them to dismantle them. Additionally, it explored the analytical framework for a study of Libya's security policies and the international relations theories such as realism and constructivism. It was shown that a new era in Libya's history unfolded when the coup overthrew the monarchy in 1969 and established a republic. Against the background already provided, therefore, this chapter addresses the development of Libya's foreign and security policies from the onset of the 1969 coup, led by Muammer Qaddafi and several junior officers, until 1981.

The chapter begins by giving an overview of Libya's political history and geographical location, and then presents a brief background to the 1969 coup, and the new rulers. Thereafter, it discusses the transformation of Libyan politics from monarchy to republic, and progresses to consider the shift of Libyan policies under the new Qaddafi regime. The following section explores the determinants of Libya's foreign and security policies during Qaddafi's regime, especially the early policies such as Arab nationalism, anti-imperialism, and anti-colonialism. In this regard, the chapter examines the domestic, regional, and external factors that affected these policies.

In examining the shift in Libyan politics in the aftermath of the 1969 bloodless coup to remove King Idris' monarchy, the chapter investigates the motives of Qaddafi and his colleagues for that coup. In this respect, it is important to highlight the incentives behind the change in the Libyan political scene in general, and in Libya's external relations in particular. The military officers who led the coup made radical changes to various Libyan policies at the regional and international levels, producing a mixture of strategies that it adopted with neighbouring countries and Western powers. Libya's previous relations under the monarchy of King Idris with the West changed and new alliances were formed in different spheres. In this regard, the chapter investigates Libya's new foreign and security policies in general, and the country's early intention to obtain nuclear weapons.

Several factors which contributed to the shift in Libya's politics during the time of the 1969 coup are considered. The alienation of the idea of Arab nationalism during the reign of King Idris, corruption, mismanagement of natural resources, nepotism, and the existence of foreign military bases in Libya had all increased the population's dissatisfaction with the policies of King Idris. Moreover, at that time, several countries in the Arab World, such as Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, witnessed changes in their political regimes, and Libya was not exempt from this transformation, especially after the military officers found the reasons and incentives to make radical changes. Additionally, the effect of Egypt and its charismatic leadership on Libya and the thinking of its young population were crucial.

3.2 Historical Review

In historical terms, Libya has experienced lengthy periods of foreign control and has been subjected to occupation by various powers. Considering the aims of the present study, however, the focus of this review is particularly on the end of the Ottoman period in Libya. The Turks, following their defeat in the Balkan Wars, had to surrender their Libyan territory to Italy,⁷⁸ in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty, thereby making Libya an Italian colony for more than thirty years (1911-1943). The Libyans of Tripolitania, who were pro-independence, unilaterally declared their independence from Italian rule despite what was planned for their country in different chancelleries and world centres of power (i.e. secret agreements between European powers).⁷⁹ Unfortunately for its founders, the Tripolitania Republic (Al-Jumhuriya Al-Tarabulsiya) formed in 1919, was short-lived. Cyrenaica also formed a parliament, but despite the intentions and efforts to unite the two provinces, differences prevented a concrete unification under the Sanussiyya movement (El-Kikhia, 1997:19; Khadduri, 1963:8).⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Towards the end of 1912.

⁷⁹ E.g. the Sykes-Picot agreement and its physical consequences on the future of the Arab World. The Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 (16th May) was a secret agreement between the British and the French and the participation of Tsarist Russia defining their respective spheres of influence and control in the Middle East following the expected fall of the Ottoman Empire. This was later divided into areas of future British and French hegemony (for more details see Fieldhouse, 2006:50).

⁸⁰ The Sanusi order, a religious movement that originally sought to purify Islam, but after the Italian invasion, had to mobilise its followers to resist Italian rule. The Sanusi movement provided a sense of unity and leadership to the people. The movement was established in small lodges called Zawiyas, extending from the desert oases between Sudan and Tripolitania and providing religious and political organisation to free and save the country from disorder and anarchy (Khadduri, 1963:8).

The Sanussiyya was originally a religious movement; however, scholars defined it as a reformist one. Its creation, in the Arab peninsula (Hejaz), goes back to the first half of the 19th Century (in 1837). In Libya, it was in Bayda in Cyrenaica that the Grand Sanusi, founder of the movement settled his order. The Grand Sanusi's major concerns in the 19th century were to re-educate Libyan tribes on Islam and to intervene whenever a conflict appeared between them, without being directly involved in the tribes. In fact, the mediation of the Grand Sanusi put an end to a large number of inter-tribal wars. Later, the movement, which was worried about potential foreign encroachments in the regions, did arm its followers and prepared them for defensive actions in case of attack. The Sanusi Zawia-lodges played several roles, being centres of learning as well as centres of training. So, when the French penetrated the Sahara in 1902, the Sanusis had to move their capital to Kufra. The Italian invasion, in 1911, found the Sanusis prepared to resist the Italian colonialism and effectively, ready to challenge the Italian colonisers (Laoust, 1965:353-355).

In 1939, at the onset of WWII, just as Italy's optimism about moving into Libya⁸¹ seemed to be justified, the country's prosperity began to decline considerably.⁸² Italy's dream of turning Libyans into second-class Italian citizens and securing Italy's position in Libya was shattered because of its choice to join Nazi Germany's camp.⁸³ Libya became one of the major battlefields for the belligerents in North Africa and the Libyans suffered enormously as a result. Most Italian infrastructure was destroyed, especially in Cyrenaica, provoking at the end of 1942, the flight of Italian colonists from that region (Vandewalle, 2006:34–37).⁸⁴

Following the surrender of the Axis forces in Tunisia in May 1943, a British Military Administration was established in order to administer Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, while Fezzan, which had been occupied by French troops in January 1943, came under the control of a French Military Administration. British forces continued to rule Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, and as early as 1942, the British promised to back the independence of Libya, with its three main regions. Another significant issue, which is worth underlining here, is that

⁸¹ The Italians wanted to create what was termed as Italy's 'Fourth Shore'.

⁸² By 1940 none of Italy's African possessions were providing a significant outlet for Italy's industrialised goods or for trade. By this time an estimated 300,000 Italians resided in Africa, which was much less than the average annual natural population increase in Italy in the years prior to World War II. In 1941 an estimated 40,000 Italians lived in Cyrenaica and another 70,000 lived in Tripolitania.

⁸³ Mussolini symbolically appointed himself as the Protector of Islam in Tripoli in 1937.

⁸⁴ Fields and farmhouses they left behind were quickly taken over by returning Libyan shepherds

the British needed the support of the Sanusi on the battlefield, prompting the creation of a force known as the *Libyan Arab Force*. Although very small, this group was extremely important, consisting of five battalions (St John, 2008:85).⁸⁵ The importance of the Libyan Arab Force could be traced back to the Libyan intention to gain independence from the Italian rule, as was promised by the British. Additionally, the Libyan battalions were familiar about the terrain of the country and they were also eager to fight the Italian fascists.

Nevertheless, Cyrenaica and Tripolitania had to wait for the end of WWII and the international agreements to know their fate. The 1907 Hague Convention gave the British a “care and maintenance” status for the two provinces,⁸⁶ while Fezzan was attributed to the French (St John, 2008: 86).⁸⁷ The liberation of Libya from Fascist Italy in 1943 did not solve the problem of the Libyans. In the same manner as the other Italian African colonies, Libya was still legally under Italian rule and Italy was considered as sovereign over all its former colonies. Therefore, when Libyan leaders demanded self-government they soon realised that no decision could be taken in this regard without first signing a peace treaty with Italy (Khadduri, 1963:112).⁸⁸

The defeat of the Italians at al-Alamein encouraged the Cyrenaicans and the Sanusi exiles in Egypt, who tried to assess how beneficial it would be to negotiate their independence and fit their aspirations with the British ambitions in the post-WWII period. However, when Sayyid Idris, under the pressure of the representatives of Tripolitania, discussed guarantees of post-war independence from Great Britain,⁸⁹ the Italians were excluded from the plan proposed by the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden. Nevertheless, the Tripolitanians interpreted Eden’s exclusive attention to Cyrenaica either as an attempt by Britain itself to take on a role in the country’s post-war future, or to recognise the Sanusi leadership as representing the post-war interests of both provinces (Vandewalle, 2006:37).

Within Libya itself, several political interests had emerged concerning the future of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan. In Cyrenaica, political allegiance and any discussion of the province’s future converged towards the Sanusis.⁹⁰ In 1946 a Sanusi-dominated National

⁸⁵ The Libyan Arab Force wore the Sanusi emblem, a badge with a white crescent and star on a black field.

⁸⁶ Such a mandate was expected to end in 1949.

⁸⁷ The French remained in Fezzan until Independence in 1951.

⁸⁸ Accordingly, Libya was unable to gain its independence, similarly to the other former Italian colonies, until Italy had given up sovereignty.

⁸⁹ In January 1942.

⁹⁰ The Sanusi in particular enjoyed the confidence of the British.

Congress was created, and the Cyrenaicans instituted their self-government policies. The members of the new National Association of Cyrenaica were in favour of the political unification of all three provinces (Khadduri, 1963:65).⁹¹

The other Libyan province, Tripolitania, unlike Cyrenaica, had not been devised and according to Khadduri, its reattribution to post-Fascist Italy had not been excluded (Khadduri, 1963:65).⁹² Moreover, in 1947, the political life in Tripolitania was quite diversified since there were five political parties,⁹³ but all agreeing on three main points: firstly the independence of the country, secondly, the unity of the three provinces, and thirdly, the membership of the Arab League. However, the major divergence between the parties concerned the role of the Sanusis in the political future of the country (Vandewalle, 2006:38).⁹⁴

Another set of political interests in the three provinces were those of the Great Powers.⁹⁵ Initially, the USA and the Soviet Union showed relatively little direct interest in Libya's fate, but the advent of the Cold War soon changed the perspective of both.⁹⁶ Italy, which still held legal sovereignty over Libya, reasserted its claim when the war ended (Khaddouri, 1963:111&112) but was not supported by either the British or the Americans.

In early 1948, the Libyan question was finally referred to a Four Power Commission. By that time, the political positions of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania had hardened considerably. The western province still declared itself overwhelmingly in favour of unity. In the east, however, the Cyrenaican political consensus was represented by a single political party, the National Congress, which wanted independence under a Sanusi government and only under Sanusi rule would Cyrenaica accept unity with Tripolitania. In Fezzan, almost half the population was in favour of continued French administration. After three years of virtual diplomatic deadlock the Libyan matter was passed to the United Nations General Assembly on 15 September 1948 (Vandewalle, 2006:39).

⁹¹ Wherein the views of nationalism which had begun to penetrate the political ideas of a younger generation were expressed.

⁹² At this time around 40,000 Italians resided in Tripolitania, whose interests were considerable.

⁹³ Whose memberships ranged from dozens to thousands.

⁹⁴ An obstacle that continued to bedevil the parties as the future of the country was soon to be taken up by the United Nations.

⁹⁵ Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union – after World War II.

⁹⁶ New considerations steadily intruded upon the unfolding diplomatic wrangling.

The infighting continued, now clearly and directly coloured by issues surrounding the Cold War. Initially neither France nor Great Britain would support attempts to create a united Libya during some of the United Nations committee debates. France was particularly keen to hold on to Fezzan. Trying to pre-empt a United Nations decision, the two administering powers signed the Bevin-Sforza plan, published on 10 May 1949, proposing ten-year trusteeships for France in Fezzan, for Great Britain in Cyrenaica, and Italy in Tripolitania. However, external opposition to such a plan was expressed by the Soviet Union and the Arab protests. Unexpectedly, the Bevin-Sforza plan provoked a situation which made possible what had on several previous occasions eluded the Tripolitarians and the Cyrenaicans - a united stance after decades of indecision and disagreement (Oakes, 2011:86-87).⁹⁷

When the General Assembly met again in September 1949, Britain unilaterally decided to grant Cyrenaica self-government under the leadership of Sayyid Idris. Despite the British claiming that this would not prejudice future UN decisions, it effectively meant that if independence was later granted to the provinces, this would necessarily propel Sayyid Idris into a privileged position and protect British and Western interests. In February 1950, France followed suit, setting up a transitional government in Fezzan and creating a Representative Assembly for the province. By that time, the UN General Assembly had started to draft a resolution to decide on the means and timing of Libyan independence as a unified country. On 21 November 1949, the resolution on Libyan independence was adopted, stipulating that the country would become independent no later than 1 January 1952 (Oakes, 2011:86-90).

The aftermath of WWII showed a growing interest in Libya not only by Western powers such as the United States, Britain, and France but also by the Soviet Union (Khadduri, 1963:113). Britain and the US convinced Italy that the best option was to grant Libya its independence.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, they also realised that they would never be able to ensure an international agreement for British control over Libya (First, 1975:66).⁹⁹ The significant fact here is that, in December 1951, the Libyan authorities granted¹⁰⁰ the US the right to retain Wheelus Field and other facilities.¹⁰¹ According to the terms of agreement, the US had to pay Libya \$1

⁹⁷ The Bevin-Sforza plan referred to ten year trusteeships.

⁹⁸ The reasons that these powers were so keen to grant Libya its independence are not stated in any public official documents to date. However, the fact that the US and Britain did request from the new Libyan state to allow them to have military bases in the country might be one element among other incentives.

⁹⁹ Another central reason being that any trusteeship agreement, whether collective or single-nation, would require the surrender of their bases.

¹⁰⁰ Before the formal proclamation of Libyan independence.

¹⁰¹ The need to have several bases around the world, to face the USSR induced the US to conclude a few

million per year, for a period of twenty years (St John, 2008:105). Such a lease was crucial to Libya, due to its endemic poverty. For instance, in 1952 the United Nations referred to the new state as “an excellent example of universal poverty in an extreme form” (Obeidi, 2001:31).

Following the formal proclamation of Libyan independence on 24 December 1951, the US recognised the new entity.¹⁰² The American administration and the British government, aware of the importance of Libya in the new context of the Cold War, made plans to maintain Libya under their own influence and to keep the Soviets at bay (St John, 2008:105). The French were also concerned about the new status of Libya and its eventual impact on the neighbouring French occupied territories.¹⁰³

Due to economic incentives, and to ensure protection from the expansionist ambitions of close neighbours, the Libyan king decided to have a close relationship with Britain and the US. He disregarded calls for Arab nationalism, which was a threat to monarchies and associated with a socialist ideology. The King’s policy allowed the United States, France, and Britain to have exceptional privileges in Libyan territory, consolidating their military presence and influence. Such extensive rights brought much criticism from various strata within Libyan society, in particular from nationalists who were not pleased with the presence of military personnel in Libya, considering Libya’s sovereignty to be severely damaged by this, and believing their country not to be a truly independent state (Simon, 2003: 41).

In trying to define the situation which dominated Libyan politics following its independence, Dearden presented Libya as a country torn between two ‘imperialisms’ - an Eastern one, symbolised by the Egyptians, and which offered emotional satisfaction, in contraposition to a Western one, providing principally material assets (Dearden, 1950:408). However, the

agreements in the Arab World. In June 1951 an agreement was reached between the United States and France which permitted the US to operate five air bases in Morocco. Agreements were also reached with Saudi Arabia over the Dharhan base so that its use by the US could continue for another five years.

¹⁰² The US also advanced the American Consulate General to the state of a legation.

¹⁰³ There are also other factors which were involved in the final disposition of Libya. The French colonial empire in North West Africa was in danger, as French possession of Fezzan linked French possessions in the North African region with those in Central Africa. France, therefore, claimed Fezzan and all of Libya south of the Tropic of Cancer; it also argued for the return of Tripolitania to Italy, since this would appease the defeated power in Europe and would at the same time provide another controlled area adjoining the French-run areas in North West Africa (St John, 2008:105).

opinion of this author seems to be exaggerated, since most of the Arab World at that period was still under colonial rule or influence.

In the same vein as Dearden, others such as St John, argue that Libyan domestic support for Arab nationalism increased considerably after the Israeli state was established, and this continued to grow in strength and importance in the coming years. Later on, these forces in favour of Arab nationalism proved to be a daunting challenge for a country ruled by a conservative monarchy (St John, 2008:107). There are certainly other elements which might help in identifying the circumstances in which Arab nationalism found its inspiration, such as the struggle between monarchists and republicans, the fight against colonialism, and the existence of the military bases. Later on, the gap between the Libyan government and the people widened due to an increase in people's political awareness and the awakening of the Arab World. In addition to the context of the Cold War and with the growing influence of the USSR, the struggle for independence against the colonisers in Africa, the Palestine conflict, the rise of Egyptian Nasserists, the Pan-Arabism Baathists, and anti-royalist movements throughout the Arab world, all served as factors that disturbed the pragmatic politics of King Idris.

The anti-colonialism of the monarchy soon faded, due to the fact that Libya's income was mainly provided by British and American air bases, and that the country was leaning more towards co-operation with the West in order to secure its support. The Libyan nationalists, who had strongly defended, and obtained independence for their country, had to face other internal challenges, with an opposition heavily influenced by the growing pan-Arab movements in the neighbouring countries.

A national constituent assembly was created in November 1950, with a federal system of government, and the monarch Sayyid Muhammed Idris al-Mahdi al-Sanusi as Chief of State. A year later, a constitution was adopted and on 24 December 1951, King Idris proclaimed the independence and sovereignty of the United Kingdom of Libya (St John, 2008:107–108).¹⁰⁴ The Libyan monarchy often insisted on Libyan-Arab fraternal solidarity, but this rarely materialised. Indeed, far from the rhetorical discourse, and until 1953, the King prevented Libya from joining the Arab League, and his government never offered strong support for the Arabs in the Middle East. The monarch, concerned by the growing influence of Egypt,

¹⁰⁴ The constitution was drafted by committees formed by the constituent assembly and adopted in October 1951.

decided to reduce Egyptian influence, and in 1956, he temporarily closed Egyptian information centres.

In 1953, a treaty signed between Libya and Britain granted the British extensive jurisdictional and extraterritorial rights in return for long-term financial assistance.¹⁰⁵ Libya continued to maintain good relations with the West, and in 1954 the USA required the use of Wheelus air base outside Tripoli.¹⁰⁶ The fact that Libya had several large Western bases and was dependent on incomes from these facilities made observers consider the Libyan Kingdom as a pro-Western one (St John, 1987:14–15). However, Kawczynski underlines that King Idris could not preserve his regime from corruption and scandals. In addition, Arab nationalism started to affect the region and Libyans were no exception to that regional enthusiasm (Kawczynski, 2011:16).

In 1959, Libya was the single biggest per capita recipient of United States largesse in the world, the USA providing approximately \$100 million in aid to the country; thus, the income from aid and from renting the military bases were the source of Libya's first economic boom (Vandewalle, 2006:44-45). Libya's dependence on income from British and American air bases encouraged a policy of co-operation with, and support for, the West. Such an association with Western powers provoked discontent at the domestic level. The strength of nationalism which stemmed from the triumph of independence was challenged, both internally by opposition groups and externally by Pan-Arab movements.

It is essential to look at the way internal unity and cohesion were dealt with and at the efforts made for developing the country. King Idris played a key role in the unification of Libya. In addition to his involvement for the recovery of Cyrenaica from Italian rule, the King had, in a brilliant manner, succeeded in winning over influential Tripolitanian leaders to rally in favour of federalism,¹⁰⁷ thereby paving the way for the formation of the Libyan state.¹⁰⁸ However, his influence on Tripolitanian leaders was limited because they disagreed about the form of

¹⁰⁵ Libya agreed, and both countries signed a twenty-year treaty of friendship and alliance.

¹⁰⁶ In return for a programme of economic, technical and military assistance, Libya agreed and signed a treaty with the United States.

¹⁰⁷ In Tripolitania, people realised that the only person who could command respect in the country was in fact King Idris.

¹⁰⁸ With great skill, King Idris was able to win the confidence and support of Cyrenaican tribal chiefs, and he not only gained the support but also the love of all Cyrenaicans. Therefore, after the war there was no doubt who the ruler of Cyrenaica would be.

government they wanted to establish, and they also wanted some constitutional limitations on his power (Khadduri, 1963:319).¹⁰⁹

King Idris, far from being interested in the consolidation of a monarchical system, was rather planning to transform the monarchy into a republic.¹¹⁰ He did, in fact, state numerous times that ruling a country which faced grave domestic problems, and one which contained enormous political and economic challenges, made the preservation of the unity and independence of the country much more difficult than achieving them in the first place. Accordingly, King Idris believed that various challenges had to be addressed: the political loyalty of his subjects, and the consolidation of the still fragile Libyan national identity among the three provinces. To achieve these aims it was absolutely necessary to benefit from Libya's incomes and use them appropriately (Khadduri, 1963:320). However, a national political identity was still to be formed. Independence unified Libya's three provinces, but as in neighbouring Algeria, it did not succeed in achieving a solid sense of national identity.¹¹¹

The gradual rise to statehood coincided with the rise of Arab nationalism and anti-colonialism in the Middle East and anti-colonial resistance in neighbouring Arab countries. Arab nationalism, with its anti-kingships stand, was not particularly appreciated by King Idris who feared for his own interests,¹¹² and therefore the monarchy focused on directing its growth and influence within the Kingdom. It is assumed by some observers that a national consciousness took hold after the 1967 war and the Libyan government seized the opportunity to stress the existence of a Libyan identity with deep roots in pre-independence history. Consequently, national feeling grew rapidly, although it was not fast enough to preserve the monarchy from the Pan-Arab ideology which conquered Egypt (St John, 1987:16-17).

The King claimed to support Libyan-Arab brotherhood and solidarity, but this was hardly ever acted upon, as confirmed by the fact that it was not until 1953 that Libya became a member of the Arab League, when it could have joined earlier. In practice, the monarchy

¹⁰⁹ In fact, such thoughts may have stemmed from the fact that there was a realisation that the King was not very anxious to rule over Tripolitania, and he would in fact have been satisfied with the Emirate of Cyrenaica. Nonetheless, King Idris felt compelled to accept the throne of Libya as some form of patriotic duty, in order to provide leadership for a divided country.

¹¹⁰ The king made it clear in 1956 that his intention was to adopt a republican system of government.

¹¹¹ The people continued to see themselves as Tripolitanian, Cyrenaican or Fezzanese, rather than Libyans. After 1951, the Libyan government made many attempts to promote a cohesive national identity, but a decade later observers highlighted the weak sense of national identity in Libya.

¹¹² Arab nationalism was also socialist in its economic perspective of an ideal society.

regime gave hardly any tangible support for the Arab cause in the Middle East. Moreover, the monarch turned to the West to sign a treaty with Britain for the period of twenty years (Wright, 1969:232). In 1957 Libya embarked on a bilateral collaboration and multilateral co-operation with other North African countries, and signed a bilateral treaty with Tunisia. However, the Libyan government was criticised, mainly by Arab nationalists who claimed that the purpose of the treaty had little to do with bilateral collaboration but was actually to further improve Libya's ties with the West (St John, 1987:14).

The discovery of oil in Libya, in 1959, completely transformed the economic status of the country and within a decade Libya had become a major producer of high quality oil. This greatly increased the use of distributive largesse at the expense of real economic and political regulation. Following the steady increase in oil revenues, King Idris, began surely and rapidly to promote loyalty and political identity between the three provinces.¹¹³ Good relations between the USA and Libya undoubtedly benefited both countries. The United States and Britain were permitted to have military bases,¹¹⁴ in addition to the economic advantages they reaped, such as the leading role given to their respective companies for the development of the country's oil industry (Deeb, 1991:29).

Despite the blessing of the oil revenues which provided for Libya's domestic needs, a growing gap between the rich and the poor was noticeable. According to Simon (2003:41), "the new flow of oil money was bringing graft and corruption to Libya, a development that was congenial to Western Oil Corporations". Also one oil expert stated that "Idris's regime was thought to be sound because it was corrupt" (Simon, 2003:41). The Libyan population was sceptical about the management of oil revenues, and many people questioned the slow rate of economic and political development, accusing the monarchy of not making good use of the new oil wealth (St John, 1987:15).

In relation to the Arab issues, the monarch's regime had adopted a policy of detachment from Arab affairs. Libya did not apply to enter the Arab League until February 1953, and even then only after demands from a wave of Arab nationalism, although Libya also joined the United Nations in December 1953. Overall, Libya's monarchy did not live up to the expectations of its people and the changes in regional attitudes caused by the rise of Arab nationalism. In

¹¹³ King Idris was at first reluctant to govern beyond his native Cyrenaica.

¹¹⁴ The Wheelus and Al-Adam airbases. Indeed, this was very practical and useful for both Western countries as it was strategically desirable in their pursuit of the Cold War against the Soviet Union.

addition, the region had witnessed a struggle between monarchies and revolutionary regimes aiming to end the existence of the Western presence (Zenbou, 2010:83).

Moreover, the Arab defeat against Israel in 1967 was blamed on the air support provided by the US and British forces, which took off from military bases in Libya. The use of the military bases had caused young people to accuse the monarch's government of not providing enough support to the Arabs, and also to object to the presence of foreign military bases in Libya (Simons, 1996:166). At the same time, US representatives were concerned about Egyptian influences via educational channels. Egyptian teachers were employed in Libya's secondary schools in various regions and some of them had political leanings stemming from Pan-Arabism. Libya was growing closer to Egyptian Pan-Arabism and the feelings of the Libyan people were leaning more towards Egypt. Moreover, there were suspicions that Libyan students who studied in Egypt might bring Pan-Arab political beliefs back to Libya after the end of their studies (St John, 2002:73).¹¹⁵

It can be added here that the new consciousness of the Libyan population in the politicisation of the Arab World grew considerably. Such growing interest mainly stemmed from contemporary events, especially those that had some effect on the conservative, traditionalist Libyan monarchy; specifically, the Palestinian conflict, the increased Soviet interest in the Middle East, and the growth of Nasserism in the Arab World (St John, 1987:14).

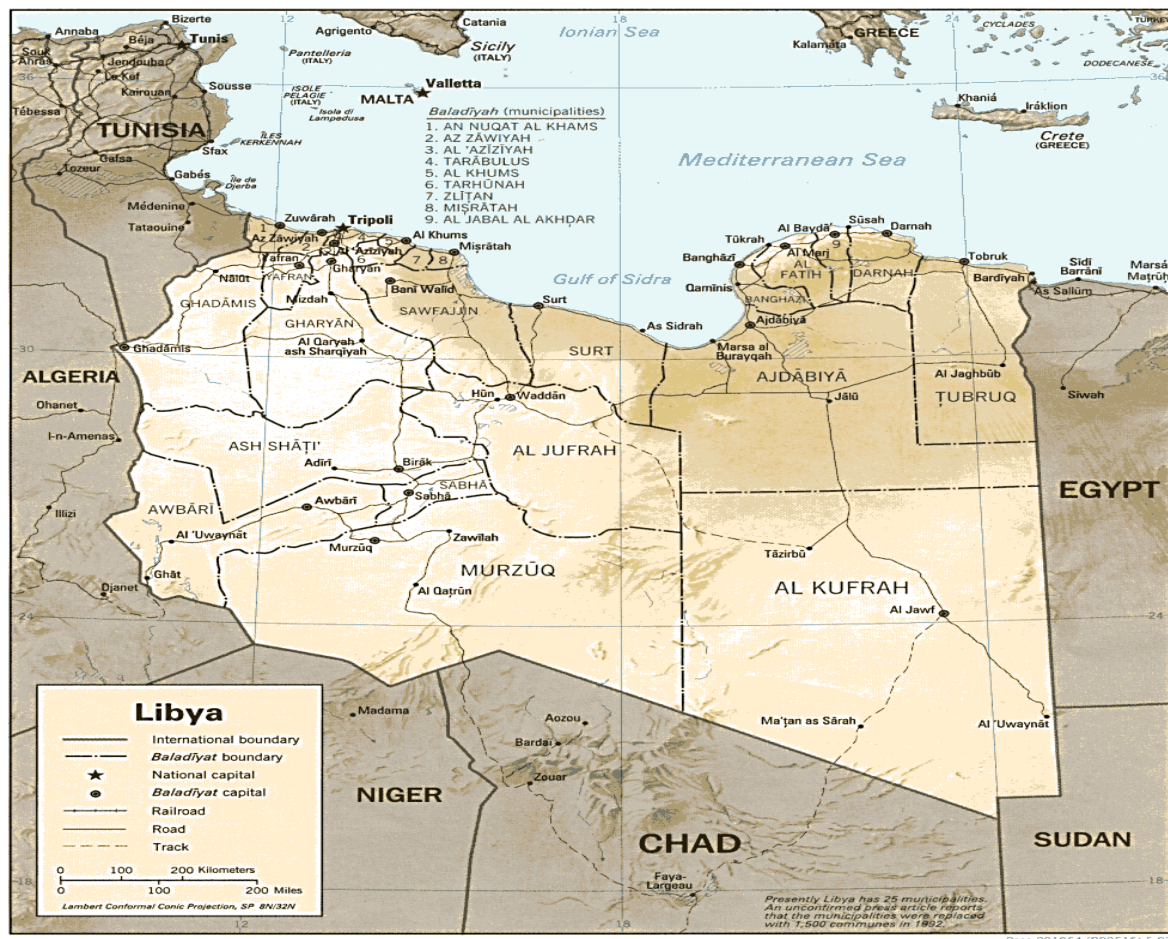
3.2.1 The Significance of Libya's Geographical Location

The geography of Libya made it an attractive territory to be conquered as attested by the considerable number of nations who invaded, occupied, colonised or settled in the land.¹¹⁶ The country is located within the Arab, Islamic, and African periphery. Its coast is along the northern central coastline of Africa, and it borders the Mediterranean Sea in the north, Egypt and Sudan on the eastern side, Tunisia and Algeria in the west, and Niger, Chad and Sudan in the south. The south of Libya contains a vast area of desert extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. Libya is the third largest state in Africa, and is also the fourth largest

¹¹⁵ Education in Libya depended hugely on Egyptian staff because of the lack of teachers in Libya.

¹¹⁶ Libya was conquered by respectively the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Numidians, the Romans, the Christians, the Barbarians, the Vandals, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Spanish, the Ottoman Turks, and finally the Italians.

country by territory in the Arab World.¹¹⁷ The geopolitics of Libya were, and still are, crucial in world affairs. In the aftermath of Libya's independence, the country, as well as other countries in the Mediterranean basin, was considered as an important asset in the struggle between the two superpowers of that era, the Soviet Union and United States.¹¹⁸ (See figure 3.1 below).



Source: Google maps, available at: <http://www.mapsharing.org/MS-maps/map-pages-state-map/images-state-map/111-libya-map.jpg>

Additionally, Libya is located in a significant and strategic area. Several assets can be listed when considering Libya's geographical location. Firstly, its thousands of miles of Mediterranean coast, secondly the fact that it faces several European countries (Italy, Malta, Spain, Greece, etc.), in addition to its short distance from the Italian Islands.¹¹⁹ Its coast

¹¹⁷ Although Libya is one of the largest by size, it has a relatively small population in comparison to its neighbouring countries, and it was estimated in 2011 to have 6.5 million people

¹¹⁸ Both were trying to contain the expansion and influence of each other.

¹¹⁹ The area is desirable especially in maintaining access to North African oil, and the shipment of the imported crude cheaper than the oil from the Gulf countries or Iran.

facilitates maritime and commercial communications with the North of the Mediterranean (Europe) while its southern border opens to sub-Saharan countries. Such a location may have contributed to make Libyans open to other cultures and able to see the world through multiple and different perspectives. All the factors cited previously moulded the foreign policy of the Libyan regime and consequently had a huge impact on the whole region. Furthermore, its geographical position places it at the centre of attention of not only the former world empires (old powers such as Great Britain and France), but also of the new superpowers (i.e. the USA and the USSR), victors of the Second World War. Obeidi underlines the attraction for colonial powers of Libya due to its strategic geographical position. Most colonial conquests of Libya came via the Mediterranean Sea, and show the importance of the geographical location of the country (Obeidi, 2001:30–31). The Mediterranean coast is the most populated area in Libya due to the fertility of the soil; a vast proportion of the rest of the country is covered with sand dunes and is made up in large part of rocky land unsuitable for agriculture.

Libya's geographical centrality allowed the country to develop and maintain relations with both the Middle East (i.e. Mashriq) and the West of North Africa (i.e. Maghreb). Historically, this means that the country was divided into three provinces, Cyrenaica, which was traditionally oriented more towards Egypt, and the Tripolitania region which was oriented towards its Western neighbours such as Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. The third significant region of Libya, Fezzan, is in the southern part of the country. Fezzan covers a vast area of desert up to the border of the African countries of the Sahel and it also shares some socioeconomic features with the neighbouring African countries. In view of its geographical position the Fezzan region was, for centuries, heavily involved in the trade with its southern African countries (St John, 2002:13–14).

The significance of Libya's geographical location lay also in its strategic military value, since it formed an important asset along the Mediterranean coast for the US, Britain, and France after the end of the Second World War. As one of the US Mission officials put it in 1956:

For the present, Libya's strategic location is, in a sense, its most important commodity. As long as the military requirements of the Western powers are important, the political and economic stability of Libya is of direct as well as indirect concern to them (Deeb, 1991:23–24).

Deeb, quoting American officials, shows that, prior to the discovery of oil,¹²⁰ Libya's geographical location was considered a vital asset for the allies in maintaining supremacy in the Mediterranean Sea in the context of the Cold War.

Indeed, a study undertaken by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1959 emphasised the importance of Libya's position along the Mediterranean coast.¹²¹ Wright, states that in the 1980s "North Africa, moreover, flanks the routes which the Soviets would follow in their efforts to penetrate Africa". She added later that "Libya serves as a buffer between the Middle East and the Maghreb and at least partially shields the latter from the full force of Arab nationalism emanating from Cairo". According to this author, "so long as Libya remains friendly to the West, the West can control the southern shore and part of the Eastern Mediterranean" (Wright, 1981–1982:21). And now, in the twenty first century the position of the West as regard to Libya's strategic position remains unchanged.

American and British bases were maintained on Libyan soil from the time of the independence of the country, and until 1969 when the monarchy was overthrown, they were unchallenged.¹²² Far from being seen as a post-colonial instrument, they were in fact one of the main sources of income before the discovery of oil, and a way of keeping at bay the Soviets, in the context of the Cold War. Additionally, such a presence of Western military powers proves the strategic importance given to Libya. Wright's assessment of Libya's geopolitics and geographical settings relates to the 1980s. However, Libya remains a significant location and it is still strategically important for various political, security, and economic reasons. After considering several different issues, it can be appreciated that Wright's statement has as much validity today as it did 30 years ago, because of for example, the fight against terrorism, insecurity, arms trafficking and drug smuggling, and illegal migration.

¹²⁰ In the late 1950s.

¹²¹ The study asserted that North Africa remained a vital asset to the United States (during the Eisenhower administration) in maintaining a foothold in the region. The study's assessment emphasised the significance of Libya's location in the region if the US wanted to preserve its control in the Mediterranean. Should it lose completely its strategic position in North Africa, the West would find its control over the Mediterranean seriously threatened.

¹²² The establishment of British and US military bases was based on the treaty with the United Kingdom and the agreement between Libya and the United States.

The next section examines the period which followed the 1969 coup d'état, in which the Free Unionist Officers, led by Muammer Qaddafi a young army captain, overthrew King Idris and put an end to the monarchy, introducing a political regime that in fact lasted for more than four decades (1969-2011).

3.3 Development of the Libyan Political System

The Libyan political system of Qaddafi's regime varied according to the circumstances.¹²³ At the outset of the coup in 1969 against the monarchy, there was no clear sight of what political system the young officers were trying to implement. Later, Vandewalle (2006: 82–83) was able to identify three phases in the development of Libya's political ideology, starting with the formation, in June 1971, of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU). The intention was to create a new structure for wider political participation according to the framework of the ASU, and to reduce the power of traditional entities and organisations.¹²⁴ This was a step taken to mobilise the masses, and to strengthen the new regime. However, the ASU failed to rally the masses and ensure loyalty for the new rulers, inducing the RCC to use drastic methods in order to maintain its tight grip on the country.

Another step was the development of Libya's new strategy, devised on the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's birth, based on 'bottom-up mobilisation', which began in April 1973. On that day, in the city of Zwara, Qaddafi announced the advent of the 'popular revolution'. In his speech, Qaddafi laid down the five points which comprised the new popular revolution. This popular revolution was meant to rally the masses with a bottom-up mobilisation, a method which was different from previous attempts by the ASU. Qaddafi's five points included the removal of administrative and legal obstacles, the creation of new entities such as 'Popular Committees', the elimination of all elements opposing the revolution, the replacement of all technocrats opposed to revolutionary change; and finally allowing Popular Committees to run organisations (Kawczynski, 2011:22-23).¹²⁵

¹²³ Different stages can be identified in this regard.

¹²⁴ It is also important to note that a new law was introduced on 30 May 1972 which banned all political activities outside the ASU.

¹²⁵ Despite the fact that they did not have the proper qualifications to conduct the tasks involved.

In 1977, Qaddafi introduced the *Declaration of Authority of the People*. The document in question was meant to represent the basic law in Libya. The lines of authority are explicitly defined in art.3 and art.4: “The People’s direct democracy is the basis of the political system in the Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, where the authority is in the hands of the people alone. The People exercise their authority through the People’s Congresses, the Peoples’ Committees, and the Professional Unions”. Both articles are fundamental features of the Green Book, and are a central element of Qaddafi’s ideology. However, despite the existence of the new legal instruments and institutions, the state’s legislative and executive organisations did not have a determinant role in decision-making. From 1977 onwards, the core element of the Libyan political system was the Revolutionary Committees, which are not mentioned on purpose, in either the Green Book or the Proclamation of People’s Power (Mattes, 2008:55-57). This might be explained by the fact that the Libyan leadership intended to protect them from potential prosecutions by Libyan courts.

Under the firm grip of Qaddafi, the Revolutionary Committees along with various other security services (i.e. internal and external security apparatus depending on the Ministry of Interior), were responsible for protecting Qaddafi’s regime. However, from 2002, despite their strong presence, the committees lost some of their privileges, due to a new soft approach towards domestic policies. Nonetheless, they remained the security organisation par excellence within the Jamahiriyah, ready for any eventuality (Mattes, 2008:57).¹²⁶

Regarding the structure and the capacity of Libya’s security, Mattes (2004) maintains that Qaddafi’s regime survival was due to the security apparatus, which operated within an unconstrained environment. None of the security organisations was subject to political control or the press, or other institutions such as NGOs. The only direct command and control came from Qaddafi himself, and he alone. Moreover, the security apparatus functioned in a flexible structure meaning that it enhanced the security of the regime, ensured its continuity, and deposed any action against the political system introduced after the 1969 coup.

The People’s Committees’ decisions regarding appointments always required the consent of the RCC. Popular elections were held at different levels - local, municipal, and provincial - with representatives of committees elected to municipal and provincial committees; at the

¹²⁶ Qaddafi wanted to reactivate them whenever it was required to do so to control the people.

same time elections were also held in most public corporations and select government bodies. The creation of the People's Committees was very important for the development of the Libyan political system because they took on local administrative functions, and generally their chairmen became the chief administrative officials for their bodies (St John, 2011:58).

On 2 March 1979, Qaddafi decided to increase his participation in revolutionary activities and to resign from his position as Secretary General of the General People's Congress (GPC). At this time Qaddafi was mostly referred to as the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, but later he adopted a new title – the Leader, or the Leader of the Revolution. In March 1979, a mass campaign was initiated calling for the elimination of all opponents of the new Libyan Revolution. Revolutionary zealots inspired by Qaddafi responded to this by launching a campaign of political assassinations, provoking the killing of more than thirty opponents of the Libyan regime. On 1 September 1979, Qaddafi encouraged Libyans abroad to take over Libyan embassies and to transform them into People's bureaus,¹²⁷ spreading confusion in diplomatic circles when the ambassadors were replaced by People's Committees (St John, 2011:64).¹²⁸ Despite the existence of various committees, the Libyan state system remained fragile and completely dependent on the direct orders of Qaddafi. Even the Revolutionary Committees were totally dependent on Qaddafi's fate; indeed, they were never expected to have a determinant role, being merely instruments to enable Qaddafi, the “revolutionary guide and protector”, to hold onto the power.

El-Khikhia argued that the decentralised system of ‘direct democracy’ created by Qaddafi over the post-revolutionary period was not appropriate, and that it was almost impossible for Qaddafi to reform his political system without the whole structure collapsing. On several occasions Qaddafi acknowledged that the Third International Theory, as promulgated in 1977, despite “being a well sound theory”, was difficult to implement. In addition, Qaddafi often described what happened after the 1969 revolution as being an experiment. Indeed, he often said that history would show whether his policies were achievements or failures (El-Kikhia, 1997:60).

¹²⁷ People's Bureaus was the term used to replace the Libyan Embassies.

¹²⁸ Qaddafi argued that the embassies represented governmental bodies and the governmental system in Libya had been replaced by people's power.

As observed by Mattes (2008), the nature of the political system inside Libya affected the informal character of Libya, and during the first eight years after the 1969 coup, the institutions formed were based on the Provisional Constitutional Declaration of December 11, 1969. However, substantial changes appeared in 1977 and as underlined by Mattes:

None of the country's central political personalities have been constitutionally defined. Their existence is based purely on their revolutionary legitimacy. Actors like the Free Unionist Officers Movement, the revolutionary committees, the forum of the Companions of Qaddafi, or the Social People's Leadership Committees have internal status, but they were not created as the result of actual legislation. In addition, the existing legislative and executive organs of the state have no constitutional basis in the Jamahiriya (Mattes, 2008:55).

Furthermore, the establishment of the Authority of the People in March 1977 was considered the basis of the political system in Libya.

The people's direct democracy is the basis of the political system in the socialist people's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, where the authority is in the hands of people alone. The people exercise their authority through the people's congresses, the people's committees and the professional unions (Mattes, 2008:56).

The schedules and the meetings of the congress, committees and professional union were maintained by law. This form of structure was entitled Direct Democracy, and came into effect in March 1977. It created unique state institutions, with the People's Congresses functioning as the legislature, and the People's Committees functioning as the executive. The People's Committees and Congresses were the main features in the Green Book and a core part of Qaddafi's ideology.

Qaddafi regarded the election process as a method which could not fulfil the wishes of the citizenry. He maintained that governance by a party or someone who won with only a 51% majority was a form of dictatorship. Qaddafi transformed the 'Jamahiriya' into a state governed by the people alone through public participation, and changed the official name of the country from Libya to the 'the Great Socialist People's Arab Jamahiriya'. This name implied that Libyan citizens could have some control over decision-making (Kwaczynski, 2011:25-26). In fact, Qaddafi often criticised conventional democracies in his speeches and statements, doing this as a means of diverting domestic opinion away from demanding proper democratic elections.

Although there had been no political party system in Libya even under the monarchy, after Qaddafi came to power the state ideology disapproved even more of the party system, and all unauthorised political parties or political activities were considered illegal and faced severe punishment. Qaddafi tried to fill the vacuum established by this move by setting up a loose political structure for a state without a formal government; his own position as the leader of the Revolution being justified on the basis of revolutionary legitimacy. This notion was used for years by the Revolutionary Committees to justify Qaddafi's role and actions, although in essence it contradicts the concept of the Green Book. Qaddafi's involvement in almost all decisions taken led to criticism from various people in Libya, and concern was expressed that he founded a political system in which he had no official role, but of which in practice, he was the country's major decision-maker (Obeidi, 2001).

3.3.1 Foreign Policy-making in Libya

The discovery of oil in Libya created the conditions where various groups in Libya believed they had a real opportunity to overthrow the old king and take over the destiny of the country. Qaddafi, then only a young military officer, was among them. After succeeding in his coup, Qaddafi realised that in order to maintain his power and his position, it was essential to control the oil revenues, since the income from these natural resources would allow him to finance a determined, aggressive foreign policy, possible because the country no longer depended on income from foreign bases. Qaddafi did use the oil revenues extensively to try to achieve his ideological objectives - the Islamic one, the Pan-Arabist one, and the opposition of Western interests symbolised by the United States, or colonialism.

In fact, colonialism was an important factor shaping Qaddafi's political views towards the West.¹²⁹ One of the basic tenets of his views was his perception of colonialism. As Takeyh (2001:63) put it, "Qaddafi came of age during the 1960s, as Libya and much of the developing world battled to escape imperial domination. This bitter struggle against colonialism shaped Qaddafi's political philosophy, infusing him with a deep suspicion of the West". Takeyh's suggestion about the origin of Qaddafi's resentment towards the West is

¹²⁹ Colonialism has often been the focus of Qaddafi; he attacked colonialism many times, and maintained that there existed a new form of colonialism, by which he meant that Libya's independence was not fully realised because of the remaining Western military bases inside the country.

plausible. However, to the suspicion of the West felt by Qaddafi and his companions it is possible to add other elements, related to foreign and security policies.

Even after the withdrawal of the US and British military bases, Qaddafi continued to criticise Western policies in the Middle East. Suspicious of colonialism, Libya tried to conduct a foreign policy independent of the rules of the Cold War imposed by the two superpowers, in its own region. In the early 1970s, Qaddafi disputed the presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) on Maltese territory since he believed this could have had a direct influence in the region. However, Libya's attempt to halt the negotiations between NATO and the Maltese government was unsuccessful (St John, 2002:94).

Qaddafi was crucially involved in the articulation of Libya's foreign policy. Despite the existence of various state institutions and organisations through which foreign policy is formulated and conducted, the final word in all decisions remained Qaddafi's alone. Libyan policies aimed to radically change the direction taken by the previous monarchy in regional and international politics. The country's international behaviour derived purely from the ideology and Qaddafi's beliefs which were rooted in the recollection of Libya's bitter colonial past, and in the impact of the 1956 war of the Suez and the different wars of independence in Africa in the 1960s. Qaddafi closely followed the struggles of Egypt under Nasser against Israel, France, and the United Kingdom, believing that colonial powers such as Italy and France had brought devastation to the region (Simons, 1996:263–274; Deeb, 1991:5; St. John, 2002:4). El-Warfally (1988:45) maintains that the underlying ideology could shed some light on ambiguous policies, which were seen as unexplained and puzzling at the time.

Qaddafi's ideology was seen as the cornerstone of the revolution; it was nationalistic in nature, emphasising the zeal of Arab nationalism and seeking to unify Arab states. Qaddafi's role in policy formulation was long and dominant, both internally and externally. He operated within an environment that was created in order to produce and facilitate the articulation of foreign policy. In addition, this environment was intentionally diversified, consisting of both formal (e.g. government officials and General Secretariats, People Congress Affairs, and so on), and informal elements (e.g. tribes, and Qaddafi's companions). Referring to the environment, Joffé and Pioletta underlined that "it must be integrated with the personalised dimension of policy formation in Libya" (Joffé and Paoletti, 2010:3).

The decision-making process was laborious because all decisions were based on two components, one pragmatic (when it comes to dealing with Western countries), and the other ideological (when dealing with Arab, African, and Latin American countries). However, what makes the Libyan case unique, was the fact that such a decision-making process was produced by one mind, Qaddafi's. Therefore, this might suggest that that policy formulation in Libya was a combination of various practical and theoretical elements. For example, Libya, like Cuba and Venezuela, was under the influence of a charismatic leader, who determined policies neglecting the role of official channels. However, Qaddafi used both his experience in power and his rhetoric in order to gain complete control over the political scene, despite the presence of various mediatory functions (Joffé and Paoletti, 2010:3).

Libyan embassies were run by zealous people guided by revolutionary inclinations, and instead of being entitled 'embassy' as is conventional for diplomatic institutions, they were called "Peoples' Bureaus" and functioned in a peculiar way. Revolutionary Committees supplemented ministries and embassies, and played a key role in articulating the foreign policy process. Other formal institutions besides the Revolutionary Committee members were the External Security services. These changes resulted in the alteration of People's Bureau objectives and behaviour (Vandewalle, 1995:28). Indeed, St John argues that in the 1980s, these External Security services represented the key instrument to "eliminate the stray dogs of the revolution" outside Libya, while the domestic arena was under the strict control of the Revolutionary Committees (St John, 2008:169). The existence and behaviours of such formal actors did raise serious concerns at the international level, culminating with the breach of diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom, following the shooting of a British Police officer outside the Libyan Embassy in 1984.

Libyan foreign policy was not as simple as it is generally assumed, and greater scrutiny allows for a more accurate idea about how the decisions were taken, and which patterns they took, to be gained. For instance, although the final decision always remained Qaddafi's, the informal process to reach such decision often involved formal and informal advisers, recruited according to the issue discussed. The group of advisers formed according to the circumstances, was temporary, and once the question of interest had been covered and the requested policies decided upon, the group was dissolved, although not permanently, in case of the need to reconsider the topic.

An interesting observation to make here is the minimum role given to the General People's Congress, which acted as the equivalent of a parliament in conventional democracies, but which was called only twice a year. It is difficult under these circumstances to devise the foreign policy of a country. Moreover, the importance of individuals in the Libyan Foreign Ministry was not based on their hierarchical position in the institution, but rather on their relationships with those in the circle of power. Indeed, there were cases where a low ranking person had more influence on policy-making than his superiors because of this factor. Joffé and Paoletti give examples where "vice ministers might outshine their ministerial superiors who may just be executors of policy, not originators" (Joffé and Paoletti, 2010:16).

According to Deeb (1991:9), Libya's foreign policy was driven by national interests with an emphasis on security matters when it operated within its immediate periphery. When foreign policy operated further afield it was driven more by ideology and pragmatism (see Figure 3.2). Deeb suggests that ideology and pragmatism played a major role in Libya's global foreign policy. Soloman and Swart (2005) supported Deeb's opinion, questioning Qaddafi's decision to support Ethiopia, a non-Arab and Christian country against Sudan, a Muslim country and member of the Arab League (Soloman and Swart, 2005:470). Such a policy symbolised the priority given to national and security interests. Another case was the support for a non-Arab country, Iran, in its war against an Arab country, Iraq. This confirmed Qaddafi's preference for the revolutionary ideology over pan-Arabism. And his further support for the Iraqi Kurds over the Baathist government was another indication of Qaddafi's conception of foreign policy (Pargeter, 2012:124). Qaddafi's foreign policy can be illustrated through five concentric circles, each one containing both a number of countries and the relevant policies for each of them.

A Concentric View of Libyan Foreign policy

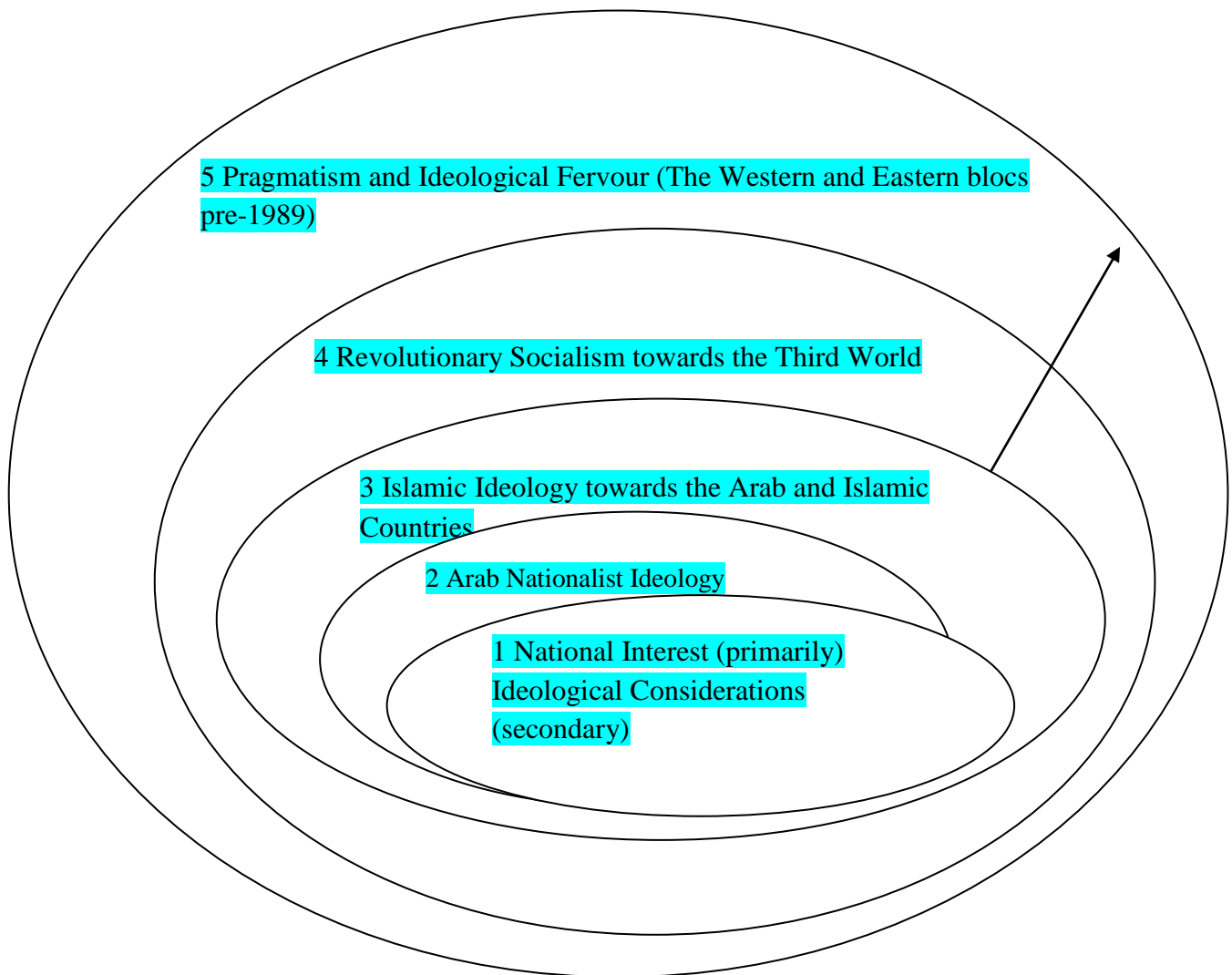


Figure 3.2: Diversity of Libyan Foreign Policies

As one moves from the inner circles towards the outer ones, a large number of countries is included, and the content of Qaddafi's policies appears to be more diffuse and more ideological.

3.3.2 A Review of Libya's Foreign and Security Policies

According to Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (2002), the “foreign policies of Middle Eastern States, rooted in state elites’ desire to defend their regimes, aim not just at deterrence of fear of outside threats, but also legitimating the regime at home against domestic opposition and mobilising economic resources abroad” (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, 2002:15). Libya certainly exemplified one of those states in the region, and its foreign policy was not very different from other regional states in matters of security, Arab nationalism, and the perception of outside threats.

Niblock (2002), in his study of Libyan foreign policy, suggests other foreign policy actors apart from Qaddafi. Firstly, there was a close circle of powerful individuals, known in Libya as *Rijal al-khaimah* or ‘men of the tent’, with whom Qaddafi reviewed and debated his policy positions. These individuals were largely members of the Free Unionist Movement in the early years of the Revolution, and of the revolutionary youth in the late years of the 1970s. The young revolutionary generation helped Qaddafi’s transformation of the social and economic situation. The Revolutionary Committees were established in 1977, although their role was restricted after 1988. That said, the old leadership stayed close to the Qaddafi circle. As noted by Niblock, Qaddafi’s family, specifically those who occupied high-ranking posts in the security services, increasingly took on advisory roles.

The same author identifies three durable factors that determined Libyan foreign policy, and that still remain today as important influences. The first is the country’s economic base formed by oil exports which began in 1961. Oil, as the country’s main export, represents a powerful instrument in Libyan foreign policy interests and ideological objectives. It also makes the country attractive and vulnerable to outside threats. Oil producing countries tend to maintain close relations with strong powers that have an interest in the upkeep of the regime.¹³⁰ The second factor is the country’s culture and geographic location. Geographically, Libyan cities are separated by vast distances, but Libyans share many aspects of social life, such as the Arab culture, language, and religion. The third factor is the country’s strategic location within the Arab World, Africa, and the Mediterranean. Consequently, it is involved with a large surrounding region with no option but to interact, whether by reacting to circumstances, or by proactive measures (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami,

¹³⁰ A similar course of foreign policy had been followed by the monarchy regime that chose to maintain strong relations with Western powers to protect itself from perceived threats of communism and Nasser’s radicalism in the region.

2002:214-217). As regards to Libya's policy in Africa, this was also on the revolutionary regime's agenda, and consequently, various African movements such as the African National Congress, and the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara, found support from the regime. Qaddafi convinced some African leaders to cut their ties with Israel, and in this matter Joffe notes that, by 1973, 20 African countries severed these ties, which were reinstated a decade later (Joffé, 2005: 608). The regime's policies during the first decade of Qaddafi's rule towards the regional actors were fuelled by leadership of the Arab world and competition between the leaders. In some cases, this competition transformed to military clashes. For instance Egypt, the powerful neighbour of Libya, represented a real challenge to Qaddafi's regime, in particular in the early 1970s. The sudden death of the Egyptian president Nasser, the leader of Arab nationalism, brought Sadat to power, and the relations between the two countries deteriorated, culminating in 1977 in an armed conflict on the border.

Libya supported the Southern rebellion movements in Sudan, and in retaliation Sudan welcomed dissidents and opposition movements in Khartoum. Qaddafi's worries about being encircled by both Egypt and Sudan in the aftermath of the 1977 mini-war proved to be well-founded, since effectively, Egypt and Sudan used Chad as a platform in order to deflect the early confrontation on their grounds, and with the assistance of France, they supported Chad in its long conflict with Libya which ended in the defeat of the Libyan army which found itself threatened precisely because of Qaddafi's policies. Both countries were accommodating opposition movements to Qaddafi's regime. In one instance, Libya bombed a radio station in Khartoum because it was broadcasting news against Qaddafi (Waller, 1999:242).

Libya's interference in African conflicts in the 1970s continued throughout the 1980s, provoking tensions between Libya and the governments of many African states. For instance, during the hearing of the Special Court in Sierra Leone, Libya was often mentioned and accused of supporting plots against the governments of West Africa, and of being responsible for the various wars of that particular period. In addition, it was alleged that Libya supported military coups against Niger's government, in 1976, and that Qaddafi's animosity towards Mobutu prompted him to support an attempt to overthrow Zaire's president in the mid-1980s. In the same period, Ghana and Gambia complained about Libya's meddling in their politics.¹³¹ Solomon and Swart claimed that Libya also supported several opposition movements and rebels in various countries such as Tunisia, Sudan, Mauritania, Mali, Chad,

¹³¹ Several attempts against the governments of these two countries would not have been possible without the support of Colonel Qaddafi's regime.

and other African countries, in their attempts to overthrow their governments (Solomon and Swart, 2005:472).¹³²

On the other hand, as was reported in the London-based Arab newspaper *Al-hayat*, Libya helped countries such as Uganda. Ali Treki, Libya's ex-foreign minister, interviewed by Sharbil, a journalist from *Al-hayat*, confirmed that Qaddafi provided both financial and material support to President Idi Amin, who under the influence of the Libyan regime, cut his diplomatic relations with Israel. In another circumstance, during the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania, Qaddafi again stood by Idi Amin and sent him Libyan forces to counter his opponents' attack.¹³³

As discussed in the previous chapter, the issue of security was a major factor in Libya's behaviour towards states in its immediate periphery. However, a secondary role was played by ideology when dealing with issues away from Libyan territory. Libya did not restrict its involvement outside its domestic borders to the African continent only, since its radical activism was also directed towards Europe and the US. For instance, Libya was allegedly linked with the assassination of the American ambassador of Sudan in 1973, and the massacre of the Israeli athletes in Munich in 1972.¹³⁴

The death of Nasser was deeply felt in the Arab World, so when Qaddafi appeared on the scene, his rhetoric and speeches gave hope to many different Arab countries. He used sensitive issues which he knew would have an effect on the minds of Middle Eastern and North African people, such as the fight against colonialism, imperialism, and the Palestinian issue. According to Anderson (1982:523), "Qaddafi had managed to convince his foreign supporters and detractors alike that he was a significant regional if not international power". However, it can be argued that the opposite was in fact the case, since Arab rulers soon realised that Qaddafi was only offering false and empty promises. Anderson gave to Qaddafi

¹³² Libya backed dissidents in different states such as Sudan, Somalia, Algeria, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, and Tunisia.

¹³³ In 1972, the former president of Uganda, Obote, who took refuge in Tanzania, tried to regain the control of the country with thousands of Ugandan refugees. However, the exiles failed to invade Uganda and remove Amin, who benefitted from Qaddafi's support. Amin blamed Tanzania's leader Nyerere for the attack and for helping his enemies. As a result the relationship between Uganda and Tanzania remained strained for many years. See Mambo and Schofield (2007).

¹³⁴ Up to the present time there has been no recorded evidence of the involvement of the Libyan regime in the Munich 1972 murders.

an undeserved aura, and in July 1977, his regime was unable to prevent Egyptian forces from violating Libya's territorial sovereignty.

Qaddafi did not limit his international ambitions only to the Arab World or to Africa. In order to achieve his aims, he was ready to use all means, including supporting terrorism worldwide. As mentioned earlier, Qaddafi backed and financed numerous movements beyond Libya's sphere (i.e. IRA, Sulu Archipelago, Lebanese fractions, Philippine, Polisario, and Nicaragua). The support given to these movements was unconditional due to Qaddafi's ideological conviction.¹³⁵ However, Libya's international adventures and support for various movements did not bring substantial results on the ground. On the contrary, it considerably damaged the reputation of Qaddafi's regime. The first official link between Libya and terrorism was made by the CIA in 1976, with the publication of a report in which Libya was described as "one of the world's least inhibited practitioners of international terrorism" (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:56). The CIA report in 1976 was based on the Qaddafi regime's policies and actions. The US had used several instruments such as diplomatic, economic, and military actions to punish the regime. These stringent measures were intended to compel Qaddafi to cease his support for international terrorism, and stop his irresponsible adventures in various countries.

To sum up this section, it can be said that a state which operates on idiosyncratic principles, such as those in evidence in Libya during the Qaddafi regime, attract negative opinion from the outside world, and previous American administrations were quick to condemn Libya as a 'rogue state' or 'axis of evil', outlaw, and a state 'of concern'. 'Rogue' is defined in the Oxford dictionary as 'behaving badly, dishonestly or differently'. The essence of the definition of 'Rogue' is that anyone to whom this term is applied may not respect values that are upheld by the international community. These values are respect for human rights, moderate behaviour among others, not inciting violence and terrorism, and respect for international institutions. A person or state who bears this label may also pose a significant threat to world peace and security.

¹³⁵ It can be said that Qaddafi was a strong believer in Machiavelli's statement, according to which "the ends justify the means".

3.3.3 Conventional Military Build-up after the Revolution

Before Qaddafi's coup in 1969, the Libyan monarchy depended entirely on Britain for its purchase of armaments. For instance, the major arms contracts signed between King Idris and the British consisted of the installation of a complete missile air defence system in Libya and a £150 million contract for the delivery of Chieftain Tanks from Britain. For ideological reasons (Libya moved closer to Egypt and to pan-Arabism), Qaddafi's regime cancelled the first contract but insisted on receiving the tanks purchased in the second (Lutterbeck, 2009:508).

However, in 1969, and in order to be less dependent on one particular power, Libya secured military assistance from France by negotiating one of the biggest single armament deals estimated at \$400 million (Deeb, 1991:55). This assistance took the form of one hundred Mirage jet fighters, including fifty Mirage 5s, thirty Mirage III-Es for the purpose of interception, and twenty Mirages for training purposes. The delivery took three years, from 1971 to 1974. The United States and Israel condemned this deal between France and Libya (Deeb, 1991:54). Kolodziej stated that at the period of the deal, the French were heavily dependent on Libyan oil (17.4% in 1970 contrasted with 2% in 1977), so the arms deal with Libya covered around \$400 million of its oil imports from that country (Kolodziej, 1980:63). Moreover, during the first decade of Qaddafi's rule, Libya spent \$22 billion on arms purchases. The Soviet Union exported military equipment to Libya worth more than \$18 billion alone. Despite the fact that there were different ideologies between the Soviet Union and Libya, the Soviet Union was Libya's main arms provider, followed by France and Italy (Lutterbeck, 2009:507&508).¹³⁶

The Libyan military capacity was intensely expanded after the 1969 Revolution, in several sectors within the military institution. According to St John, Libya's military expenses were among the highest in the developing world, and the armed forces grew in size quickly. The military was viewed as symbolic during the monarchy regime, and did not have a strong influence because the regime relied heavily on its Western alliances (St John, 1987:137). Soon after the revolution, however, Libya began to renovate its military institutions and expand its military capabilities. Hard currency from oil revenues made Libya a very active

¹³⁶Libya was one of the highest arms buyers based on a per capita calculation.

customer in military expenditure, with almost \$2 billion a year being spent on military purchases in the first few years. According to a report from the Institute for International Strategic Studies (IISS), Libya's military capability in the early years was composed of 73,000 military personnel and 535 combat aircraft (Schumacher, 1986–1987:333). From 1973 until 1983, Libya spent approximately \$28 billion on armaments. Mattes notes that prior to the 1969 Revolution, the army consisted of 7,000 members, but in the years after Qaddafi came to power, the army grew rapidly to reach 55,000 members in 1982 (Mattes, 2004:1-3).

Although Qaddafi was critical of the United States and the Soviet Union, he was willing to import military equipment from both these powers, as well as from other countries. Libya did not rely on specific arms suppliers, but rather used various states including Italy and France. In the aftermath of the evacuation of their military bases and Libya's aggressive behaviour, the United States and Britain did not provide military assistance as the regime requested; they were cautious about Libya's new policies regarding the West, and they therefore provided only limited arms assistance (Lutterbeck, 2009:508). It is essential to underline that when Qaddafi came into power he ensured the Americans that their oil companies would not lose their privileges, neither would they be nationalised.

It is worth noting that due to the Cold War imperatives and security concerns, Libya attempted to acquire nonconventional military capability. Qaddafi sought to acquire nuclear weapons shortly after he came to power, in order to strengthen Libya's military capability and enhance its security. The initial efforts to obtain readymade nuclear weapons from various countries, such as China between 1969-71, France in 1976, India in 1978 and the Soviet Union in mid 1970s, all the regime's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons ended in failure (Bowen, 2006:8). As will be discussed in greater details in the next chapter, Qaddafi regime did not spare any efforts to pursue nuclear weapons capability from different countries and sources including the black market.

In the coming sections, light is shed on the most important elements affecting Libya's political trajectory in the aftermath of 1969 until 1981. Several factors are highlighted and the most significant ones are discussed.

3.4 Factors Affecting Libyan Foreign and Security Policies from 1969 until 1981

In this section, all the factors which influenced Libya's foreign and security policies (since Qaddafi and his companions seized power in 1969 until 1981) are raised. As discussed in the theoretical framework, there are several influences - domestic, regional, and international - that affected post-1969 Libyan politics. Indeed, after the end of the reign of King Idris, Libya's international relations shifted from being friendly and peaceful, to being hostile and confrontational, reflecting a radical state with a defiant posture. Qaddafi and his companions altered Libya's political orientation, allying the country with powerful states and adopting a similar ideology to its regional neighbours (i.e. Egypt, Iraq, and Syria). Moreover, the young political leadership of the Libyan regime had, from the early years, been antagonistic towards several countries. However, before embarking in analysing these factors it is important to analyse the historical context and its relation with the puzzle of this study.

On 1 September 1969, the Free Unionist Officers Movement (a small group of Libyan army officers) carried out a coup d'état against the monarchy,¹³⁷ took over the reins of power and began a radical reorientation of the domestic and foreign policy of Libya. The movement was led by a twelve-man central committee which presented itself as the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The Council's first statement was the proclamation of the Republic, issued on 1 September 1969, and the denunciation of the fallen monarchy. The members promised the Libyan people a radical change in both socio-economic and political systems. In fact, the sceptical statements made by Colonel Qaddafi, the coup's leader, concerning the usefulness of a modern state were merely public enunciations of what the Libyan people already thought (Vandewalle, 2006:79).

In the first address to the Libyan people, Qaddafi announced that the monarchical era was over and that the new Libyan Arab Republic was born. "People of Libya! Your armed forces have undertaken the overthrow of the corrupt regime, the stench of which has sickened and horrified us all" (part of the speech made on 16 September 1969). During that same speech, Qaddafi made several historical allusions such as the following one: "By a single stuck the army has lightened the long dark night in which the Turkish domination was followed by

¹³⁷ The lack of support for King Idris when the coup occurred made their mission all too easy.

Italian rule, and then by this reactionary and decadent regime, which was no more than a hotbed of extortion, factions, treachery, and treason". He announced to the Libyans the coming of a new era "where all will be free, brothers within a society in which, with God's help, prosperity, and equality will be seen to rule us all" (Bianco, 1975:67& 68)

The person who pronounced these famous words was the new ruler of the 1969 coup. A native from Sirte, Qaddafi was in his twenties when, with his companions, overthrew the Libyan monarchy.¹³⁸ As a son of a Bedouin family, his early education was a mixture of traditional religious subjects, and then his elementary education took place at one of the schools in Sirte. Thereafter, his family moved to Sebha in the south of Libya. At Sebha he began his secondary education, most of his teachers coming from Egypt. In this city Qaddafi had access to a range of materials, including books, newspapers, and radio. Since his youth Qaddafi had been a political activist and a harsh critic of the monarchy (Blundy and Lycett, 1987). Regarding the impact of Qaddafi's education as a student at the Sebha School on Libya's revolution, Blundy and Lycett (1987:39) noted: "If the Libyan revolution has a starting point, it is in the classroom of the Sebha school".

During his years at Sebha School, Qaddafi organised demonstrations opposing King Idris' policies and blaming the monarch for his refusal to provide assistance to Nasser in the 1956 Suez War. In fact, Qaddafi was expelled from Sebha School due to his political activism against King Idris. Thereafter, Qaddafi moved to another school in Misurata, where he formed a covert cell in order to organise a revolutionary change. Later, with the creation of other cells, Qaddafi suggested to his comrades that they join the army, not for pure military ambition but to use it as a tool to effect political change. Another significant and powerful figure close to Qaddafi was his right hand man Abdel Salam Jalloud, who was a friend, a companion and a supporter of Qaddafi for more than two decades (Cooley, 1982).¹³⁹

After his graduation from Misurata High School in 1963, Qaddafi joined the military college, together with his colleagues, and this marked the beginning of the Free Officers Movement. Qaddafi's aim in the Benghazi Military Academy was not to have a successful military career but to use the army to achieve his political objectives, as shown in his statement that "several of my fellow revolutionaries studied with me. When we decided to go to the academy, it was

¹³⁸ Qaddafi was born at Sirte in 1943.

¹³⁹ Jalloud, initially wanted to study medicine, but was later convinced to join the military college along with others by Qaddafi.

not because we wanted to become professional soldiers but because we wanted to infiltrate the institution and prepare for the revolution” (Oakes, 2011:122). Qaddafi spent more time than his colleagues in the military academy because he had to resit some examinations. One of the British military trainers in Benghazi, Ted Lough, recalled that Qaddafi was very cruel and complicated to deal with, and that he was not making as good progress as the other cadets in the military academy. Reports were often sent to British diplomats in both Tripoli and Benghazi regarding unrest and disorder among the military personnel in the academy. According to Oakes (2011), the British Embassy was anticipating some kind of conspiracy against King Idris but the suspicion rested on a much more powerful figure, that being the Army Chief of Staff, Aziz al Shelhi (Oakes, 2011:122-124).

Qaddafi and his companions graduated from the military academy college in 1966 and some of them were sent abroad for further training. Qaddafi himself joined Beaconsfield in Britain, where he completed a nine-month training course with the signal corps (Cooley, 1982). The military gave Qaddafi and his colleagues an opportunity to organise themselves, and recruit and form cells to execute their coup, which they did in a very smart way. The group also called themselves the Free Officers Movement, the same name used by Nasser in the coup of 1952. Every member in the Free Officers Movement formed his own cell, recruiting civilians as well as soldiers from their cities. According to Oakes (2011:124), using the cell system was vital for disciplined army members. Communication was only through the leader of each cell, and the members did not know each other except the heads of the cells. Meetings and discussions between the conspirators were easier at the military academy than when they were stationed in different posts, since communications were complicated then due to the distance from each other. In their spare time, the conspirators formed loyalties and recruited friends. Qaddafi was confident that he would not be betrayed by his colleagues because they had the same goal which was to topple King Idris’ regime (Simons, 1996:173).

The success of the 1969 coup might be explained by events leading up to that year during which useful preparations were made for communication during the event. Specifically, in 1964, Qaddafi joined the Libyan army’s signal unit in Benghazi (Simons, 1996:174). It can be underlined here that communication was a crucial element in the plan of the Free Officers, who intended to be able to eventually subvert the communication network, especially between the high commanders loyal to King Idris. Later the main Libyan army’s signal centre in Benghazi was taken over by Qaddafi, who soon ordered sophisticated communication

devices for his unit. Additionally, he had direct access to codes and ciphers which enabled him to communicate with all army units wherever they were on Libyan territory (Oakes, 2011:125).

Qaddafi was particularly influenced by Nasser's speeches broadcast by the Egyptian national radio. In fact, Blundy and Lycett report that Qaddafi learned Nasser's speeches by heart and used to recite them to his schoolmates. Another source of influence on the young Qaddafi was Nasser's book *'The Philosophy of the Revolution'*, which explains how Nasser shaped a cell composed of military officers and conducted a coup against the Egyptian monarchy in 1952 (Blundy and Lycett, 1987:41). Egypt, and Nasser in particular, were significant inspirations to a whole generation of young Libyans during the monarchy; Nasser raised awareness of Arab Unity and contributed to the strength of feeling in Libya which was opposed to King Idris' government.

In terms of the instruments for governing once the revolution succeeded, according to Hervé Bleuchot (1982), Qaddafi and the RCC did not have anything ready when they made the 1969 coup. The author underlines the fact that "[i]nitially he [Qaddafi] had nothing new to propose in the institutional field, and the provisional constitution of 11 December 1969 was a just a copy from the Egyptian constitution" (Bleuchot, 1982:141). In addition to reiterating the same slogans, "Liberty, Socialism and Unity", which were borrowed from the charismatic Nasser, Qaddafi wanted to be seen as the champion of Islam, without adhering to the thought of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, who did not put nationalism or Arabism as priorities (Bleuchot, 1982:141).

Mohammed H Heikal (1975) believes that the two influences in Qaddafi's life were the army and the desert. It was in the army that he first really found himself, but it was to the desert that he would return for solace (Heikal, 1975:185). The desert had a big impact on Qaddafi who, referring to his early age living as a Bedouin said:

It was difficult in terms of the circumstances and the environment under which I lived. Bedouin life is mobile; the strictness of upbringing therefore comes from the severity of these circumstances. But socially I was free. We were Bedouins enjoying full freedom, and we lived amongst nature and everything was absolutely pure, in its true self, in front of us. We lived on the land and there was nothing between us and the sky. Bedouin society made me discover the natural laws, natural relationships, life in its true

nature and what suffering was like before life knew oppression, coercion and exploitation (Berween, 2003:50).

In one of the early statements regarding their identity, the coup makers declared that their intentions were to faithfully follow the aims elicited in the Nasserist slogan; “Freedom, Socialism and Unity”. Such a slogan affiliated them with the eponymous Nasser rather than with the Baathists, whose slogan was “Unity, Socialism and Freedom”.¹⁴⁰ Despite the similarity of the slogans, the orders in which the aspirations are listed signify not only different perspectives but also an ideological split. Nasser argued, quite rightly according to the present researcher, that unity cannot be achieved in the absence of freedom. So, Qaddafi and his companions espoused Nasser’s ideology and in doing so they distanced themselves from the Baathist camp (Heikal, 1975:67).

In the regional arena, between 1950 and 1978, several attempts to unite Arab states were made. All failed, the only concrete unity was between 1958 and 1961, when there was a brief union between Syria and Egypt under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser. In 1963 the attempt to unify Syria, Egypt, and Iraq was unsuccessful. After the death of Nasser in 1970, and on 1 January 1972, a federation was proclaimed for the unity of Libya, Syria, Egypt and Sudan, but there were no practical effects thereafter (Choueiri, 2000:166–167).

In terms of the preponderant ideologies of that period, it is important to mention first, ‘Nasserism’ which started as a movement for Egyptian national liberation, and gradually moved towards espousing Arab unity and finally, Arab Socialism. Accordingly, after 1956, the links between ‘political’ and ‘social’ revolutions and the building of ‘a co-operative, democratic and socialist society’ were repeatedly stressed. Between February 1958 and September 1961, Nasserism was the sole political ideology in the United Arab Republic of Syria and Egypt. The year 1961 was officially the start of a new revolution in Egypt and the Arab nationalist movements at large, which heralded the arrival of social revolution. Socialism had become an alternative system of economic development and political organisation in newly-emerging non-aligned developing countries, and this was particularly important because at that time both the Soviet Union and the US had their own ideologies when dealing with the Arab World (Choueiri, 2000:188–189, 191).

¹⁴⁰ Arabists who, in order to propagate their ideology, established a political party called Baath.

The other large movement representing Arabism was known as Baathism (when its proponents created a political party called Hizb al Baath'), representing the ideology of the Arab Baath party. This party was formally founded by two Damascene school teachers, Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Baytar, in 1947. It was also called the Socialist Baath Party after merging with the Arab Socialist Party. It recruited its members from students, workers, farmers and minorities, and later on it developed into a well-organised party. The Baath party extended from its base in Syria and reached Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Tunisia, and the Arab Peninsula, but although Baathism established itself in a small way in countries like Sudan, Egypt, Libya, and Algeria, it did not have a strong presence in other countries until the 1970s. The Baath ideology is based on Arab unity, freedom and socialism, a philosophy which was espoused by various Arab parties (Choueiri, 2000:197

3.4.1 Domestic Factors Affecting Libyan Behaviour

Regarding the development in post-1969 Libya, Qaddafi, in his first major speech, attacked the existing social order, calling for a complete transformation of the social, economic, and political systems.¹⁴¹ He described the key themes of the ideology which the new Revolutionary Committee would go on to expand and develop in the future. Contrary to what has been discussed in the theoretical framework, concerning the significant role often played by domestic factors,¹⁴² the new Libyan military rulers were not inclined to allow the Libyan public to be major players. It is worth underlining that when Qaddafi came to power, many people rallied with him in the expectation of a new era. Effectively, Qaddafi and the new RCC were able to gain the support of various segments of Libyan society. This civilian support was of immense importance to Qaddafi and the RCC, who were backed by university graduates, government officials, students, and relatively low ranking military officers. In fact, all these people were dissatisfied with the policies of the government of King Idris.¹⁴³

The domestic scene in Libya did not have a substantial role during King Idris' era and Qaddafi followed the same stance; he prevented the people from participating in Libya's domestic politics. Banning domestic associations, unions, syndicates and political parties was the strategy adopted to weaken public involvement and strengthen Qaddafi's own position.

¹⁴¹ It was the thirty-eighth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Sanusiya Sheikh Umar al-Mukhtar, the resistance leader hanged by the Italians in 1931.

¹⁴² Such as in the democratic countries in the West.

¹⁴³ See declassified documents released by the CIA 2011 'Qaddafi Rise to Power in the Libyan Revolution 1969-1972'. Available at: <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/QaddafirisetoPowerinLibya.pdf>

Indeed, Qaddafi and the RCC believed that the existence of political parties would be threatening to their role and would jeopardise the new government led by Qaddafi. Moreover, granting such permission for political parties and unions was believed to leave the country exposed to partition (Mattes, 2007:61).

Kwaczynski (2011) notes that Qaddafi's 1973 Green Book was the main feature of 'statelessness' in which there was a call for all citizens of Libya to avoid the trap of political parties and political representation. Political parties were seen in the Green Book as instruments which go against the interests of the Libyan and which might misguide naive and apolitical people. In addition, representatives of elected government were seen as manipulative. Qaddafi claimed in the Green Book that people should not leave power to the elected representatives but rather participate directly in decision-making. He was quite clear about the conventional political parties when he wrote in the Green Book that: "The purpose of forming a party is to create an instrument to rule the people". For him, parties were "fundamentally, based on an arbitrary authoritarian concept" of domination by a few over the majority, and a pretext to have access to power, by claiming that they represent the people's aspirations (Qaddafi, 1970:3).

In domestic politics, the RCC was the top authority in Libya with the power of choosing the Council of Ministers. Consequently, most of the ministerial positions, occupied previously by civilians, became filled by military people, with the exception of the Oil Ministry because the RCC members themselves did not have enough experience to manage it. During that time, the army became a powerful actor, and many youths were encouraged to join (Vandewalle, 2006:82).

3.4.1.1 The Role of Ideology

The Libyan Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), like most revolutionary regimes, blamed the previous regime for the country's ills and, in order to legitimise its dismissal, exaggerated its level of corruption. The period in which Qaddafi came to power was quite exceptional, the world was divided between the two superpowers, and new ideologies appeared in the Arab World, mainly in Egypt, and Syria. While the 1952 coup in Egypt promoted Nasserism,¹⁴⁴ in Syria, Arabist ideologists entered the political arena and founded

¹⁴⁴ Nasserism referring to the name of the new Egyptian leader, which was a form of Arabism.

the Baa'th party.¹⁴⁵ Niblock suggests that Libyan foreign policy was created to reflect ideological purposes, specifically the interests of Arabs, Muslims, and Africans, which could only be achieved by independence (Niblock, 2002:213).

The philosophy of the Baa'th, as well as Nasser's Egypt, was based on three major concepts. The first was 'Unity' which meant uniting all the Arabs under the same banner. The second element was 'Freedom', relating to full independence from foreign powers and influence, and the third factor was the economic model to be adopted, 'Socialism'. The revolutionary trinity of 'Unity, Freedom and Socialism' was adopted by the RCC. Therefore, it is clear that the early statements of the RCC were inspired by previous revolutionary movements and governments (St John, 1987:18).

The ideological elements of freedom, socialism and unity were considered to be the basis of the revolution by Muammar Qaddafi (Obeidi, 2001:45).¹⁴⁶ Heikal described this as an "ideological split" (Heikal, 1975:69), suggesting that Libya's revolution was oriented towards Egypt and Nasser rather than the Baathists of Iraq and Syria.¹⁴⁷ However, for El-Warfally, one of the core drivers of the 1969 Revolution was the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially after the defeat of the Arabs in June 1967 and the accusation of the Arabs that the United States and Britain had provided air support from military bases in Libya. This was what motivated the young army officers to execute a coup against the monarch's regime (El-Warfally, 1988:45).

The principles of Nasserist Arab nationalism played a direct role in the theory of Libya's stateless state, which developed during the first three years after Qaddafi seized power in September 1969. Therefore, those sources that informed the construction and operation of the Libyan political system also informed the intellectual project behind foreign policy. In 1973 Colonel Qaddafi produced the Green Book, the document defining the ideology underlying the Libyan state; the Green Book emerged in stages, with the final version being completed in 1976 (Joffé and Paoletti, 2010:5).

¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, the first movement for comprehensive Arab unity originated in Syria in 1909, and was a major theme of the Baa'th Party by 1945.

¹⁴⁶ The slogans articulated by the new regime were similar to those of other revolutionary regimes and movements in the region.

¹⁴⁷ The Syrian and Iraqi Baathists believed that unity comes before freedom.

Qaddafi's ideological convictions were an important element in Libya's politics and foreign policy. As Obeidi put it:

Ideology is what the regime has based its political legitimacy on. Through ideology the new regime tried to overcome loyalty to the remnants of the monarch regime. The ideology of the new regime played a significant role in facilitating political mobilisation and in shaping foreign policy (Obeidi, 2001:45).

Article 1 of the 1969's coup communiqué described Libya as part of the Arab nation and discussed the country's commitment to comprehensive Arab unity, but it also recognised that Libya is part of Africa. In the 1970s, Libyan foreign policy began to stress pan-African unity, with additional elements borrowed from Islamic law. Following Arab nationalist leaders who succeeded in overthrowing monarchies,¹⁴⁸ Qaddafi tactically anticipated support for a potential Islamist opposition and introduced more religious authority in his form of government. In fact, as soon as he took power he started a campaign of Islamisation aiming to add this to his pan-Arab socialist revolution. Qaddafi claimed that his revolution was compatible with Islamic values. However, Libyan religious scholars were sceptical about Qaddafi's awkward interpretation of Islam (Pargeter, 2008:83-84).

Joffé describes the way Qaddafi used religion to fulfil his own aspirations: "Islam became the vehicle through which Qadhafi attempted in his usual popular fashion to reject the old religious order and to justify his own ideological alternative" (Joffé, 1995:146).¹⁴⁹ Article 1 stated that Islam was the religion of the state, similarly to most Arab and Islamic countries. The rest of the articles in the first chapter covered Libyan socialism and the way governments operate. It can be underlined here that, although it underwent many changes, according to the circumstances, most of Qaddafi's ideology remained the same (St John, 1987:18).

To sum up, Qaddafi based Libya's foreign policy on neutrality, non-alignment, and assistance for all liberation and freedom movements around the globe. Accordingly, he insisted on the removal of the US and British military bases from Libya in order to complete Libya's freedom (Deeb, 1991). Additionally, the post-coup period witnessed support for various foreign movements, stretching from liberation movements in the region, such as Palestinian and Lebanese factions, and further beyond Libya's sphere as far as the IRA.

¹⁴⁸ The monarchies were accused of being under foreign influence,

¹⁴⁹ See Joffé, G, (1995). "Qadhafi's Islam in Local Historical Perspective" in Qadhafi's Libya 1969 to 1994, ed. Vandewalle, St Martin: New York.

An important note which should be underlined here is the fact that aspects such as ideology and identity can affect the choice of decision making, particularly foreign policy preferences. From this perspective, it is clear that constructivist accounts can be appropriate for explaining and understanding the behaviour of governments, even the dictatorial ones. It is evident from the discussion above that Qaddafi's regime was influenced by Arabism, religion and liberation phenomenon. However and as will be seen in the next chapters, the realist approach is still more suitable when used to explain and understand the motivations of Libya's nuclearisation and denuclearisation.

3.4.1.2 The Role of Oil

The significance of the economic sector was very important to Libya's policy-makers. In fact, oil was, and remains, the most exported commodity from Libya; in 1963 the total export income from oil revenues reached 98.3% percent of all exports, and oil production has never fallen below 90% of export revenue. The income from this commodity goes directly to the state, which has a relatively small population compared with Egypt or Algeria, so Libya was able to maintain oil revenues and provide housing and welfare for its citizens (Niblock, 2002:214).

In 1969, when the RCC came to power, there were major disputes throughout the oil-producing world concerning whether it was best to seek broader control through a strategy of greater participation with the oil companies, or to attempt outright nationalisation. At first Qaddafi's government tried to implement the former strategy, but it met with no success so it moved to the latter. In the process, Libya strengthened its relations with Iran and Algeria. Furthermore, Libya had established continuing contacts with Algeria in order to take convergent decisions regarding oil policies (St John, 1987:108–109).

When Qaddafi came to power, oil became a political tool to enhance Libya's foreign policy objectives both regionally and internationally. There was a suspicion that oil was vulnerable to external threats from Western powers because the regime assumed that the West was conspiring against it. Therefore, the regime established closer relations with the Soviet Union as a response to the perceived threats. However, Qaddafi continued to promote policies intended to weaken the superpowers, which were permanently attempting to undermine his regime (Niblock, 2002:214–215).

In Libya the revolutionary government's first step in raising oil prices was taken towards the end of 1969, when the pricing committee tried to negotiate with the oil companies. After several unsuccessful attempts, on 4 April 1970, the government adopted a stronger approach and despite the appointment of the former Prime Minister, Maghrabi, as Chairman of the Pricing Committee, it appeared later that the real decisions were taken by Abdel-Salam Jallud, the RCC member who had successfully negotiated the early withdrawal of US and British forces from Libyan base facilities. The appointment of Jallud for negotiating with the oil companies showed the importance Qaddafi was giving to that dossier. The RCC particularly targeted independent oil producers such as Occidental, because Libyan supplies constituted a large part of their crude oil resources outside North America (Allan, 1981:183; Shukri Ghanem, 1985:164; St John, 1987:108).

In the summer of 1970 there were gradual cuts in Libyan oil production, and there was a break in the tapline which carried oil from the Middle East to the Mediterranean. This caused temporary shortages in petroleum products, provoking two major consequences; firstly, an increase in both oil prices and freight rates and an occasion for an increase in the Libyan posted price, which the oil companies could not ignore. Secondly, exploration and development investment from the oil companies fell drastically in Libya. With increasing concern about the new direction of Libyan oil policies, the foreign oil companies were willing to agree to higher oil prices (Simons, 1996:198-199).

Libya's substantial financial resources and recognised oil reserves, contributed to the successful negotiations with the oil companies. Additionally, these negotiations took place when the European demand for oil, Mediterranean oil in particular, was at one of its highest levels because of the closure of the Suez Canal. The excellent quality of Libya's crude oil, along with the RCC's recognised interest in greater conservation measures, also contributed to Libya's success in oil negotiations. Furthermore, the oil companies were divided among themselves and the major players refused to go to great lengths to protect the independents (Lenczowski, 1975:64).

In 1971, following the nationalisation of BP by the Libyan government, a Libyan company called the Arabian Gulf Exploration Company took over the share of the BP-NB. In addition, the production of all other oil companies operating in Libya was frozen in order to prevent

them from supplying BP. Shortly afterwards, the oil companies took action by amending the Libyan Procedures' Agreement to include total or partial nationalisation of the properties of any party by the Libyan government. Qaddafi justified the action as a protest against the British government, who, by evacuating the Greater and Lesser Tunb islands off the coast of the UAE, gave the opportunity to the Shah of Iran which brought them under his sovereignty (Waddams, 1980:251). This reflects the fact that the ideology of Qaddafi was based on supporting the Arab world's causes (i.e. Palestinian and Lebanon conflicts with Israel as well as the October war between Egypt and Israel 1973).¹⁵⁰

There was a major oil crisis in the early 1970s, as a result of various interdependent factors. The first one was the increasing power of the oil producing countries of the Middle East; until that point the oil companies had always discovered, developed, and controlled the oil in the Middle East themselves. Secondly, by this time the United States was extremely dependent on Middle Eastern oil. The third factor was the different phases of annexation by Israel in Palestine, which was very much opposed by the Libyan and other Arab governments but which had the complete support of the United States (St John, 1987:116).

Following the October 1973 war, the Arab oil-producing countries, with the strong support of the Libyan government, imposed oil restrictions. New price levels were imposed by unilateral decree as opposed to negotiation. In late October, Saudi Arabia drew up an agenda of restrictive measures that mostly involved general production cutbacks and an export embargo to specific countries. With full backing for such measures, the Libyan government sought to cut off oil exports to countries supporting the Israeli state. Accordingly, its oil exports to the United States were cut off and shortly after Libya also halted oil supplies to the Netherlands (Simons, 1996: 200-201).

In accordance with an OPEC decision taken in Kuwait on 16 October, Libya reduced its overall oil production by 5%. Moreover, on 20th October a resolution announced that the price of oil was to be increased from \$4.60 to \$8.90 per barrel; this was justified on the basis of inflation, increased demand for oil, and fluctuations in currency exchange rates and freight charges. The UNSC intervened by adopting Resolution 338 in order to end the military conflict. However, Libya, Iraq, and Kuwait denounced the United Nation's order and

¹⁵⁰ The reflection of Qaddafi's ideology on Libya's foreign policy only occurs when the issue is not threatening the interests of the regime (i.e. security and power).

described it as unwarranted foreign intervention in an Arab conflict. Nonetheless, Egypt and other Arab countries accepted the ceasefire, thereby adding to Libya's isolation in the Arab World (Lenczowski, 1975:64).

The Libyan regime believed that oil was a target for regional and international powers. Deeb elaborates on the significance of oil to the Libyan regime: "Oil wealth ... has been perceived by the Libyan leadership as the main reason the nation and the regime are endangered. Time and again Libya has accused its neighbours and others of planning to take control of the oil wealth through invasion" (Deeb, 1991:15).

European countries such as Italy, France, and Germany benefited greatly from Libya's oil reserves. Libya's strategic location and the low price of Libyan oil in comparison with other oil-exporting countries were the main reasons for such preference. Oil was one of the tools used by Libya as a political weapon for bargaining and financing foreign policy activities, such as support for various movements in the region and beyond. The fears of Qaddafi's regime were neither exaggerated nor unfounded since Sadat, in dire financial crisis and to confirm his leadership of Egypt, did attempt to seize part of the Libyan territory in 1977.¹⁵¹ Rogan stated that: "In his desperation to increase Egypt's revenues, in July 1977, Sadat did attempt to seize Libyan oil fields". In order to justify his aggression, Sadat cited the military help given by the Soviets to Qaddafi. Rogan notes that "In a mad opportunism, Sadat considered the Soviet arms deliveries to his wealthy neighbour a pretext to invade – as though the Libyan arsenal represented a threat to Egypt's security" (Rogan, 2009:487-488). Sadat withdrew his forces from the Sinai to use them against Libya. Such a decision was far from being popular in Egypt and soon the president had to halt this aggression following the pressures from several countries (Algeria, Kuwait, the PLO, Washington, and Moscow).

The Camp David Agreements between Egypt and Israel turned the Libyan neighbour into a big and permanent threat for the revolutionary state. Egypt went from being a model political system into an enemy for the Libyan regime and the unlimited faith Qaddafi had shown in President Nasser's ideology disappeared. Joffé states that since the death of President Nasser, his successor Anwar Sadat never trusted Qaddafi and saw Libya as a real and enduring threat to his country, which explains the short border war in July 1977. Qaddafi, whose regime was

¹⁵¹ Sadat as well as Numeiry of Sudan, Chad, and the Saudis etc...

still relatively fragile and fearing its Eastern neighbours, pre-empted a potential danger, and in 1975 made a mutual-defence agreement with Algeria, known as the ‘Hassi Messaoud Treaty’. Accordingly, when two years later, Egypt unilaterally attacked Libya, Algeria intervened vigorously to stop the invasion (Joffé, 2005:609).

3.4.2 Regional Factors Affecting Libya’s Foreign and Security Policies

The regional factors which affected Libyan policies were the result of various tensions with Libya’s regional neighbours. For instance, countries such as Morocco and Saudi Arabia disapproved of the overthrow of the Libyan monarchy and the establishment of a revolutionary state. Likewise, the Egyptian state was not on good terms with the Qaddafi regime.

The relations between Sadat and Qaddafi deteriorated when the Libyan regime later blamed the Egyptian government, accusing it of inertia and of not attempting to rescue the Libyan plane and guiding it to safety before it was shot down by an Israeli jet fighter.¹⁵² In order to retaliate against the perpetrators, Qaddafi as the Chief Commander of the Libyan Armed Forces ordered the commander of an Egyptian submarine stationed in Tripoli at that time, to sink the *Queen Elizabeth II* en route to Israel (Heikal, 1975:192).¹⁵³ It should be noted that the submarine stationed in Tripoli was part of the naval unit of Egypt under a defence agreement negotiated between Libya and Egypt during Nasser’s era (Simons, 1996:274).

According to Ronen (2008), Qaddafi’s hostility and confrontation with the former president of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, and the United States, increased dramatically with the shift in Egyptian foreign policies. Qaddafi believed that Sadat did not have the stature of his predecessor, Nasser, and accused him of abandoning the Nasserite ideology and becoming a pro-Western leader (Ronen, 2008:5). Rogan believes that Qaddafi never forgave Sadat, who for economic incentives, wanted to conquer Libya in 1977 (Rogan, 2009:487). In addition, and despite his rejection of communism, Qaddafi made a strategic move by allying himself

¹⁵² The flight was scheduled to arrive in Cairo but due to weather conditions it lost its way over Sinai, occupied by Israel. In that tragedy, 108 passengers were killed, among which was Libya’s former Foreign Minister.

¹⁵³ This voyage was part of the celebrations for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the creation of the state of Israel, and on board were wealthy Jews from the US and Europe (Heikal, 1975:192). The Egyptians did not take this action, which would have had very serious consequences.

with the Soviet Union to save his regime from the two perceived threats.¹⁵⁴ Libya's reliance on the Soviet Union led the US to designate Libya as a threat to its interests in the Middle East (Ronen, 2008:5).

El-Warfally (1988:98) also notes the animosity between the two leaders, adding another factor precipitating the attack on Libya. The author refers to the intentions of the Egyptians and Sudanese, acting *de concert*, to isolate Libya by encircling it. Under the claim of countering a Soviet-Libyan influence in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa, Numeiry and Sadat signed a defence treaty in 1976. A year later (in 1977), Syria and Saudi Arabia joined Egypt and Sudan in order to counter Soviet and Libyan policies in Africa. In the same year, Egypt tried to expand its territories by trying to annex part of southern Libya. The attempts against Libya were certainly motivated by the country's oil wealth as well as other factors. The vulnerability of Libya was due to its very large territory, and a relatively small population, making it attractive to potential invaders, both at the regional and international level.¹⁵⁵

Another significant regional issue for post-1969 Libya, was the Palestinian one. Qaddafi provided moral and financial support to various Palestinian factions, including military organisations. Moreover, Libya denounced the lack of enthusiasm and support from other Arab governments for the Palestinian cause (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, 2002). Often, Libya's behaviour towards other Arab regimes in the region depended on their stance regarding the Palestinian-Israeli dispute; Qaddafi never compromised on this issue in his dealings with other Arab countries. For instance, in 1974, when Sadat agreed to the US proposal to disengage and make peaceful arrangements with Israel, Qaddafi reacted by denouncing the action and by stating "there was no justification for providing Egypt with aid due to the violation of the three nos' of the 1967 Khartoum Conference" – no peace – no negotiation - no recognition of Israel (Ronen, 2001:3).

Heikal (1975:196) argued that Qaddafi was convinced that an armed conflict between the Arab states and Israel was unlikely to happen despite the prolonged tensions between Israel and the Arab World. Sadat, who did not trust Qaddafi, kept him in the dark about the date of

¹⁵⁴ Qaddafi allied his regime with Soviet Union in the mid-1970s, and improved his relations with the Soviets.

¹⁵⁵ Qaddafi's interference with the internal matters of neighbours such as Chad, Tunisia, Sudan and Egypt.

the 1973 war.¹⁵⁶ In the aftermath of that conflict, The Libyan ruler criticised the scale of the operation. According to Heikal, Libya participated financially by giving at least \$1,000 million for the 1973 war, as well by supplying Egypt with arms, food and medicine (Heikal, 1975:197). It should be noted that after the October war 1973, there was a high level of co-operation between Libya and Egypt. However, differences between Qaddafi and Sadat clearly appeared in their perspectives regarding how the Arab issues could be dealt with. This co-operation between Sadat and Qaddafi was based on Qaddafi's ideology to support Arab issues and oppose the West. Nevertheless, the co-operation deteriorated and the two countries changed from being allies to enemies. The tension between them reached its peak during the war in 1977.¹⁵⁷ In fact, one of the causes of this animosity was the unexpected visit of Sadat to the Israeli Knesset in 1977 and the peace initiative in 1978 which were considered by various states as an individual reaction which breached the collective Arab security agenda.¹⁵⁸

Another regional issue affecting Libya was that concerning its border with Chad.¹⁵⁹ Libya and Chad had a boundary altercation over the Aouzou strip, which goes back to the colonial period¹⁶⁰. The issue was raised again in Libya post-1969, leading to border clashes between the two countries. In the 1970s, the Qaddafi regime had to deal with the question of the ownership of the Aouzou strip again. Ultimately, the case was referred to the International Court of Justice (Simons, 2003:60-61), which rejected Libya's legal argument and based its decision on instruments in Annex I to the 1955 Treaty. Evans stated that "The ICJ thereby upheld the principle of the stability of frontiers" (Evans, 1995:687).

3.4.3 External Factors Affecting Libyan Foreign and Security Policies

Domestic and regional factors in Libya's foreign and security policy (1969-1981) seem to have played a lesser role compared with the external ones. Since coming to power, Qaddafi wanted to have international status through a defiant and unconventional way of conducting

¹⁵⁶ Sadat was cautious because of the eventual repercussions that might arise from leaked information.

¹⁵⁷ This unprecedented surprise visit by Sadat was criticised by the Libyan regime as well as other countries (i.e. Algeria, Yemen, and Syria)

¹⁵⁸ For more information regarding the distrust between Libya and Egypt, see Ronen, Y (2001:3-5) "Personalities and Politics: Qaddafi, Nasser Sadat and Mubarak (1969-2000)".

¹⁵⁹ It can be underlined that, during the monarchy regime, there were no major arguments or boundary disputes between Libya and its neighbours.

¹⁶⁰ France and Italy, former colonisers of Chad and Libya, had some friction over the Aouzou strip.

politics. Rather than following the path of his predecessor who allied himself with Western countries, Qaddafi chose to challenge the norms of the Cold War era.

3.4.3.1 Libya's Anti-Western Measures and Alignment with the USSR

At the outset of Libya's revolution, Qaddafi did not differentiate between the United States and the Soviet Union; he considered both superpowers as enemies of the Arab World. This stemmed from his religious beliefs, and his initial hostility towards the Soviets derived from the atheist status of the Soviet Union. According to Heikel, Nasser tried to convince Qaddafi to take a different approach with the Soviet Union, since the Cold War period demanded more pragmatism in foreign policy, and to ally with the Soviets rather than the United States. However, during the first years, Qaddafi did not change his attitude towards the Soviet Union despite his respect for Nasser (Heikal, 1975:187).

After the 1969 coup, the new regime reassured the US and Britain of the security of their economic interests, including American oil companies, inside Libya. The US had anticipated that the new regime would embrace pan-Arabism, be allied with Nasser, and oppose communism. And the Nixon administration soon recognised Libya's new regime because of its early statements, which did not demonstrate any hostility towards it. The US ambassador in post at Tripoli in that crucial period, David Newson, encouraged the administration to recognise the new revolutionary regime, mainly because of Libya's anti-communist attitude, while Henry Kissinger, in contrast, advised for the adoption of a tough policy towards the new regime in Libya. His advice, was however, not followed for fears that such an approach would jeopardise access to oil and result in the new rulers of Libya choosing to become allied with the Soviet camp (Matar and Thabit, 2004:51-52). That said, the crisis which followed the 1973 Arab-Israeli war dramatically changed the relations between Libya and the United States, especially when Libya nationalised the American oil companies which operated most of the oil fields in the country (Hagger, 2009:102).¹⁶¹

The first real shift in the relationship between Libya and US was in March of 1973, when a Libyan Mirage fired on an unarmed US Air Force reconnaissance plane over eighty three miles off the Libyan coast. The US plane managed to escape unhurt. In fact, the pilot had

¹⁶¹ The American support for Israel had an impact on the future of the US-Libyan relationship.

ignored an instruction to follow the Libyan jet fighter to land at a Libyan field (Matar and Thabit, 2004:55.)¹⁶² It was reported by the *Washington Star* on 23 March, that the planes were gathering intelligence information. Despite the fact that Libya denied firing on the US plane, a similar incident occurred on 30 March when Libyan jet-fighters intercepted fourteen phantom planes. The Libyan government claimed that the airplanes violated its territorial waters (El-Warfally, 1988:65-66). In fact, Finney maintained that it had been normal practice for the Americans to gather electronic intelligence – through missions “performed by American reconnaissance ships and planes along the coasts and borders of other countries” for more than two decades (Finney, 1973). And in reality, Qaddafi’s regime’s revolutionary activities were considered a threat to international peace and stability (i.e. training and supporting various terrorist organisations in Libya), thereby providing the US with sound motives to gather intelligence information on the Libyan territory.

The American suspicions appeared over Libya’s foreign policy misconduct regarding several issues between the two countries, and in particular their views regarding the Arab-Israeli issue, and their ambiguous position in the Cold War. Libya’s belligerent attitude towards Israel, which was evident by supplying arms for the 1973 war, worried the Americans. The Libyan regime always claimed that its intentions were not to nationalise the oil industry and that the rise in prices would be agreed upon through negotiations with the oil companies themselves. It was clear that the Libyan government wanted to have more control of the country’s oil sector, without aggressively challenging the West (St John, 1987:107). However, the Libyan revolutionary government never accepted the fact that their oil was controlled by the West, and as Qaddafi’s oil policy unfolded, the influence of the key fundamentals of Libyan foreign policy, such as Arab nationalism and non-alignment, were evident (St John, 1987:119).

One of Qaddafi’s statements in the early years revealed the aggressiveness of the revolution: “We resort to wise and just means [that is, negotiations] to enable us to liberate our land, but

¹⁶² In 1973, Gaddafi declared unilaterally *The Line of Death*, delimitating the Libyan internal waters in the Gulf of Sidra and drawing a straight line at 32 degrees, 30 minutes north between a designed point close to Benghazi and Misrata, giving to Libya a fishing area of 62 nautical miles. Any attempt to cross it without permission would be considered as an intrusion and lead to a military response (Beecher, 1973). The US reacted by conducting naval operations in the area, and on March 21, Libyan fighter jets fired on a [US Air Force C-130](#) while it was conducting [signals intelligence](#) off the Libyan coast. However the American plane managed to escape through the use of a cloud cover.

if fighting becomes inevitable, then let there be fighting” (Ronen, 2008:10–11). This statement shows that the new regime was about to become more active in confronting all perceived threats, either from the West or from its neighbours.¹⁶³ Libya was also accused of active involvement in terrorist activities, and was regarded as a principal financier of international terrorism. The country was believed to have connections with the Black September Movement that killed eleven Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972.¹⁶⁴ Libya’s efforts succeeded in undermining Israeli influence when, on 12 April 1972, Uganda decided to cut its relations with Israel and instead created diplomatic relations with Libya. Furthermore, ten other African countries, under Libyan influence, proclaimed their support for the Palestinian Resistance Movement (El-Warfally, 1988:70).

Qaddafi publicly supported various movements in the region and worldwide. He declared that Libya supported all liberation movements, and supplied arms to several organisations such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), militant black groups in the United States, the Muslim minority in the Philippines, groups in South America, and most importantly for him, Palestinian movements and the creation of training camps in Libya (St John, 1987:38). Libya’s support for these movements stemmed from Qaddafi’s beliefs regarding the legitimacy of using armed struggle in certain circumstances to achieve revolutionary goals.

However, Qaddafi denied all accusations in an interview with the West German newspaper *Der Spiegel* on 26 July 1976. A couple of months later, in an interview with the *Daily Telegraph* in London, Major Jalloud revealed that Libya had only trained guerrillas from Palestine, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. He also stated that all past plane hijackings were ‘mistakes’ due to personal initiatives rather than being guided or supported by the Libyan regime. That was consistent with what happened in April 1976, when Libya rejected an asylum plea from three Muslim Filipino men who asked to land a hijacked plane in Tripoli (El-Warfally, 1988:71). However, despite the fact that Jalloud denied the Libyan government’s involvement with several plane hijackings, the Libyan regime had been involved in similar incidents in civil aviation, and as is discussed in the next chapter,

¹⁶³ For instance, in its immediate periphery, Libya had a particular way of applying its policies. For example, in terms of military interventions, Libya’s involvement in sub-Saharan countries shows another aspect of Libya’s foreign policy and the huge amounts of money spent on adventurous and costly operations. Uganda in April 1979, and more significantly in Chad in October 1981

¹⁶⁴ In fact, until the present time, there has not been any proof regarding the Libyan connection with the terrorist attack at the Munich Olympics 1972.

Qaddafi's regime was accused of downing Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie and the French airline UTA.

In January 1974, The US played a leading role in the signing of the first Israeli-Egyptian disengagement agreement. However, the American position and policies towards the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict encountered the deep disapproval of Qaddafi, known for his enmity towards Israel. Libya feared that US influence in the region would continue to spread, thereby affecting the international balance of power (Ronen, 2008:83–87). Indeed, the Soviets also had their reasons for strengthening relations with Libya. Firstly, they too had a standing influence in the region, and wanted this to increase. Secondly, they needed Libyan hard currency from oil revenues. Major Jalloud visited the USSR in 1975 and the controversial issue of two arms deals (signifying the essential and most important aspect of Libyan-Soviet relations) was discussed. The first deal was concluded in December 1974, and was described as involving TU-22 supersonic bombers, SAM missiles, tanks, and anti-tank missiles. The second deal involved one thousand tanks and six F-class submarines. However, despite their accelerating relations, there was still concern within the USSR about Qaddafi's beliefs and actions as confirmed by Roger Pajak, who said at the time: "the Soviets no doubt are concerned about Qaddafi's strong anti-communist feelings and his erratic behaviour" (El-Warfally, 1988:62).

In 1976, relations worsened between Egypt and Libya, and both the Ford administration and its successor, the Carter administration, in the White House immediately sided with the Egyptian regime and made an agreement to assist Egypt against any potential aggression from Libya, which was supported militarily by the Soviet Union. While economic relations between the United States and Libya were good, there were allegations by the Ford administration against Libya in respect of its activities abroad, which ranked Libya as the fourth most dangerous enemy of the United States (Cooley, 1982:265, 284).

A particular issue over which disagreement occurred was the American decision to block the release of approximately \$400 million-worth of equipment which had already been paid for by Libya. The American rationale for not respecting the terms of the contract was the fear that once delivered, the material would eventually be used for military purposes. Before the crisis, it had been agreed to deliver 'eight Lockheed C-130 heavy transport aircraft and two Boeing 727 airliners, as well as 400 Oshkosh heavy lorries'. However, in the same period

(i.e. 1977), the Pentagon listed Libya as a potential enemy of the US, arguing that its regime was supporting ‘international terrorism’ and backing different armed groups such as Palestinian guerrillas and the Irish IRA (Wright, 1981:215). What was publicly claimed, from both the US administration and the Libyan regime did not reflect what was happening on the economic side. For instance, through the 1970s until well into the 1980s, the US remained the main importer of Libyan oil while Libyan needs in technology and expertise in various fields were provided by the US (Cooley, 1982:284).

When Carter came into power, Qaddafi wanted to take the opportunity to soften the American attitudes towards Libya. He thought that the newly-elected president might change the US policies and opt for a more balanced position on the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Accordingly, Qaddafi made friendly overtures towards Carter, and was willing to normalise relations by appointing a new ambassador to Tripoli, but Qaddafi’s expectations were short-lived when the Americans claimed that they had discovered a plot to assassinate their ambassador in Egypt, Herman F Eilts. After that particular episode, Carter considered the Libyan leader as untruthful, and perceived Libya as a terrorist state, later imposing an embargo on the country (Simons, 1996:317).

The Carter administration was angry with the Libyan government for failing to protect its diplomatic mission in Tripoli from the mob who set it on fire in support of Iranian revolutionary militants who were holding US hostages in Iran. In a letter addressed to the Libyan official in charge of Libyan affairs in the US, President Carter blamed Libya’s government for its position on the incident. Relations went further downhill in 1980 when Libya’s diplomatic mission in the US was closed. Libyan diplomats were accused of plotting to murder Libyan students who failed to return to Libya (St John, 2002:113-114). Such accusations emerged after the federal authority had kept members of the Libyan diplomatic mission under surveillance for several months, and had become convinced that some of them from the Libyan Bureau in Washington DC were plotting to kill such students. Similar assassination incidents happened in several European capitals targeting outspoken Libyan dissidents who had been opposing Qaddafi’s regime since the 1980s (e.g. in Rome, Athens, Manchester, London, and West Berlin (El-Kikhia, 1997:140).

Another incident occurred in the 1980s between the two countries resulted in the loss of two Libyan jets. Simons (1996), when referring to that particular incident states:

The provocative naval exercise off the Libyan coast, thousands of miles from the US, was deliberately designed to lead to a military confrontation; and in this aim they succeeded. A massive Sixth fleet battle group, including the nuclear power aircraft carrier Nimitz, sailed into the Gulf of Sirte (Simons, 1996:319).

Simons mentions that the Pentagon did later acknowledge that there was no proof that the Libyan jets were acting in a hostile way. Chomsky, quoting Edward Haley, referring to the 1981 incident, said that it was mainly an anti-Qaddafi message which “was reinforced by the trap laid for Libya in the Gulf of Sidra”, a trap “elaborately planned on the US side with the intent of confrontation in which Libyan jets could be shot down as they were” (Chomsky, 2002:88).

Under Reagan, the relations between the US administration and the Libyan regime went from bad to worse. According to Laham, one particular incident worsened an already tense situation. In August 1981, during the US Sixth Fleet Freedom of Navigation exercises, two Libyan jet fighters were shot down after they fired at two American [F-14](#) fighters. Libya claimed that territorial waters in the Gulf of Sirte were violated by the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, which was operating outside its legal limits (Laham, 2008:83).

Reagan intended to deter Qaddafi’s policies in the region and worldwide. He was determined to cripple Libya’s activities, imposing economic sanctions and campaigning to isolate the country from its European neighbours. The Reagan administration wanted to prevent Libya from supporting international terrorism, and the unilateral sanctions imposed by the US constrained Libya to turn towards its European neighbours for commercial relations. However, Reagan’s determination to isolate Libya did not converge with the European interests because of oil deals (Laham, 2008:84). Nor did the sanctions and constant threats made by different American administrations prevent Qaddafi from pursuing his peculiar policies based on his revolutionary radicalism.

3.4.4 Multiple Factors, Domestic, Regional and External Influencing Libya's Foreign and Security Policies

As discussed in the introduction, a number of factors can explain to very large extent the Libyan foreign and security policies, particularly the country's intention to acquire nuclear weapons programme from 1969 until 1981. In this respect, multiple factors (internal, regional, and external) were identified as having played an important role. However, there was variation regarding the influence of these factors. In the previous sub-sections, the domestic factors such as the effects of colonialism, and the new political ideology were shown to have created a platform which allowed the Libyan regime to conduct aggressive policies, pursue power, leadership and security. The legacy of colonialism produced a perception of neo-colonialism and imperialism that placed the West in a very negative picture, and this ideological factor was most apparent in Libyan foreign and security policies. However, its significance varied. For instance, when Libya dealt with an issue distant to its periphery, the ideology was seen to be appropriate, but when there was a threat to Libya's immediate boundaries, it was not. Moreover, other internal factors such as oil and natural resources were of immense importance to the regime, since oil revenues facilitated the importation of huge quantities of arms and equipment. In fact, there was relatively little influence from domestic factors, in particular on Libyan security and foreign policies, although oil was used as a tool by the Libyan regime, such as in the oil embargo in 1973.

At the regional level, the factors that affected Libyan policies were seen to be more influential than the domestic ones. As discussed, the insecurity and fear of the Libyan regime stemming from attempts by neighbours to seize its oil fields contributed to the rise in conflicts in the region, created tensions with Egypt (under Sadat), Chad and Morocco, and affected Libya's policies. These widespread tensions confirm the greater influence of the regional factors over the domestic ones. Moreover, the tensions and conflicts with neighbouring countries such as Chad, Sudan, Egypt, and Tunisia extended to different perceptions of general politics because of Libya's ideological stance, and precipitated conflict with regard to several regional and security issues. The importance of regional factors in Libya's security policy was vital, especially as the Qaddafi regime was trying to become a regional power with a quite specific agenda such as leadership in the Arab World, security concerns, exporting Libya's revolution, and intervening in the internal affairs of some African states as well as Arab states, particularly those with monarchies.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ In fact, Qaddafi's regime did intervene in and criticise, in many instances, the politics of other countries (i.e. Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Jordan, and Oman).

In the same vein, Arab nationalism and the Arab/Israeli conflict were important issues for Qaddafi's regime in its first decade. Qaddafi used the Arab/Israeli conflict to mobilise the Libyan people and declared that he would become the new Arab leader after the death of Nasser. Moreover, Qaddafi's self-proclaimed leadership of the Arab World in the first decade of the regime was an important factor, although its influence is considered to have been moderate in this period.

On the international level, the factors that affected Libya's security between 1969 and 1981 were stronger than other influences. However, the regional and international factors varied in terms of their impact upon Libya's security policy and its quest for a nuclear arms capability. For instance Libya's antagonism was mostly directed towards Western countries, especially the US and Britain. Moreover, the Libyan regime was not hostile to the US and Britain from the onset of the coup in 1969, after which Qaddafi had assured those countries that their interests in the country would be protected (i.e. that their oil companies would not be nationalised). However, after the evacuation of the military bases in Libya, the aggressive turn in the foreign policy of Qaddafi and the RCC surprised the US, and tension began to appear between Libya and the US as well as with other countries at the beginning of 1973. As already mentioned, the first tensions occurred when Libyan jet fighters attacked a US reconnaissance plane, but other similar incidents also arose in that decade, as for example when Libya fired on the US Sixth Fleet,¹⁶⁶ and when several terrorist actions took place in Europe.

In assessing the importance of the factors discussed, it can be said that domestic, regional, and international factors, all affected Libya's policies to a certain extent, but apparently there were variations in the effects of these factors. For example, some domestic factors were more influential upon Libya's policies than others. As is clear from the discussion above, oil provided the financial capacity for the regime to acquire nuclear weapons and simultaneously enabled it to support different movements around the globe financially and militarily. Regional factors also played an important role in determining the Libyan foreign policies, rather than domestic factors. Finally, although internal and regional factors had their influence on the Libyan policies, the external pressure by powerful states which stemmed from the international scene and the bipolar international system was more influential. Indeed, several issues occurred in the early period of Qaddafi's rule (i.e. Cold War era, the

¹⁶⁶ The Fleet was doing a naval exercise and Libya claimed that it had crossed its territorial waters.

status quo of Libya in 1969, the US and British military bases, political ideology, regional conflicts and proxy wars).

3.4.5 Theoretical Discussion

The theoretical framework as presented, has demonstrated that there are different perspectives within International Relations theories regarding the incentives of states in determining their security as well as foreign policies, and that the main relevant theoretical schools in IR can explain the direction of some of the Libyan policies between 1969 and 1981. Of these, the most relevant school of thought seems to be realism, which can explain Libyan policies between 1969 and 1981 better than other theoretical schools such as constructivism, and liberalism.

This does not present that constructivism is out of meaning in this context. Indeed, as discussed earlier, Qaddafi's regime policies were influenced by many factors such as identity and ideology which can be considered as recognised norms in international relations. However, the realist accounts can better explain the policies and behaviour of Qaddafi's regime, especially when Libya was attempting to acquire nuclear weapons. In this period, Qaddafi considered the status quo of the Libyan state as weak, and hence, in need of military strength which in his vision, included the acquisition of a nuclear weapon. Libya's conventional armament stock increased radically in the first decade of the Qaddafi regime, as also did the military role in civilian life, but there was no nuclear capacity, which was seen as a deficit by the regime. Moreover, Qaddafi's regional inspiration to be one of the Arab and African "big men" can be explained from a realist point of view. His reaction to the international environment such as the fears from the big powers in intervening in his rich country convinced him to seek power and ultimately acquire a nuclear deterrent. Additionally, Qaddafi's ideology was pragmatic and it was used only according to the regime's core interests. Despite the fact that Qaddafi wanted to achieve Arab Unity and especially among the powerful Arab countries, he supported non-Arab countries against Arab countries in contradiction with his ideology (i.e. Ethiopia against Sudan, Iran against Iraq). Accordingly, Qaddafi's ideology is analysed from a realist perspective.

Regarding the neoclassical realism account which explains the extent to which the internal dynamics can influence state's policies, its role in this particular period of this case was very

weak due to the fact that the internal factors (i.e. political parties, syndicates, civil society groups and pressure groups and labour unions) were not influential on the regime's policies. It is not odd that the internal factor was weak since the autocratic regimes used to ignore and marginalise the sources of internal pressure. Additionally, regimes such as Qaddafi's or Saddam's feared external threats more than domestic.

Libya's involvement in regional issues, such as in the conflicts with Chad, Egypt, and Sudan which had resulted from different political standpoints, agendas, and alliances, and the country's desire to protect the regime from outside forces, were perceived as critical threats to Libya's national security, especially as the armed forces were considered as weak and small compared to those of Egypt or Algeria. Indeed, Libya's natural resources (i.e. oil and gas), large territory, and small population combined to compel the Libyan government to develop and build its military capacity. Accordingly, accumulating military might was seen by Qaddafi's regime as crucial to protect the country not only from its neighbours, but also from other states further afield. This was particularly a source of concern for the regime since during that same period Libya's relations with the West in general and with the US specifically, had worsened due to the defiance of the Qaddafi regime and its reckless vision of world politics.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the dramatic changes in the Middle East in the wake of the Libyan coup in 1969 when Qaddafi and his military colleagues overthrew the monarchy and brought the era of the Libyan Kingdom to an end. It has shown how Libyan history and geography influenced the foreign policy of the revolutionary regime under Qaddafi. Thanks to its geographical context, Libya sought to play a leading role not only on the regional scale, but also within the wider Arab World. History has also been shown to be another influence upon Libya's foreign policy, since decades of colonialism maintained the suspicions held by the revolutionary regime that the West could not be trusted to remain outside of Libya's internal affairs. Additionally, ideology and the particular beliefs of the revolutionary regime, contributed to the formulation of Libyan foreign policy and the conduct of Libya outside its own territory, a situation which was especially obvious when issues arose internationally rather than close to the Libyan periphery. The chapter has shown how a radical change occurred in Libyan foreign policy in the aftermath of 1969. The priorities of Qaddafi in terms

of Libya's foreign and security policies were to maintain the country's national interests, such as its security, to enhance Arab nationalism, and to a lesser extent, to support other revolutionary movements.

In fact, the flow of oil and the regime's control of this important asset facilitated the shift from Libya's friendly stance under the monarchy of King Idris to the confrontational position adopted by Qaddafi and his revolutionaries. Moreover, the regional insecurity encountered by Libya in consequence of historical events and its new confrontational approach, contributed towards the militarisation of the Libyan state, and enhanced Qaddafi's radical policies. These radical policies emerged because the regime considered some regional neighbours such as Egypt, Algeria, and Sudan to be a definite source of threat to its security, and the national interests. Another important element in the first decade of Qaddafi's rule was the antagonism between Libya and other countries further afield, such as the US and the UK. And it was shown how this hostility continued even under different US administrations. During the Cold War era, the West was seen to view Qaddafi and his regime as being involved in international terrorism and as collaborating with the Soviet Union, and in turn Libya considered the West as potentially causing instability within Libya and therefore, being a danger to its national interests. By the end of the first period (1969-1981), the US and the UK governments started to exert pressure on Qaddafi's government in order to stop meddling in some countries, cease Qaddafi's antagonistic policies and end Libya's support to outlawed organisations. The international pressure which was led by the US did not completely compel Qaddafi to stop his regime's policies. However, international pressures accumulated on Libya compelled Qaddafi's regime to change its policy and behaviour in relation to some issues (i.e., antagonism with the US, Britain and meddling in neighbouring countries). As we will see in the next empirical chapters, the behaviour of Qaddafi's regime started to change gradually due to effect of external pressure, namely economic sanction, threat of military action and international isolation.

In the next chapter, the escalation of the enmity between the US and Libya is addressed. This is seen through the various crises which occurred, such as the continuing involvement of Libya with international terrorism, confrontation with United States, and the development of the Libyan nuclear programme. In this respect, the chapter will discuss the Reagan administration's use of force against Libya under the claim of combating terrorism. It will also elaborate upon Libya's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, discussing how Libya, in the

1970s, tried to purchase a ready-made nuclear bomb from different countries. Additionally, it will explore the UN Security Council resolutions which required Libya to collaborate more fully in the investigations related to terrorist activities which targeted the Berlin club, the UTA's French airliner, and the Lockerbie bombing.

Chapter Four: Libya's Sanctions and the Evolution of the Nuclear Programme

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the origins of Qaddafi's policies and actions at regional and international levels were discussed, from which it was seen that in the aftermath of the 1969 military coup d'état, the lack of an adequate defence system, as well as Qaddafi's perception of having inherited a weak state, were huge concerns. Accordingly, these issues represented the first priorities to deal with. The new Libyan leadership changed Libya's foreign and security policies, not only with its neighbours but also with the major world powers.

Initially, Qaddafi and his companions denounced the monarchy and criticised King Idris, not only for his domestic policies, but also for his pro-Western stance in regional and international spheres.¹⁶⁷ Various factors in this regard were highlighted and came under strong denunciation by the new rulers.¹⁶⁸ Certainly, the fact that Libya's natural resources were not completely under Libyan control, and the continued presence of foreign military bases on Libyan soil, undermined Libya's sovereignty.¹⁶⁹ Additionally, the country was perceived as a weak state and consequently, vulnerable in case of foreign aggression. To address these concerns and distance the new regime from the policies of King Idris, significant changes in Libya's politics were enacted by Qaddafi and his companions, starting with the abolition of the monarchy, the evacuation of the bases, and the building of more adequate Libyan military forces. Such were the changes, that after just a few years since the military coup in 1969, the Qaddafi regime's policies projected an antagonistic image to the world superpowers (US and USSR), as well as to states such as Britain, and France. Clearly, Qaddafi had to adapt to this situation, and make choices regarding where to place his loyalties. Initially, he did not side with either superpower.

¹⁶⁷ The regime of King Idris had chosen to be closer to the West and preferred to align the newly born country with the victors of the WWII. For instance, the monarchy formed several alliances with the US, UK, and France in relation to security and economic assistance. However, this friendly relationship faded when Qaddafi came to power.

¹⁶⁸ Such as the lack of sovereignty and the huge dependence on Western powers for the management of the country.

¹⁶⁹ The British and American bases in Libya owed their existence to agreements made with the monarchy of King Idris.

On the regional scene, it is worth recalling that Nasserism was another factor which influenced the new rulers and increased their zeal for Arab unity. However, following Nasser's death, Libya's relations with Sadat's Egypt and other Arab countries deteriorated, despite a promising debut with its early attempt to unite Libya and Egypt. Qaddafi's perspectives and projects were not shared by the Egyptian leader and other statesmen. In addition, there were many suspicions about the involvement of Qaddafi in Egyptian domestic politics. These emanated as the consequences of Libya's policies and interference in domestic issues in the region, such as the conflict in the Western Sahara, with open support by Qaddafi for the Polisario Front, his support for several rebellions in Sudan, his involvement in Chad, and his attempts to destabilise Tunisia, and other states in the region and further beyond. Indeed, Libya under Qaddafi, did its utmost to export its revolution through the financing of several movements and by backing dissident activities in neighbouring countries.

It appears that from the outset of the 1969 coup, Qaddafi's encouragement for armed movements was motivated by his belief that all revolutionary activities should be supported, identifying them with his own cause.¹⁷⁰ In view of Qaddafi's background, the way he came to power, and his rhetoric after he took power, it was quite natural for him to be involved, in different forms, in all 'liberation' movements, whether in Africa, Europe or South America.

An insight into the personality of Qaddafi is found in Heikel's evocation of his meetings with the new young ruler. Heikel observed the 'naiveté' of Qaddafi regarding how international politics work, stating:

Qaddafi could at times display a terrifying innocence of how things worked in the modern world. He was capable of gross oversimplification. Many of his friends, for example, were annoyed at the way Qaddafi interfered in countries like Ireland (Heikel, 1975:186).¹⁷¹

Qaddafi strongly believed in the cause of the IRA, the Basque's ETA, the Polisario Front, the Kurds, and several other movements across the world. All of them were seen as independence and liberation movements and had the right to seek self-determination, through all means. However, Qaddafi's support for all these movements was not only moral but also material as he provided money, arms, and logistical support such as training camps.

¹⁷⁰ Qaddafi acknowledged in 1992 that: "*In the 1970s we supported liberal movements without knowing which were terrorist and which were not. In the 1980s we began to differentiate between terrorists and those with legitimate political aspirations*" (quoted by Simons, 1996:263).

¹⁷¹ He later added that Qaddafi "was fascinated by the game of power" (Heikel, 1975:186).

Accordingly, Qaddafi's regime established, and consolidated in particular, ties with numerous radical leftist movements, in addition to a panoply of Palestinian organisations, and Muslim insurgents in the Philippines. These bonds and Qaddafi's foreign policy were shaped according to a perception and ambition to raise the status of Libya and make it a proactive player on both the regional and international scenes (Bahgat, 2005:44). However, the regime seems to have chosen the wrong path by which to attain its aims. As is elaborated in the coming sections in this chapter, Qaddafi's external and internal policies made the international community associate Libya with terrorism, identifying it as a 'rogue' or 'pariah' state and considering it as a problematic country for world peace and security. In order to reach his aims, Qaddafi needed to finance his political ambitions and promote his ideology in some parts of the world, and in this particular connection, the country's oil revenues were indispensable as they effectively allowed Qaddafi to export his revolution and support various movements, especially in developing countries. As part of this attempt to disseminate his revolution, Qaddafi was critical of governments that were friendly to the West, such as Egypt during Sadat's presidency, Jordan, Morocco under Hassan II, and Saudi Arabia, all of which had special relationships with the United States (Tanter, 1998:124).¹⁷² Furthermore, as a rentier state, Libya relied heavily on its oil and gas income, which was mainly spent by Qaddafi without accountability or transparency, and which provided the Libyan regime with the means to import huge quantities of military hardware.¹⁷³

It was observed in Chapter Two in the construction of the theoretical framework for this study, that the Qaddafi era could be divided into three distinct periods; and that the realist tenets such as power, security, and economic sanctions are essential to explain the Libyan case as it progressed through these periods. Specifically, it became clear that the Qaddafi regime's intentions to get the sanctions lifted, end the country's diplomatic isolation, and avoid military confrontations with the West and particularly with the US, were necessary for Libya's return to the international community. Certainly, the realist paradigm can assist in developing an understanding of the initial shift in Libya's behaviour, specifically in the second phase between 1982 and 2000. As is discussed in this chapter, the incentives for the shift of the Qaddafi regime's policies varied. It was in fact, compelled to comply and co-operate with the UN, the US, and the rest of the international community, and to avoid

¹⁷² All Qaddafi's actions worried several states, both regionally and internationally. Qaddafi was seen as a troublemaker by states such as Sudan, Chad, Uganda, Cameroon, Gabon, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone, which had all detected some acts of subversion and interference in their affairs.

¹⁷³ For more detail see Zartman, W, "World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1971-1980" March (1983).

military confrontation in order to achieve the removal of the international sanctions, the end to Libya's diplomatic isolation, and to engage in economic investment in various aspects. In this respect, Qaddafi's regime was required by the US, Britain, France, and the international community to end support for terrorism, stop its subversion activities, end the pursuit of unconventional weapons, and most importantly, change its attitudes and behaviour to the West.

The next section examines Qaddafi's involvement with terrorism as well as his support for revolutionary movements. Without doubt, the activities associated with Libya drew attention from the world community and led several states to isolate and boycott Qaddafi's regime and in some instances, to attack it militarily.

4.2 Libya and Armed Militancy

Qaddafi's revolutionary activities within and outside Libya posed a formidable threat to the stability and security of several states. The Western bloc also suspected Qaddafi of being the Soviet surrogate in the region and of turning the Libyan territory into a USSR base. In fact, Qaddafi believed that the achievement of his self-assigned mission towards Arab unity required revolutionary and radical changes in the Arab World, to be brought about by him provoking the fall of what he considered as reactionary and 'rotten' Arab regimes (Ronen, 2008:85). Qaddafi's ideology, rhetoric, policies, and actions in the region, were more than sufficient to greatly worry Arab and African leaders, thereby compelling those figures to react in order to protect their states and their regimes.

Libya's early involvements in Africa were meant to assist liberation movements such as the ANC in their fight against the Apartheid regime of South Africa. In addition, however, Qaddafi was involved in helping other African states to be less dependent on their former colonisers. During that particular period, Qaddafi - seeing himself as the legitimate heir of Nasser - was still pursuing his dream of achieving what his hero had failed to do, unite the Arab World (Huliaras, 2001:5). It was this commitment to Nasserism that encouraged Qaddafi's interference with African states' politics. Indeed, Libya's heavy involvement in African politics in the 1970s and 1980s represented the peak of the regime's revolutionary activities. Such involvement was seen in Qaddafi's attempt to destabilise African regimes perceived as pro-western, by providing support to their opposition movements. At the same

time, other regimes which he endorsed, were financed and supported. World leaders had different ways of describing Colonel Qaddafi's military adventures. For instance, Kissinger described Qaddafi as a 'rogue criminal', Numeiry considered Qaddafi to have 'split personalities both evil', Castro preferred to describe him as a 'reckless adventurer', while Regan referred to him as "the mad dog of the Middle East" (Solomon and Swart, 2005:469-471). Certainly, Qaddafi's regional and international meddling created tensions and concerns for several countries; and in return, this interference was countered with similar actions by the affected states (i.e. support was given to Libyan dissidents, training was provided for Qaddafi's opposition, and threats were made regarding international isolation, and military retaliation).

In the regional sphere, Sudan, due to its geographic location, was constantly under Qaddafi's intrigues. The Libyan ruler interfered with the domestic politics of that country by plotting against the regime of Numeiry such that the Sudanese president was induced to seek alliances with Egypt in order to counter Qaddafi's actions. Other neighbouring countries were also targeted by the Libyan regime; for instance, the tensions with the Moroccan monarchy resulted in freezing the relations between the two countries from 1975 until the middle of 1981. In that year, Qaddafi assured Hassan II that he would no longer provide military support for the independent movement of the Western Sahara, the Polisario Front. Libya's western neighbour, Tunisia, also had to counter Qaddafi's plans to intervene in Tunisian domestic affairs in the 1980s. In this respect it was claimed that Qaddafi was supporting rebels eager to overthrow President Bourguiba, an action that led to a low-intensity conflict on the borders. Relatively good relations existed between Libya and Algeria until Qaddafi changed his position regarding the issue of the Western Sahara by standing with the Moroccan king, and at this point Algeria reacted by excluding Libya from its alliance (Joffé, 2005:609-610).

Not surprisingly, Libya's neighbours were extremely concerned about the potential threats posed by Qaddafi, and consequently formed alliances to deter any subversion or military aggression against their respective countries. For instance, Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania signed the treaty of Brotherhood and Concord in 1983, based mainly on national security and defence matters. And when Libya's relations with Tunisia worsened, Tunisia allied with Algeria as a means of countering Libyan's threats (Mezran, 1998:4-5).

Another treaty, the Maghreb Fraternity and Co-operation Treaty between Algeria, Tunisia, and Mauritania was signed in 1983, without including Libya and Morocco. As a response, Morocco concluded the Treaty of Oujda with Libya in 1985. By signing that treaty, Morocco broke its isolation in North Africa and gained an ally in the region. However, the treaty collapsed soon afterwards. In 1988, Algeria asked Libya to join the existing Treaty of Concord, to contain and accommodate Qaddafi's behaviour in the region. In this connection the Algerian President Benjedid stated:

a policy of accommodation and political restraint would 'neutralise' Libya, 'freezing' its efforts to destabilise its neighbours and engage in terrorism. By signing the treaty, Qaddafi would be promising, in effect, 'not to interfere, not export one's experience to any other country and to respect the existing regimes (Mezran, 1998:14).

The policies of Libya together with its open defiance of the Western World, induced the United States to take strong measures against Qaddafi's regime. Unilateral sanctions were implemented by the American administration, such as the ban on arms exports to Libya and the closing of the American Embassy in Tripoli. The Libyan Embassy in Washington was also ordered to close and American citizens were banned from travelling to Libya. These American decisions were due to Libya's involvement in, and support for, international terrorism. Accordingly, Rose affirms that during the mid-1980s, Libya's actions and deeds were not only confined to the Libyan periphery, but also extended to other parts of the Middle East and North Africa, provoking an increase in international terrorism (Rose, 1999:141-142). Edward Schumacher stated in 1986 that Qaddafi's regime "at one time or other backed subversive groups in almost every other North African country" (Schumacher, 1986-1987:332). Effectively, Qaddafi publicly acknowledged Libya's position towards the Western powers in a speech addressed to the Organisation of Non-Aligned Movements in September 1986, when he stated: "I will do everything in my power to divide the world into imperialists and freedom-fighters" (Ganor, 1992:1). This statement was perceived as preaching violence against a number of countries. According to Qaddafi's view, any attack against 'imperialist' countries was legitimate. Therefore, the following section explores the rise and fall of Qaddafi's adventurist activities in the region and around the globe.

4.2.1 Qaddafi's Regional and International Policies

Qaddafi refused to make any distinction between terrorism and legitimate struggle. For him, it was perfectly acceptable to use revolutionary violence to achieve political gains, such as prestige, power, and allies. The regime provided training, financial support, and shelter to armed organisations such as the IRA, Spain's ETA, Italy's Red Brigade, and different Palestinian groups. Indeed, Edward Hoover, the first director of the FBI, claimed that Libya represented "[t]he greatest threat to the internal security of the country" (Burweila, 2006:13).¹⁷⁴

After a few years in power, Qaddafi arrogantly claimed that the Libyan political platform was not enough to fully express his ambitions and realise his future plans; he needed a different and wider environment to be recognised as a regional leader, as somebody with a certain weight in world politics. As a visionary, keen to realise his ideas and projects, he was convinced that his revolutionary views had to be known and acknowledged beyond Libya's geographical borders. He also knew that his plans would not be achievable without using Libya's oil revenues. Accordingly, he financed his ideology and beliefs in order to provoke the desired changes in the region and beyond, but the outcomes were far from matching the level of the investments made, and in reality very little success was achieved. In addition, Qaddafi's desire to be seen as a true leader in the Arab World, Africa, and Latin America, was not realised, despite the constant emphasis in his speeches, on sensitive issues such as colonialism, imperialism, uniting the Arab world, and later on, uniting the African continent (Pargeter, 2012:118). Qaddafi's intentions were to alienate the populations from their rulers, by popularising his image among Arab and African masses through inflammatory speeches, and to reach his aims, he did not hesitate in investing significant resources in terms of propaganda and finances. He supported people who adopted his ideologies and were working towards overthrowing their governments.

Qaddafi's beliefs and approaches towards specific issues such as Arab unity, Western imperialism, and Israel were not shared by Arab rulers. During the Cold War, both Egypt and Saudi Arabia refused his offers due to his overt defiance of the superpowers and his pretences to defend noble causes.¹⁷⁵ So, despite Qaddafi's repeated attempts to attract Arab rulers to his

¹⁷⁴ Aya Burweila, Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS) Research Paper no. 105 (2006) *Libya after Rapprochement: Implications on Energy Security*.

¹⁷⁵ The antagonism with Egypt occurred in the post-Nasser era, with the presidency of Anwar Sadat (1970-

world design, the governments of these countries were nevertheless suspicious about his real intentions and very early distanced themselves from the Libyan regime. Moreover, other leaders, instead of waiting for his intrigues, mischiefs, and tribulations, used in anticipation a large variety of means to encounter Qaddafi's actions such as attempts to destabilise his regime and weaken his rule, by backing Libya's opposition movements in exile and helping assassination attempts against him (Pargeter, 2012:119-120).

The radicalism promoted by Tripoli's regime, its engagement in support of armed struggles, and its backing of regional and international terrorism, by different groups, liberation movements and subversive ones, reached its height in the 1980s. During that decade, Libya was heavily involved, whether directly or covertly, in a series of incidents that upset many Western countries, concerned by the radical stance and policies adopted by the Libyan regime. The following section sheds light on various militant and revolutionary activities outside the Libyan sphere.

4.2.2 Qaddafi's Support for Outlawed Movements

During the last decade of the Cold War (1979-1989), Libya was suspected of being an instrument in the hands of the Soviets by being involved in proxy wars for the USSR.¹⁷⁶ For instance, in 1975 the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Libya that allowed the 5th Eskadra to use Libya's ports at Tobruk and Baida. Qaddafi's regime also allowed the Soviets to access the military bases at Wheelus and El Adem. Additionally, the Soviet Union made similar agreements with Tunisia and Morocco for the same purpose (McCormick, 1987:14). Moreover, Libya's rapprochement with the Soviet Union raised some concerns due to the fear that the Libyan military capability could be used by the Soviet Union in eventual conflicts with the West or in Africa. On the other hand, Egypt conducted several military manoeuvres conjointly with the US in response to Qaddafi's meddling in neighbouring countries and in Africa. Libya reacted by strengthening its relations with the Soviet Union, acquired more military equipment, and conducted joint military exercises in 1982, 1983, and 1984 in the Mediterranean Sea (El-Kikhia, 1997:126-127). Moreover, commercial contracts and mutual interests overcame the ideological incompatibility between Libya and the Soviet Union

1981). Saudi Arabia and Egypt were in fact considered as part of the western bloc.

¹⁷⁶ In view of Libya's relations with the Soviet Union, it is worth noting that after the Soviet advisers' withdrawal from Egypt during the Sadat era, Libyan-Soviet relations became closer.

For Qaddafi, opposing Western hegemony in general and the United States in particular, meant to support indiscriminately all movements and groups that were ready to challenge such supremacy. Therefore, various opposition groups, liberation movements as well as radical organisations across the world, benefitted from the generous backing of the Libyan regime, without being accountable for their unethical actions. In reality, the fact that these movements conducted terrorist activities did not concern Qaddafi greatly. Instead, the outcomes of such actions were significant for the Libyan ruler who approved when the targets of terrorism were either Western countries or regional governments with different ideologies from the Libyan one. St John captures the real essence of Qaddafi's understanding regarding the issue of revolutionary activities, when he states that "Qaddafi unsuccessfully attempted to differentiate between terrorism, which he claimed to reject, and revolutionary violence, which he openly advocated" (St John, 1987:45-46).

Qaddafi's vision and strategy for becoming the incontestable leader of the Arab World was achievable through the help of revolutionary movements, who (according to him) once in power would be grateful and faithful to the Libyan leader. With the purpose of encountering Qaddafi's activities, few Arab regimes used the same strategy as the Libyan leader by backing some Libyan opposition movements in exile, providing them with the appropriate logistics, and in some instances training them. In order to prevent all attempts from abroad, a campaign of assassinations on Libyan dissidents started worldwide, whether in neighbouring countries, in Europe or in America.¹⁷⁷ Alterman believed that, due to Qaddafi's radical policies, Libya became a problematic country to the West in general and to its neighbours in particular (Alterman, 2006:3).

Regarding Libya's support for revolutionary movements, Anderson (1987) underlines the fact that Qaddafi was considered by the other Arab leaders as the main promoter and permanent instigator of a wide revolution in the Arab World. However, the failure to provoke such revolution, and the decision of Egypt and Jordan to engage in a peace process with Israel, created real tensions and disappointed Qaddafi and upset his plans. On the other hand, the real and strong support for the Libyan regime came from states such as Syria and Iran who had excellent relations with Libya. According to Anderson (1987:65), "[o]nly Iran and Syria remained on good, if occasionally competitive, terms with Libya, whose support of Persian

¹⁷⁷ Libya's actions had reached a high level in the early eighties. For instance, in 1993 Libya's security services abducted and killed Mansour Elkihia, who was attending a conference on human rights in Egypt.

Iran in its war with Arab Iraq reflected the growth of revolutionary solidarity at the expense of Arab causes in Qaddafi's foreign policy".

In another instance, Qaddafi supported Ethiopia, which is largely Christian, over a Muslim and Arab country, Sudan. Such backing puzzled some analysts for whom such a stance was in contradiction with Qaddafi's claims (regarding the solidarity within the Muslim world) (Solomon and Swart, 2005:470). In fact, Qaddafi did have a peculiar perspective, and in this particular case he regarded Numeiry's regime as the real enemy,¹⁷⁸ regardless of the religion of the people of Sudan. Qaddafi did not pardon Numeiry for siding with Sadat over the Camp David Agreements. Jalloud, one of his close companions confessed in an interview that Qaddafi told him: "I won't bring Numeiry down, but I will make him bleed, and when that happens, the opposition in the North will bring his regime down" (Pargeter, 2012:131). Therefore, revolutionary activities targeting regimes judged inimical to the Libyan system of governance were part of Libya's foreign policies.

Qaddafi's domestic and foreign policies, claims,¹⁷⁹ threats, and reckless decisions to support indiscriminate violence, affected the image of Libya worldwide, and as a consequence, the country was considered as a 'rogue' and 'pariah' state, exactly the opposite of Qaddafi's expectations. However, Joffé and Paoletti conceded that the ideological commitment of Qaddafi could quickly change when there was a risk to Libya's security (Joffé and Paoletti, 2010:18). These observations by Joffé and Paoletti confirmed what Deeb had stated in 1986, that Qaddafi was rational in decision-making, especially when he felt that his regime was under threat. In fact, Deeb criticised analysts who described the Qaddafi as irrational,¹⁸⁰ saying: "[i]f Qaddafi was so out of touch with reality and his perceptions and expectations so irrational and distorted, it is unlikely that he would have remained in power for so long or played such an active role in Arab and African Affairs over the past sixteen years" (Deeb, 1986:152). Deeb's opinion seems more plausible and the evidence of her position is

¹⁷⁹ In the speech delivered during the Summit of the Organization of Non-Aligned States in September 1986, Qaddafi defiantly stated: "I will do everything in my power to divide the world into imperialists and freedom-fighters". Any violent action against one of the 'imperialist' states is just and welcome. Those perpetrating these attacks are not 'terrorists' according to Qaddafi's understanding, but rather 'freedom fighters', because "national liberation can only be achieved through armed struggle". Any attempt at bargaining, negotiating or reaching a compromise with the 'imperialist bloc' is doomed to failure and will harm the Arab cause".

¹⁸⁰ This school of thought considers Libya's foreign policies according to the psychological determinants of Qaddafi.

illustrated by the involvement of Qaddafi in faraway areas, such as South America by supporting Nicaragua, El Salvador and M19 - the Colombian separatists' movements.

4.2.3 Libya's Support for Latin American and Asian Revolutionary Movements

Qaddafi supported revolutionary and liberation movements almost everywhere in the world. Professor Ganor,¹⁸¹ an expert on terrorism, commented on this, pointing out that the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and other armed factions in El Salvador were mainly financed by Qaddafi. Additionally, he mentioned another incident which occurred in Brazil in April 1983, when a huge amount of arms were found on board a Libyan plane. The Libyans pretended at that time that the plane was carrying medical supplies intended for Nicaragua. However, it is believed that the arms were in fact destined for the Colombian group M19.¹⁸² Additionally, Ganor observed that Libya supported the IRA in Northern Ireland, the '*Brigade Rosse*' (Red Brigade) in Italy, and groups in Japan, Turkey, and Thailand among other places. The backing of several Palestinian groups, was also mentioned by the author (Ganor, 1992:28-29).

This support led some countries and governments to respond using different means (i.e. financing and training the exiled opposition movements). According to Allman (1975:305), Qaddafi's assistance and the aid which was delivered to the liberation or revolutionary movements such as the IRA was fruitless and unproductive. However, this assertion was challenged by *The Independent* newspaper in 2009, which revealed that the UK government made a financial offer of 14 million Pounds to Qaddafi's regime in return for its cessation of support for the IRA.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Dr Ganor's article was published in the "Survey of Arab Affairs - A periodic supplement to Jerusalem Letter /Viewpoints" SAA: 28 29 Iyar 5752 1 June 1992. Dr Ganor is a member of the International Advisory Council of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research. Article available at: <http://www.ict.org.il/Article.aspx?ID=429>

¹⁸² Originally, the 19th of April Movement or M-19, was a Colombian guerrilla movement, that after conducting an armed revolutionary struggle (1980s), decided to enter political life (late 80s and 90s) by creating their own political party, the M19 Democratic Alliance (*Alianza Democrática M-19*). The ideology of the M19 was a mixture of populism and revolutionary socialism, which might explain Qaddafi's support.

¹⁸³ The Independent reproduced a copy from the National Archive in Kew. See the article online, available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/britain-offered-gaddafi-16314m-to-stop-supporting-the-ira-1797754.html>

Former American Ambassador to the UN, Jeane J Kirkpatrick,¹⁸⁴ underlined that the relationship between the Libyan and Nicaraguan governments was similar to the one between ordinary people (in terms of friendship). Referring to the ties between the Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and Qaddafi, she reiterated the message about the 1986 bombing of Qaddafi's headquarters:

My brother, wrote President Daniel, given the brutal terrorist action launched by the US government against the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, I wish to send my sentiments and solidarity from the FSLN National Directorate and the Nicaraguan people and government (Kirkpatrick,1991:205).

Kirkpatrick observed that the two leaders had, in fact, shared a friendship with very strong bonds for decades. She pointed out that, as early as 1979, before they came to power in July 1979, Sandinista leaders were involved in the Middle East and North Africa, training the PLO camps in Libya and Lebanon. The strong ties between the two counties were reinforced when the Sandinistas took power in Nicaragua. Qaddafi then promised political and financial aid to the new rulers, and indeed kept his promise.

“Our friendship with Libya is eternal”, said Sandinista commander Tomas Borge on September 1, 1984. While Sergio Ramirez, another influential Sandinista, stated that:

the solidarity of the Libyan people, of the Libyan government and comrade Muammar Qaddafi was always patently manifest. This solidarity has been made real, has been made effective, and has been made more fraternal since the triumph of our revolution (Kirkpatrick, 1991:205-206).

The Sandinistas received a \$100 million ‘loan’ from Libya in the early years and had commercial agreements with the Libyan regime, exchanging oil for bananas and coffee. However, these apparent trades were merely a smokescreen protecting the other dimension in the relationship, which emerged in April 1983, when during an inspection, Brazilian authorities found eighty-four tons of military equipment (missiles, machine guns, bazookas,

It is claimed that Harold Wilson's Labour government was in negotiation in the 1970s to halt the supply of arms from Tripoli to the Provisional IRA. Britain made a secret offer to pay 14 million pounds to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. In a ‘personal message’ to Gaddafi sent in 1975, the British Prime Minister said that Britain would make the payment as part of an agreement to end Libya's material support for the IRA. “I do not want to anticipate the results of the forthcoming talks, which we shall enter into in a truly constructive spirit, but it might be helpful nevertheless to mention two questions of particular importance to us. The first of these concerns Northern Ireland”, he wrote.

¹⁸⁴ See Kirkpatrick J J (1991:205-207) *The Withering away of the Totalitarian State ... and Other Surprises*.

mortars, bombs, cannons and two unassembled fighter planes) in four Libyan planes. All these arms were for the Nicaraguan regime (Waller, 1999:192).

The reality of Nicaragua's training with the PLO and Libya cannot be denied: nor can the Libyan economic, financial, and military assistance given to the Sandinistas. Nicaragua's capital Managua was transformed as a consequence of Qaddafi's aid, and it soon became the capital city of terrorism in the Western Hemisphere. For instance, groups such as the German Bader-Meinhoff gang, the Basque ETA, Colombia's M19, Peru's Sendero Luminoso, and El Salvador's FMLN often met Libyans and Palestinians in Managua. The Italian authorities publicly complained of the presence of fugitive Italian terrorists in Managua. When the Colombian M19 group conducted their deadly operation against Colombia's Supreme Court, more than 100 people were killed. It was found afterwards that the guns used during the terrorist raid were linked with Libya, Vietnam, Cuba, and Nicaragua.¹⁸⁵ The link with Libya was also clear. People like Diana Morales, who inflicted the most casualties on the military were trained in Libya and in Latin America. Speaking after the American bombing of Libya, Sandinista commander Tomas Borge commented: "Who has given the United States government the right to determine what is terrorism and what is not terrorism?" (Kirkpatrick, 1991:205-207).

Brian Davis¹⁸⁶ listed the countries in the Western Hemisphere, which benefitted from Qaddafi largesse. Specifically, he observed:

The western hemisphere did not escape Qaddafi's attention, especially in the 1980s. Libya cultivated strong ties with Cuba and with the Marxist New Jewel regime on Grenada, providing an interest-free loan for the airport construction project over which Washington openly expressed worries. Qaddafi also sent missiles and other weaponry to Argentina in its 1982 war against his nemesis Great Britain.

Davis confirmed previous claims concerning the Libyan relationship with the Sandinistas, underlining the fact that the Sandinistas had received Libyan training and arms since the early 1970s. More detail is provided about that relationship by Davis, in the comment that:

¹⁸⁵ Some of the rifles used in the raid had been sold by the Vietnamese to Libya and from there were shipped to Nicaragua and then to the Colombian guerrilla movement. Sandinista army rifles (M-16s and R-16s) were also found at the scene. The Sandinistas directed preparation for the attack, which was modelled on their 1978 seizure of the parliament building in Managua. An FSLN commando group traveling on Colombian passports arrived in that country a day before the bloody occupation and co-ordinated it. Other Nicaraguans handled communications. And Tomas Borges himself eulogised the slain Colombian guerrillas at a 'people's mass'.

¹⁸⁶ See Davis B L. "Qaddafi, Terrorism, and the Origins of the U.S. Attack on Libya" (1991:17-18).

The Jamahiriyah supplied the Sandinista government with large loans and weaponry, invested in joint agricultural ventures, and sent advisers to help fight the contras, to assist in 'interrogation techniques', and to train terrorists in Nicaraguan camps (Davis, 1991:17-18).

Moreover, there were close ties between Libya and the military regime in Suriname. Indeed, it was feared that such links might provide terrorists with sanctuaries where arms funds and/or training would be provided by Qaddafi (Davis, 1991:17-18).¹⁸⁷

Nonetheless, the overwhelming activities of Qaddafi and his regime did not deter the opposition which, however small, did play a certain role in the Libyan saga, and several writers have tried to explore the different opposition groups and the methods they used to try to overthrow Qaddafi. As history reveals, however, Qaddafi managed to thwart all conspiracies in this respect.

4.2.4 Libyan Opposition to Qaddafi

Qaddafi wanted to be recognised as a revolutionary philosopher, thinker and great leader, and was ready to concretise his aspirations by all means. In fact, he used violence and terror to reach his aims - domestically, regionally, and internationally. On the domestic level, Libyan citizens were often oppressed by the revolutionary committees and many violent scenes were shown on national television including hangings, and executions of businessmen, students, and soldiers as well as of other ordinary people who opposed the regime.

However, this overt repression did not prevent attempts to topple Qaddafi through military coups. Such efforts became more frequent after the 1980s, with one of the most significant coups against Qaddafi being in May 1984. This was conducted by the military wing of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), when the NFSL members attempted to storm Qaddafi's compound in Tripoli but were unsuccessful.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, most of the people involved were captured and publicly executed. Other attempts by military officers to topple

¹⁸⁷The other recipients of Qaddafi largesse were the Colombian M-19 guerrillas; the Peruvians Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement; the "Alfaro Vive, Carajo!" terrorists of Ecuador; Marxist guerrillas from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Venezuela; terrorists from Uruguay, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominic Republic, and Haiti; and leftist political groups in Panama, Antigua, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago.

¹⁸⁸The National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) is an opposition movement based abroad but with sympathisers within Libya.

Qaddafi were also foiled and again, the officers responsible were arrested and executed (Anderson, 1987:65).

Qaddafi did not even spare the life of one of his closest companions and RCC members, Omar El-Mheyshi.¹⁸⁹ Following the failure to depose Qaddafi in 1973 and the arrest of 200 military officers who were involved in the plot (Oakes, 2011:135), El-Mheyshi sought refuge first in Tunisia, then in Egypt, and finally in Morocco. The late Moroccan King, Hassan II, was keen to gain the support of Qaddafi concerning the thorny question of the Western Sahara, so he struck a deal with Qaddafi in 1984, in the form of a treaty, known as the ‘Treaty of Oujda’.¹⁹⁰ In return for his rapprochement with Qaddafi and Qaddafi’s policy change, King Hassan II handed El-Mhyeshi to the Libyan regime, and shortly afterwards, El-Mhyeshi was executed. As for domestic politics in Libya, Qaddafi ordered the killing of people from his own tribe, such as Hassan Ishkal,¹⁹¹ when they expressed their disapproval of the way he was ruling the country. Black stated that:

Qaddafi has had to eliminate at least one member of his extended family when his primacy was threatened. His cousin Hassan Ishkal, in charge of domestic security and Libyan troops in Chad, was gunned down by regime supporters after it became clear that he was no longer willing to adhere to Qaddafi’s orders (Black, 2003:253).¹⁹²

Qaddafi used demeaning terms such as ‘stray dogs’ and traitors to describe dissidents because they had contacts with the West or formed opposition movements abroad. Liquidation of exiled Libyans was one of the most used tools to remove the regime’s political opponents. And from the 1980s, the political assassinations of Libyans by the revolutionary committees across the world brought much attention and exerted pressure on Libya (Anderson, 1987:67).

In October 1993, a group of military officers led by Colonels Muftah Gharum, Mustafa Balguasim, and Saad Salim Faraj from the cities of Bani Walid, attempted a military coup against Qaddafi but, the coup was foiled and the army officers were executed in 1997 by the

¹⁸⁹ El-Mheyshi was Minister of Planning at the time of the failed coup in 1973 against Qaddafi.

¹⁹⁰ The deal in question was to ensure that Qaddafi change his position on the Sahara and refrain from backing the independent Sahraouian movement, the Polisario Front.

¹⁹¹ Hassan Ishkal was Qaddafi’s cousin. Mattes wrote that Colonel Hassan Ishkal was Commander of the Sirte military region and because of in-fighting with Qaddafi during the Chad intervention was eliminated on 24 November 1985. See Hanspeter Mattes’s paper entitled *Challenges to Security Sector Governance in the Middle East: The Libyan Case*. Paper presented at the Workshop on “Challenges of Security Sector Governance in the Middle East”, held in Geneva 12-13 July 2004, organised by the DCAF Working Group on Security Sector Governance and Reform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

¹⁹² See Black C R (2003). Muammar Qaddafi and Libya’s Strategic Culture. (Chapter 9) “Know the enemy” (2003).

security forces (Oakes, 2011:135). Accordingly, Qaddafi's regime issued a 'Law of Collective Punishment' allowing the regime to punish whole families, towns and tribes for any illegal activities against Qaddafi or the regime. This law was passed in 1997 (Eljahmi, 2006:4). Following the numerous coups attempted by the military establishment, Qaddafi's attitude changed drastically, and he managed to weaken this institution to such a level that it became a 'negligible quantity' as an actor on the Libyan scene. He then decided to rely heavily on the traditional tribal loyalties, either from elements in his own tribe, el Qadhadhfah, or through alliances with other tribes and clans, in order to ensure his own security and consolidate his power. As discussed previously, Qaddafi's priorities were always to guarantee his survival and to strengthen his power by any means. He also considered whoever opposed his concept of state as an enemy.

The Libyan political opposition groups abroad were diverse; some consisted of prominent Libyans in the regime, lawyers, businessmen, students, or military officers who had escaped from Qaddafi's war in Chad and found refuge in the United States of America. What can be observed regarding the Libyan opposition is the fact that dissidents organised small political parties and operated outside Libya. Several groups were active such as the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), the Libyan National Alliances, Libyan Movement for Change and Reform, and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). However, despite being based abroad, they were constantly harassed, threatened, and faced several assassination attempts in the countries where they were living, or during their travelling (Vandewalle, 2006:128-130; Anderson, 1986:232-233).

Nevertheless, the Libyan opposition never gave up, and since their movements were not restricted, they were very active, through the organisation of conferences, the publication of newsletters, press releases, documents and photos, denouncing the regime's abuses of human rights, and shedding light on Qaddafi's crimes, persecutions, and unjust policies. Most of these dissident groups and movements shared their radical opposition to Qaddafi's regime, and voiced their opposition to Qaddafi's policies on issues such as human rights violations at home and abroad. They were keen to present an alternative to the Libyan people and to be directly involved in Libyan politics after Qaddafi. Accordingly, they stated their various political perspectives in terms of constitution, and the establishment of political parties with a real role in a democratic Libyan state (Barger, 1999:67).

Violation of human rights was seen in the secret executions of Libyan citizens which the regime used to eliminate political opponents who rejected the political system and the authoritarianism of Qaddafi in Libya. Several Libyan citizens faced political violence because they requested their political and civil rights. Such brutality turned many Libyans into exiles, some as early as the beginning of the 1970s. The Revolutionary Committees represented the instrument used to terrorise Libyans. Lawyers, university lecturers, intellectuals and students were often blamed for the failure of the Libyan revolution, and hence, it was 'legitimate' for these committees to eliminate and crush the dissidents who threatened the regime (Henderson, 1980:18-19). The elements constituting the Revolutionary Committees (RCs) were ideologically brainwashed by Qaddafi's discourse and consequently, were reliable, loyal, and ready to implement, by all means, the ideology of the regime.

The most challenging opposition was represented by Islamist groups, who were thrashed by the Qaddafi's regime thrashed them with an iron fist. In the late 1980s, members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), formed small cells and engaged in military activities against Qaddafi's regime, and indeed attempted to assassinate him in November 1996 while on a visit to a small town south of Libya.¹⁹³ The Libyan Islamist movement was determined to get rid of the 'Pharaoh' of Libya, and Qaddafi security services used repression to uproot it,¹⁹⁴ detaining most of the members of the LIFG and their close relatives. Moreover, in June 1996, Qaddafi's regime committed one of the biggest massacres in Libya, the 'Abusleem Prison Massacre', around 1,286 prisoners revolted because of the detention conditions; security forces killed them all in the courtyard and buried them in mass graves in the prison. Consequently, the LIFG members were dismembered and the survivors escaped from Libya (Pargeter, 2012:169-170). This massacre might be considered as one essential factor for the 2011 popular uprising. Nevertheless, the tragic event of Abusleem was not buried, and its implications will be addressed in the next chapter.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Addullah Al-Grew, who was a member of the LIFG threw a hand grenade at Qaddafi but it did not explode. The perpetrator was caught, and summarily executed. The members of the Al-Grew family were thrown out of their home which was demolished.

¹⁹⁴ Some of the Islamists who had in fact fought against the Russians in Afghanistan decided to return to Afghanistan to escape Qaddafi's repression, others went to Europe.

¹⁹⁵ Once the people knew about what happened in Abusleem, Qaddafi's regime tried to contain the victims' families and members of the LIFG, by offering compensation to the relatives of the victims.

4.3 Libya and the West

The rise of international terrorism in the 1980s attracted increased international attention, as Libya's state-backed terrorist activities caused immense suffering throughout the world in general, and to Libyans in particular. Indeed, the victims of the Qaddafi's regime's terrorism were not only Libyan citizens but also other foreign nationals. European states came into direct confrontation with Qaddafi's regime because of Libyan violence that also reached European cities. For instance, in April 1984, Libyans studying in the UK were peacefully protesting in front of the Libyan Embassy at St James's Square in London, in solidarity with their fellow students at Libyan Universities, and against the violent scenes at different Libyan campuses and against Qaddafi. WPC Yvonne Fletcher was one of the police officers deployed to guard the protest and subsequently died from gunfire coming from inside the Libyan Embassy, while several Libyans present at the scene were also injured. Following that tragic incident, the Libyan Embassy was surrounded by the police and under siege for eleven days. Eventually, the Libyan diplomats were allowed to leave the embassy (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:58).

The UK government reacted by freezing diplomatic relations with Libya, and Libyan diplomats were expelled from the UK. The murder of WPC Yvonne Fletcher was pursued with the Libyan government from the day she was shot dead until the late 1990s. It was not until 1999 that the Libyan government acknowledged its responsibility and paid Fletcher's family compensation. A team from the British police flew to Libya to question the suspects (Simons, 2003:126-127).

According to the British newspaper *The Telegraph*, after several visits to Libya the Metropolitan Police were given the names of two suspects in the killing of PCW Yvonne Fletcher. They were both high profile figures in Qaddafi's regime, Matoug Mohammed Matoug and Abdelgadir Mohammed Baghdadi. However, after the 17 February 2011 uprising, another suspect name was added, Salah Eddin Khalifa. According to Ashur Shamis, Mr Khalifa was one of the pro-Qaddafi students in London. After he returned to Libya, he was appointed head of the Tripoli High Institute for Electronics, and remains at large (Gilligan, 2012).

Due to the regime's support for terrorism, the Reagan administration decided to impose unilateral sanctions in 1981, in a bid to persuade Qaddafi to change his policies.¹⁹⁶ In fact, the previous Carter administration had imposed partial economic sanctions on the regime, but this action had no major effect on the regime's behaviour, and certainly not once the US oil companies had left Libya and been replaced by European ones.¹⁹⁷ Additionally, before the bombing of 'La Belle discotheque', the US conducted air and naval manoeuvres (March 1986) over the Gulf of Sidra, which Qaddafi claimed as Libya's territorial waters. These manoeuvres occurred at the peak of the antagonism between Qaddafi's regime and the Reagan administration. On 23 March 1986, American and Libyan armed forces clashed and the American military destroyed two Libyan missile boats and an anti-aircraft battery located in the Sirte basin on the coast of the Gulf of Sidra (Laham, 2008:102-103).

The terrorist attack on 'La Belle discotheque', on 5 April 1986 was shocking. The club was very popular with American military personnel and targeted for that reason, with the explosion killing two American soldiers and a Turkish woman, and injuring more than 200 people. Libya was immediately suspected of this act of terror, especially after certain messages were intercepted suggesting this, and the Libyan security agents who operated in East Berlin were accused of planting the explosives. When the intercepted cables between Tripoli and East Berlin were thoroughly analysed, the Reagan administration was sure it had proof that Qaddafi's regime was behind the attack (Stanik, 2003:144), and although the main perpetrators were not identified in the immediate aftermath of the incident, and the case was still under investigation, the Reagan administration explicitly confirmed the Libyan government's involvement in the terrorist incident.

The bombing of the La Belle discotheque in 1986 was perceived as a retaliatory attack for the sinking of the two Libyan navy boats by the US, and the Reagan administration quickly reacted on 15 April 1986 by making a limited air strike on targets in Tripoli and Benghazi. One of the main targets was Qaddafi's barrack in Tripoli, in an operation entitled El Dorado Canyon (Simons, 2003:127). After the bombing of Qaddafi's headquarters, Qaddafi appeared as a victim of American bullying, several governments including the Arab League condemned the bombing of Libya, and the European countries were reluctant to support the

¹⁹⁶ In 1982 the Reagan administration imposed an embargo on oil imports from Qaddafi's regime and prohibited technology transfers to Libya. By 1986 the US had cut off its economic ties and imposed a series of economic sanctions, which damaged Libya's oil industry due to its dependence on US technology.

¹⁹⁷ President Jimmy Carter ordered the closure of the US embassy in Tripoli in February 1980.

US in this attack (Laham, 2008:108). The operation was seen by the Libyan government at that time as an assassination attempt against Qaddafi.

The air raid targeting Qaddafi's compounds in both Tripoli and Benghazi killed dozens of civilians and injured many others. According to the Libyan regime, 36 civilians and one soldier were killed, but other estimates indicated a higher number of deaths from the military. An American jet fighter F-111 was shot down and its two pilots were killed. A combination of psychological and covert pressure such as contacting dissident groups in Libya was coordinated in order to unseat Qaddafi. Military unrest occurred because of the discontent among military officers with Qaddafi's policies that had led to confrontations with states such as the US, France, Chad, Egypt, and Tunisia. Undoubtedly, the American airstrike had an impact on ordinary Libyans, the military, and Qaddafi himself, but it was ineffective in the long term since other terrorist incidents continued to occur in which the Libyan regime was connected either directly or indirectly (Schumacher, 1986/87:335-337).¹⁹⁸

British bases were used by the F-111s and other jet fighters A-6s, A-7s, and F-18s flew from an aircraft carrier stationed at the Libyan coast. In fact, the French and the Spanish authorities did not grant the US planes permission to use their airspace for the British based F-111s to join other jet fighters due to the fact that these were the only jet fighters able to achieve the type of low-level precision airstrike needed.¹⁹⁹ The raid resulted in the destruction of civilians' houses and other buildings, as well as damaging the diplomatic residences of France, Austria, and Finland (Sidaway, 1989:41).

However, as indicated, the US counter-terrorism campaign intended to halt the training of terrorists on Libyan soil, and to destroy the training facilities themselves, was not successful. Clearly, this military action was designed to end Qaddafi's support for terrorism, and to alienate the Libyan military from Qaddafi and his regime. Another objective was to convince the European allies that if they really wanted the US to refrain from using unilateral military actions, the best way was to impose collective sanctions against the Libyan regime (Bowen, 2006:41).

¹⁹⁸ The Reagan administration bombing of Qaddafi's headquarters did not prevent the hijacking of the Pan American aeroplane in Karachi just a few months later in September 1986, in which a Libyan link was suspected by the presence of several elements.

¹⁹⁹ The F-111s jets were induced to use a longer route over the Atlantic Ocean. French and Spanish authorities judged that it was 'unnecessary' for US aircraft to conduct their mission by using their airspace.

The Reagan administration claimed that the American raid in April 1986 forced Qaddafi to abandon his support for international terrorism. Indeed, Joffe and Paoletti (2010) believe that the April 1986 bombings marked a wake-up call for Colonel Qaddafi and his regime. They pointed out that the Libyan leadership “could no longer ignore the reality of American power”, and that the foreign policies in support of subversive movements, international terrorism, whether through rhetoric or in a more concrete manner, had to be revised (Joffe and Paoletti, 2010:22).

In the same vein, Ronen mentioned that Qaddafi benefitted from two serious setbacks within the US terrorism policy, which occurred later in 1986. The first one related to the discovery of a plot to overthrow Qaddafi, through which it eventually became clear that the US administration supported the idea of toppling Qaddafi. This action was accompanied with the manipulation of the US media to enhance the prospects of his political elimination (Ronen, 2008:34). The second setback was the infamous ‘Iran gate’ in which the media revealed that whilst operating an arms embargo against Iran, the US was simultaneously providing arms to this country. This was reported by Ronen who stated that:

Washington was supplying weapons to Tehran, with the aim of bringing home US nationals held hostages by pro-Iran terrorists in Lebanon. The publicization of these affairs heavily damaged the moral standing of the United States as a champion of antiterrorism, and in turn, benefitted Qaddafi’s Libya (Ronen, 2008:34).

Nonetheless, despite these flaws in the US behaviour, the pressure on Qaddafi was mounting from several fronts, economically, diplomatically, and militarily (Schumacher, 1986/87:337). At the same time, however, Libyan support for terrorism remained undeterred as evidenced by the terrorist acts perpetrated against two civilian aircrafts - the bombing of Pan Am 103 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988, and the downing of the French airliner UTA in the subsequent year.

4.3.1 The Lockerbie and UTA Cases

Two major air incidents occurred in 1988 and 1989, which were later connected with the Libyan regime. In the case of the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, this took place on 21 December 1988 over the small Scottish town of Lockerbie, killing all 259 people on board. The jumbo jet was en route from Heathrow airport to John F Kennedy airport, when a bomb

exploded in the cargo hold which damaged the plane's electric power. There was no chance of an emergency landing, and all passengers on board were killed, in addition to 11 people on the ground. The Lockerbie air disaster was one of the most tragic cases in civil aviation history. The criminal investigation into the Lockerbie case began a comprehensive search to find the perpetrators and their sponsor (Matar and Thabit, 2004:7).

Less than a week after the start of the official investigation, the joint team of British and American investigators found that the destruction of the airplane was no accident but the result of an intentional bombing. Between January 1989 and November 1991, the investigators questioned more than 15,000 people in different countries and continents, and searched some 845 square miles around Lockerbie. In the mid-1990s, a Palestinian group, the PFLP of Ahmad Jibril, was thought to be behind the terrorist act. According to the proponents of this theory, Ayatollah Khomeini commissioned such an action against an American airliner in revenge for the shooting down, by the *USS Vincennes*, of an Iranian Airbus containing pilgrims to Mecca in July 1988 (Black, 1998:207).²⁰⁰ However, the results of the investigation were quite surprising since on 14 November 1989, the Scottish and US prosecution authorities announced that they had brought criminal charges against two Libyan citizens. The two men, Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed Al-Megrahi, and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, were accused of being agents working for the Libyan intelligence service.

The main factor pointing to Libya's involvement in the Lockerbie bombing was the discovery of a microchip of the bomb, followed by the arrest of two Libyan intelligence agents, in possession of explosive devices (in Senegal in 1988). Further investigations showed a link between the Lockerbie timer and the two Libyan suspects (Plachta, 2001:93).²⁰¹

Due to the absence of diplomatic relations with Libya, the UK and the US made informal extradition demands, through the Belgian Embassy, to Tripoli. Two weeks later, the US and the UK issued a statement, which required Libya to hand over the two suspects for trial. The Libyan government refused to extradite the suspects because this undermined its sovereignty, and instead started its own legal proceedings.²⁰² Qaddafi's regime stated that Libya had its

²⁰⁰ See Black, R. The Lockerbie Disaster. 9(2) Stellenbosch L. Rev. 207 1998.

²⁰¹ Plachta M (2001). The Lockerbie Affair: When Extradition Fails. Are The United Nations' Sanctions A Solution? (The Role of the Security Council in the Enforcing of the Rule *Aut Dedere Aut Judicare*). Resource Material Series No. 57. 114th International training course visiting experts' papers. Available online at: http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/RS_No57/No57_13VE_Plachta3.pdf

²⁰² There was no extradition treaty between Libya and the concerned states (US, UK and France).

own competent judicial system and could not hand over its nationals, who were kept in custody. The Libyan government offered the US and the UK governments observer status during the trial of the suspects in Libya, but both governments refused to accept. After further negotiations, the Libyan authorities suggested that the suspects could be tried either in a neutral country or that the International Court of Justice could decide where the trial could take place. Eventually, Libya agreed to hand over the suspects to be tried in The Hague, by Scottish judges (Plachta, 2001:127).

Another tragic incident occurred on 19 September 1989 when a French airliner, UTA 772 exploded over Niger after a brief transit in Chad, within less than an hour of its departure from Brazzaville, the Republic of the Congo. The huge explosion killed all the people on board including the crew. The debris of the blasted aircraft was scattered over the desert and the cockpit was found five kilometres from the explosion (Simons, 2003:142).

According to Younis Lahweij, the suspicion of Libyan involvement in the downing of the French plane UTA 772, was due to the belief that Mohammed Al-Maghrief, a Libyan opposition leader and the head of (NFSL), was on board that plane (after a brief stop in Chad). Another incentive was the presence of the wife of the ex-American Ambassador to Chad. There was an assumption that the Libyan government thought that Colonel Robert Lee Pugh was transforming former Libyan prisoners in Chad into fighters against Qaddafi's regime. The Libyan involvement in this matter was proclaimed before the accusation of Libya in the Lockerbie bombing. France required the assistance of the Libyan government during the investigation on the causes of the blast. More specifically, the French authorities wanted to investigate the matter of the crash plane with Libya's head of security Abdullah Al-Sanusi and other Libyan officials. However, the Libyan regime refused to participate in the investigation launched by the French. The results of the inquest show that Libya was linked to the crash (Lahweij, 1998:356).

4.3.2 US Unilateral Sanctions and UN Multilateral Sanctions

The international community was united in condemning these two horrific acts of terrorism, and the US, Britain and France demanded Libya's full co-operation with the investigations launched to determine responsibility for the Lockerbie and UTA bombings. It was the reluctance of the Libyan regime to co-operate in these investigations which prompted the UN

in 1992 to demand that Libya officially respond to the accusations made by the US, Britain, and France. Consequently, on 11 January 1992, the UN Security Council (UNSC) issued Resolution 731 which required the Libyan government to co-operate and “immediately provide a full and effective response” to the earlier four demands of the US, the UK, and France; firstly, by turning over the two suspects, secondly, by disclosing all information about the bombings, thirdly, by ending its support for terrorism, and fourthly by paying compensation to the victims’ relatives. According to Hurd:

There was no mention in the resolution of further action should Libya fail to comply, and it did not specify what Charter provisions it was relying on for its authority. It did contain a statement that international terrorism “constitute[s] a threat to international peace and security”, which is important Charter language for justifying Council involvement in an issue, but this reflected the inability of the sponsors to negotiate a more direct reference to Chapter VII (Hurd, 2005:505).

Several states approved the imposition of sanctions in order to make Libya change its behaviour. If Libya did not comply with the demands of the UNSC, it would be faced with military action. It is worth noting that Libya’s main ally, Russia, joined the US in its demands to solve the Lockerbie case. The Russians suspected Tripoli of being involved in the bombing (despite the denial of Qaddafi) and were aware that the sanctions would have a negative impact on Russian economic relations with Libya (Maerli and Lodgaard, 2007:76).

However, the Libyan failure to surrender the two security agents suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie bombing Abdelbaset Al-Megrahi, and Al Amin Fhimah, to the US or Britain resulted in another resolution. On 31 March 1992, the UNSC adopted Resolution 748 which stipulated that States should (1) deny permission to any Libyan aircraft to take off from, land in or overfly their territory; (2) prohibit any provision to Libya by their nationals or from their territory of arms; (3) reduce the number of staff at Libyan diplomatic missions and control the movements of the remaining staff; (4) prevent the operation of all Libyan Arab Airlines offices.²⁰³

Another UNSC resolution (883) was passed in November 1993 after Libya’s refusal to comply with the UN demands. Resolution 883, issued by the UN prohibited Libyan airlines from selling tickets, froze Libyan assets, and banned the export of oil equipment. The sanctions were implemented in order to force Libya to comply with demands and modify its behaviour. The Libyan government tried to avoid the earlier resolutions but Resolution 883

²⁰³ See S/RES/748 (1992).

seemed to have had more effect on the Libyan regime (Collins, 2004:10-13). Moreover, the Libyan government hired international legal teams in order to find an exit strategy for this problem and to defend its position regarding these debates (Waller, 1996:75).

4.3.3 The Libyan Response to US and UN Sanctions

Libya did not react immediately to the sanctions imposed since, in the first instance, Qaddafi's regime was convinced that friendly states would violate the embargo and help him to resist the various pressures resulting from the hardship of the situation. His judgement was incorrect in this respect, and when it appeared that his calculations were wrong, he decided to opt for compliance and co-operation. Accordingly, it is important to measure the level of Libya's compliance with the international institutions' demands, and in doing this both the external and internal effects of the sanctions are now examined, as also is the pressure from the international community. Furthermore, Libya's incentives to attract economic investment in order to sustain its economic ability and to preserve Qaddafi's regime are explored. On several occasions, Libya complained that the sanctions were unjust and argued that the issue should have been dealt with through legal channels. The argument used by Qaddafi was that the sanctions would directly affect Libyan citizens and domestic airlines, since they prevented Libya from importing parts and technology for its aviation. For instance, the Libyan regime claimed that the explosion of a Libyan civil aircraft en-route from Benghazi to Tripoli, which cost the lives of all people on board, was a consequence of the sanctions.²⁰⁴

In the mid-1990s, the US did change strategy and this did seem to bring effective results. Instead of acting unilaterally, the Clinton administration decided to seek the United Nations' involvement and acquire wider support from most member states, with the purpose of being able to implement multilateral economic sanctions and achieve the isolation of Libya (Nolan, 2007:85). The changes in the geopolitical scene, in particular after the end of the Cold War period, with the fall of the Soviet Union as a superpower, had a positive impact on Libyan matters.

²⁰⁴ Ali Treki, Libya's ex-foreign minister attributed the downing of the Libyan plane over Tripoli (in 1993) to the Libyan intelligence (Treki, 2012).

UN sanctions were indeed imposed in order to force Libya's compliance with the UN demands to stop its support for terrorism. Commenting on this situation, Cortright and Lopez (1999:2) underlined that "sanctions can serve as a middle ground between mere diplomatic protest and ultimate military force". In terms of effect, it can be observed that UN and American sanctions against Libya weakened Libya's economy and hardened life for Libyan people. The regime itself struggled internally due to the low income from the oil revenues during that period. Popovski (2011) posits that UN sanctions, and especially the air embargo and the freezing of funds, exerted pressure on Qaddafi's regime. The UNSC did not require an oil embargo due to the fact that many states, which depended on Libyan oil, would have been indirectly penalised. Nevertheless, other elements contained in the UNSC measures weakened Libya's oil industry.²⁰⁵ Cortright and Lopez pointed out that UN sanctions on Libya 'impeded Libya's aspirations to earn a larger international role commensurate with its great oil wealth' (Cortright and Lopez, 2000:119).²⁰⁶ Effectively, according to World Bank estimates, Libya lost around \$18 billion, mainly because of the lack of foreign investment in the oil and gas industries.²⁰⁷

The economic situation in Libya deteriorated and worsened after an extensive trade embargo was imposed by various US administrations. Under the sanctions, the performance of the Libyan economy was weakened as several projects were postponed or abandoned through lack of funding. Schumacher underlines that budget restrictions in 1985 forced the cancellation of a \$4.2 billion Soviet nuclear power plant, more than \$1 billion in housing and road projects, and \$700 million in military construction projects (Schumacher, 1987:344 & 337). However, military spending was not cut despite the low oil returns, due to its priority for the regime's survival. In consequence of the multilateral sanctions, the public sector, which represented the large part of the Libyan economy, was unable to implement appropriate policies to face the challenges. Libyan oil fields suffered from the absence of investment by the US and as an alternative, the country resorted to the European market. US measures such as freezing the Libyan assets, compelled Libya to invest in Eastern European countries, Egypt, and Malta.²⁰⁸ The oil production did not go below Libya's OPEC quota. Yet, Libyan oil was sold to the United States through the European markets, and overall the

²⁰⁵ Popovski V (2011). Fighting the Colonel: Sanctions and the Use of Force. *Jindal Journal of International Affairs* 148-161 (2011) Vol.1, Issue 1, October 2011.

²⁰⁶ Cortright D and Lopez G (2000), *The Sanctions Decade: Assessing the UN Strategies in 1990s*.

²⁰⁷ See case studies in sanctions and terrorism, provided by the Peterson Institute for International Economics available online at: <http://www.piie.com/research/topics/sanctions/libya3.cfm>

²⁰⁸ For instance, Libya devoted some of its money to invest in petrol stations in several countries.

US unilateral sanctions were not as effective as they were meant to be (Vandewalle, 2008:40-41). Nevertheless, the US sanctions had a modest influence upon Libya's oil sector as the lack of technology and equipment prevented the sector's modernisation.

In 1996 the Clinton administration introduced the Iran Libya Sanction Act (ILSA), and imposed economic sanctions on companies investing over \$40 million in Libya.²⁰⁹ However, the extension of the ILSA did not prevent European companies investing in the Libyan market since there were loopholes in the act (such as the date of signing the contract), and several European countries used these to avoid its impact. Vandewalle (2008:41) observed that "companies simply amended old contracts to accommodate new investments, and avoided signing new contracts that could have triggered ILSA regulations". However, despite the ineffectiveness of the ILSA on Libya in the short term, UN sanctions were extended over the period of seven years, and gradually the sanctions gained more significance by affecting and damaging Libya's economy.

The measures taken by the UN to constrain Libya were unavoidable given the fact that Libya's behaviour outraged various countries. Particularly, the issue of extradition of Al-Megrahi and Fhimah was difficult to resolve due to the enduring disagreements between the US, Britain, and Libya, and it was only in August 1998, ten years after the tragic incident, that a solution was reached. At this point the parties agreed to have the suspects tried before a Scottish court in The Hague, and under Scottish law and procedures.

The collapse of the Soviet Union as Libya's supplier of military and logistics might have been one of the factors behind the decision to surrender the two suspects for trial. The Soviet Union was one of Qaddafi's main allies, relied upon for support especially when dealing with rivals. Accordingly, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, Qaddafi's regime lost a strong ally and consequently had to change its foreign policy. Qaddafi also witnessed Russian co-operation with the US after the collapse of the USSR, and Russian support for the US coalition in the first Gulf war against Iraq. Therefore, Libya's former ally - Russia, was no longer on Qaddafi's side and in this situation, the regime concluded that it was better for Libya to comply with the UN resolutions (Ronen, 2008:100).

²⁰⁹ Iran was included in the ILSA due to its intention to pursue a nuclear programme and for the support of terrorist organisations listed by the USA. Clinton issued Executive Order 12957 (15th March, 1995), banning US investment in Iran's energy sector, and EO 12959 (6th May, 1995), banning US trade and investment in that country. The aim was that sanctions would deprive Iran of the ability to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and to fund terrorist groups. See Katzman, 2006, CRS Report for Congress, The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA).

Furthermore, Russia also mediated the handover of the Lockerbie suspects. According to Plachta (2001), Russia joined the efforts of the former General Secretary of the UN Kofi Annan to convince Qaddafi to handover the suspects. He stated “Annan orchestrated a discreet but relentless political campaign to persuade Qaddafi, including a hitherto secret appeal by the Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov of Russia. As part of this appeal, the US assured Libya that the trial would not be used to undermine Qaddafi’s rule in Libya” (Plachta, 2001:135). In fact, the Libyan regime did realise that the loss of a powerful protector such as Russia, necessitated a review of its foreign policies, the cessation of its unconditional support for terrorism, the surrender of its weapons of mass destruction, and an end to its systematic and open opposition to the West. The terms and conditions of UN Resolutions 731, 748 and 883 were maintained despite several attempts by the Libyan regime to have these suspended or removed.²¹⁰ On 27 August 1998, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1192, suspending the measures (i.e. sanctions) set forth in its resolutions 748 (1992) and 883 (1993) upon the certification by the UN of the arrival of the suspects in The Hague for trial (Niblock, 2001:3).²¹¹

Among the conditions set by the Libyan government was the need for an assurance by Kofi Anan and Nelson Mandela that the two defendants would not be questioned by the US or Britain. Finally in April 1999, Qaddafi complied with the UN demand and handed over the Lockerbie suspects for trial in the Netherlands. On that occasion, he stated that “the world has changed radically and drastically. The methods and ideas should change, and being a revolutionary and progressive man, I have to follow the movement” (Takeyh, 2001:66).

Following the trial,²¹² al-Megrahi was found guilty, and sentenced to life imprisonment with the recommendation of serving a minimum of 20 years, while the other defendant, Fhimah, was found not guilty. Megrahi made an appeal, which was rejected by the Court on 14 March 2002.²¹³ However, Libya agreed to compensate the victims’ families and accepted its formal

²¹⁰ The resolutions of the United Nations did not have a permanent status, and they were maintained only because of the behaviour of Qaddafi who for years, evaded the solution at hand.

²¹¹ In point 8 of the Resolution it is stated explicitly what follows:

Reaffirms that the measures set forth in its resolutions 748 (1992) and 883 (1993) remain in effect and binding on all Member States, and in this context reaffirms the provisions of paragraph 16 of resolution 883 (1993), and decides that the aforementioned measures shall be suspended immediately if the Secretary-General reports to the Council that the two accused have arrived in the Netherlands for the purpose of trial before the court described in paragraph 2 or have appeared for trial before an appropriate court in the United Kingdom or the United States, and that the Libyan Government has satisfied the French judicial authorities with regard to the bombing of UTA 772; See Resolution 1192 available online at http://i-p-o.org/security_council_resolution_1192.htm

²¹² The trial began on 3 May 2000 and the verdict was pronounced on 30 January 2001.

²¹³ See Knowlest J B. The Lockerbie Judgments: A Short Analysis. 36 Case W. Res. J. Int’l L. 473 2004.

responsibility, and such behaviour resulted in the lifting of the sanctions in September 2003 (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:70).²¹⁴ According to St John, the priorities of the American policy-makers towards Qaddafi's regime were: firstly, the Lockerbie affair, secondly, its unconventional arms programme, thirdly, Libya's regional policies, and finally democracy and human rights, although these were to a lesser extent (St John, 2008:136). In fact, the US was determined to prevent Qaddafi's regime from acquiring nuclear capability.

4.3.4 Libya's Policies: From Defiance to Co-operation

The issue of Lockerbie raised the solidarity of several African nations which, on the one hand, tried to mediate, and on the other, in view of the inflexible position of the US and Britain, defied the UN sanctions and defended Libya at the level of other international institutions. Qaddafi regarded the attitude of the Arab World as a betrayal because the countries involved did not challenge the sanctions, while some African leaders did violate the measures stipulated by the UN resolutions to help Libya. In 1999, Libya turned its attention to Africa again (due to its disappointment with Arab leaders, and Qaddafi's intention to reward African leaders), and invested in different institutions, giving diplomatic aid in return for diplomatic engagements. Libya was one of the initiators of the transformation of the Organization of African Unity to the African Union in 1999. The African Union would deal with the political, economic, and social challenges facing the African continent, with Qaddafi orienting his attention during the end of the nineties towards these and away from the Arab World. He also changed the state radio from the 'Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland' to the 'Voice of Africa' (Pham, 2010). Qaddafi's ideological conception was not productive. Hence, he had to comply with the international institutions and the powerful actors. Furthermore, in March 1999 Qaddafi stated "I have no time to lose talking with Arabs. ... I now talk about Pan-Africanism and African unity" (Takeyh, 2001:67). In this remark he might have been referring to the crucial role played by Nelson Mandela in the Lockerbie crisis. Other African leaders also supported Qaddafi, while Arab leaders' attitudes were equivocal in the 1990s.

According to Joffé (2011), after the suspension of the UN sanctions, various European States and the European Commission (EC) showed interest in reconsolidating relations with Libya, primarily because of their interest in the energy sector and commercial ties, but also because

²¹⁴ Libya agreed to pay half of the amount of the compensation when the UN sanction lifted and the rest when the US sanction lifted.

of a new phenomenon which necessitated Libya's co-operation. This related to illegal immigration to Europe by large numbers of Africans fleeing their own countries in search of protection from civil conflicts, violence, and better economic opportunities. European leaders considered the issue of illegal immigration as one of the main concerns in the late 1990s (Joffé, 2011:233), and the EU attempted to secure a deal with Qaddafi's regime to stop the flow of illegal immigrants from Libya's shores, despite the fact that the regime was well-known for human rights abuses. In fact, on various occasions, the Libyan regime stated that it could not patrol the Mediterranean basin on its own, and Qaddafi demanded that Europe should contribute financially in order to avoid what he called 'black Europe'. Libya received £42 million from the EU to fund and assist it in improving the conditions of the illegal immigrants. However, Qaddafi demanded £4 billion in order to stop the flow. Indeed, during the EU-African summit in Tripoli in 2010, Qaddafi stated "[w]e should stop illegal immigration. If we do not, Europe will become black, it will be overcome by people with different religions, it will change" (Waterfield, 2010).²¹⁵

The deal between the Libyan regime and the EU to halt illegal immigration was controversial because of the Libyan regime's poor record of human rights. Accordingly, several human rights groups criticised the EU because of the agreement with that regime, stating that Libya was not a safe haven for asylum seekers and refugees (Vandvik, 2010). Finally, Qaddafi agreed to help but stipulated several conditions, such as logistics,²¹⁶ financial compensation for the returned illegal migrants, and the need to address the root causes of the problem (i.e. the poverty of Sub-Saharan countries, the civil wars, ethnic cleansing, and lack of investment by the West). The co-operation between Qaddafi and EU indicated that both parties shared strategic interests. Regardless of the nature of Qaddafi's regime, the EU viewed Libya as a partner in the security of the Northern Mediterranean sea.

In the previous chapter, realism was shown to be a robust analytical tool for explaining the foreign and security policies of Qaddafi's government from his rise to power right through to the 1980s. This chapter indicates that realism can also better explain the second period, and is

²¹⁵ Waterfield, B. (2010) "Gaddafi demands £4 billion from EU or Europe will turn 'black'". Article published by the Telegraph in 30th November 2010. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8170956/Gaddafi-demands-4-billion-from-EU-or-Europe-will-turn-black.html>

²¹⁶ Electronic surveillance of the Libyan coast, boats for patrolling and joint patrols.

relevant as an analytical instrument in discussing the shift of Libyan policies from defiance to compliance.

4.4 Libya's Nuclearisation Project

*"In 1969 and the early 1970s we did not reflect on where or against whom we could use the nuclear bomb. Such issues were not considered. All that was important was to build the bomb."*²¹⁷

The first Arab country that tried to acquire nuclear capacity was Egypt, under the leadership of Nasser. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) pointed out that Egypt had a nuclear weapons research programme from 1954 to 1967 (Kolodziej and Kanet, 2008:204), while Bhatia (1988:59) and (Lefever, 1979:73) indicate that Egypt attempted to acquire nuclear technologies from China and the former USSR between 1963 and 1967.²¹⁸ This information might be helpful to determine where and when the idea of pursuing a nuclear programme crossed Qaddafi's mind. In addition, Heikal, an influential Egyptian journalist stated that Libya's first attempt to buy nuclear weapons, goes back to 1969 (the same year as the coup that overthrew the Libyan monarchy). This important revelation demonstrates that Qaddafi's aspirations regarding unconventional armaments were expressed very early in his career as Libya's ruler.

Bhatia (1988) notes that from the 1970s, there were links between Libya and Egypt with the aim of establishing nuclear co-operation between the two countries.²¹⁹ However, despite the existing potentialities within Egypt, its leaders abandoned the idea of becoming a nuclear power in 1968. Qaddafi, on the other hand, still keen to develop nuclear capability, decided to benefit from Egyptian know-how and recruited Egyptian scientists due to their expertise in the nuclear field. According to Bhatia, the transfer of scientists suggests the first Pan-Arab attempts to acquire nuclear weapons. Libya lacked the know-how, but possessed the financial

²¹⁷ "Libya: Al-Qadhafi addresses General People's Congress Tripoli," Great Jamahiriya TV [in Arabic], March 2, 2004. See Maalfrid Braut-Hegghammer Libya's Nuclear Intentions: *Ambition and Ambivalence* p.3 available online at:

<http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/25636/1/Libya%20-%20Nuclear%20intentions.pdf?1>

²¹⁸ The two authors cited were quoted by Jo and Gartzke: (2007:167).

²¹⁹ Egypt was involved in the development of nuclear capability in the early 1960s.

resources for such a big project, and consequently, Egypt was requested to provide Libya with scientists to assist in launching the nuclear programme (Bhatia, 1987:64-65).²²⁰

The conflicting situation in the Middle East during the Cold War had compelled most of the states in the region to build alliances with one of the superpowers. According to Mearsheimer (2001:5), “[p]olitics in almost every region of the world were deeply influenced by the competition between the Soviet Union and the United States between 1945 and 1990”. The Middle East and North Africa were not exceptions from the influence of either the USSR or the US. Libya’s relations with some regional neighbours in the early years depended on the Arab states’ stance in the Arab-Israeli conflict.²²¹ Qaddafi, as Nasser’s heir, regarded the security of the Arab World equally important as the security of Libya; thus, it was essential to counter all potential foreign threats on Libya’s periphery (Rothman, 2007:305).

Jo and Gartzke (2007:167) pointed out that “[s]tates that lack the ability to produce nuclear weapons are likely to seek other options such as enhancing their conventional forces or pursuing diplomatic solutions (Libya)”. From 1969, Qaddafi made intensive efforts to strengthen Libya’s armed forces by acquiring huge amounts of conventional weapons (Khikha, 1997:138). Qaddafi’s charisma, as well as his dream to become a regional leader after Nasser, seems to be one of the factors that explain the original choice of the Libyan regime. According to Qaddafi’s own logic, such an aim would only have been possible by possessing a significant amount of weaponry and strengthening the status of Libya, on regional and international levels, and simultaneously protecting his regime. Since their seizure of power in 1969, the new rulers of Libya were acutely aware of the country’s weakness and desperately wanted to remedy that weakness by building up its military capability and acquiring nuclear weapons.

Unsurprisingly, from 1976 to 1989, Libya invested more than \$28 billion in its conventional forces, with approximately 2/3 (\$20 billion) being spent on deals with the former Soviet Union (El-Kikha, 1997:133). Indeed, the quantity of imported arms was well beyond the needs of Libya’s armed forces. Additionally, military equipment was acquired from Western

²²⁰ An Egyptian scientist Salah Hedayat who was recruited for the prospective nuclear programme stated that the option of building its own infrastructure was chosen following Libya’s failure to purchase nuclear weapons (Bhatia, 1987:67).

²²¹ For example, Qaddafi based his relationship with Egypt and Jordan on their political choices, especially in regard to the Palestinian issue.

states, including the UK, Italy, France, the Netherlands, West Germany, and the United States (Wiegele, 1992:159). It can be observed that Qaddafi was keen to balance and diversify his armament purchases and not to rely on one main supplier such as the former Soviet Union.²²² Such hasty spending on conventional weapons puzzled analysts trying to identify Qaddafi's real intentions. The main question asked was why so much money was being spent when the regime was already thinking about the nuclear option.

The other option was to 'buy the bomb', and Heikel (1975) asserts, this was something Qaddafi was determined to acquire (following the 1967 defeat by Israel) to ensure the security of the Arab countries.²²³ Accordingly, Qaddafi sent one of the Free Officers, Major Abdusalam Jalloud, to Cairo in order to consult President Nasser regarding the purchase of nuclear bombs.²²⁴ Nasser explained to the Libyan envoy that in the context of the Cold war, none of the super powers would sell a ready-made nuclear bomb. For Jalloud, the other alternative was to approach China and make an offer, but Nasser knew that nuclear weapons were never for sale. The Chinese refused to sell the nuclear bomb and Jalloud returned to Libya empty-handed (Heikel, 1975:74).²²⁵

Abdsalaam Jalloud who was a close companion of Qaddafi,²²⁶ disclosed the fact that Libya attempted to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) for several decades. Jalloud declared that "we were enthusiastic and were frustrated to see other states possessing nuclear weapons ... and we thought that Arabs as well should have a nuclear deterrent" (Sharbil, 2011).²²⁷ According to Jalloud, acquiring nuclear weapons would have contributed to the emergence of a powerful Arab World, since an Arab state possessing nuclear weapons would be able to preserve the national security of all Arab states by using the threat of such a

²²² The evidence of that is the huge amount of money spent by the Libyan regime on conventional weapons. In Qaddafi's era arms purchases were diversified according to Cold War terms. By the middle of the 1970s, Qaddafi had entered a new phase, especially after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the failure to realise a union with states such as Egypt, Sudan, and Tunisia, prompted Libyan Major Jalloud to turn to Moscow with a long list of arms to be purchased. For the Soviet Union this request meant a new opening to the Arab World, after setbacks in Egypt and Sudan, and a new source of hard currency for Libya, the US for the only source likely to respond favourably to its demands. For more details see Zartman (1983:15) in the report entitled "World Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1971-1980" published by the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

²²³ In particular countries such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and so on.

²²⁴ Rather than consulting, Jalloud in fact informed Nasser of the Libyan intention to buy a nuclear bomb from China. See Heikel (1975:74).

²²⁵ The Chinese were nevertheless ready to co-operate with Libya in terms of research in the nuclear field.

²²⁶ The interview was conducted by Gassan Sharbil of *Al hayat newspaper*, and the article was published on 30 October 2011. Abdsalam Jalloud defected from Qaddafi's regime post the 17 February 2011 uprising. This was the main incentive for trying to pursue nuclear weapons from China.

²²⁷ Sharbil, G (2011) article available at: <http://tamimi.own0.com/t72160-topic#510674>

weapon as a deterrent. He mentioned the first Libyan attempt to purchase nuclear weapons from China.²²⁸ Jalloud was the main negotiator during the talks with the Chinese government. Recalling the 1970s meetings, Jalloud reported that, in a very diplomatic way, the Chinese officials informed him that nuclear weapons require a nuclear base and advanced technology, which were non-existent in Libya. Faced with this polite refusal, the Libyan delegation nevertheless tried to convince China to at least assist Libya in developing a nuclear programme (Sharbil, 2011).

Another former government official, Saad Mujber,²²⁹ during an interview given for the present study, stated that the idea of Libya's nuclear programme resulted from the hope that Libya, Syria and Egypt would have a nuclear deterrent when they were eventually united as a political entity. However, when the Union between these three countries collapsed, Libya found itself in a difficult position since the know-how that was expected to come from Syria and Egypt, which had a better reservoir of engineers and scientists, was not forthcoming. Mujber stated that the nuclear programme commenced in 1974. Libya's incentives to acquire nuclear weapons were reiterated by Jalloud (in 2011) and Mujber (in 2012).

The failure of various union projects with Egypt, Syria, and Sudan convinced Qaddafi to alter his initial motivations for acquiring nuclear weapons and instead made him focus on consolidating his leadership and the regime's interests. Another influential figure in Libya, Abderahman Shalgum, Libya's former foreign minister, asserted that the driving force behind Libya's nuclear project was to strengthen the regime and make it a regional power. Libya post-1969 had a nationalistic outlook, its aspiration deriving from the orientation of the regime towards the Nasserist camp and the politics of the region during the Cold War. In an interview with Sharbil of *Al hayat newspaper*, the Libyan ex-foreign minister during Qaddafi's regime Abderahman Shalgum revealed that the motivation for going nuclear was 'leadership'. Qaddafi wanted to be 'the Arab leader' and such leadership required him to display military power in order to weaken the states in Libya's periphery (Sharbil, 2011).

However, Qaddafi made contradicting statements during his rule over Libya. He acknowledged, at a very early date, that his regime sought to develop nuclear capacity but

²²⁸ In reality, Jalloud was acting as a chief negotiator.

²²⁹ Mujber also served as Libyan ambassador in several countries.

only for peaceful purposes. For instance, in an interview with Youssef Ibrahim of the New York Times,²³⁰ Qaddafi stated:

We have signed all agreements on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Our nuclear research is conditional on international conventions. But we are serious as the rest of the world in our desire to reduce our dependence on oil and to find alternative sources of energy including atomic sources. We are victims of the story that we want to build an atom bomb. It is not true (Ibrahim, 1980).

In fact, Qaddafi's statements were contradicted by other Libyan officials. For instance, Ali Treki, the former foreign minister in Qaddafi's regime, along with his Syrian and Iranian counterparts, stated clearly in 1985 that they would certainly seek to obtain nuclear weapons in order to encounter the threats posed by Israeli nuclear capability (Bowen, 2006:21). These declarations regarding the question of nuclear weapons often cited the case of Israel and its undeclared nuclear capacity. Indeed, the danger of Israel's nuclear weapons was a focal point in Qaddafi's discourse. In one statement he said "Israel's arsenal of nuclear weapons and missiles is capable of hitting targets in Libya" (Black, 2000:18). Consequently, he was determined to confront such a threat by all means including by developing a nuclear weapons programme.

Certainly, the perception of threat from Israel was expressed in the period of the heyday of Arab nationalism and Qaddafi's quest for Arab unity. Later, it was the issue of regional insecurity, inter-state rivalries, and constant fear of foreign aggression by foreign powers that were the incentives for possessing nuclear weapons. Regional insecurity and the instability in North Africa was also a factor in Libya's desire for nuclear weaponry. In this connection, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, and European states, such as Italy and France, with their larger armies were the subjects of concern for Qaddafi. These perceived regional challenges necessitated stringent military calculations, especially in the early years of the regime (Takeyh, 2001:69).²³¹

Several observers and analysts attributed Libya's pursuit of nuclear capability to various factors. For instance, Braut-Hegghammer (2008) believes that the Libyan desire to acquire nuclear weapons was inspired by military, political, and symbolic motivations. Accordingly,

²³⁰ The interview goes back to December 1979 and was published in 1980 by *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* under the title of *Libya and the World*.

²³¹ Qaddafi who was neither consulted nor informed, prior to the 1973 war against Israel, was willing to prove to the Arab leaders that he was able to propose better options (i.e. by pursuing the nuclear weapons option).

Libya's top priority was to obtain nuclear capability for national security purposes. This was a key instrument for deterring potential antagonistic forces and to secure Libya's vast territory from external threats.²³² The Libyan ruler wanted to be less dependent on the Libyan army; this later represented another potential internal challenge for the regime itself.²³³ Moreover, the regime's ambition to play a leading role in Arab and Middle East politics was an additional incentive to pursue nuclear weapons. Indeed, pan-Arabism was initially used as guidance for Libya's foreign policy but was abandoned (due to lack of support from the Arab governments on the issues of Lockerbie and the sanctions) and shifted towards Africa in an effort to enable Qaddafi's leadership, power, and leverage to be realised (Braut-Hegghammer, 2008).

According to Rublee (2009:151), and Lutterbeck (2009:511), Libya wanted to prevent and deter any foreign threat or intervention, balance Israeli nuclear capability, proclaim the leadership of the Arab world, and serve the national security of the Arab states collectively. And in Solingen's analysis, Libya's incentive to become a nuclear power had been since the early seventies, the wish to consolidate and strengthen the security regime in order to protect Qaddafi's personal power rather than to protect the state security (Solingen, 2007:216). Solingen's statement suggests that the circumstances in Libya did not change with time; the domestic pressure on Qaddafi's regime was not high, and consequently, there was no need for sophisticated armament.

Despite the fact that the argument of Solingen can explain some aspects of Libyan behaviour during that period, her emphasis that the internal challenge was weak is questionable. Indeed, the domestic factor was apparent and persuaded the regime to undertake a number of policies and consider the acquisition of nuclear weapons prerequisite not only to the Libyan national security but also the Arab security in general. This in fact means that the concern of the regime was not only to protect itself by acquiring this kind of weapon but also to serve as a deterrent weapon under the framework of Arab collectively. As discussed in the previous chapter, Qaddafi's regime did not spare any efforts to assist various Arab states politically and militarily, its support to Egypt and Lebanon can be considered in this regard as a case of point. In light of the foregoing, it is clear that realism is not the only approach to explain

²³² Libya experienced a brutal colonisation under Fascist Italy and consequently, the regime was committed to devising a firm national deterrence policy in order to survive outside aggression.

²³³ The numerous assassination attempts by the military establishments might have influenced the decision to acquire nuclear weapons (Braut-Hegghammer, 2008).

Qaddafi's regime behaviour since the collective cooperation among the Libyan and Arab states suggests that the regional norms or constructivist accounts can play an important role in explaining the transformation of Libyan policies.

Actually, Qaddafi perceived various threats to his regime from different groups in Libya. It was a well-known fact that Qaddafi was the dominant figure in Libya. He had the monopoly on all decision-making, and in particular on Libyan foreign policy, but most importantly wealth and power. For instance, his regime announced the confiscation of any additional houses owned by Libyans or local investors and encouraged people to seize rented properties. The confiscated properties were unfairly redistributed to other people according to the prevailing economic policies of the Qaddafi regime.²³⁴ Moreover, Qaddafi replaced the regular army with 'people's militias' and he oppressed religious scholars, intellectuals, and students. He also created tensions between tribes by favouring one against another. By these means, Qaddafi tried to eradicate any and all individuals who opposed his policies, ideology or the political system he espoused. His domestic policies increased the enmity of the Libyan people towards their ruler. Not surprisingly, regime security and the protection of his power were Qaddafi's main concerns, especially since he had much to fear from inside as well as outside the country (Black, 2003:257). Regime security might have been one of the motives behind the desire to obtain unconventional weapons, in particular after the dissolution of the military and their replacement by Qaddafi's own brigades.

However, in the 1980s the driving force to acquire nuclear weapons shifted towards ensuring Libya's security, and specifically this was the situation after Libya's relations with Western countries and the United States deteriorated. In the aftermath of the American raid on Libya in 1986, the political survival of the regime and the deterrence of external threats became the priorities for Libya's decision-makers; and in the period that following (during the 1990s), Libya used two strategies simultaneously. The first strategy consisted of improving the country's relationship with the US administration, while the second aimed to conduct a secret programme on nuclear and WMD activities.²³⁵ Indeed, when it became clear that the US was not willing to normalise its relations with Libya, the determination for acquiring nuclear

²³⁴ In the 1980s the regime declared that entrepreneurs and traders did not contribute to the economics of Libya. Consequently, small businesses such as jewellers, restaurants and private factories were banned. For more information see Kawczynski, D. (2011:221) "*Seeking Gaddafi*".

²³⁵ The second strategy was devised in case the Americans rejected the Libyan diplomatic approach.

weapons became stronger since it was the only perceived alternative left for the Qaddafi regime's survival (Corera, 2006:178-179).²³⁶

An example of regional and Western threat is that of Libya's conflict with Chad which prompted some states such as France, Egypt, and Sudan to support Chad rather than Libya. When confronted with such an alliance, Libya decided to protect its state and territory by seeking to acquire nuclear weapons (Bahgat, 2008:132). The Libyan-Chadian relations were peaceful when there was no perceived threat against Qaddafi, but when the regime believed there was a menace from this neighbour, it supported rebels against the Chadian army. Consequently, the Chadian government cut its diplomatic ties with the Libyan regime because of its Chadian foreign policy. Libya's military intervention in Chad caused some countries in region to react to the aggression. For instance, Sudan and Zaire, fearing Qaddafi's expansionist policies, helped some Chadian factions fight against Libyan troops (Huliaras, 2001:7).²³⁷ Additionally, Libya's meddling in other African and neighbouring countries compelled some states such as Sudan and Egypt to enhance their involvement in Chad. According to Deeb (1991:133), "Qaddafi's military intervention was therefore not merely a defensive action against the perceived threat of anti-Libyan forces in Chad. It was also an aggressive pursuit of interests in extending Libya's influence and increasing his power". Several Libyan politicians, such as Shalgum and Mujber, share the opinion of Deeb regarding Qaddafi's real objectives, although their confessions of these opinions were only made after the fall of the Libyan ruler.

The insecurity in the region, and Libya's ambitions to acquire nuclear weapons might have triggered the moves by Algeria to acquire its own nuclear capability.²³⁸ Indeed, Solingen asserts this, suggesting that the timing of Algeria's move was due to Libya's ambition to nuclearise (Solingen, 2007:214-215). This is supported by Gertz (1991) who maintains that Algeria's motive to acquire nuclear capability was due to the perceived threat from Qaddafi's

²³⁶ For instance, in 2000, Libyans requested A.Q. Khan, who was the father of the Pakistani nuclear bomb, to provide them with a complete enrichment programme (Corera, 2006:178-179). The link and relationship between Khan and Libya will be discussed in detail due to its relevance for the present study.

²³⁷ The name of the country changed to Democratic Republic of Congo.

²³⁸ According to Solingen, Algeria in the 1980s received a research reactor from China before joining the NPT treaty. In 1991, Algeria agreed to put its research reactor under the auspices of the IAEA and in 1995, signed the NPT in order to be under the safeguard of the IAEA and prove the peaceful purposes of its projects.

radical regime, especially after the Libyan-Algerian relations deteriorated.²³⁹ These claims by Solingen and Gertz were not unsubstantiated.

It is worth underlining that Libya's capacity to acquire a nuclear programme had several dimensions. Libya's attempt to obtain off the shelf and later develop a nuclear programme was driven by internal, regional and external factors. The most important element which compelled the Libyan regime to obtain non-conventional weapons was the external threat, but this nuclear policy was not the only one. For instance, Qaddafi's regime nuclear policy was not only to compensate for the weakness and the ineffectiveness of the regime's military capabilities, but also to enhance Libya's fighting capability. Moreover, deterring regional and foreign adversaries was another vital nuclear policy for the regime's national security and survival. Additionally, Libya's vast territory and large neighbours (i.e. Egypt, Algeria and Europe in the North of Libya's Coast), compelled the regime to prepare itself for foreign aggression and attacks whether from regional or international powers. Despite Libya's nuclear policy shift during the first three decades after 1969, external threats (i.e. regional and international), national security, balance of power and survival could explain Libya's nuclear policy to a large degree. Moreover, internal challenges to the regime, compensating the weakness of the regular army and enhancing the regime's fighting capability were also important factors to the regime's nuclear policy, but to a lesser degree.

4.4.1 Libya's Development of Nuclear Capacity

Before elaborating on the development of a nuclear programme and discussing the different agreements with states and private companies, it is essential to shed some light on Libya's official stance regarding the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Libya became signatory to the NPT in 1969, prior to Qaddafi's coup, and the new regime ratified this in 1975. However, Cirincione et al. (2005:321) underline the fact that despite Libya's status in the NPT it did not enter into a safeguard agreement with the IAEA until 1980.

The incentives for signing the NPT were various. Firstly, the Russians would not have provided the promised nuclear reactor without such a pre-condition. In fact, when Libya

²³⁹ For more details see the article published by Bill Gertz in the Washington Post on 11 April 1991 "China Helps Algeria Develop Nuclear Weapons".

ordered a nuclear reactor, Russia reiterated its conditions for providing it.²⁴⁰ Secondly, Libya wanted to openly acquire the nuclear technology from several developed countries, such as Argentina and Belgium.²⁴¹ Libya's membership in the NPT implied that the regime was able to acquire, from several states and multinational companies, sensitive technology and nuclear materials without being suspected of developing a nuclear weapons programme.²⁴² Despite Libya's status within the NPT it was suspected by various governmental bodies and analysts that Libya may have conducted nuclear research intended for military purposes.²⁴³ The water project for irrigation known as 'the Great Man-Made River', despite its objectives, was believed to be used also for the nuclear weapons programme (Hart and Kile, 2005:636).²⁴⁴

The US in particular was very cautious towards Libya's real intentions and since the beginning put pressure on several countries (i.e. Russia, Belgium, and Argentina) suspected of providing nuclear assistance to Libya. Eventually, in the mid-1990s Libya supported the NPT Review and Extension Conference without conditions, while Israel refused to join the NPT. In addition, Libya was among the 43 African countries that signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty in April 1996 (Cirincione et al., 2005:322).

Having discussed Libyan incentives to become a nuclear power, and the country's stance towards the international regulations and treaties, it is appropriate to consider the concrete steps taken in the attempted development of a nuclear programme since such consideration will reveal some evidence of Libya's genuine effort to implement its nuclear policy. Without question, the nuclear weapons development represented a huge challenge for Libya's rulers because as mentioned earlier, it was difficult to acquire the modern technology and manpower necessary to realise the completion of the nuclear project. The Libyan state was

²⁴⁰ Russia requested Libya to adhere to the IAEA safeguards prior to providing and installing the 10 megawatt nuclear reactor. Indeed, Libya fulfilled the Russian prerequisites in order to obtain the 10 megawatt nuclear reactor, but it had violated the NPT and attempted to manufacture nuclear weapons. Qaddafi's real intention was not to abide by the NPT or international norms regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons programme, but rather to obtain the 10 megawatt nuclear reactor from Russia. Autocratic regimes, such as Qaddafi's, are characterised by their tendency to violate international conventions such as those on human rights abuses and freedom of speech.

²⁴¹ It should be noted here that the intention of Libya to build a power reactor, with the help of Russia, near the Gulf of Sidra, was abandoned due to American pressure on Belgium, which was the potential supplier at that time. See Cirincione et al. (2005:322).

²⁴² On more than one occasion Qaddafi made contradictory statements regarding the issue of nuclear weapons.

²⁴³ The United States in particular were very sceptical of Libya's declared intentions and since the beginning put pressure on several countries suspected of providing nuclear assistance to Libya. The Chad Affair raised the attention of European powers and the IAEA as an institution was judged inefficient in terms of controlling the behaviour of rogue states.

²⁴⁴ The water project was conceived to provide water to cities, towns and to irrigate agricultural lands.

less than twenty years old when Qaddafi started thinking about acquiring nuclear weapons, and there was neither the technical expertise nor the manpower to bring such a project to fruition.

After failing to purchase nuclear weapons from China,²⁴⁵ Libya resorted to India in the 1970s, and suggested it would pay off all Indian foreign debts (approximately \$15 billion) in return for the sale of nuclear weapons (Solingen, 2007:213). Later, in 1974, the Libyan regime approached Pakistan, offering to finance the Pakistani nuclear programme in exchange for Pakistan's nuclear expertise,²⁴⁶ especially on plutonium-reprocessing and uranium enrichment.²⁴⁷ One of the Egyptian nuclear scientists working in Libya noticed an increase in Pakistani nuclear scientists after 1975 (Bhatia, 1987:67).²⁴⁸ However, in a statement to an Indian newspaper in 1986, Qaddafi denied any Pakistani assistance in its nuclear weapons programme, saying "[w]e consider nuclear weapons production against humanity" (Solingen, 2007:213). Indeed, it has been reported by the IAEA that in 1985 Qaddafi's regime exported uranium concentrate (yellowcake) and uranium hexafluoride (UF₆), to a 'nuclear weapons state', and this was processed and exported back to Libya. The nuclear components were intended to be used in testing for a uranium conversion facility but were never utilised. These activities were not declared by the regime to the IAEA (Hart and Kile, 2005:639).

Moreover, Qaddafi's regime did not cease its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons even though it had failed to obtain a ready-made bomb from various countries. Despite the fact that the collapse of the Soviet Union was not beneficial to Qaddafi, in the mid-1990s, his regime attempted to revive the development of its nuclear weapons programme and take advantage of the inherited nuclear stockpile from the disintegrated countries (Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan), and negotiated on the black market in order to obtain nuclear components (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:61). And although Libya's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons were not fruitful, the regime still pursued the acquisition of other non-conventional weapons (chemical weapons) in order to secure power, security and leverage.

²⁴⁵ Nasser facilitated the contacts between Libya and the Chinese authorities in 1970s.

²⁴⁶ Libya sought Pakistani assistance in order to set up a nuclear programme.

²⁴⁷ In spring 1976 it was reported by the international scientific community that there was \$1 million in gold in a Swiss bank which Qaddafi had offered for a nuclear weapons.

²⁴⁸ The agreement of nuclear assistance between Libya and Pakistan was revoked after Bhutto was executed.

As will be shown in the subsequent sections, Qaddafi's regime did not give up its quest to obtain nuclear weapons and continued to train Libyan scientists, finally resorting to the black market again.

4.4.2 Qaddafi and Chemical Weapons

It is important to underline that chemical weapons have been important assets to states and armies. Chemical weapons have been developed since the beginning of the nineteenth century and have been used (i.e. WWI) or stockpiled by a number of armies. Indeed, during the Second World War and Cold War, massive quantities were produced by a number of countries. In fact, some states have pledged to eliminate their chemical stockpiles under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). However, several states evaded or boycotted the CWC and engaged covertly to develop chemical weapons (Falkenrath, 1998:47).

Indeed, chemical weapons differ enormously from other nonconventional weapons (i.e. nuclear and biological) such as the threats posed by the lethality of these weapons, including costs, use and effectiveness. Unlike Nuclear weapons which are very difficult to develop or manufacture, and have the capacity to destroy cities and can cause a massive destruction and radiation. Chemical weapons are relatively easier to produce and can also cause limited damage on a small area and dissolve very quickly (Cirincione et al., 2005:3). Despite the fact that there is a huge difference between chemical and nuclear weapons in relation to the cost, production, effectiveness and the intensity of destruction, both of them are regarded as Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) or nonconventional weapons.

Libya was long suspected of developing chemical weapons; indeed this suspicion can be seen to have emerged in the early period of Qaddafi's regime. And according to Spector (1990:175-180), the focus on chemical weapons intensified in the late 1980s when the interest on nuclear weapons waned. This focus was due to the fact that chemical weapons were less complicated to acquire. In 1971 Libya became a signatory to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons,²⁴⁹ but it did not sign the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention. With the assistance of foreign expertise, Libya had

²⁴⁹ Despite Libya's membership in the NPT (from 1975) and the BWC (from 1982), analysts believed Libya was pursuing a range of WMD programmes, albeit not entirely successfully. See CRS Report for Congress, Order Code RS21823, April 22, 2004. Squassoni S A, and Feickert A; Disarming Libya: Weapons of Mass Destruction.

built a complex in the town of Rabta, a mountainous region on the outskirts of Tripoli²⁵⁰ (Sinai, 1997:93-94).²⁵¹ The Pharma 150 factory in Rabta was capable of producing chemical weapons (CW), and was considered to be one of the largest production facilities in the region.²⁵² This facility had a CW production unit, storage, and a steel mill. Sinai (1997) notes that effective production within the plant began in the 1990s, but as noted by Wiegele (1992:131), the facility was heavily dependent on foreign experts and the assistance of private companies from several countries.²⁵³ Not surprisingly, the Libyan government claimed the facility was for pharmaceutical production, but reports assert that the plant did in fact, produce chemical weapons and nerve gas, and that Libya was working on offensive chemical warfare (Hart and Kile, 2005:644).

Naturally, Libya's chemical weapons factory in Rabta was a major concern to the US, especially after the US intelligence sources discovered that the factory was capable of producing poison gas. Libya denied such allegations, claiming that the plant was part of an irrigation system known as the Man Made River. In the mid-1990s, the US Defence Secretary William Perry announced a potential US strike on the chemical factory, using the B-61 nuclear warhead to demolish the facility. The project continued, however, and in 1997 Libya received equipment from the chemical and biological weapons unit, known as 'Project Coast' from South Africa (Cirincione et al., 2005: 323 & 324).

Sinai (1997) suggested that the information leaked to the CIA, and the fear of military reaction from the US induced Libya to move the facility further into the desert, close to Sebha, to avoid detection. Nonetheless, the international community remained very concerned about Libya's chemical activities because of the regime's support for terrorism (Sinai, 1997:93). The CIA also reported that "Tripoli has not given up its goal of establishing its own offensive [chemical weapons] program" (Takeyh, 2001:68).

²⁵⁰ Different European states such as Germany, France, Belgium, France, and Italy and Japanese private companies and China were involved in the building of that particular complex.

²⁵¹ Companies from all over the world were involved at various degrees in building, developing and participating in the functioning of the plant. Several nationalities were employed in the Rabta Chemical Plant. For instance, more than a thousand Thai nationals were reported to have been employed there, as well as Pakistanis.

²⁵² See Zanders J P (2001) Libya's Chemical Weapons Programmes (1980-2000) Track Two Vol.10 (3) Dec. 2001. Article available online at: http://www.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/10_3/libya.html

²⁵³ A West-German company called Imhausen-Chemie was allegedly paid ten times the standard price to equip Rabta's plant. See Wiegele T C (1992:131). The Clandestine Building of Libya's Chemical Weapons Factory. Southern Illinois University Press: Carbondale.

A second Libyan CW plant, Pharma 200, was in fact a duplicate of the Rabta plant, built underground in a deserted area, about 650 miles south of Tripoli in the Sebha Oasis, a military base about 95 kilometres north of the Chadian-Libyan border. Construction of the Pharma 200 plant started in the late 1980s and was completed in 1992. It is believed that the German company, Imhausen developed and delivered plans for the plant.²⁵⁴ Two other German companies, Rose of Stuttgart, and Abacus in Ulm, were suspected in June 1990 of helping to design the facility.²⁵⁵

According to a report by the Soviet Foreign Intelligence Service, Libya attempted to acquire technology related to the production of chemical weapons from Iran and Iraq, but without success. Libya's chemical plant production and research programme suffered hugely from the sanctions (imposed in 1992) and the facilities constructed for this purpose had to be transferred to more than one location, and in some cases, were converted into facilities for medical purposes. The Soviet report also indicated that Libya was in possession of approximately 70-80 tonnes of chemical weapons. It had manufactured phosgene, sarin and sulphur mustard, but in limited quantities. According to this report, most of the production of the chemical stockpile came from Rabta's chemical complex (Hart and Kile, 2005:643). According to Tucker (2009:363), "Libya's chemical weapons (CW) capability was the most advanced of its WMD programs and the only one for which a stockpile actually existed". Libya CW stockpile and activities posed a grave threat to regional as well as international peace and stability.

Again, not surprisingly, the US Secretary of State, George Shultz voiced his concerns that Libya might deliver unconventional weapons to terrorist groups. In fact, Libya provided the IRA with SA-7 anti-craft missiles and plastic explosives (Semtex). However, According to Terrill, Qaddafi's regime considered the acquisition of chemical weapons as defensive and offensive benefits to its military, rather than being intended for support for terrorism. The Libyan regime also believed that chemical weapons capability would enhance its status within the Arab World as a regional power. Acquiring such weapons were considered to be risks worth taking due to the benefits this would bring to Libya's foreign policy, especially in that region (Terrill, 1994:58). It has been shown that Qaddafi believed the acquisition of

²⁵⁴ In the 1990s, Juergen Hippenstiel-Imhausen, the President of Imhausen was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison for tax evasion and export control violations in connection with work on the Rabta project. "West German Firm Said To Have Aided Libya With New Chemical Weapons Plant", *Inside the Pentagon*, August 23, 1990:7.

²⁵⁵ Marc Fisher, "Libya Deal Ends in Jail for German", *The Washington Post*, June 28: 1990: p:33.

nuclear weapons was significant for his regime's survival, particularly given the existing hostile relations with several countries in the region and worldwide, but the failure to acquire such weapons forced Libya to resort to chemical weaponry as it is considered easier to manufacture in an effort to deter external threats and foreign aggression.

4.4.3 The Training of Libyan Scientists

An Egyptian nuclear scientist Salah Hedayat asserts that the option of Libya building its own infrastructure was chosen following the country's inability to purchase nuclear weapons (Bhatia, 1987:67). And the intentions were clear in this respect, as noted by Cooley, who stated in 1981 that:

Of the 2,000 Libyan students now in the United States, approximately 200-300 are studying nuclear physics. If Qaddafi ever acquires a nuclear bomb, its creator may be either Dr. Fathi Nooh, a Libyan nuclear physicist trained at Berkeley, or Dr. Fathi Shingi, another Libyan trained in the British and Indian nuclear establishments (Cooley, 1981:87).

Cooley's statement was supported by Müller who mentioned the presence of Libyans studying nuclear physics in different parts of the world,²⁵⁶ both in the East and West.²⁵⁷ As a defensive measure, the US administration decided to prevent Libyan students to study nuclear physics (Müller, 1987: 264).²⁵⁸

Furthermore, in 1984, three years after the building of Tajura, a research centre was established at the same site. This was reported to be

staffed by 750 Libyan specialists and technicians aided by Soviet staff. Many students were sent abroad; a group of 200 was studying in the United States until early 1983 when the United States proscribed training Libyans in nuclear science.²⁵⁹

According to one Libyan senior official with an extensive knowledge of Libya's nuclearisation programme, the Libyan government went through financial, technical and economic hardship to continue with the programme. This official stated that:

The nuclear programme requires a huge amount of money as well as the establishment of a whole infrastructure with companies and factories. If such a programme was implemented, it would have been very difficult to

²⁵⁶ In the early 1980s, the US was the preferred destination for Libyan students.

²⁵⁷ Harald Müller,(1987), *A European Non-Proliferation Policy. Prospects and Problems*, Oxford: Clarendon press.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. p.264.

²⁵⁹ See: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/libya/nuclear.htm>

hide its resources, its functioning and its purposes. Libya has always been a country with limited technical capabilities, represented by a small number of experts who studied in Western Universities. Additionally, relying on foreign expertise is not a wise policy, because if identified, it will unveil to the international community a Libyan nuclear weapons programme. The other dissuading factor is the economic one, since Libya does have only one main natural resource, oil. So, due to the enormous financial needed for any nuclear programme, most of the oil revenues would have been dedicated to such a project.²⁶⁰

The declarations of this high ranking official lead to the conclusion that a nuclear project was something beyond Libya's capacity in terms of the country's financial and technical capabilities. Indeed, according to this individual, Qaddafi's ambition to obtain nuclear weapons was far from being achievable. The Libyan case cannot be compared with that of other nations such as Iran because of its lack of technical base and indigenous experts (Müller, 2007:78). Several reasons accounted for the failure to implement formal agreements with the countries that could have assisted Libya. One external factor was the pressure brought to bear by the US, and internal considerations from other political actors within the various countries (Bowen, 2006:27).²⁶¹

For example, in 1977, Moscow was asked to provide assistance for the construction of a natural uranium heavy water moderated reactor, heavy water production facility, reprocessing plant for irradiated nuclear fuel and plutonium separation, and other related facilities. Negotiations started between Libyan and representatives of the Soviet company Atomenergokspport in order to build a nuclear power with two 440MW reactors in the Sirte province. According to Timerbaev (2008), Libya offered \$10 billion for the development of a closed nuclear fuel cycle. However, the Soviets were against nuclear proliferation and the emergence of new nuclear weapon states, consequently the Qaddafi regime's offer was rejected. Moreover, Libya's behaviour on the international stage was another obstacle towards finalising any further nuclear agreements due to the unpredictability of Qaddafi's reactions. In 1980 the IAEA demanded that Libya allow international inspection of its facilities, and following Libya's compliance in this matter, the Russians delivered a light water 10MW reactor that was using highly enriched uranium, for the Tajura Nuclear

²⁶⁰ This information was gathered following a fieldwork interview conducted in Libya with a Libyan official in summer 2012.

²⁶¹ Hence, it was seen dangerous for the world and regional security to provide such a personage with nuclear capacities.

Research Centre (TNRC) (Timerbaev, 2008:113).²⁶² The TNRC had 15 research departments and laboratories which encompassed critical facilities with the intention of generating and producing nuclear activities (Hart and Kile, 2005:636). Between 1981 and 1983, the newly-built reactor began to operate in Tajura, but subsequently, it was reported that the nuclear programme was not in operation due to the hesitation from foreign companies to provide the needed supplies (Solingen, 2007:217).²⁶³

According to IAEA documents, Libya had taken significant steps in nuclear activities between 1983 and 1989, by conducting a small-scale uranium conversion at the Tajura Nuclear Research Centre (TNRC). However, there is no evidence that through the research project, there was any use of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆). The training itself was provided on power systems, mass spectrometers, welding, gas handling, quality control, computerised matching techniques, and heat treatment of materials. It is understandable that such training raised international concerns and it was feared that by mastering the process of uranium conversion, Libya would be able to go further and develop nuclear weapons (Hart and Kile, 2005:640).

After that period and until 1994, a small quantity of uranium was converted. This process was considered significant and potentially to be used for military purposes. According to Bahgat (2008), in 1984 “Libya ordered a modular uranium facility from a Far Eastern country” and decided, a decade later, in July 1995 to revive its nuclear activities including gas centrifuge uranium enrichment. It is believed that North Korea was that country, although not specifically mentioned by name, and that it delivered UF₆ to Libya between September 2000 and February 2001 (Bahgat, 2008:130-131).

However, the material did not arrive in Libya until 1986 as the Libyan authorities concealed the equipment in several locations in order to evade international inspection. In fact, real difficulties were encountered while trying to assemble this equipment because the instruction guide was not delivered with the components which had been stored for several years without use. For almost ten years, the Libyans tried to assemble these components to create

²⁶²Roland Timerbaev (2008): On Libya, Antimissile Defense, As Well As Other Autobiographical Events, *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security*, 14:1, 111-124

²⁶³ Several private companies from various countries such as the US, Poland, Hungary, and Switzerland provided the Tajura reactor with equipment.

centrifuges but without success (Corera, 2006:108). Unlike other nuclear aspirants such as Iran and North Korea, Libya found its nuclearisation programme to be daunting.

Additionally, a nuclear plant necessitates a significant amount of uranium, and in pursuit of this, Libya imported large quantities of yellowcake from Niger between 1978 and 1991, and engaged in uranium conversion in the late 1980s (Cirincione et al., 2005: 322).²⁶⁴ According to Hart and Kile (2005), Libya's nuclear infrastructure was modest, yet a former Libyan representative at the IAEA stated that Libya imported depleted uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) on various occasions in 1985, 2000, and 2001, but failed to declare it to the IAEA. The UF₆ is a compound used for the uranium enrichment process, and which produces fuel for nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons. Uranium has less than 1% of the fissile uranium 235, while a nuclear device requires uranium enriched to at least 20% U-235. Libya also failed to declare to the agency, its activities related to concentrated uranium and uranium oxides, uranium tetrafluoride (UF₄), and the transfer of waste resulting from this process. Additionally, the Libyan government did not inform the IAEA about its use of uranium for radiation, its treatment, or the design of centrifuge stations.²⁶⁵ Uranium tetrafluoride (UF₄) is an intermediate compound which is used for uranium conversion; it can be also converted to uranium hexafluoride for enrichment, especially in centrifuges (Cirincione et al., 2005:464).

4.4.4 American Efforts to Discourage Nuclear Proliferation

The spread of nuclear weapons has always been a major concern for the United States. During the presidencies of George H W Bush, and Bill Clinton, the US assisted former soviet republics such as Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in dismantling thousands of nuclear weapons installed in their region before the collapse of the Soviet Union. This initiative could be attributed to the diplomacy of various US presidents, keen to convince the new states to give up nuclear weapons after the fall of the Soviet Union (Cirincione et al., 2005:8).

The proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world, and in particular the Middle East as well as North Africa, is closely monitored by the two superpowers. For instance, concerning Libya's nuclear weapons programme, initially (in the 1970s and 1980s) the country was not

²⁶⁴ Yellowcake is a concentrate produced during the milling process that contains about 80% uranium oxide (U₃O₈). In preparation for uranium enrichment, the yellowcake is converted to uranium hexafluoride gas (UF₆). In the preparation of natural uranium reactor fuel, yellowcake is processed into purified uranium dioxide.

²⁶⁵ Interview conducted by the researcher in summer 2012.

considered close to obtaining nuclear weapons and consequently Libya's nuclear programme did not pose a threat to international peace and stability during the first two decades of Qaddafi's regime. However, in the 1990s the progress of Libya's nuclear programme induced states such as the US to reassess Libya's nuclear and missiles programmes (Campbell et al., 2004:62).

Preventing Libya from acquiring sensitive technology and nuclear materials was a policy pursued by the US for more than three decades. In this respect, the US campaigned successfully to prevent the transfer of dual use and military technology to Libya, by winning the approval of 33 nations' members of the Charter of the 'Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual Goods and Technologies'. The 'Wassenaar establishment' functions as a control for the transfer of sensitive military technology. The said arrangement was formerly known as the Co-ordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control, having been founded during the Cold War era to prevent the spread of military technology to the Soviet bloc (Cirincione et al., 2005:318). It was effective, as shown in 1984 when the Belgian government tried to enter into an agreement with the Libyans but were placed under pressure from the US and other European states not to do so (Müller, 2007:78).

Kroenig (2010) also notes that in 1985, Argentina tried to transfer some nuclear technology to Libya under a bilateral agreement intended to provide Libya with plutonium reprocessing facilities. When the US discovered that Argentina was prepared to export nuclear technology to Libya, it placed pressure upon Argentina to call off the deal and cancel the transaction. Kroenig (2010:105-110) also underlines the fact that states enjoying security guarantees and alliances, such as Taiwan and Argentina, are less likely to provide nuclear co-operation when faced with US pressure. Accordingly, Argentina understood the demands of the US and did not resume the deal with the Libyan government. However, there are reports which contradict Kroenig's account. For instance, Cirincione et al. (2005:322) assert that Libya and Argentina had in fact co-operated in nuclear technology and information through the provision by Argentina of a plutonium reprocessing facility.

The evolution of the Libyan project to secure nuclear weapons was assessed by the CIA in the late 1990s, the outcome being that the CIA reported that Libya was far from developing a nuclear capability and becoming a nuclear threat.²⁶⁶ The report maintained that Libya's

²⁶⁶ Although the US was not really concerned by the evolution of Libya's nuclear programme on the ground, it

nuclear programme did not have the appropriate funding, lacked the relevant experts, and did not benefit from nuclear co-operation with foreign firms.²⁶⁷ It concluded that Libya's nuclear programme was dependent on the Soviet research reactor which was under the safeguards of the IAEA (Takeyh, 2001:68). However, despite the fact that the US assessed Libya as being a long way from manufacturing a nuclear bomb, the US remained concerned about Libya's ambitions, probably due to the potential for Qaddafi's pursuit of nuclear weapons to trigger a similar move amongst his neighbours, willing to protect themselves from the Libyan threat. Takeyh (2001) saw Libya's desire to pursue nuclear weapons capability as understandable, especially given that the country's natural resources had been, in several instances, coveted by powerful neighbours such as Algeria. At the same time Libya's relations with Egypt were unstable. These circumstances, according to Takeyh (2001) should have been enough to lead the US to conclude that Libya's pursuit of nuclear weaponry was entirely to be expected, and that diplomacy was required to realise a sensible outcome. On this issue, he stated:

Tripoli has chosen to build up its air power, missile force, and chemical weapons in order to deter potential adversaries with larger armies. Both of these factors - the rudimentary level of Libya's WMD program and the genuine basis for its regional insecurity suggest that it might be possible to persuade Tripoli to abandon its plans for WMD. US diplomacy should persuade Libya that its WMD projects will only precipitate a regional arms race that will exacerbate, rather than alleviate, its vulnerability (Takeyh, 2001:69).

The reinvigoration of Libya's nuclear programme in the mid-1990s was simultaneous with Libyan government efforts to normalise relations with the US on issues related to terrorism, Lockerbie, and nuclear proliferation. In fact, Qaddafi's regime contradictory statements and behaviour in particular regarding its rogue foreign policy, nuclear policy and Libya's relations with the US. On the one hand, the regime due to several reasons (i.e. economic sanctions, low oil prices, threat of military action and international isolation) attempted to approach the US and at the same time opted to reinvigorate its nuclear weapons programme. The tipping point behind the shift of Qaddafi's regime policies was politically calculated. Despite the fact that the regime's behaviour was contradictory, due to Qaddafi's perception that his approach to normalise Libya's relations with the US would end in failure, therefore he would opt to continue a rogue foreign policy and develop a nuclear capacity.

nevertheless pressured the potential suppliers in order to avoid the transfer of nuclear materials to Libya.

²⁶⁷ The agreements signed with several countries were not respected by the suppliers, the contracts were often disputed at national levels (i.e. parliaments and opposition parties, and the media also played a challenging role).

These efforts were indicated for instance, in 1999, when Qaddafi sent a formal offer of rapprochement to the US, through his representatives who secretly attempted to negotiate with their US counterparts on the surrender of Libya's WMD programmes, during the Clinton administration (Hochman, 2006:66). In fact, Qaddafi's regime feared that its efforts to normalise its diplomatic relations with the US might be rebuffed, and that if the sanctions and isolation did not come to an end, it would be necessary to follow its other strategy to obtain unconventional weapons. Libya's concerns about the international community and the powerful states such as the US, UK and France, did in fact, compel it to develop its nuclear weapons programme in parallel with its rapprochement with the US and the international community.

Another example of Qaddafi's wish to re-establish relations with the US was seen in 1989 with the statement by Libya's former foreign minister, Jadallah Azzuz al-Talhi that the Libyan government wanted to reinstate these links. In the same vein in 1993, Libya's ambassador to the UN, Ibrahim Al-Bishari 1993 said "the United States is an important state in this world, and we can only seek to establish the best relations with it in the framework of respect and mutual interests". After the collapse of the USSR, Qaddafi's regime had to be more pragmatic in its relations with the world's sole superpower. Thus, it could not ignore the reality of the post-Cold War era, especially after being labelled as a rogue state. Furthermore, after the inauguration of Bush's Presidency, Qaddafi indicated that he was prepared to negotiate disarmament and resolve the issues between Libya and the US (St John, 2002:153).

The evidence of this desire for rapprochement was provided by Al-Bishari and Al-Talhi, two senior officials in Qaddafi's regime, who stated that Libya's intention was to end the mistrust and hostilities between the two states. According to Moss (2010:2), "for nearly a decade, he [Qaddafi] tried in vain to facilitate rapprochement through various intermediaries, including U.S. congressman Gary Hart and other foreign leaders such as Saudi Prince Bander Bin Sultan and the South African leader Nelson Mandela". The stringent measures such as diplomatic isolation and economic sanctions imposed by the US and the international community because of the Qaddafi regime's aggressive policies, had considerably damaged Libya's economy and interests such that Qaddafi was searching for some solution to the problems.

However, Qaddafi's early attempts at rapprochement with the US failed due to the Lockerbie affair. For relationships to be resumed, Libya had to accept responsibility. According to the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Martin Indyk, "[i]n October 1999, Libya repeated its offer on chemical weapons and agreed to join the Middle East multilateral arms control talks taking place at the time. Why did we not pursue the Libyan WMD offer then? Because resolving the Pan Am 103 issues was our condition for any further engagement" (Hochman, 2006:72-73).

Indeed, since the early 1990s, and even before the implementation of the sanctions, Libya wanted to normalise its relations with the West in general and the US in particular, but the Lockerbie affair posed a major obstacle. There was also legal concern from the US Congress regarding US terror victims. However, the penalties imposed upon the Libyan regime which harmed the country's interests, and especially its oil infrastructure, also damaged US investments in that sector. Clearly, the solution was to readmit the Qaddafi regime to the international community but Qaddafi would have to be pragmatic in order to persuade the US and the UN to lift the sanctions and bring the diplomatic isolation to an end; and simultaneously, to stay in power. The regime could not ignore the reality of international institutions such as the UN in the post-communist era, which was dominated by the US, Britain, and France (Chorin, 2012:60). And, as will be shown in the next chapter, the regime had to comply with the US conditions prior to any rapprochement (i.e. solve the Lockerbie crisis, end state-sponsored terrorism, and dismantle its nuclear weapons programme).

4.4.5 Libya and the Khan Network

The relationship between the Libyan regime and Pakistan goes back to the first two decades of Qaddafi's rule, but more concrete development occurred in the 1990s with what became known as the *Khan Network*. A Pakistani official, Altaf Abbasi,²⁶⁸ asserted that Salem Bin Amer, an important member of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) travelled with him to the Netherlands to meet A Q Khan and discuss the possibility of assisting Libya's nuclear programme in return for financial assistance. After this meeting Qaddafi agreed to

²⁶⁸ Abbasi was, at that time, one of the close aids of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan.

extend financial support for Pakistan's nuclear programme in exchange for co-operation in the development of Libya's own programme (Solingen, 2007:217).

Libyan officials first met the nuclear scientist A Q Khan in January 1984 (IAEA report) when he briefed them about nuclear production technology. Libya had the option of buying the centrifugal uranium enrichment technology, but this acquisition would have been useless due to the lack of Libyan technical knowledge.²⁶⁹ The contacts with Khan were more frequent between 1989 and 1991, and through these contacts, the Libyan regime was able to gain more information about the centrifuges established by the Pakistani scientist.²⁷⁰ The ready-made centrifuges are rotary cylinders used for uranium enrichment. Eventually, the regime did order some components which turned out to be unsuitable for the implementation of a nuclear programme, and having discovered this, the Libyans bitterly criticised the people who sold them these devices.

Libya was prevented from purchasing an assembled centrifuge by the UN Security Council embargo; it was not possible to get the purchased equipment in storage in Dubai. Despite the early disappointment with the lack of progress with Khan, Libya kept the communication channel open, and in 1995 Pakistan agreed to send 20 assembled P-1 readymade centrifuges to Tripoli, together with the components to assemble at least another 200 centrifuges (Cirincione et al., 2005:463).²⁷¹

Another attempt to revive Libya's nuclear programme was made in 1995 and that proved to be more rewarding. The link with Khan's network had introduced Libya to the black market which allowed the country to obtain the required material, components, and technology through Khan. In 1997, Khan's network managed to sell Libya twenty centrifuges and an additional two hundred parts (relevant for building), amounting to sufficient equipment to establish a research programme. In the same year, Khan and his colleagues met the head of the Libyan nuclear programme, Matoug Mohamed Matoug, in Istanbul. The Libyan official

²⁶⁹ Implementation of the NPT safeguards the agreement of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Report by the Director General, GOV/2008/39, September 12, 2008, <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2008/gov2008-39.pdf>

²⁷⁰ Some of the components of the centrifuges were scheduled for transfer.

²⁷¹ Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Report by the Director General, GOV/2004/12, February 20, 2004, <https://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2004/gov2004-11.pdf>

requested a complete centrifuge facility, since Libya did not possess the ability to manufacture its own (Corera, 2006:109).

After several failed attempts, the L-1 test eventually succeeded in October 2000.²⁷² Later that year Libya began the installation of cascades with 9, 19 and 64 centrifuges,²⁷³ and by September 2000, Libya had received two L-2 centrifuges.²⁷⁴ Subsequently, another 5,000 with the appropriate equipment were ordered.²⁷⁵ In reality, Khan was only acting as a mediator in the production and delivery of components and equipment in different countries. Behind that network, people and companies from at least thirteen countries were involved.²⁷⁶ In terms of costs, the Libyan state paid 100 million dollars to the Khan network (Laufer, 2005). By 2000, Libya had received thousands of P-2 centrifuges from Khan's network.²⁷⁷ Such a quantity is usually sufficient to produce fissile materials for several bombs. The delivery included all related equipment, design, and twenty tons of UF₆ (Corera, 2006:109).²⁷⁸ The Libyans were satisfied with the services of the Khan network, in particular because they were able to evade IAEA safeguards and detection.²⁷⁹

Libya's former foreign minister, Shalgum, states that the Head of Libya's nuclear weapons programme Matoug Mohamed Matoug requested that he send some Libyan scientists to Pakistan. Accordingly, Shalgum visited Pakistan and secretly discussed the proposal in a military air base with Pervez Musharraf.²⁸⁰ Accordingly, close co-operation developed between Libya and Pakistan, providing the Libyan trainees with Pakistani ID cards during the

²⁷² The L-1 centrifuge design is an old design of European origin, also referred to as G-1, or P-1.

²⁷³ The first order was then increased to 10,000 centrifuges.

²⁷⁴ The L-2 is similar to other European designs, being more advanced than the L-1 type centrifuges, and using maraging steel rotors instead of aluminium rotors.

²⁷⁵ *Report by the Director General. Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.* Available online at: <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2004/gov2004-12.pdf>

²⁷⁶ Germany, Spain, Italy, Lichtenstein, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, South Korea, Singapore, Turkey, Switzerland, South Africa, and Japan. See Laufer M (2005), *A Q Khan Nuclear Chronology*. Article available online at: <http://carnegieendowment.org/2005/09/07/a.-q.-khan-nuclear-chronology/6jq>

²⁷⁷ The P-2 centrifuge is the same design as the one developed by Germany in the early 1970s and stolen by A Q Khan from Urenco, the uranium enrichment consortium of Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands. In fact, the P-2 uranium enrichment output is about 2.5 times better than the P-1 centrifuge. For more information, see the article by Albright and Shire (2008) "Iran Installing More Advanced Centrifuges at Natanz Pilot Enrichment Plant: Factsheet on the P-2/IR-2 Centrifuge" and published by the *Institute of Science and International Security (ISIS)*

²⁷⁸ The Khan network was able to evade the NPT regime for several years.

²⁸⁰ Shalgum interview with Gassan Sharbal of *Al hayat* newspaper published in June 2011.

phase of their preparation for Libya's nuclear programme. On the whole, the Libyan official acknowledged that Libya's nuclear programme suffered from mismanagement and corruption on a massive scale. He also stated that Libya's decision-makers paid huge amounts of money in the efforts to acquire nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Shalgum also argued that in addition to Libya's mismanagement of the programme, there was also the problem that Libya was not capable of producing the atom bomb, due to lack of expertise and manpower.

Shalgum asserted that the Pakistani Head of State, Pervez Musharraf, knew about the clandestine nuclear activities with states considered as radical, such as Libya. However, when it was discovered that Pakistan was dealing in nuclear components with Libya, the government denied the allegations and maintained that Dr Khan, their chief scientist, had provided Libya with the required equipment, in particular with the weapon design, without the knowledge of the Pakistani government (Campbell et al., 2004:137).

Mohamed Elbaradei, the former head of the IAEA, confirmed Shalgum's statement. According to him, Libya had engaged in a uranium enrichment programme for several years, and during this period had received equipment and the design of nuclear weapons from the Pakistani nuclear scientist Khan network as well as from other private firms.²⁸¹ The IAEA official stated that he had been informed that one of the causes of Libya's nuclear programme was a response to the US attack on Libya in April 1986 (Elbaradei, 2011:149). However, the explanation given by Elbaradei seems inconsistent with the facts since the bombing of Libya did not occur until 1986, and all the evidence shows that Qaddafi's regime started the process of obtaining nuclear capability in the early 1970s. In fact, the airstrike of the 1986 accelerated Libya's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, due to its fears of similar attacks in future.

The black market network, offering nuclear technology and equipment, played an essential role in the transfer of materials and technology to states such as Libya, North Korea, and Iran,²⁸² since it served to reduce the technology barriers for states seeking to acquire a nuclear weapons programme covertly. For instance, the IAEA did not know about Libya's uranium enrichment prior to Libya's own announcement of its secret nuclear weapons programme (Campbell et al., 2004:343). Clearly, despite being a signatory to the NPT, Libya

²⁸¹ Elbaradei stated that Libya had also received nuclear assistance from South Africa regarding its programme.

²⁸² These countries deliberately violated their obligations as members of the NPT.

did not respect its provisions.²⁸³ The acquisition of nuclear weapons was seen as essential for the Qaddafi regime's survival yet the only way to secure these was by violating international norms concerning nuclearisation. In fact, autocratic countries such as Libya, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Syria did not comply with the IAEA safeguards or with the NPT. Had the IAEA been able to coerce these countries into compliance, they would quite likely have had to surrender their nuclear weapons programmes.

4.5 Factors Affecting Libya's Shift in Foreign Policy and Nuclearisation

In this section, all the factors which influenced the initial shift and new formulation of Libya's foreign policy (from 1982 until 2000) are raised. As discussed in the theoretical framework, there were several influences - domestic, regional, and international - that affected Libyan politics between 1982 and 2000, especially the development of its nuclear programme. Indeed, during this period, Libya reached the peak of its antagonism with the US, the West, and regional countries. However, at the end of the same period, Libya started to change its foreign policy with its neighbours, powerful states, and international institutions. Furthermore, on more than one occasion Libya attempted to reconcile and cease its previous policies, such as those concerned with its sponsorship of terrorism, meddling in the affairs of other countries, and the aggressive ideological stances on various issues.

4.5.1 Domestic Factors Affecting Libyan Behaviour

Although the domestic element did not play a major role in the previous period between 1969 and 1981, in the period that followed (1982-2000), domestic issues substantially increased in their influence. As already explained in this chapter, several aspects of Libya's domestic policy had an impact on its shift in foreign policy, not least being Qaddafi's oppressive rule and the treatment of Libyan individuals who opposed his policies and the regime's political system. Domestic policies concerning political belief compelled hundreds of people to flee the country (i.e. businessmen, students, army officers, ambassadors, and ministers) and form opposition groups to the regime in countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Algeria, the US, Britain, and France. Since there was an absence of communication channels with the outside world they made it their responsibility to reveal Qaddafi's gruesome domestic policies. They had also formed political groups such as the National Salvation of Libya. Some of these

²⁸³ The IAEA was unaware of the covert nuclear activities of Libya.

groups received training and logistics to topple Qaddafi and his regime, as for example, former soldiers (i.e. Khalifa Haftar) who had fled from the Chad war to the US.

Another domestic group which played a role during this period, was the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) who continually opposed Qaddafi. Qaddafi focused on this particular group and considered them enemies, because they not only opposed him, but they actually wanted to assassinate him and bring an end to his regime. In fact, the LIFG fought against Qaddafi's security forces for several years, without achieving much, since most of them were either arrested or fled the country.

The third category on the domestic front was the military. Qaddafi feared the military institutions, perceiving them as a source of threat to his regime. After the first coup attempt carried out by Qaddafi's colleague, other attempts were made by groups of military officers from different cities. Although these all failed, Qaddafi continued to dissolve the regular army and formed brigades to save his regime from the perceived internal threats. Dissolving the regular army might have contributed to Qaddafi's quest to acquire nuclear weapons as a means of compensating for the vacuum left by the dissolution of the army.

4.5.1.1 The Role of Ideology

The importance of ideology in Libya between 1982 until 2000 varied since this represents a time period of almost two decades. In fact, the role played by ideology in Qaddafi's regime varied in strength according to the issue at hand. The most significant point to grasp is that the regime's interests and survival outweighed any ideology. However, Qaddafi used ideological approaches in order to obtain support in the developing countries and he provided them with assistance purely because he wanted to be perceived as a leader of a revolution. Therefore, he supported several movements and organisations that were outlawed by their governments. In Libya, ideology was used to mobilise the population and to obtain legitimacy. Additionally, Qaddafi used his ideology in different instances to criticise some countries (i.e. the West, the US, Israel, and some Arab countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco.). However, ideology had no influence upon issues such as national security or trade.

According to Black (2003:254), “Qaddafi’s ideology and rule are constantly changing”. His interests and pragmatism overwhelmed the role of ideology, especially in security and trade. The pragmatism and interests of Qaddafi could be seen in the Lockerbie, UTA airliner, and Berlin discotheque cases. For instance, the regime’s ideology and rhetoric against the US, Britain, and France was not constant, and interests surpassed the rhetoric in order to get the sanctions lifted. Additionally, Qaddafi used his ideology when dealing with several issues such as the Arab/Israeli question, Libya’s sovereignty, imperialism, and colonialism, yet abandoned it during the sanctions period when the regime was seeking opportunities to re-engage in the international arena, and end the threat of military action, the sanctions, and the isolation.

4.5.1.2 The Role of Oil

Oil certainly played a substantial role in directing the Qaddafi regime’s behaviour, since the economy was almost entirely dependent upon that sector. In the period under review, the low prices of oil revenues, international sanctions, and absence of big oil companies, all combined to compel the Libyan regime to comply with the UNSC resolution, and the demands of the Western states, in order to remove the economic sanctions and end the country’s political and economic isolation. In fact, the declining oil revenues during the sanction periods and the discontent of Libyan citizens with the regime, because of the low wages and unemployment, definitely had an impact on the change in Libya’s foreign policy. According to a former senior official in Qaddafi’s regime “The UN sanctions did have an effect on Libya in all fields”.²⁸⁴ In fact, international sanctions affected various Libyan sectors (i.e. oil industry, aviation, infrastructure and the military). In view of the above discussion, it is evident that the oil factor had a modest impact on the continuation of Libya’s nuclear weapons programme.

Libya’s dependence on oil revenues was heavy and as a result, the UN sanction weakened its economy. As one former Libyan ambassador stated “the sanctions did weaken the Libyan economy and did take their heavy toll on the economy”.²⁸⁵ This argument is supported by Black (2003:256) who maintains that “UN sanctions in effect from 1992 to 1999, influenced

²⁸⁴ Interview with senior a former senior official in Qaddafi’s regime, Libya

²⁸⁵ Interview with former ambassador during a fieldwork interview, Libya

the Libyan economy and isolated the country from the world community". The lack of oil income resulting from low oil exports during this critical period of Qaddafi's rule had affected several projects and undermined the regime. Consequently, the role played by oil did have a modest influence on persuading the regime to reconsider its policies regarding the development of its nuclear weapons programme.

4.5.2 Regional Factors Affecting Libya's Foreign and Security Policies

Despite the fact that Libya's relations with its neighbouring countries were relatively better than in the previous decade, Qaddafi still appreciated that his regime was in danger of being attacked by states such as Egypt and Sudan, purely because his policies clearly revealed his regional ambitions which were at odds with those of his neighbours, and which were evidenced in Qaddafi's meddling in their internal politics. Indeed several neighbouring countries accused Qaddafi of attempting to overthrow their regimes. For example, during this period, Libya was accused by the Sudanese government of supporting rebel groups in the South of Sudan. And strong differences of opinion existed between the Egyptian government and Qaddafi regarding the Arab/Israeli conflict and Qaddafi's policies in the region. This type of behaviour led to conflict and the skirmishes which Libya had with most of its neighbours convinced them to contain the Libyan regime and its policies, especially during the sanctions.

In fact, countries in the region exploited the situation in Libya both politically and economically. On the political level, most of the Arab countries in Libya's periphery isolated Qaddafi during the international sanctions. For example, the bordering countries ignored Qaddafi, refusing to acknowledge him as an effective actor since the international isolation had reduced his influence. On the economic level, they tried to gain economic benefits and advantages due to the fact that Libya needed to use their territories for importing goods, transportation, and travelling.

Moreover, Tanter (1998:136) maintained that the Arab World deliberately isolated Qaddafi during the sanction period in order to prevent his subversive activities towards their countries. This regional isolation of Libya by its neighbouring countries prompted the Libyan regime to re-think its attitudes towards the region, and consequently to shift its policies significantly, resulting in the regime's later focus on Africa and not the Arab World.

4.5.3 External Factors Affecting Libyan Foreign Policy and the Nuclear Programme

The external pressure exerted on Qaddafi's regime was of huge significance in forcing the shift in Libya's behaviour and policies as there were various measures taken the regime to do this. Libya's affiliation with outlawed organisations and its quest for nuclear weapons were genuine concerns for the rest of the world and hence, it was possible to effect a collective resistance to Qaddafi and to sustain that. In fact, Libya's behaviour shift was motivated by several external elements, an important one being the international isolation of Qaddafi's regime, and especially the attitude of powerful states such as the US, Britain, and France. This entrenched isolation forced Qaddafi to accept any opportunities for rapprochement so that the issues underpinning the isolation could be addressed. Another element was the matter of Libya's nuclear weapons which was considered a threshold to any re-engagement with the international community, and especially the US as America had no intention of lifting any sanctions unless Qaddafi's regime made concessions regarding Libya's unconventional weapons. Other external factors were Libya's support for terrorism, and the dispute concerning the trial of the Lockerbie suspects.

In fact, the Libyan regime started to re-orient its policies and behaviour after several years of isolation and sanctions, as it was coerced to co-operate with the powerful states (such as the US, UK, and France), and the international community, and comply with international institutions. Being a small outlawed state, Libya found itself under sanctions, diplomatically isolated, and threatened militarily due to its association with terrorism and its adventurist policies. Qaddafi's regime tried to avoid the costs of more sanctions and threats of force, having eventually come to realise that its interests rested in compliance with the international community, and that it had to bring an end to certain issues related to its unconventional policies and behaviour. The concerns about terrorism and nuclear weapons were top priorities for the international community. At the same time, Qaddafi's regime wanted the removal of unilateral/multilateral sanctions and a change to the country's isolation. It was hard for Libya to challenge the UN Security Council and the post-Cold war reality. Hence, it was decided to co-operate with the international institutions on these issues of concern. Qaddafi was aware that only by changing his foreign policy, by complying with the UNSC resolutions and co-operating with international institutions, the country would be able to reintegrate within the international community.

The effects of sanctions had been dire throughout the Libyan economy, and could not be sustained by the country in the long term. In line with new pragmatism and intentions to be reintegrated within the international community, and desperate to ride Libya of the economic burdens occasioned by the sanctions, Qaddafi announced “[n]ow is the era of economy, consumption, markets, and investments. This is what unites people irrespective of language, religion, and nationalities” (Takeyh, 2001:66). Qaddafi’s long-standing ideology became obsolete; in its place he opted for pragmatism and complied with the demands of the international community. He decided to adapt new policies and re-engage in international politics, in the hope of finding a new role for himself as a regional leader.

The aims of the various US administrations were not limited purely to finding a solution to the Lockerbie crisis, but also to bringing an end to Libya’s support for international terrorism. And another often-mentioned and important matter was Qaddafi’s ambition and intention to acquire different types of non-conventional weaponry, including his desire to develop a nuclear weapons programme (Takeyh, 2001). An ex-Libyan representative at the IAEA who was interviewed during the fieldwork pointed out that UN sanctions had an impact on the continuity of Libya’s nuclear programme, saying:

The UN sanctions imposed on Libya did have a negative impact on the Libyan nuclear programme. The states started following the Libyan foreign economic policies, its financial transactions, monetary transfers, and enquiring how Libyan money was spent. Finally, the last step was to ‘dry’ the only source left to the Libyan regime, represented either by official companies and others.

The effect of sanctions on states such as Libya that were trying to acquire unconventional weapons was immense. Moreover, Libya could not continue to develop its programme without being held responsible for the consequences of such activity by the international community.

It can be appreciated that the external factor had a much stronger impact than the other factors because Qaddafi wanted to save his regime from collapsing which would have been the logical outcome of the external pressure by the international institutions and powerful states such as the US. Within this context, it is clear that the negative impact of Libya’s isolation convinced the regime to try to end the stand-off, since with increasing globalisation, it had become apparent that states cannot survive on their own.

4.5.4 Multiple Factors - Domestic, Regional and External Influencing Libya's Foreign and Security Policies

From the previous discussion, it is evident that in this particular period, there was variation in the role played by the many factors which exerted an impact on Libya's initial policy shifts. The importance of the domestic factor had grown from the previous period, due to increasing opposition to Qaddafi's regime by several segments within Libyan society which could voice an opinion and spur into action because of communications development resulting from the globalisation phenomenon and technological advances. In fact, it is widely accepted that globalisation prevents the domestic affairs of any state from remaining secret. And despite the previous track record of the regime in maintaining a strong grip in Libya, there was strong opposition from various elements of Libyan society, including military personnel, Islamists, and largely the general public. To sum up, the role of the domestic factor was important in forcing Libya's policy change because society had become stronger, more able to communicate, more vocal about its oppression, whereas in the previous period the domestic players were kept under greater control.

The regional factor also motivated Libya's reconsideration of its policies because Libya did not enjoy good relations with its neighbours due to Qaddafi's interference in their affairs, and the deterioration in those relationships were potential threats to his regime. Therefore, Libya was isolated during the sanction period by its neighbouring countries, as well as by the rest of the world, and the knowledge that his government was unpopular regionally, encouraged Qaddafi to alter his behaviour not only towards African states but also towards the international community, particularly the powerful states.

The relationship with the powerful states stands as the most important of all factors, however, as this conditioned other external factors which almost brought the regime to its knees. Pressure from outside, in various forms such as threats by the US to destroy the chemical plant, international isolation, absence of investment in the oil sector, US and UN sanctions, combined to produce an extremely strong influence upon Libyan policies such that their previous emphasis on supporting terrorism and pursuing nuclear weaponry was removed. At the same time, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, whilst not an open threat in itself, meant that the Libyan region had lost an important supportive ally and altogether, these outside influences compelled the Libyan regime to reconsider its external policies.

4.5.5 Theoretical Discussion

In view of the foregoing debate, realism can be understood to be the most relevant theory for explaining Libya's motivations to pursue nuclear weaponry, and subsequently abandon that action. Essentially, in the face of a real and present danger coming from the West, the US, and the disintegration of its ally, the Soviet Union, the Qaddafi regime chose to comply with the major powers and the UN resolutions and demands, rather than confront them. Moreover, Libya ended its support for the outlawed movements in this period due to a genuine desire to bring its international isolation to an end, to improve the dire economic circumstances which the country had found itself in, and to avoid military attack (e.g. 1986 air raid). Therefore, the regime was seen to recognise the futility of its policies and to opt for a pragmatic approach rather than confrontation with the West and the US. The Libyan regime was convinced that its strategic interests must be in accordance with the rules of the international community.

In contrast to the last chapter, the neoclassical realism accounts can be seen in this period of time. Since the beginning of the 1980s the internal pressure started to increase, for example the activities of the opposition groups inside and outside Libya had become clearly noticeable. Due to the regime's policies (internal, regional and external) which had negative consequences on the Libyan population, the attitude of the Libyans was not conformed to the regime's outlook. There was a growth of extremist groups who wanted to topple the regime in some parts of the country and the rise of assassination attempts against Qaddafi.

In this regard, several former senior officials agreed that the impact of the external factor in different forms had a great impact on Libya's policy shift and the continuation of its nuclear weapons programme; and most of the interviewees also stated that the external factor had an impact on Libya's policies relating to terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. This theoretical argument is not only appropriate to explain the Libyan case, but it can also be generalised to understand other cases. As discussed above, the external factor in different forms, such as international isolation, sanctions, and the threat of using military force did persuade the Libyan government to change its long-held policies and associated behaviour. The success of these tools can be considered as useful means to persuade other countries suspected of nuclear proliferation such as Iran, Syria, and North Korea to give up their nuclear weapons. This theoretical perspective challenges the opinions of various scholars

who claim that constructivism is the best approach to explain the shift in Libya's policies and behaviour, because it is clear that Libyan compliance was not simply a response to the demands of the international community's norms, but to the regime's fear of further economic sanctions, political isolation and threat of military action (i.e. regime change). It is evident from the previous chapters that the regime did not respect the international norms, particularly those who are related to nuclear non-proliferation, intervention in the internal affairs of other states and supporting terrorism groups. Indeed, to achieve its geopolitical, social and economic interests, the regime had to change its policies in order to avoid domestic and external pressure.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined several of the major issues featuring within the theoretical framework, and has highlighted their relevance to this period of study. It began with an analysis of Libyan policies between 1982- 2000, pointing to a significant change in the behaviour of the government. A number of internal, regional, and external factors were shown to be the cause of this shift, and in contrast to the situation revealed in the previous chapter, the domestic influence on Qaddafi's government was seen to have grown. This advancement in internal pressure was seen to be linked to the emergence of opposition groups and their ability to communicate worldwide given increasing globalisation which opened Libya up to the rest of the world and vice versa. Simultaneously, the influence of the external pressure was shown to be important in effecting Libyan policy and behaviour change. Indeed, this external pressure and collective action by UN member states was significant in delaying the development of Libyan nuclear weapons. The actions by the US and UN members to end Libya's support for terrorism and nuclear proliferation compelled Libya to alter its policies. International actions and extreme measures such as sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and threat of military force coerced Libya to re-think its foreign and security policies, and after years of defiance, the Libyan regime finally agreed to comply and co-operate with the international community and the powerful states with regard to terrorism and nuclear proliferation. Regarding the regional factor, even though the effects of domestic and external factors were more influential, that too had a modest effect on Libyan policies. The influence of the external actor can be seen clearly when we compare the behaviour and the policies of the regime empirically in different periods. For example, while the regime was reluctant to obey the

international demands, its level of cooperation increased between 1982- 2000. This indeed was a result of the affect of external pressure namely economic sanctions, international isolation and threat of military action. It is worth mentioning here that these conditions may also be applicable to other countries involved in such activities.

Accordingly, the study suggests that realism is the most suitable approach when trying to understand the Libyan regime's behaviour and its reaction to the international community. Despite the fact that the internal pressure aspects started to appear on the Libyan public policies, its influence on the regime remained weak. In fact, the behaviour of Qaddafi's regime was according to its national interests and not in order to respect the regional and international norms as argued by constructivists. As will be seen in the next chapter, Qaddafi's regime abandoned its ideology which it had followed since Qaddafi came to power. For example, he believed in Libya's sovereignty but eventually surrendered the Lockerbie suspects to another authority, a step which contradicted his original ideological stance. This shows that states can change their policies under pressure regardless of their ideologies.

Chapter Five: The Last Decade; Negotiations and Dismantlement of Libya's Nuclear Programme

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the origins of the influence of domestic, regional, and international insecurity on Qaddafi's regime were discussed. Additionally, the impacts of the particular issues which Libya had to deal with, such as the Lockerbie affair, the UTA bombing, the La Belle discotheque bombing, and the sanctions imposed by the international community, on the continuation of Libya's nuclear programme, were considered.

Against that historic background, this chapter analyses the negotiation process which led eventually to the dismantlement of Libya's nuclear weapons programme. It starts by focusing on the consequences of this shift at the national level on one hand, and the relationship of the regime internationally, on the other hand. At the national level, the concentration is on Libya's policy changes, and in particular, the concessions made with regard to the denuclearisation and dismantlement of its stockpile of unconventional weapons. The chapter sheds light specifically on the most important phase of Qaddafi's changing policy, from 2001 until 2003. It should be noted that the study will consider both the internal and external policies of the regime after its denuclearisation in order to assess the implications of these policies on the internal and international levels.

Libya's dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme in 2003 is a vital aspect of this chapter.²⁸⁶ Indeed, this action by Libya was a result of several factors, which are discussed later in detail. At the international level, the focus is on the effects of external factors on the shift. In this regard, the events of 11 September, the invasion of Iraq, and the Libyan political leadership's desperate need to return to the international fold, stand as important motives which altered Libya's foreign and security policies. It is worth noting that in the aftermath of the terror attack of 9/11, Libya co-operated closely with the US and other Western countries

²⁸⁶ Kelsey Davenport reported that: "On December 19, 2003, long-time Libyan President Moammar Gaddafi stunned much of the world by renouncing Tripoli's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs and welcoming international inspectors to verify that Tripoli would follow through on its commitment". See the Chronology of Libya's Disarmament and Relations with the United States. Article Available at: <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/LibyaChronology>

regarding terrorism. Libya decided to join the West in the war on terror in order to divert the pressure it was receiving itself from the US and the international community. After reviewing the internal and external factors forcing Libya's denuclearisation, the implications of this event on domestic and foreign affairs, and the extent to which the Libyan case might be generalised to other cases such as Iran, Syria, and North Korea, are considered. It should be noted that this chapter covers extensive fieldwork interviews with former senior high officials, diplomats, intelligence officers, and ambassadors in Qaddafi's regime. Indeed, the data gained from these interviews has been extremely useful and productive, playing a principal role in filling the gaps in the existing literature by providing exclusive and unpublished information.

5.2 Features of the Libyan Policy Shift at the National Level

As discussed in the last chapter, the influence of domestic, regional, and international factors had changed the regime's policies at the national level. In fact, in the late 1990s, the regime seems to have had full control of the domestic scene as the Islamist groups were soundly crushed, especially after the failed assassination attempt upon Qaddafi and other military officers. As a reaction to these domestic threats, Qaddafi intentionally weakened the military establishment by not paying army personnel, and making several influential officers redundant. Later, he decided to completely dissolve the regular military institution, creating in its place, new special brigades consisting of members of loyal tribes and kinships. He particularly relied upon his own sons, who were commanding the various forces. Lisa Anderson captured the essence of this when she stated:

Qaddafi has successfully ensured that the state, as a mechanism for regulation and focus on loyalty, is largely alien to Libyans. For better or worse, tribal loyalties now trump Libyan patriotism and Arab nationalism among much of the population (Anderson, 2001:516).

At this stage, it is essential to underline the fact that most of Qaddafi's colleagues who carried out the military coup with him in 1969, were marginalised or assassinated. The few who remained were assigned to insignificant duties such as welcoming African presidents. In this situation, Qaddafi's close family came to the fore, being groomed to interact more with

Libyan politics. For instance, one of Qaddafi's sons established a charitable foundation which mediated in some instances to release hostages abducted by terrorist groups.²⁸⁷

The political scene in Libya started to change to reflect more family-oriented control. Other sons of Qaddafi became hugely involved in different spheres of life and industry, such as in sport, in the military, and in telecommunication companies.²⁸⁸ Influential figures such as Jalloud, who played an important role in Qaddafi's regime for the first two decades, as well as others among Qaddafi's companions, were arrested or placed under house arrest for more than 30 years.²⁸⁹ The economic and trade situation was appalling, and unemployment, poverty, and frozen salaries contributed largely to Libyans' dissatisfaction with the policies of the Qaddafi regime. To counter the public discontent, the regime made some minor internal reforms but these did not include addressing the major concerns of the population such as the need for a constitution, allowing political parties, and accepting genuine opposition (Interview with former senior official Saad Mujber, Libya, summer 2012).

It is essential to highlight the fact that within the Libyan political establishment, there were two groups who were considered as either reformists²⁹⁰ or hardliners.²⁹¹ The reformists recognised the consequences of a radical and defiant stance towards the international community and the US, and that same group tried to convince Qaddafi to pursue a better relationship with the world, and to make significant changes to Libya's foreign policy and international outlook. On the other hand, the hardliners were mainly people from the revolutionary committees who wanted to retain a challenging attitude towards the world order as defined by the West, and pursue more radical policies as the basis of the regime's legitimacy. Qaddafi was clearly placed among the hardliners, who dominated the scene for three decades (Takeyh, 200:65).

The hardliners (mainly from the old guard) remained one of the pillars which the regime depended upon to implement its policies. Essentially, the regime relied upon a structure

²⁸⁷ It was in 1998 that Saif al-Islam created the '*Qadhafi International Foundation for Charity Associations*', later renamed '*the Qadhafi Foundation for Development*', which was meant to be a non-governmental organisation but which was working very closely with the Libyan government.

²⁸⁸ Qaddafi's son Mohamed, was in charge of the state-owned telecommunication company, which owns the only two mobile phone network providers, Madar and Libyana.

²⁸⁹ Awad Hamza and Bashir Hawadi were Qaddafi's colleagues in the military coup of 1969; both were under house arrest for two decades.

²⁹⁰ The former Foreign Minister Umar al-Muntasir, and Energy Minister Abdalla Al Badri were calling for better integration and international investments.

²⁹¹ Most of the hardliners were members of the revolutionary committees and some of them were Qaddafi's relatives e.g. Ahmed Ibrahim and Mohamed El Majdoub.

comprised of several people from the revolutionary committees, and other informal actors such as from certain tribes, to implement policies in line with the regime's ideology. However, a new force appeared at the beginning of 2000, with the decision of the regime to attract Libyan intellectuals living and working abroad, and offer them government positions, albeit mainly in the economic field. Consequently, a new wave of economic policies allowed the liberalisation of the Libyan economy (Pargeter, 2006:222-223). In fact, the regime's domestic policies in the 1980s and 1990s, far from adopting coherent plans, created only confusion in several economic sectors due to their impracticality, and simply led to a deadlock in this domain.

The revolutionary committees (the old guard) whose members were considered the elites of the regime, were unable to provide a solution to save the failed economic sectors. Subsequently, the role played by Qaddafi's sons increased substantially, especially that of Saif al-Islam Qaddafi who contributed to the liberalisation of the country's economy. A struggle between the reformists and hardliner groups in the cabinet ensued, as seen for instance in the removal of Shukri Ghanem in 2006 from the position of Minister of Economics, because of his reformist policies. Shukri Ghanem had only been appointed in 2003, but the General People's Congress challenged his reformist ideas. According to Obeidi, the 2006 formation of the government revealed the influence of the old guards (Obeidi, 2008:124), as the policy reforms introduced by the technocrats in that period were intended to secure public support for Qaddafi's regime. In fact, the Libyan regime had been initiating the economic reforms since the late 1990s but due to the clashes with the Islamist opposition, these had not been implemented.

The advocates for reforms, openness, and shift of foreign policy towards the West in general and the USA in particular, were later joined by Qaddafi's son Saif, who among his other involvements, also headed his father's charitable association (semi non-governmental organisation). This group was pursuing reforms in both domestic and foreign policies, and started to do this by trying to give more freedom to the media, reducing censorship, and calling for a constitution. However, it was challenged by a conservative group which was headed by Qaddafi's cousin Ahmed Ibrahim who believed that if Libya abandoned its aggressive posture change, the regime would lose its domestic support and the Libyan elite (old guard) would subsequently lose numerous privileges within the new, reformed Libya. This clash between reformers and conservatives in Libya reflects how the latter viewed security. It can be seen that at the end of this dispute, the reformists won over the

conservatives, since a new direction characterised by concern for economic interests and pragmatism, was chosen (Ruble, 2012:74). The achievement of reconciliation with various states, and openness towards more moderate countries, were the main objectives of the reformist group.

Qaddafi's regime accepted the views of the reformists due to their ability to bring about several socio-economic changes such as providing financial support for private companies, youths, small businesses, allowing Libyan nationals to enter into partnerships with players in the high street market (i.e. Marks and Spencer), and absorbing the changes in the regime's view of world politics. The new elites who emerged in the 2000s did so with the increased involvement of Saif al-Islam. And the rise of this group was associated with a greater tendency to pragmatism and less concern for ideology. According to Obeidi (2008:124),

this new elite that now routinely spends in the West will have an effect on their agendas, on their worldviews, and on their own ideas and ideology. Moreover, one can expect that the new elite may be more pragmatic and less ideological than the old generation. The change in the language and, in particular, elements of the ideology of the regime expressed in Qadhafi's own political discourse, may well be a harbinger of the changes taking place within Libyan politics.

The changes brought to Libya's domestic politics by the reformists were in the same tone of the Qaddafi regime's new political discourse and rhetoric. Qaddafi's posture in the late 1990s was less confrontational and aggressive due to the regime's new pragmatic outlook and reorientation. Conversely, whilst remaining loyal, the old guard was unable to offer to Qaddafi an exit strategy.

It is worth underlining that Libyan advisers to Qaddafi have maintained that the country's previous posture and policies brought a negative image to the regime. The domestic economy had witnessed a severe downturn as a result of the double sanctions imposed upon the country, and falling oil prices. These circumstances convinced Qaddafi that his regime had to drastically change its foreign policy and embrace the age of globalisation and international trade. For Libya, international reintegration was a vital component in the effort to sustain the regime's survival and return the country to mainstream politics. Qaddafi's new elites acknowledged that Libya's posture of defiance towards the international order would undermine the state's interests (Litwak, 2008:26).

It was readily apparent that the new direction of Qaddafi's regime was motivated by the belief that Libya would benefit more if it were to resolve its problems by reaching a settlement with the West and, hence, normalising its relations. Consequently, after several years, the Libyan ruler realised that times had changed, and with that realisation, abandoned his earlier radical stance and opted for reform and openness with the international community. Qaddafi acknowledged that with the era's evolution, so too must his policies change, and consequently, he became more sympathetic towards the reformist views, saying: "We cannot stand in the way of progress; no more obstacles between human beings are accepted. The fashion now is the free market and investment" (Takeyh, 2001:66).

Domestically, Qaddafi pardoned various opposition groups in exile, among which was the Islamist movement. Pardons were given both to individuals and to groups. Indeed, Libya's return to the international community after the dismantlement of its nuclear programme had motivated the regime to approach the exiled groups to convince them to return to Libya and cease their opposition to Qaddafi. The regime had established a branch in the Libyan Foreign Ministry entitled the Administration of Immigration and Expatriates, and appointed Ali El Rishi to deal with Libyan opposition and expatriates outside Libya. El Rishi, was one of the opposition figures residing in the US, but returned after being granted an amnesty by the regime. Several envoys were sent by the regime to various US and European cities between 2005 and 2010 in order to provide incentives for Libyans (i.e. travel tickets, housing, and jobs), who were willing to return to Libya and accept Qaddafi's regime (Interview with Saad Mujber, summer, 2012). For example, many dissidents who had been living abroad for decades in different continents returned to Libya, and some, such as Mahmoud Jibril, and El Rishi, became important policy-makers. Another aspect of the regime change was related to the economic sector, where a number of reforms, such as returning private properties confiscated in the mid-1980s (according to Libyan Economic Law) to their original owners, and giving important loans to several Libyan youths, were implemented. Additionally, the regime funded many Libyan students to study either inside the country or abroad, elsewhere in the Arab World, and in the West. An important aspect of these economic shifts was the fact that Qaddafi mandated his sons to engage in the reforms.²⁹²

²⁹² Ibid.

5.3 Features of the Libyan Policy Shift at the Regional and International Level

The change in the regime's policies was not only at the national level but also on the regional and international levels. In fact, at the regional level, Libya's attention shifted from the Arab World to Africa and its European neighbours; and at the international level, the regime changed its stance, tensions, and enmity towards the Western world to facilitate more amicable interaction. In other words, it began to reconcile with the international community in respect of many important issues, such that it started to co-operate in the war on terror, accept responsibility for the Lockerbie Affair, the UTA (the French airliner) and the Berlin discotheque disasters, and started the process of negotiation in respect of Libya's denuclearisation. As is explained in the subsequent sections, the regime made concessions regarding the above issues in order to end its isolation from the international community, to achieve the removal of the US sanctions, to return to the international fold, and secure economic investment.

Certainly by 2000, Libya's political spectrum had begun to change, and the gradual settlement of the disagreements between Libya, the US, UK, France, and Germany paved the way for the Libyan regime's reintegration into the international arena. In fact, it had been the unsettled issues of Lockerbie and the UTA matter which had delayed the return of Libya to the international community. This standstill situation did not allow Libyan officials to pursue discussions regarding Libya's nuclear weapons programme.²⁹³ In this scenario Libya was desperate to find an 'emergency exit' solution and decided to shift its major foreign policy agendas, by withdrawing its support for revolutionary movements and other groups. In addition, the regime became involved in promoting peace in conflict areas.²⁹⁴ Quite clearly, Qaddafi's regime realised that its internal, regional, and external policies were counterproductive and had created several problematic issues on all levels.

According to Pargeter (2010), Libyan officials realised that the international isolation and sanctions imposed on Libya had a very large impact on the country, since they had brought not only external problems, but domestic challenges which the country was struggling to overcome. Accordingly, some of Qaddafi's trusted figures, such as Musa Kusa, Abdul Ati al-

²⁹³ Despite its importance the issue of nuclear weapons was not then at the top of the US agenda. According to Indyk, "Washington did not believe Libya's unconventional-weapons programs posed an immediate threat" See (St John, 2008:134).

²⁹⁴ For example, Libya mediated between the Twareg and the government in Niger, Darfur and Mali.

Obeidi, Belgasim Zawi, and Abdurhman Shalgum believed that Libya had to rebuild its relations with the international community in order to combat the crisis it was experiencing. In this respect, Pargeter maintains that Qaddafi himself started the reforms when he handed over the Lockerbie suspects, since this action resulted in the suspension of the UN sanctions. However, despite the fact that the regime had to allow some internal reforms and adopt new policies at the national level, reforms were mainly driven by the need to rehabilitate the country within the international community after its prolonged period of political and economic isolation. To participate in the globalised world, Libya had to adopt new reforms (Pargeter, 2010:2), and it did so because the regime considered the era of the Cold War to have finished, and that this situation required a change in its national and international policies.

5.3.1 Aspects of Change at the Regional Level

At the regional level, Qaddafi's regime shifted its focus from the Middle East to Africa. The reorientation of Libya's policies towards Africa was due to several reasons, such as African solidarity with Qaddafi during the sanctions, Qaddafi's aspiration for leadership in the continent and most importantly to gain leverage, and security as well as power. Qaddafi recognised that by investing in Africa he would increase his chance of becoming the regional leader, and achieving his hoped-for political reintegration. Thus, several initiatives were considered by the regime, and among the projects which Libya pushed hard for, was the creation of the African Union (AU). In fact, one of the projects which Qaddafi launched was the creation of the United States of Africa.²⁹⁵ Libyan funds were used by Qaddafi to support several organisations in Africa such as the African Union, and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States CEN SAD, and to integrate other regional organisations (Pham, 2010).²⁹⁶

Moreover, in addition to Libya's own financial contribution to the AU, Libya paid the dues of other countries that were unable to meet their financial contribution. The African Union and

²⁹⁵ The United States of Africa was proposed by Qaddafi but there was no general consensus for such a body amongst other African statesmen.

²⁹⁶ CEN SAD was established to promote free trade in Africa. The founding members were Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya, Mali, Niger and Sudan. They were later joined by the Central African Republic (1999), Eritrea (1999), Djibouti (2000), Gambia (2000), Senegal (2000), Egypt (2001), Morocco (2001), Nigeria (2001), Somalia (2001), Tunisia (2001), Benin (2002), Togo (2002), Ivory Coast (2004), Guinea-Bissau (2004), Liberia (2004), Ghana (2005), Sierra Leone (2005), Comoros (2007), Guinea (2007), Kenya (2008), São Tomé and Príncipe.

other institutions were used by Qaddafi to raise issues such as the need to end the UN sanctions.²⁹⁷ Furthermore, Libya hosted several meetings and gatherings of similar institutions such as CEN SAD in order to promote free economic trade in the African continent. Through these initiatives, Qaddafi who was known for his socialist leanings, renounced his 'Third Universal Theory' due to its failure, and became a promoter of free economic trade. The new policies indicated Qaddafi's wish to reinforce his power in Africa. Indeed, on 9 September 1999, in Sirte, he presented his vision for a 'United States of Africa', with a single army, currency, and powerful leadership (Sturman, 2003:110-111).

Such rallying calls as the invitation to help create the 'United States of Africa' were not Qaddafi's only interests in Africa, there being substantial investments made by the Libyan regime in various joint ventures in telecommunication, agriculture, infrastructure, and other projects. Investment in such projects did not cease with the end of the sanctions. Indeed, they continued and new projects were funded even after the sanctions were suspended (Huliaras and Magliveras, 2011:174). Indeed, the behaviour of Arab states convinced Qaddafi to shift his policies and alliances towards African states. In this respect, Mujber argues:

Because they (the Arabs) did not stand with him when the sanctions of the UN were imposed, and frankly speaking, many African leaders have come challenging the sanctions of the UN by landing their planes in Tripoli airport without authorisation from the UN, while no Arab state did so. They did not because they knew him very well and by that time he was an enigma for everybody, for the Libyans and for the Arab countries, and for the West.²⁹⁸

That said, Qaddafi's reorientation to Africa was motivated purely by self-interest since his thirst for more power was evident in his proclaimed dream to become the new leader of Africa. And the fact that Libyan initiatives towards Africa continued after European companies entered the Libyan market and the sanctions were partially lifted is more evidence of Qaddafi's goals in this matter. Thus, Qaddafi had simultaneously, two objectives, these being to rehabilitate his country with the Western world, and to invest in sub-Saharan Africa with a view to assuming a supreme role of leader of the continent.

The Libyan regime started to pursue a rather positive and more reasonable direction in its relations with neighbouring Europe. In this respect it had been integrated in various forums such as the Barcelona Process (BP), which refers to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

²⁹⁷ See Sturman, K (2003) "The rise of Libya as a regional player" *African Security Review*, 12:2, 109-112

²⁹⁸ Fieldwork interview in Libya, summer 2012

between members of the North and South of the Mediterranean basin. This initiative was meant to enhance political, economic, and social relations between the members of the partnership. This regional integration was hoped to bring Libya closer to the international community, allowing its return to the international fold, and its co-operation on the security of the region (Bahgat, 2010:44). As one of the high-ranking former diplomats commented on Qaddafi's shift: "the hawkish Qaddafi of the early years, defiant, talkish and supporting terrorism and revolutionary military groups across the world ... all that stopped. The incentives were to see Libya reintegrated into the international arena and particularly to gain the support of Europe and of the United States".²⁹⁹

Indeed, as mentioned by the diplomat concerned (who requested anonymity), Libya realised that the support given to revolutionary groups using terrorism was counter-productive to its foreign and security policies. Qaddafi's regime comprehended the consequences of its previous policies which had affected the country in all aspects - socially, economically, and politically, and hence, it began rehabilitating itself domestically, regionally, and internationally in order to be welcomed back into global politics. In fact, the dire consequences of the regime's external policies (i.e. several years of isolation, sanctions and economic stagnation) created domestic disapproval of Qaddafi's rule. Whilst the regime attempted to make some domestic reforms such as respecting human rights, allowing freedom of speech, and writing a constitution, these reforms were not serious in their nature. The regime's intention was to gain an international status, leverage, and appease the Libyan people. If Qaddafi's regime granted concessions, such as writing a constitution, allowing freedom of speech, and political parties, it would have undermined Qaddafi's power. For that reason, the domestic reforms were elusive to obtain or be granted by Qaddafi. Despite the fact that there was political reform at the beginning of 2000s and onwards in several countries, such as in Eastern Europe, and Latin America, and that various African nations had elections, the Arab regimes did not take any steps regarding the transition of powers (Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen). (Interview with a senior official in Qaddafi's regime, summer 2012).³⁰⁰

The continuous external pressure exerted on the regime for many years (i.e. threat of military action, sanctions, and isolation) compelled it to change its stance regarding the support of

²⁹⁹ An interview conducted by the researcher in summer 2012.

³⁰⁰ The interviewee requested anonymity in this research project.

revolutionary movements, meddling in neighbouring countries, and its aggressive foreign policy. Accordingly, Libya significantly decreased its support for terrorism by evicting terrorist organisations such as the Abu Nidal group, closing the training camps, and facilitating the extradition of fugitives to Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan. These moves were indeed welcomed internationally, as indicated in the Report of the US State Department of Global Terrorism which acknowledged and praised Qaddafi for “having repeatedly denounced terrorism since September 11 (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:68). This volte-face by the US administration seemed to have placed Libya in the same boat as Western countries in the newly proclaimed ‘war on terror’.

Libya’s long years of international and diplomatic isolation had a dreadful effect on the country, and consequently the government recognised that for the West, terrorism was a very serious issue. In this scenario, there would be no contemplation of an ending to Libya’s international isolation before the Qaddafi regime ended its support for terrorism. This was fully appreciated by the regime, and on various occasions it made statements to the effect that it had stopped supporting acts of international terrorism and had ended its support and training for groups using violence to reach their political aims. According to Alterman (2006:4), one member of the US administration stated in an unofficial interview that “Libya had been out of the terrorism business for at least a decade”. Indeed, had Libya continued its support for terrorism it would have faced the consequences of the ‘war on terror’ proclaimed soon after 11 September, 2001. However, Qaddafi and his regime choose to publicly denounce all forms of terrorism and took this opportunity to show their solidarity in the war on terror. It is perfectly clear that Libya understood the negative outcomes of its previous policies, especially after being categorised as a pariah state for more than three decades. Hence, the necessity to change foreign policy was quite obvious to Qaddafi. According to Takeyh (2001:64), “Qaddafi realised that he had to accept the passing of the age of revolutions and the arrival of the age of globalisation”.

The idea of promoting peace and security represented a new strategy. Qaddafi believed that by changing the direction of Libya’s regional policies, the results might be very positive for the ruling regime. For instance, Qaddafi amended his stance on the Arab/Israeli question in 2002, becoming more pragmatic after he realised that his previous behaviour and aggressive

foreign policy had not been fruitful.³⁰¹ Subsequently, the previous rhetoric and statements regarding the elimination of Israel were brought to an end, and as a result of his new outlook, Qaddafi proposed an initiative, based on a one-state solution, where both Arabs and Jews would live in peace, security and prosperity. He even went so far as to suggest a new name for the one-state envisaged, that being 'Isratine', a combined name suggesting that both Palestine and Israel could live harmoniously in one democratic state. The proposal was published in more detail in a booklet entitled 'The White Book' (Lutterbeck, 2009:155), which revealed a quite simplistic perspective on the part of Qaddafi, and which did not offer anything original to the international efforts to reach a long-lasting peace. Basically, the Palestinian/Israeli issue presented a much more complex problem than indicated in The White Book.

Nonetheless, Qaddafi found the opportunity to show his solidarity with the US after the events of 9/11, and this was a vital ingredient in Libya's re-integration with global politics. In the face of the new challenge by terrorism, the US Bush Administration declared its 'war on terror' and sought to involve most countries, including Qaddafi's Libya. Such participation by Libya in this essentially Western initiative was motivated purely by the desire to gain political recognition and economic interests.

5.3.2 Libya's Co-operation in the War on Terror

The tragedy of 11 September was one of the major acts of terrorism perpetrated against a civilian population seen thus far in the 21st century, and the war on terror which followed this attack was led by the US, with several other countries' governments joining the international efforts, and forging alliances with the US on this matter. Libya was not exempted from this initiative, and in this circumstance the opportunity to re-join the international community, for which Libya had been waiting, was provided. Not surprisingly, Libya seized this unexpected chance and pledged its willingness to participate actively in the fight against terrorism. In fact, Qaddafi's regime faced the threat represented by Islamist groups at home, and consequently this gave greater substance to the regime's positive participation in trying to combat terrorism together with the US and the international community. On this matter,

³⁰¹ In fact, Qaddafi was pragmatic and contradicting his ideological discourse regarding Israel, for instance in May 1993, Qaddafi sent a pilgrimage to Jerusalem instead of Mecca. For more details see Robert Waller (1996:90) 'The Lockerbie End Game', *The Journal of North African Studies*, 1:1, 73-94.

Qaddafi stated “[w]e have been terrorised by what happened in America and we express our condolences to the American people who suffered from this unexpected catastrophe” (Chorin, 2012:70).

By condemning the tragic atrocity of 2001, Qaddafi reminded the international community that he had been fighting ‘terrorism’ in Libya since the 1990s. In fact, the Qaddafi regime offered to collaborate with the US prior to 9/11 in tackling al-Qaeda groups in North Africa. This desire to co-operate came in the aftermath of the failed attempt to assassinate Qaddafi in 1996 by a member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), which the regime had argued was financed al-Qaeda (Hochman, 2006:67). Accordingly, Libya’s Head of Intelligence met with US officials soon after the incident in Europe and supplied his counterpart with a list of names of people and organisations suspected of having been involved in the 9/11 attacks (Stottlemire, 2011:59). An interview with a senior Libyan official³⁰² supports this argument. This official maintained that:

You know well that in the mid-1990s there were bloody confrontations between the regime and the Islamists and I think the two sides did get heavy casualties. The regime was able to defeat and suppress that particular movement. After 9/11 the US become more active in the fight against terror, and tried to get the co-operation of most countries and I think Libya was among the countries which helped a lot the US in this field. Libya was also the first country which condemned the actions on the American soil.

Qaddafi’s security forces were long involved in the conflict with the Islamic extremist militants who considered themselves the grassroots of domestic opposition to Qaddafi’s rule. The emergence of militant Islamists began in the early 1980s in various Libyan cities, but the regime did not tolerate these groups and consequently, they were pursued, arrested, and imprisoned. In other cases they were simply eliminated. A few cells fled to Afghanistan and once they gained military experience from the war against the Soviets, they returned to Libya. By the beginning of the 1990s, the jihadist movement, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), appeared on Libyan soil again and established a foothold in the East of Libya. Two or three years later, the Qaddafi regime discovered that these groups, and especially the militant ones, had begun to spread. Qaddafi then launched a massive operation on the militant groups and other moderate Islamists as well, the result being that most of these groups were brutally repressed and their members arrested (Pargeter, 2006:221).

³⁰² Interview with a former minister in Qaddafi’s regime, 2012.

It is important to note that after the terrorist attack on 9/11, Qaddafi did not blame the US or its foreign policy for provoking such an attack on itself, and this was the first time he had refrained from doing so. Rather, he immediately aligned himself with the US in the war on terror in order for his regime to be accepted in mainstream politics. According to Walt (2005:110), “[i]nstead of resisting US power, a few states - Libya is the most recent example - ‘bandwagon’ with the United States. To appease Washington, bandwagoners realign their foreign policies according to Washington’s dictates”. Evidently, Qaddafi realised that closer co-operation and assistance regarding the fight against terror with the West in general and the US in particular, would benefit his regime. Additionally, it would alter the international perceptions of Libya’s previous posture (i.e. support for revolutionary and outlawed movements).

In reality, Libya was not the only Arab or Muslim country that supported the US. For instance, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco all united in the global fight against al Qaeda and Islamic extremism, due to the perceived risk to their countries and regimes from terrorist groups and organisations.³⁰³ It is important to highlight that the states mentioned above are not genuine democracies, and do not share the same values as true democracies in terms of human rights and freedom of expression. However, for various reasons such as overlapping interests with liberal democracies, they aligned themselves with the international community on the objectives of the war on terror. And despite the fact that the Libyan regime did not respect the human rights of its citizens, or allow political parties, or give its citizens the right of freedom of expression, the US accepted Qaddafi’s collaboration in its fight against al-Qaeda and terrorism.

In the regional sphere, the Libyan regime started to co-operate with other Arab governments regarding the issue of Islamic extremists. The activity of these extremists in the region prompted Arab states such as Egypt and Tunisia, to co-operate in an effort to cripple their terrorist activities in accordance with the Arab League’s official position on the issue. For instance, Qaddafi’s regime extradited Islamist militants to other countries such as Yemen and Jordan (Takeyh, 2001:68). Tackling Islamists was an important challenge for all Arab states despite their ideological divergences and their disagreements on other political and economic matters. On this particular issue there was a degree of unanimity within the Arab League and full co-operation was forthcoming from Arab governments.

³⁰³ It is important to underline the fact that most of these countries used the pretext of the war on terror to silence their political opposition.

Dealing with the problem of al Qaeda and Islamic extremists represented a top priority for Qaddafi's regime. During the Libyan rapprochement with the US, Libyan officials met with US representatives secretly in May 1999 in Geneva, to discuss various pending issues between both states. The Libyan officials informed the US about the Islamist threat in the region and both sides agreed to co-operate and tackle al-Qaeda (St John, 2008:134). Libya recognised that it was vital for the regime to get closer to the US and fight a common enemy. Nonetheless, whilst there was indeed close co-operation on this matter, other standing issues, such as the compensation to the Lockerbie victims' families, remained a barrier to full normalisation of relations.

A former senior official in Qaddafi's regime reiterated that the attacks on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent war against terrorism did have a huge effect on the Libyan foreign policy.³⁰⁴ It prompted the country to moderate its discourse and opt for a more prudent policy of appeasement. This attitude was taken after observing the reactions of the United States to states and terrorist organisations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Kenya, Tanzania, and in the Arab Maghreb which includes Libya and that is close to its borders.

5.3.3 The Reconciliation of the Lockerbie, UTA (the French airliner), and the Berlin Discotheque Affairs

The Libyan government agreed to settle in respect of the UTA bombing and pay compensation, but the Lockerbie affair took years to reach its conclusion. However, Qaddafi's will to resolve these conundrums indicates that he was determined to find a way out and rejoin the international community, diplomatically, economically, and politically. The new dimension in Libya's behaviour, integration within various institutions in Africa and Europe, reflects the Qaddafi regime's acknowledgement that it was imperative to return to the international fold.

As mentioned, the Lockerbie affair resulting in a standoff between Libya, the USA and the UK, lasted for several years before Libya agreed to the conditions set by the other parties in the dispute. In trying to reach a settlement, Qaddafi encouraged his representatives to engage in further talks with the US, as he had successfully done with the European countries involved in the other two terrorist events. The aim was to secure a full normalisation of

³⁰⁴ Interview conducted by the researcher in Libya 2012.

relationships through economic, political, and cultural integration, but this required Libya to show it was no longer among the list of states supporting terrorism. After taking a few steps towards resolving the UTA issue, and handing over the Lockerbie suspects for trial, Libya had still to accept formal responsibility for the bombing, and make compensation to the families' of the victims. Permanent campaigns and pressure from Lockerbie victims' families on the US administrations prevented a political settlement between the two states. In fact, the main concern for the Bush Administration was a successful outcome to the Lockerbie affair, rather than the other issues that Libya wanted to negotiate upon, such as the country's unconventional weapons project. In this respect, the observation is made by Vandewalle (2008:216) that although Libya approached the Clinton administration concerning its unconventional weapons, for the US this matter was not a priority. Lockerbie clearly represented a very genuine dilemma for Qaddafi. He did not want to be held accountable or personally responsible, as this would have tarnished his new image of peace promoter and the wise man in the region, yet, the remaining US sanctions represented a barrier to Libya's reintegration into the world order, and consequently a solution had to be found.

- **The Lockerbie Trial**

The surrendering of the Lockerbie suspects to the Scottish jurisdiction was an indication of an important shift in Libyan external policy. Libya was also required by the US to accept responsibility for the tragic incident in order to obtain the full normalisation with the US which it desired. From this perspective, Qaddafi believed that by opposing and denouncing terrorism, he would have more chance of being welcomed and accepted by the international community, as he had realised that the regime's former policies had caused Libya's political isolation, and resulted in two decades of UN and US sanctions which had caused stagnation in the economic and investment sectors. Reflecting on the hardship suffered by his country, a former senior official in Qaddafi's regime maintained that:

I believe that the US embargo had an effect, although it did not affect a lot on the material side, it had nevertheless a moral impact and led to the reconsideration of numerous policies and practices. Libya realised that it was for its own benefit to return to the international fold (community) and to provide the most favourable conditions for investments and developments. (Interview with a senior official in Qaddafi's regime, summer, 2012).

For three decades, terrorism and the threat of nuclear weapons capability had been considered by Qaddafi's regime as tools to achieve political aims. However, in acknowledgement of the need for new policies on terrorism and nuclear proliferation to be in place if Libya's rulers

wished to remain in power, the whole policy outlook shifted. In this respect, Qaddafi recognised that his own political and economic survival depended on such changes in behaviour towards the international community and the West in particular.

In fact, the jury at the Lockerbie trial took almost three months to reach a decision, which was eventually that one of the defendants, Abdelbaset Al-Megrahi was convicted, while the second defendant, Fhimah was acquitted due to the lack of strong evidence against him. Fhimah was a station manager at Malta Airport and the allegation that he supplied the tag to allow the luggage to proceed to the airliner was weak from the beginning. The end of the Lockerbie trial in the Netherlands came after the election of President Bush, who, since his inauguration in office maintained that his administration would not deal with perceived terrorists.

Indeed, George Bush reacted to the verdict of the Lockerbie trial by reiterating that the Libyan government was required to address its commitments under the UNSC resolutions. The conditions were that Libya should accept responsibility for the actions of its citizens, unveil its own information about the bombing, cease its support for terrorism, and pay compensation to the victims' families (Stottlemire, 2011:57). It was clear that President Bush followed the footsteps of his predecessor regarding the Lockerbie victims' families' compensation, and renunciation of terrorism. Moreover, the tragic atrocity of 11/9 made the Bush administration firmer in its stance towards international terrorism, although it did take the spotlight away from the Lockerbie affair for some time.

In this circumstance, the negotiations between Libya and the US continued until the end of 2003, by which time the Libyan government and the US had reached a final agreement on the Lockerbie case. Libya agreed to pay a substantial amount of money to the victims' families, and acknowledged its responsibility for the actions of its citizens. Regarding the financial reparations, Libya agreed to pay the families of the victims US\$2.7 billion for the Lockerbie bombing (Ronen, 2006:280). The payment was made in three instalments and was contingent upon some elements, such as removing Libya from the list of states declared as supporting terrorism.

Two main factors played in Libya's favour, and ended its status of pariah state. The first was the surrender of the Lockerbie suspects to international justice, and the second was Libya's letter to the UNSC of 15 August 2003, which stated that:

- out of respect for international law and pursuant to the Security Council resolutions, Libya as a sovereign state has facilitated the bringing to justice of the two suspects charged with the bombing of Pan Am 103, and accepts responsibility for the actions of its officials;
- has co-operated with the Scottish investigating authorities before and during the trial and pledges to co-operate in good faith with any further requests for information in connection with the Pan Am 103 investigation. Such co-operation would be extended in good faith through the usual channels;
- has arranged for the payment of appropriate compensation. To this end, a special fund has been established and instructions have already been issued to transmit the necessary sums to an agreed escrow account within a matter of days.³⁰⁵

The UN sanctions were lifted immediately after receiving the letter of acknowledgement from Libya. However, the compensation for the victims' families was not neglected by the negotiators since Libya had to pay US \$2.7 billion. The total amount was deposited at the Bank for International Settlements.

5.4 The Process of Dismantling the Libyan Nuclear Weapons Programme

Once the question of Lockerbie was resolved, Libya found itself confronted with another problem, that being its nuclear programme. The US was unwilling to lift its sanctions and normalise its relations with Libya until details of Qaddafi's unconventional weapons programme had been revealed and were transparent for the international community to see. There is no doubt that the process of solving issues relating to nuclear weapons capability is not an easy task. In fact, the process of denuclearisation needs a long time and strong efforts to reach a compromise. As is shown shortly, the dismantling of Libya's nuclear weapons programme took three different approaches.

5.4.1 The Path towards the Rollback of Libya's Nuclear Programme 2003

From the end of the 1990s Qaddafi had wanted absolutely to put an end to the sanctions by changing Libya's behaviour. At the same time, Europe wanted to embrace Libya's new outlook on security and economic interests. Following the lifting of the UN sanctions, European companies found Libya to be a promising supplier of energy, and these joint

³⁰⁵ See Libya's letter addressed to the President of the Security Council in full. The transcript of a letter sent to the UN Security Council from Libyan UN envoy Ahmed Own, accepting responsibility for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing, published on 16 August 2003, available at : <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/3155825.stm>

economic interests encouraged the governments of Italy, Germany, Britain, and France, to support their companies in efforts to access the Libyan market. Essentially, European co-operation with Libya started after the handing over of the Lockerbie suspects and the fulfilment of the conditions included in the UNSC resolutions. Trade and energy were important aspects in the co-operation between Europe and Libya. Due to the sanctions, the Libyan oil sector had not been exploitable for decades, and thus it required investment in appropriate technology, which could be supplied by foreign companies (Joffé, 2011:238).

Indeed, the renewal of relations in all fields with the European countries was essential to boost Libya's economy, and at the same time was of benefit to European investment companies. However, the co-operation was ultimately more important for Libya than for Europe, as it opened the gates for Qaddafi to be accepted and deal with other governments and statesmen on a global scale. Basically, Libya's European rapprochement in economic terms paved the way for more positive relations with other countries. In respect of oil in particular, Libya's oil sector was operated by the Libyan National Oil Company (LONC), but suffered from under-development because of the sanctions, and after the partial suspension of sanctions, Libya once again became attractive to international oil companies for several reasons, such as the quality of its crude oil, its short distance from Europe, and the fact that its territory remained largely unexplored (Vandewalle, 2008:217).

With regard to the Libyan rapprochement with the US, whilst there was fierce opposition to efforts towards this from pressure groups representing the families of Lockerbie victims, unofficial meetings did take place between Libyan and US representatives on the subject of Libya's relations with the West. Accordingly, a former Prime Minister in Qaddafi's regime maintained that, during the last two years (before the official declaration and before the agreement concerning the compensation of the Lockerbie victims' families), there were secret 'popular' discussions in parallel with the secret official negotiations.³⁰⁶ These were attended by American, and former influential and trusted Libyan officials. Despite the fact that the representatives did not have official positions in their respective governments, the discussions were more open and included issues not addressed in the official negotiations. Indeed, Qaddafi was absolutely adamant in his wish to reach a deal with the US and was ready to make the required concessions by changing Libya's behaviour.

³⁰⁶ Interview with a former Prime Minister in Qaddafi's regime in Libya, 2012.

American oil companies, like their European counterparts, campaigned to ease the sanctions on Libya. In view of the changing Libyan policies, the Department of Energy task force, and the lobby of US oil companies advised the Bush administration (in April 2001) to reassess relations with Libya. By mid-2001 US officials had refrained from labelling Libya as a 'rogue state', preferring to use the term a 'state of concern', thereby demonstrating a more lenient stance towards the regime (Chorin, 2012:68). This indicated the mutual interest in aiming for a normalisation of relations between the two countries. Consequently, Libya's rehabilitation was facilitated by the rapprochement which brought the opportunity for the country to rejoin mainstream politics and the international community.

In fact, in the aftermath of 11 September, any states that intended to acquire or pursue a nuclear weapons programme, were sure to face the dire consequences of the implementation of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the wrath of the US, the only superpower remaining after the fall of the Eastern bloc. With this perspective in mind, the Libyan regime started to reconsider its nuclear project, thinking that it was more likely to have a negative rather than positive impact on its security. Moreover, the costs and benefits of the nuclear programme were not as expected, especially after the long decade of international sanctions. That said, according to an anonymous interviewee, the effects of the sanctions on the Libya's nuclear programme were limited, as Libya resorted to the black market network. When asked about their influence, he said: "Yes, the sanctions had an impact but not a huge one, although it delayed the programme for years".³⁰⁷ From this angle, it can be said that a definite shift occurred in the regime's interests about unconventional weapons such that they were considered to enhance Libya's negative image and bring further isolation.

5.4.2 The Negotiations Concerning Libya's Denuclearisation

This section focuses on the negotiation process between three parties - Libya, Britain, and the United States - in the aftermath of the Iraq war, and explains how a compromise was reached. It considers the negotiations process and who was behind the initiative (as well as the timing and location). This section evaluates the initial US and British responses when these countries were approached by Libyan officials to discuss Libyan nuclear denuclearisation. The section also evaluates the steps that were taken to reward Libya for giving up its programme, such as

³⁰⁷ An interview with a senior government official in Libya, 2012.

the suspension of the UN and US sanctions, and Libya's return to the international community.

As mentioned previously, Libya had approached the US in order to offer concessions regarding its pursuit of unconventional weapons. Martin Indyk has acknowledged that Libyan officials approached him to talk about Libya's nuclear programme while the secret negotiations started effectively in May 1999 in Geneva, Switzerland (Corera, 2006:178 and 179).³⁰⁸ According to a senior source in Qaddafi's intelligence service as well as other senior figures in the Libyan regime, it was the collapse of the former Soviet Union which affected the course of Libya's foreign policy (Interview with an intelligence officer, summer, 2012).³⁰⁹ Qaddafi's regime had opted for more concessions in order to return to the international fold, especially after settling the Lockerbie affair and other issues with the UK and France. The rationale was to save the ageing regime which had started to crumble due to numerous external and internal factors (i.e. the end of the Cold War with the loss of a powerful ally, the effects of international sanctions, the diplomatic isolation, the growth of internal opposition and the several attempts to overthrow Qaddafi himself).

The first priority of the US following the 9/11 terrorist attack was to prevent further tragedies. Accordingly, President Bush promised the American people that the administration would fight international terrorism and pursue all terrorists and tyrants who gave terrorists shelter. This was a pledge to which Bush was totally committed. Afghanistan was the first target of Bush's policy towards terrorism; another priority for the Bush administration was the issue of Iraq and its 'alleged' weapons of mass destruction. During the time when the issue of Iraq's WMD was mounting, and when President Bush asserted that certain states were considered as representing the 'axis of evil' (in 2002), Libya was not mentioned explicitly but was still an object of concern. The Bush Administration suspected Qaddafi's regime of having been developing nuclear and chemical weapons since the 1980s (McCormick, 2010:224), and John R Bolton, the former Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, stated in May 2002 that Libya was still a 'rogue state' that was actively involved in developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. John Bolton also reiterated his suspicion on 26 May 2002, by stating:

³⁰⁸ Indyk was Assistant Secretary of State during the Clinton Administration.

³⁰⁹ In fact, various senior figures interviewed in Libya stated that Libyan foreign policy was affected by the fall of the former Soviet Union.

There is no doubt that Libya continues its longstanding pursuit of nuclear weapons. We believe that since the suspension of UN sanctions against Libya in 1999, Libya has been able to increase its access to dual use nuclear technologies. Although Libya would need significant foreign assistance to acquire a nuclear weapon, Tripoli's nuclear infrastructure enhancement remains of concern.³¹⁰

However, the Libyan government denied any sort of involvement in the nuclear business. This statement by the regime did not reflect the full picture as Libya was definitely involved in nuclear weapons proliferation, but at a low level. In fact, St John and Zoubir maintained that Bolton's argument regarding Libya's advanced nuclear and chemical weapons programme was groundless and inaccurate. They argued that Bolton's assertion that Libya would have nuclear weapons in a few years' time was over-estimated, and the idea that Libya represented a nuclear threat was exaggerated (St John, 2004:395; Zoubir, 2006:60).

As early as the late 1990s, Libya was willing to negotiate its disarmament with the US but the lack of interest in this question of disarmament by the American administration postponed an eventual agreement on the matter. Another gesture by Qaddafi was made in 2002 during the official visit of the British Foreign Minister, Mike O'Brian to Libya. According to Corera (2006:180) "when O'Brian brought up the issue of non-conventional weapons, Gaddafi did not utter his usual denial. Instead, Gaddafi surprised O'Brian by acknowledging that weapons of mass destruction were a serious issue, and said he was keen to improve relations in order to get foreign investment for his oil and gas industries". The British representatives maintained that it was crucial for them to make an offer to Qaddafi such as improving relations with the US and the West in order to convince him to give up his unconventional weapons (Corera, 2006:180). Furthermore, the British and US intelligence officials knew about Libya's nuclear weapons programme, and had warned the Libyan representatives through secret messages, that if Libya continued its defiant posture regarding its nuclear programme, the international community would act to coerce Libya to surrender that programme (Corera, 2006:182).

Tucker (2009) has reported that Qaddafi's son Saif al-Islam, who was then a post-graduate student at London School of Economics (LSE), approached the British Secret Intelligence Service MI6, to discuss the issue of Libya's WMDs, long before the invasion of Iraq in 2003. A few months later, during a meeting at Camp David, the former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, requested President Bush to look at the Libyan initiative. The primary

³¹⁰ See the lecture by John Bolton, available at: <http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/beyond-the-axis-of-evil>

discussions were between officials from both the British and US intelligence agencies, and Libya. In order, to prevent any leakage to the media the matter was considered top secret by all the involved parties. From the American side, Robert G Joseph³¹¹ and Stephen R Kappes³¹² were appointed to deal with the issue. The instruction was given directly from President Bush, who also required a minimum number of officials to be kept from the State and Defense Departments. Libya, for its part, sent Musa Kusa³¹³ the head of Libya's external intelligence organisation to represent the country (Tucker, 2009:364).

Various meetings took place in London, Geneva, and Tripoli, between March and September 2003, and in September 2003, representatives from the CIA and MI6 met Qaddafi in Tripoli to discuss the possibility of a visit by British technical experts to assess Libya's programme (Tucker, 2009:365). According to the former head of the nuclear weapons portfolio in Qaddafi's regime, Matoug Mohamed Matoug, the negotiations with the US and the UK for the dismantlement of Libya's nuclear weapons programme lasted nine months. Matoug stated that there was a Libyan intention to inform the IAEA agency about the talks between the three parties but the secret character of the negotiations prevented the regime from doing this as the discussions between the parties were still in process (Elbaradei, 2011:150).

Additionally, the former Libyan Prime Minister, Abdulrahman Shalgum, stated in an interview given to the London-based Arabic newspaper *Al Hayat*, that the final phase of the negotiations started after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Sharbil, 2011). However, he pointed out that the talks started a long time before 2003. According to him, the negotiations were already at an advanced stage, well before the invasion and occupation of Iraq and that it was erroneous to think or claim, as some people did, that Qaddafi was afraid after the invasion of Iraq. Shalgum, who affirmed that the discussions on the dismantlement of Libya's WMDs started in 2001, revealed that he discussed the issue with Qaddafi in that same year. He also stated that he told Qaddafi that Libya did not need the nuclear weapons programme, and that the need to abandon it was quite urgent. The reasons presented by Shalgum to Qaddafi were related to the geographical space taken by such a project, the difficulty of storage of such sensitive material, and finally, the risk of a leakage with its disastrous consequences to the country. Furthermore, during a meeting in the US, Bush asked Bouteflika the Algerian president, to deliver a message and warn Qaddafi regarding his pursuit of nuclear weapons.

³¹¹ Joseph was the director for proliferation strategy, counter proliferation, and homeland defense on the National Security Council (NSC).

³¹² Keppes was the Associate Deputy Director for operations at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

³¹³ Kusa was a very controversial figure in the Libyan regime, and was linked to various terrorism activities.

Bush stated that if Qaddafi did not renounce his nuclear weapons programme, he would suffer dire consequences. Bouteflika informed the Libyan foreign minister Shalgum about Bush's warning to Qaddafi, and Shalgum in turn delivered the message to Qaddafi, who subsequently accused them both of being cowards (Sharbil, 2011).

According to Saad Mujber, a former official diplomat, Qaddafi was contradicting himself regarding the negotiation of Libya's denuclearisation. Despite the fact that he authorised and approved the negotiation to dismantle Libya's nuclear programme, Qaddafi accused his negotiators (Abdel Ati el-Obeidi and Musa Kusa) of betrayal, in contradiction to Qaddafi's earlier authorisation to start the negotiation of Libya's nuclear dismantlement. As Mujber noted, during the course of negotiating Libya's nuclear reversal, "he (Qaddafi) even accused Abdel 'Ati el Obeidi of a treason, but he was lying". When asked who was suspecting Abdel 'Ati el-Obeidi, Mujber said:

Qaddafi, Qaddafi, of course, but he was lying. He wanted the negotiations to succeed and he accepted the advice that if you want to have better relations with the US you have to surrender. I am sure he was scared, I know him personally, he had three of his close advisers to negotiate how to resolve the problem with the West and London. Abdel 'Ati el Obeidi, he was Prime Minister before, Foreign Minister before, he was speaker of the General People Congress. And Muhammad Zawi who was Minister several times, information and interior, and Musa Kusa who was his chief spy, under the auspices of Abdallah Senoussi (Interview with Saad Mujber, summer 2012).

Indeed, Qaddafi did not want to be associated with Libya's nuclear programme personally, nor did he want to be held responsible if there was any setback during the process of the negotiation.

Other sources interviewed in Libya stated that Libya's representatives in the negotiations with the British and US officials were Musa Kusa, Ahmed Mahmud, Farj Boughalia, intelligence service officers, and the deputy foreign minister Abdel 'Ati el-Obeidi. All of these individuals were assigned to deal with the dossier of the WMD programme. There were meetings with delegations or envoys from the UK, the USA, and the European Union. In the same period, internationally-mandated experts on nuclear weapons often visited Libya, usually going to Rabta, or Tajura or Tarhuna.³¹⁴ However, an unexpected difficulty appeared when a boat loaded with dangerous goods was intercepted on its way to Tripoli. There was

³¹⁴ An intelligence officer attended the negotiation between Libya, the US and the UK in the dismantling process of Libya's nuclear arms.

speculation about the shipment, and it was claimed that this might have been nuclear or other dangerous materials. A dismantling operation took place, followed by the loading of the confiscated parts from the boat involved. At this stage it was important to have more precision about the role of the experts, and the interviewee denied the presence of members from the IAEA. According to him, all the foreign visitors were delegates from foreign governments, in particular from the USA, and were not IAEA experts. Unlike the US, Britain and France, the IAEA did not exert pressure on Qaddafi's regime for its foreign and security policies as well as its pursuit of its nuclear programme. In this regard, the IAEA was not an effective actor in the Libyan case and did not play an independent role. These visitors brought their own translators, and several meetings took place between the Libyan intelligence services and the delegations. The former high Libyan official was not able to obtain more details due to the fact that tough security measures and restrictions were put in place to maintain secrecy in respect of the negotiations.

Libya's nuclear reversal was enhanced during the final phase of the negotiation, when a ship loaded with nuclear materials en-route to Libya from Dubai was intercepted by the British and the American authorities in October 2003. It was reported that the nuclear material contained centrifuge parts assembled in Malaysia. The seizure of the ship was conducted by members of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), an international initiative led by the US in its attempt to cripple any transfers of nuclear materials by state and non-state actors (Cirincione, 2005:321). On the one hand, the Libyan regime wanted to negotiate its nuclear disarmament with the US and Britain, but at the same time it was importing nuclear material to continue to develop its nuclear programme in case the negotiation failed. However, the seizure of the merchant ship made such a manoeuvre impossible.

In fact, the interception of the ship gave the US and British intelligence a clear picture of Libya's nuclear programme, and given the circumstances, the Libyan negotiators could not deny that the ship was indeed being used to transport materials for Libya's nuclear weapons programme. The seizure of the ship was proof that Libya was developing a uranium enrichment programme, and this was a decisive element in the negotiation. Accordingly, the Libyan government allowed technical experts from the US and Britain to access weapons sites, laboratories, and military factories. The preliminary scrutiny of Libya's weapons sites showed more Libyan activities in the nuclear and chemical weapons fields (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:74).

The researcher asked a former senior official about the seizure of the ship, and whether it had affected the course of negotiation, to which he replied: “I do not think so, because at that time, the decision to get rid of the nuclear programme was already taken. The dismantling was already planned and I keep insisting that the programme itself was not a serious one”.³¹⁵ Qaddafi’s regime realised that Libya’s nuclear programme would be counterproductive to its own security and concluded that it would gain more leverage if it were to denuclearise. Also the calculation of the costs and benefits of such programme showed that it would be costly to Libya, especially after years of economic sanctions.

5.4.3 The Announcement of the Dismantling of Libyan Nukes

On 18 December, the night before Libya’s announcement that it would dismantle its nuclear programme, an American and British proposal was made to the Libyan regime, suggesting that as soon as Qaddafi announced Libya’s intention, President Bush and the British Prime Minister Blair would react publicly to that statement, showing their approval for such a wise decision (Sharbil, 2011). However, the Libyan ruler was unwilling to go as far as what was requested by the Western leaders, and according to Shalgum,³¹⁶ on the morning of 19 December, Abdulrahman Shalgum, Musa Kusa, Abdul Ati Obeidi,³¹⁷ and Mohamed El-Zway³¹⁸ met at the Foreign Ministry, where they waited for the final phase of the statement. Qaddafi proposed to record the statements on the Libyan TV network, but Blair and Bush disagreed with this proposal and insisted that Qaddafi should make a statement first. Qaddafi did not want to be involved directly with such a statement,³¹⁹ and it was the former Foreign Minister Shalgum who read the statement of Libya’s dismantling of its nuclear weapons programme, after which Bush and Blair commented positively on the shift regarding the non-proliferation.

When Libya’s Foreign Minister announced the dismantlement of Qaddafi’s regime nuclear weapons and long range missiles, the whole world was astonished, due to the fact that for several decades Libya had attempted to acquire unconventional weapons. Moreover, the

³¹⁵ Fieldwork interview with a former senior official in 2012.

³¹⁶ Interview with Gassan Sharbil of *Al Hayat* newspaper, published on 18 June 2011.

³¹⁷ Obeidi was Deputy Foreign Minister. He was arrested after the uprising in 2011.

³¹⁸ El-Zway was Libyan ambassador to Britain. He was arrested after the uprising 2011.

³¹⁹ According to Shalgum, that day almost fifty calls were made to MI6, seventy calls to the CIA, and more than twenty calls with Saif and Abdallah Senoussi to reach a final agreement. At the end, it was agreed to make a statement that satisfied the three parties.

timing of the announcement came only few days after Saddam Hussein was captured in Iraq. The dismantlement of Libya's nuclear weapons programme indicates that Qaddafi saved his regime's survival, especially after Iraq was invaded for the same reason (its pursuit of nuclear weapons).

The Libyan Foreign Minister, Abdulrahman Shalgum, confirmed that all substances, equipment and programmes with the potential to produce nuclear weapons would be dismantled. Specifically, Tripoli pledged to do the following:

- Declare all nuclear activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and sign the additional protocol.
- Eliminate ballistic missiles beyond a 300km range.
- Eliminate all chemical weapons stocks and munitions, and accede to the chemical weapons conventions.
- Allow immediate inspection and monitoring to verify all these actions.

In the declaration, Libya pledged to give the relevant international institutions access to its unconventional weapons. Subsequently, inspectors from the US, the UK and IAEA visited Libya to verify the dismantlement. In return for Libya's goodwill, the US and Britain promised to assist Libya's reintegration with the international community and to end the remaining sanctions. Furthermore, Britain and the US affirmed that it would help Libya in various projects, such as in the development of its oil industry, its domestic infrastructure, and in the provision of medical assistance. Several high ranking officials from the US and Britain, including the former Prime Minister Tony Blair visited Libya, in order to gain access to the Libyan market, to extend the share of BP in the country, and to co-operate in different programmes (Muller, 2007:80).

Various interpretations about the motives of Libya's decision to abandon its nuclear weapons programme have been made. One was that the disarmament was a by-product of the invasion of Iraq, and given the announcement's timing which was just a few days after Saddam Hussein was captured, this was a sensible conclusion. It is true that there was a strange coincidence between the invasion of Iraq and the time chosen by Libya to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. Moreover, officials in the White House reiterated the same claims that Libya feared it could be next. For instance, George Bush stated that:

As we hoped, the liberation of Iraq had an impact beyond its borders. Six days after Saddam's capture, Colonel Muammar Qaddafi of Libya, long time enemy of America and state sponsor of terror - publicly confessed that he had been developing chemical and nuclear weapons. He pledged to dismantle his WMD programs, along with related missiles, under a system of strict international verification. It is possible the timing was coincidence. But I do not think so (Bush, 2010:267-268).

Other policy-makers in the Bush administration, such as Dick Cheney, reiterated that one of the positive results of Iraq's invasion was Qaddafi's denuclearisation concessions. Dick Cheney described Libya's public announcement to disarm as "one of the great by-products ... of what we did in Iraq and Afghanistan", stressing that just "five days after we captured Saddam Hussein, Mu'ammarr Qaddafi came forward and announced that he was going to surrender all of his nuclear materials to the United States" (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:48).

Others, such as Campbell et al. (2004), shared the same opinion, pointing out that Libya's decision to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme was connected with the military action in Iraq; this direct involvement (by the USA and its allies) in an Arab country in March 2003 represented a decisive moment and convinced Qaddafi to alter his foreign policy, to avoid a military confrontation. For Campbell et al., another crucial reason for Qaddafi's actions was the desire to see the rehabilitation of Libya in the international arena (Campbell, 2004:322). The link between Saddam Hussein's capture and Qaddafi's declaration certainly seems plausible given the timing of the two events. However, informed people and participants in the secret negotiations (Qaddafi's men, the US and the British) knew that Libya's statement was, in fact, the result of long and extended discussions between the parties.

In reality, Saif al-Islam two months before the announcement, asserted in October 2003 that Libya wanted to return to the international fold in order to gain commercial interests and restore its diplomatic relations with the US. He added that "Libya would soon make an important announcement". In view of this statement, St John maintained that Libya made its decision in September 2003, when US and British weapons inspectors were allowed to visit the weapons sites. However, the formal agreement between the negotiators was not reached until December, a few days before Saddam's capture (St John, 2004:397). St John's conclusion is undoubtedly very sound, but it is, nonetheless, quite possible that the Iraq invasion in 2003 may well have accelerated the process of Libya's dismantling.

Another official in the Bush Administration contradicts Campbell's explanation. According to the former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's memoirs, Qaddafi's decision to give up

the nuclear weapons programme came prior to the capture of Saddam. She stated that “the Saturday before the Libyan announcement [i.e., December 13, 2003], I’d called in Dan Bartlett to tell him about the coming good news [the Libya announcement]. I was surprised when he looked disappointed. ‘I thought you were going to tell me that we had found Saddam’, he said. ‘That will be next week’, I said in jest (quoted by Chorin, 2012:71).

Senior figures in the Bush Administration, such as Under Secretary of Defence Douglas Feith, made a direct connection between toppling Saddam and Qaddafi’s abandonment of his nuclear programme. Feith stated that Qaddafi did not want to be next after witnessing the fall of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein regimes. Others, such as the US Energy Secretary, Spencer Abrams, supported Feith’s claims regarding the relationship between the war in Iraq and Qaddafi’s announcement, in particular the timing of Libya’s concession which was just days after the capture of Saddam (Salama, 2004). However, a former senior officer in the Libyan regime believes that despite the false pretext invoked by the US for the invasion of Iraq, Qaddafi knew that the American administration would prevent (by all means) any country from acquiring nuclear programmes. The Libyan diplomat also affirmed that while Iraq was being invaded, negotiations were taking place between the Libyans and the Americans with British mediation. He confirmed that during these negotiations in the middle of 2003, the decision was taken to announce Libya’s decision not to pursue nuclear capacity and to openly declare the existence of its secret programme.³²⁰

Hence, according to government officials, there were various factors which contributed to Libya’s dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme. One of the key figures in this debate was the then Prime Minister, Shukri Ghanem, who “asserted that his government based its decision on an independent assessment of its national interests, on a careful study of the country’s future in all domains ... conforming to the aspirations of the Libyan leadership and people” (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:48). After the country reviewed its security interests the Libyan government realised that the nuclear programme was counter-productive, and a burden on its own national security. Libyan policy-makers had stated on numerous occasions that a review of the costs and benefits associated with the programme should be undertaken, and this was considered to contribute towards a re-thinking of the regime’s original intention to acquire or develop a nuclear weapons programme.

³²⁰ Fieldwork interview with a former Libyan prime minister, summer 2012.

In view of the above interpretations, it might be possible that Qaddafi did in fact suspect that his regime would be next on the agenda of Western powers, and that he personally might suffer the same fate as Saddam Hussein. If he had not perceived this threat, it is unlikely that he would have abandoned his ambition to obtain nuclear weapons since he believed the achievement of these would have ensured his control of Libya and the survival of his regime. Additionally, if Qaddafi had anticipated a regime change, it would have been irrational for him to disarm. However, the regime received assurances from the US and Britain, that there would not be a regime change and that they simply wanted a policy change (Jentleson and Whytock, 2005:82). Thus, there was a strong incentive to denuclearise Libya ‘voluntarily’, and if the regime had felt threatened at that time it would have been impossible to obtain the desired dismantlement. The nuclear programme, if successful, would have served as a deterrent. In the same way, SCUD B and C missiles were vital components in Libya’s armament and represented strategic weapons, yet Qaddafi pledged to dismantle them (Interview with Saad Mujber, summer 2012).

In the same vein, Litwak (2008) argues that in contrast to the regime change in Iraq, Libya received credible assurances that the regime would not be removed as long as it agreed to dismantle its nuclear programme, allow weapons inspectors, and change its policies (i.e. support for terrorism, and nuclear proliferation). According to him, had Qaddafi suspected that the US and international community would topple his regime, he would not have renounced his unconventional weapons, and would have continued to acquire nuclear capabilities since these would serve as a strategic deterrent to any aggression (Litwak, 2008:25).

Proponents of realism have argued that Libya’s stance regarding its denuclearisation was explained in terms of a fear of suffering the same fate as Iraq. However, if Qaddafi’s regime feared a similar invasion, he would not have made a concession regarding the long range missiles when giving up the nuclear weapons. In fact, the long range missiles are strategic weapons and would have played a vital role in deterring external aggression. Qaddafi’s regime in the aftermath of the US airstrike on Libya in April 1986, fired Scud missiles towards the Italian island of Lampedusa. According to Stanik (2003:199), “[i]n a desperate attempt to retaliate against the United States, Qaddafi ordered his army to launch two Soviet-built SS-1 Scud Ballistic missiles at the U.S Coast Guard long-range navigation station on the Italian Island of Lampedusa”. It is worth noting that any state would preserve such conventional weapons for its security in the face of perceived threat. Therefore, Qaddafi,

keen to maintain himself in power, chose to renounce his nuclear weapons programme in order to make Libya more stable, ensure its economic growth, and facilitate its return to the international community. In view of Libya's recent behaviour, and the overall shift of its policies, the denuclearisation of the country might be attributed to realism. Qaddafi's regime realised that it was in its own economic and political interests for the regime to change its attitudes and alter its foreign and security policies.

It is worth underlining that the IAEA was unaware of the negotiations in 2003 between Libya, Britain, and the US. It had been excluded from the discussion concerning Libya's nuclear weapons programme, due to the fact that the external pressure which was exerted on Qaddafi's regime for many years came from the powerful states (US and UK) and not from the IAEA, which actually had no power to exert pressure on countries that violated the safeguards of the IAEA (i.e. Libya, North Korea, and Iran). Accordingly, the IAEA was informed symbolically as the concerned organisation, of nuclear activities.

According to the former head of the IAEA, Mohamed El Baradei, it was "only the night before Libya's declaration on 19th December 2003, I was informed by the British intelligence that there will be an announcement on Libya. A joint statement by President Bush and former Prime Minister Blair will remark on Libya". El-Baradei also said "on the same night I learnt from Matoug Mohamed Matoug, then deputy prime minister that the foreign minister will declare that Libya decided to dismantle its WMD" (El-Baradei, 2011:149).

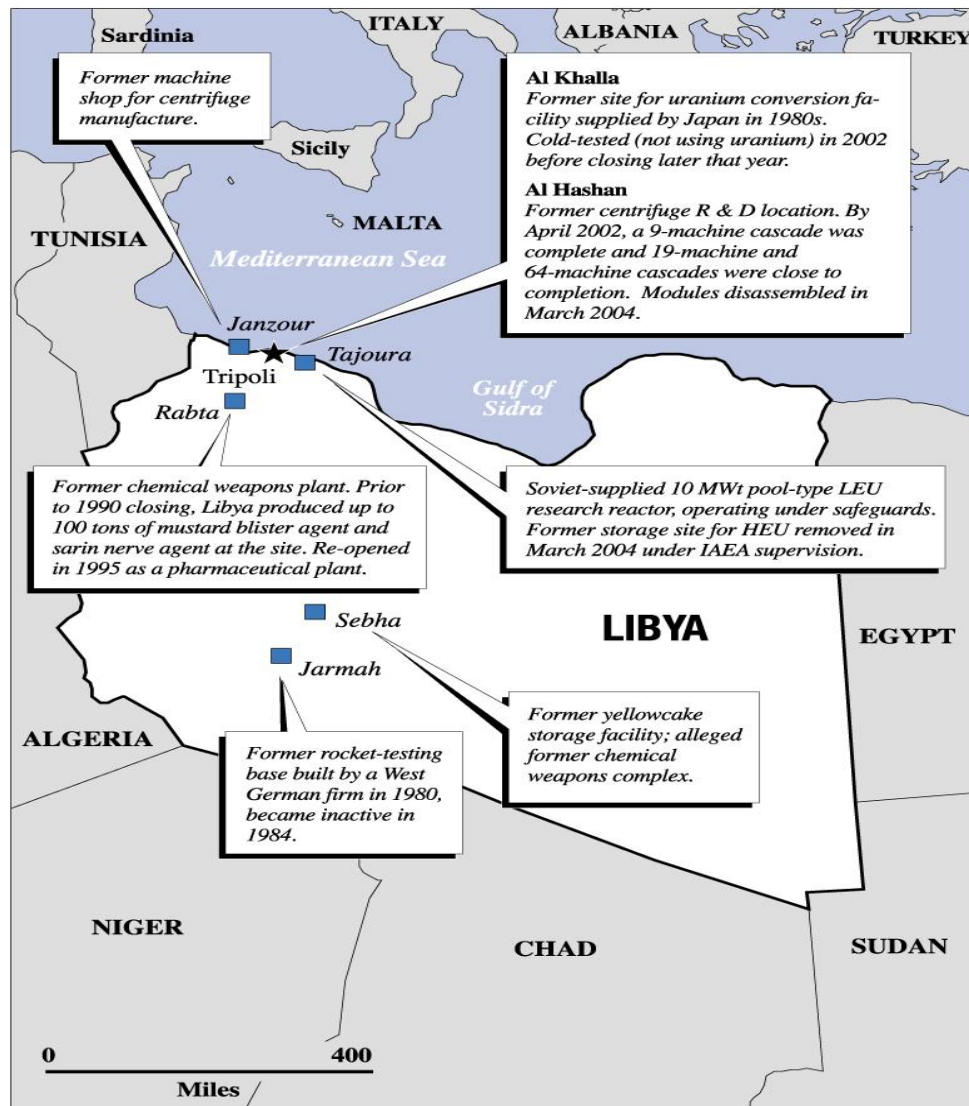
The Libyan representatives knew that the IAEA would not be the appropriate actor to contact in order to unveil its nuclear programme, and hence, it was decided to deal directly with Qaddafi's main adversaries, the US and Britain, due to their influence in international and Libyan politics. In fact, if Qaddafi's regime had approached the IAEA regarding its secret nuclear weapons programme, this would not have been enough to end the sanctions, isolation, and threat of military action, since the IAEA could only be involved with Libya's nuclear programme, meaning that the other disputed issues such as the Lockerbie bombing, the US unilateral sanctions, and its threat of military action on states harbouring or supporting terrorism, would remain. Qaddafi realised the gravity of his regime's policies and consequently approached the powerful actors (the US, UK, and France) in order to end the long years of confrontation with the West in general and the US in particular. Libya's compliance with the powerful actor would benefit Qaddafi's regime and also attract foreign investment, technology for its oil industry, and for the country's infrastructure.

From this perspective, it appears that the Libyan policies were driven by realist accounts which assume that the regime responded to external pressures either the economic sanctions or the threat of use of force. However, other motivating factors particularly the internal ones suggested otherwise. For instance, the fact that the regime realised the costs of the continuity of Libya's nuclear programme would adversely influence its economic, security and social cohesion in the country. This indeed reflects the fact that the change in Libya's policies was not only a result of the external pressure but also domestic pressure was an important factor in this regard. Although the external and internal pressure can be explained by the realist approach, analysing the behaviour of the Libyan regime and its response to the external and internal pressure could be understood from a constructivist point of view. In fact, the acceptance of Qaddafi's regime to negotiate and dismantle its nuclear programme might be considered as an obligation to internal and external norms such as peaceful co-existence, economic development, respecting human rights and avoiding internal turmoil.

5.4.4 Verification and Assessment of Libya's Nuclear Programme

The second round of negotiations between Libya, the US and Britain was held on 5th January 2004, in London. At that stage, the discussions focused on the modalities for implementing the agreement following Libya's public and official announcement. The representatives asked the Libyan government to facilitate the disarmament and fulfil its commitment to abandon all the items related to uranium enrichment, the whole chemical programme, and Scud B and C the long range missiles (Tucker, 2009:367). In the aftermath of Libya's announcement of denuclearisation, the Qaddafi regime allowed the IAEA to verify the dismantlement and assess the nuclear programme. Several inspectors from international institutions were allowed to visit nuclear sites in different locations. According to Tucker, "the mood of the meeting was dramatically different from the tense atmosphere that had prevailed during the negotiations over Qaddafi's statement. All the three sides emphasised co-operation, partnership, and completing Libya's disarmament as expeditiously as possible" (Tucker, 2009:367). (See figure 5.1 below).

The Various Nuclear Sites in Libya



©Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Deadly Arsenals* (2005), www.ProliferationNews.org

Source: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Deadly Arsenals* (2005), www.proliferationNews.org

The USA and Britain were still very concerned about Qaddafi's unpredictable behaviour. Therefore, they both approached the IAEA to ensure that the decision to dismantle would indeed be carried out and that Qaddafi would co-operate in the process. John Bolton, and William Ehrman,³²¹ met on 19th January 2004 with the Director General of the IAEA. The three parties discussed the issue of the implementation of the agreement once Libya decided to renounce its nuclear weapons program and any related activities. They agreed that the IAEA would make the appropriate verification in accordance with its role under the NPT. Additionally, the US and Britain, in view of their expertise and experience in nuclear matters, affirmed that they would remove the nuclear parts and sensitive equipment after the IAEA verification.³²²

Libya also co-operated fully with inspectors from the IAEA. According to the former Director General of the IAEA, Mohamed El-Baradei (2011:157), "[t]he path was eased by the Libyans' full and consistent co-operation. Their readiness to provide information and access made the technical verification work refreshingly straightforward for the IAEA inspectors". The IAEA inspectors were given access to all plants and were allowed to inspect the weapons sites without obstacles from the Libyan government. It is worth noting that the dismantlement of the first phase was immediate, and completed several weeks after the announcement. This open and transparent co-operation with IAEA inspectors allowed the unveiling of Libya's 'nascent' nuclear programme. Additionally, the team concluded that Libya did not engage in nuclear 'weaponisation'. The nuclear weapons design was kept with Matoug, and IAEA experts noted that the weapons design lacked significant parts (El-Baradei, 2011:155).

Moreover, Matoug, the person in charge of the nuclear programme, had several meetings with El-Baradei in Vienna to ensure that the inspection was conducted according to the clauses of the agreement. In late January 2004, the IAEA inspectors ended their verification and produced an assessment of Libya's nuclear capabilities. Libya's co-operation was unlike the experience of the IAEA in Iraq, North Korea, and Iran. This indicates that Libya co-operated fully with the IAEA inspectors, and with the USA and Britain. According to El-Baradei, the agreement between the IAEA and the US representatives gave both sides a role to play. The IAEA would engage in verification, measurement, and the US would provide the logistics (El-Baradei, 2011:156-157). Libya's compliance in denuclearisation is one example

³²¹ Sir William Ehrman was the Foreign Office's Director General for Defence and Intelligence (2002- 2004).

³²² See the press report <http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/2004/prn200401.html>

of the shift in Libya's external policies, and the move towards international re-integration, but should also be seen as resulting from Qaddafi's underlying aim to remain in power.

The US played a major role in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, by ensuring the transfer of the nuclear and other sensitive materials outside Libya. According to the US Department of State report by Paula A DeSutter,³²³ by the beginning of 2004, the US and the British teams had removed all the sensitive parts of Libya's nukes and long range missiles.³²⁴ The team ensured that Libya had handed over the weapons design, which was supplied by A Q Khan (having been bought from the black market). The Libyan officials supplied the weapons design to the US and the British teams which also removed centrifuge parts, equipment, and uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) that was also supplied through the Khan Network. Additionally, the Libyan regime allowed the removal of five long range missiles (SCUD-C). There was an agreement between the Libyan government and its American counterpart, during the negotiations, to ship the nuclear parts to the US. Accordingly, all the material was flown to the US by the end of January 2004, and subsequently stored in the national laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tennessee (Nolan, 2009:103). The measures taken by the US and Britain were effective in achieving the phase of the dismantling, since the accomplishment of the transfer and the verification of Libya's nuclear materials by them and the IAEA made the Libyan case a non-proliferation success, thereby supporting the peace and security of the world.

President Bush and Prime Minister Blair benefitted greatly from Libya's announcement to denuclearise. This can be seen in the light of the allegations made about Iraq's WMDs proving to be unfounded and causing huge embarrassment to both leaders. However, the main beneficiary was Qaddafi, who, due to his decision to give up Libya's programme and accept the dismantlement of his nukes, convinced the US, Britain, and the international community of his willingness to change his regime's behaviour without any change in the political system (Coreara, 2006:194). Years later, it appears that the declared goodwill of

³²³ Paula A DeSutter was Assistant Secretary at the Bureau of Verification, Compliance, and Implementation (USA) sworn in 2002. The Bureau of Verification, Compliance, and Implementation is responsible for the supervision of all matters related to the verification of and compliance with international arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament agreements and commitments. It led, co-ordinated, and participated in the implementation of the United States' effort to assist Libya in meeting its December 2003 commitment to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction programs and long-range missiles. DeSutter acted as principal policy liaison to the US Intelligence Community for verification and compliance issues.

³²⁴ Please see the US Department of State report on Libya dismantling the nukes, available at: http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/proliferation/libya/2004-02-26_us-libya-assistance-in-elimination-of-wmd_nti_org.pdf

Qaddafi was purely a calculated political strategy to ensure his security and regime's survival.

By voluntarily renouncing his nuclear weapons programme and long range missiles, which he had pursued for at least three decades as part of his security strategy, Qaddafi must have radically changed his perspectives on security. It does not seem sensible to agree with the opinions of those, especially politicians, who have argued that Qaddafi's concessions and decision to denuclearise came about because of President Bush's foreign policy in regard to nuclear non-proliferation. If that was the case, Qaddafi would not have given up the long range missiles or at least delayed their surrender. When Qaddafi's regime was willing to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme under external pressure, the US and UK forced it to abandon the long range missiles although they were not part of their initial demands.

To prove to the rest of the world that his change in policies was underpinned by genuine attitude shifts in the regime, Qaddafi stated in an AU summit in Maputo in 2003, that "Africa produces uranium but the criminal is he who transforms it into destructive weapons instead of putting it to civilian and peaceful uses" (Stottlemire, 2012:195). He also reiterated that he would lead other countries in their efforts to dismantle their nuclear weapons and maintained that Libya's dismantlement of its nuclear programme was consistent with the progress of the international community.

Qaddafi realised that pursuing a nuclear programme would have a negative impact on Libya's security and national interests. For instance, in an interview given in 2005, he stated:

We started to ask ourselves, 'By manufacturing nuclear weapons, against whom are we going to use them?' World alliances have changed. We had no target. And then we started thinking about the cost. If someone attacks you and you use a nuclear bomb, you are in effect using it against yourself (Cirincione et al., 2005:319) .

According to a former Libyan representative at the IAEA, the Qaddafi regime had voluntarily dismantled its nuclear programme because it wanted to be rehabilitated with the international community.³²⁵

The interviewee added that Libya was trying, through its denuclearisation, to obtain material, and political gains, in order to find a compromise with Western countries. The main aim was to obtain international acceptance during the rule of Qaddafi, especially in view of his

³²⁵ Interview conducted by the researcher in Libya, 2012.

regime's previous policies (i.e. violations of human rights, and the support for regional and international terrorist organisations). Moreover, the same official maintained that Libya wanted to be seen as a peaceful rather than a terrorist state, and to improve its relationship with most countries across the world. The evidence of that is the enactment of laws for the liberalisation of the economy, the reopening of embassies in the European capitals and the United States of America, and the intention and the will to facilitate the mission of the IAEA's inspectors. Additionally, as a former prime minister put it, "I think that the main reason was the pressure made by some countries US and Britain". In fact, the external pressure and coercion could be one of the factors behind the concession made by Libya to denuclearise (Interview with former Libyan representative at the IAEA, summer, 2012).

The first statement aired by the Foreign Minister was on 19 December 2003, Abdulrahman Shalgum, and this reflects the commitment Libya wanted to make regarding nuclear non-proliferation:

Libya has decided to limit its missile activities to missiles with a range consistent with that agreed under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) ... Libya wishes to reaffirm that it considers itself bound by the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Agreement on Safeguard, the IAEA, and the Convention on the Biological Weapons and that it accepts any other commitment, including the Additional Protocol to the IAEA, Safeguard Agreement, the Chemical Weapons Conventions, and the Biological Weapons Conventions (Hochman, 2006:70).

Shalgum's statement demonstrated that the surrender of Qaddafi's regime's nuclear stockpile and long range missiles was a sign of Libya's compliance with the world's most powerful states. It is important to point out that the negotiation of Libya's denuclearisation was with the powerful states rather than with the concerned agency the IAEA. The Libyan regime's non-compliance with the US and Britain would further isolate and impose yet more sanctions on the country. In this regard, Qaddafi's regime abandoned its ideology, sovereignty and opted for economic gains as well as political interests (i.e. attracting foreign investment, and normalising relations with the US).

The transformation of Libya is viewed as a reorientation move by Qaddafi towards the international community. O'Reilly argues that Qaddafi changed his perception and world views during the late 1990s. His beliefs became more positive, and in particular after the diplomatic engagement (i.e. after 1999), his previous perception, stance, and ideological incentives were radically transformed due to the new world circumstances. According to him,

positive perceptions about the nature of the political universe and greater optimism about the realization of political goals were directly tied to improved perceptions of others in the international system. Specifically, Qaddafi began viewing others more positively, with the exception that co-operative actions on his part would be reciprocated (O'Reilly, 2010:289).

The influential role of Qaddafi's son, Saif, in the politics of Libya, may have convinced Qaddafi to give up the nuclear programme. Saif had the full trust of his father, as he was expected to be the heir to his rule. According to cables sent by Polaschik, Charge d' Affairs, from the US Embassy in Tripoli, on 30 November 2009, revealed by wikileaks, Qaddafi's son was one of the people who had a significant role in the normalisation process between Libya and the Western world. He had played a major role in transforming Libya and confronting the hardliners who wanted to retain the nuclear programme. Saif, who was authorised by his father's government, complained to the US ambassador that Libya was frustrated with the slow pace of normalisation between Libya and the US in various areas such as economic, security, and military.³²⁶ Consequently, Libya halted the shipment of the Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) stockpile to Russia, due to the fact that Libya did not receive its expected compensation from the US in the military and economic domains. The US ambassador warned Qaddafi's son that stopping the shipment would have grave consequences on the bilateral relations. According to the same cable:

Saif stated that Libya's decision to give up its WMD programs was contingent upon compensation from the U.S., including the purchase of conventional weapons and non-conventional military equipment; security cooperation; military cooperation; civil-nuclear cooperation and assistance ... Saif noted that Libya was a small, rich country, surrounded by large, powerful, poorer neighbors. Yet Libya, the only Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) signatory in the region, had given up all of its conventional weapons and could not purchase replacement systems or military equipment from the United States.³²⁷

Evidently, what Saif stated to the US ambassador indicates that the Libyan regime did not voluntarily end its nuclear weapons stockpile as was portrayed by the regime, but was rather pressured by the US to dismantle it, together with its long range missiles, and to join the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

Qaddafi's new posture in the last decade of his rule was different from that in the first decade when he took power. After years of hostility towards the West, open support for terrorism, and for outlawed organisations, the regime's policies shifted in a positive direction towards

³²⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/237232>

³²⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/237232>

supporting international institutions. This shift was considered important in the reorientation of Libya's behaviour. Since the announcement of Libya's denuclearisation in 2003, Qaddafi became a supporter of multilateral institutions such as the International Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Additional Protocol, and the Convention of Biological Weapons. Qaddafi demanded that the countries in the region abide by the treaties of non-proliferation and urged them not to violate the NPT and its obligations (Hochman, 2009:30). Therefore, surprising most political analysts and observers, Qaddafi embraced the same organisations which he had previously ignored, and denounced. This in turn indicates that the regime was under pressure to do so.

Indeed, Qaddafi's long defiant stance regarding various issues between Libya and the West, particularly the US, had dramatically changed by the beginning of the new millennium. The major event which might have provoked such a rapid shift by the Libyan regime was the collapse of the Soviet Union and its repercussions on small countries like Libya. The fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the bipolar era prompted the Libyan government to adapt more prudent foreign and security policies. The incentives behind Libya's new attitude were confirmed in an interview conducted with a Libyan senior official³²⁸ who held various ministerial positions in Qaddafi's regime. According to him:

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist bloc was a huge event. It substantially altered the reality of the world. Indeed, all countries had to reconsider their foreign policies due to this extraordinary event. In particular, third world countries and those who had special relationship with the Soviet Union. You should know that, at that time Libya had strong relations with the Soviet Union. It was relying a lot on this powerful ally, especially as regard to armament and the political support. When the collapse happened there is no doubts that the people in charge had to reconsider their foreign policies in particular the subsequent development of international politics.

Libya had to appease the West in general and the US in particular, in order to avoid new sanctions or military confrontation. Accordingly, Qaddafi's regime abandoned its security interests under international pressure and favoured economic interests and political reintegration with the international community.

³²⁸ Interview conducted by the researcher with a former Prime and foreign Minister, after the fall of Qaddafi's regime, summer 2012. The interviewer requested anonymity in the research.

5.4.5 Libyan Gains in Return of its Denuclearisation

In considering what gains were made by Libya after its about turn in respect of its nuclear weapons plans, several questions can be asked, these being: What are the advantages of Libya's dismantlement of its nuclear stockpile on a national and international level? Did the international community reward Libya for taking this important step or not? To what extent did Libya benefit from its decision to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. This section provides an indication of how these issues were addressed. According to a senior official in the Libyan foreign ministry,³²⁹ the US agreed that it would assist Libya in the following:

1. The conversion of Tajura reactors in order to produce low-enriched fuel.
2. Treatment of radioactive waste and its transport for burying it in a country.
3. The creation of a regional centre for nuclear medicine to treat cancer which would benefit not only Libya but also its neighbouring countries.
4. The desalination project: An agreement was made with the Americans, during the visit made by experts, regarding the equipment characteristics in order to conduct the desalination process (providing water to the main cities and saving the groundwater). However, not all that was agreed upon became a reality, despite the fact that samples from the Libyan sea water were taken.
5. The radioisotopes project, which was very slow, and consisted of a project of the clean room and its transformation to the production of pharmaceutical kits (the Tajoura research centre previously had a large stock of radioisotopes, radioactive waste, and low-enriched uranium fuel). This was not achieved.
6. There were also issues suspended such as the technique of transforming the solar energy for the production of electricity, and the water desalination and the production of hydrogen.

A former Libyan representative at the IAEA who asked not to be named, stated that Libya was hoping to obtain more gains in the military and economic field but, according to him, the only positive results were the improvement of Libya's relationship with the West and its removal from the US list of states supporting terrorism. Other promises made during negotiations, such as help in the scientific field and the offering of international scholarships, did not materialise (Interview with the Libyan representative at the IAEA, summer, 2012).

³²⁹Fieldwork interview conducted in Libya by the researcher, summer 2012

According to the veteran ambassador Saad Mujber, Libya benefitted from the dismantlement of its nuclear programme through being allowed to reintegrate in various international institutions.³³⁰ However, the remarkable aspect was Libya's election to the UN Commission of Human Rights in Geneva in 2003.³³¹ Libya won the election by a secret ballot, with 33 members voting for, three countries against, and 17 countries abstaining. In fact, Libya's election was facilitated by the developing countries, whilst the US, Canada, and Guatemala voted against it. Although Libya did not respect human rights, it was nevertheless, elected the chair of commission. Libya was not marginalised after the sanctions were lifted and the relations with the Western powers were re-established.

The shift in the Qaddafi regime's policies was made apparent when Libya was elected to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This emphasises that the international community and the powerful states realised that the regime had effected a radical transformation in its behaviour and policies. If Qaddafi had not altered his stance on foreign and security policies, Libya would not have held its rotation as the UNSC chair for one month. A former Libyan prime minister asserted that Libya's return to the international fold was vital for Qaddafi's regime.³³² He stated:

Libya was elected in the Security Council of the United Nations, in 2007, which proved that Libya was accepted again internationally. This is no doubt that it helps the improvement of bilateral relations with the USA, as well as with other countries, it had also economic effects either direct or indirect on the country, with new investments made in Libya and the coming of big companies, keen to offer their services in various projects. Unfortunately at that time, the decisions taken in this field were not appropriate. To summarise, it can be said that Libya did benefit greatly from its decision to dismantle its nuclear programme.

Qaddafi and his regime were welcomed by various states and international powers due to the change in its external behaviour. Libya's denuclearisation was in fact a victory for the international community, as this achievement brought the belief that the world had less of a threat to its peace and security by this action. And the fact that Libya had abandoned its nuclear programme in order to be welcomed back into the international arena was considered far less costly in sovereign terms, than would have occurred had Libya suffered the same fate as Iraq. Coercion tools such as sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and the threat of military

³³⁰ Interview conducted by the researcher in Libya, 2012.

³³¹ See the UN News Centre "By secret ballot, Libya elected chair of UN human rights commission" published on 20th of January 2003. Article available at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=5924>

³³² Interview conducted by the researcher, Libya, 2012

action explicitly worked in the Libyan case. Also from Libya's perspective, as was argued by the interviewees, Libya gained political and economic leverage as a result of its policy shift, especially after the US lifted its sanctions and normalised relations.

From the perspective of the former head of the IAEA, Mohamed El Baradei, the rationale behind Qaddafi's decision to dismantle the nuclear programme was the new image he wanted to present to the world - a new Libya built on peace, fraternity, and solidarity (i.e. a 'peaceful country'). El Baradei noted that, just days after the announcement, he visited Libya, and met with Qaddafi regarding nuclear proliferation:

He [Qaddafi] had reached the conclusion that weapons of mass destruction would not add to Libya's security. They should be gotten rid of, he declared, not only in Libya but also in the Middle East and globally (El Baradei, 2011:152).

Moreover, El-Baradei stated that Qaddafi wanted Libya to be a role model to others pursuing nuclear weapons proliferation. Qaddafi's stance, ideology, and world views were transformed. He realised that economic interests and pragmatism were better for his regime than a defiant posture which would make the country more vulnerable to further sanction and isolation

In fact, Qaddafi was allowed to visit the European Commission in Brussels in 2004, a year after Libya dismantled its nuclear stockpile. During this particular visit, he reiterated Libya's intention to lead other states in their abandonment of their nuclear programmes. The shift from defiance to co-operation enhanced Qaddafi's position within the world community. In this respect, Hochman maintained that "Libya, which was in the lead and led the liberation movement in the Third World and Africa, now has decided to lead the peace movement all over the world" (Hochman, 2006:70).

In fact, however, this was an over-statement by Hochman, since documents concerning Libya's intelligence, published on 21 February 2013 by the Arab newspaper "*Asharq Al-Awsat*", revealed that Qaddafi's regime was active in supporting various groups and attempting to destabilise several countries in the Arab and African world (i.e. Yemen, Mali, Mauritania, Algeria, Niger, Sudan, and Polisario in Morocco) until the Libyan uprising in 2011.³³³ So, although the Libyan regime was pretending to promote peace and reconciliation

³³³ See Abdel Sattaar Htaihah, "Qaddafi's intelligence documents" Published on 20th February 2013 by *Asharq Al-Awsat* in Arabic, article available at: http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?issueno=12503&article=717956#.VDBNB_ldXTo

between various groups, in actuality it was supporting one group over another for its own political interests and leverage in the Africa.

After Qaddafi ceased his unlawful activities, reformulated state policies, and fulfilled the demands of the international community, he was able to rehabilitate himself after decades of international pressure and isolation; consequently, he began to mediate in regional conflicts. Regardless of his previous posture, Qaddafi wanted to show the world that his priorities had altered and were influenced by economic interests and pragmatism. According Takeyh (2001:67)

The colonel has embarked on a high-profile diplomatic campaign to settle conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Horn of Africa, Sudan, and Sierra Leone. Libya has also signed bilateral trade and cultural pacts with Niger, Senegal, and South Africa, while extending aid to Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe ... Most of these initiatives have yet to produce substantial practical results. But their importance lies in the fact that, after decades of attempting to subvert Africa's state system, Qaddafi is now making positive contributions to the continent's political cohesion and economic rehabilitation.

Contrary to Takeyh's statement regarding Qaddafi's peace initiatives in Africa, Qaddafi was seeking only his political interests. According to cables sent by the US embassy in Tripoli to Washington, several African presidents deplored Qaddafi's bullying and manipulation. For instance, it was documented that there was a "[d]eep distrust of Gaddafi among other African leaders; Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni, for example, feared a Libyan attack on his aircraft".³³⁴ This indicates Qaddafi's involvement in some regional disputes for political gains such as his presidency of the African Union.

In light of Qaddafi's radical changes and his reorientation of Libyan foreign and security policies, several statesmen and senior officials from Europe, Latin America, Russia, and of course Africa, paid him visits. The security and economic interests were top aspects of the new co-operation between Libya and the world. Libya also held various African, Arab, and international summits, a sign that the regime was considered to be rehabilitated and accepted by most states. According to a former Libyan ambassador Saad Mujber,³³⁵

³³⁴See Leigh, D. "Lockerbie freed after Qaddafi's thuggish threat" published on 10 December 2010 by *Guardian* newspaper. Article available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/dec/07/wikileaks-gaddafi-britain-lockerbie-bomber>

³³⁵ Interview conducted by the researcher, Libya 2012

Several important politicians came to Libya and were received by Qaddafi, in his tent, among them Tony Blair, Berlusconi, Sarkozy, Putin, Schroeder, Rice, the King of Spain and the PM of Portugal. I am sorry for the West, they came rushing just because of petrol and dollars. All these countries which were adamant against him they have come.

Libya's transformation during the last decade of Qaddafi's rule was quite significant. For instance, it was characterised by full co-operation in numerous areas, whether in economy, security (in particular by fully collaborating on the issues of illegal immigration and international terrorism), or drug trafficking. The result of such transformation was that Libya's relations with countries such as the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and the US shifted radically.

In the international arena, Qaddafi was the chairperson of the African Union in 2009-2010, and indeed wanted to extend his presidency for another year but his effort was rebuffed due to the AU charter. Also in 2009, the former Libyan foreign minister and Qaddafi's personal envoy to Africa, Ali Triki, was elected the chairman of the General Assembly of the UN (UNGA).³³⁶ Such elections would not have transpired had the Libyan regime retained its previous stance regarding its foreign and security policies. Certainly, there would have been no general consensus among the UN member states to elect Libya to chair the UNGA in the situation where Qaddafi's regime remained defiant regarding issues such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, Lockerbie, and the UTA disaster.

5.5 Libya and the West - From Antagonism to Partnership

Qaddafi's reorientation of Libya's external politics was vital in order to be accepted and reintegrated within the world community. However, the domestic reforms led by that Qaddafi's son, with the assistance of Libyan intellectuals and technocrats living abroad such as, Mahmoud Gibril who held the economic development fund and Shukri Ghanem who later became a Prime Minister, failed to achieve the desired internal improvements expected by many (Stottlemire, 2012:197). This failure resulted from the fact that Qaddafi's political motivation to transform the unique political system that he had created was far from strong,

³³⁶ See [Claudia Rosett](http://www.forbes.com/2009/03/11/libya-qaddafi-general-assembly-opinions-columnists-united-nations.html), "The U.N.'s Year of Libya" published by *Forbes* on 3 December 2009 available at: <http://www.forbes.com/2009/03/11/libya-qaddafi-general-assembly-opinions-columnists-united-nations.html>

standing as an obstacle to the achievement of the hoped-for reforms, which remained elusive, due to Qaddafi's unwillingness to step down or resign. The regime failed to adequately address the domestic problems and the other issues related to basic human rights, such as allowing political parties, and writing a constitution. Indeed, had Qaddafi allowed those political reforms, it would have jeopardised his rule and the political system he espoused.

On the international stage, Libya's economic co-operation with the major European countries and international actors was vastly significant. The previous obstacles between Libya and those countries were removed after Libya accepted responsibility for the Lockerbie and UTA tragedies, agreed to give compensation to the families of the victims, ended its support for terrorism, and abandoned the nuclear weapons programme. However, Qaddafi kept control of the Libyan state with an iron fist, and his political system of 'Jamahiriyah' remained unchanged. Since Qaddafi had first presented his political system in 1977 to the Libyan population, he had always reiterated that his role was 'only a guide and not a ruler'. However, the approval of Qaddafi to dismantle his nuclear weapons programme in 2003 and accept responsibility for his regime's previous actions implies otherwise, and confirms that he was indeed, Libya's ultimate ruler.

Although the Libyan regime managed to transform its external relations with the West and the international community, domestically several issues remained ignored. These domestic issues were not priorities to Qaddafi's regime and, hence, grievances from inside the country remained a threshold to Qaddafi's rule. According to Human Rights Watch:

The country's rehabilitation has led some improvement in the situation there, but notes that freedom of expression and political opposition are still severely curtailed and that political prisoners are still being detained. Indeed, being involved in a group or activity that opposes the ideology set in the revolution of 1969—which saw Colonel Qaddafi seize power—is still punishable by death (Seymour, 2008:16).³³⁷

The transition of power in Libya was not realistic due to the lack of Qaddafi's political will, the absence of political parties, a constitution, and elections. In normal circumstances, a real transition would have been achieved through the promulgation of a constitution, the legalisation of political parties, and the holding of elections. Instead, Qaddafi's strategy was to appoint his sons in key and sensitive positions. For instance, the national security was headed by Muatasim, while the military brigade was under the control of his other son

³³⁷ See also the Human Rights Watch Report (2006) Vol:18, No. 1(E) " Word to Deeds The Urgent need for Humans Rights Reform" <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2006/libya0106/libya0106web.pdf>

Khamis. Saif, Qaddafi's most prominent son and his likely successor, was involved mainly in domestic and external politics, although he did not have an official position within the government.

The rehabilitation of Qaddafi's regime was followed by encouraging steps from different European countries. The United Kingdom normalised its relations with Libya after several years without diplomatic ties. The first Libyan ambassador to the UK Mohamed Elzway was appointed after the Lockerbie verdict, and the restoration of the relations was fully implemented by both countries. This new start was reinforced by several projects and the UK participated in Libya's economic development, through the signing of several oil contracts, and the commitment to improve the education system of the country. On 25 March 2004, the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair made an official visit to Libya, becoming the first PM to visit the country since Winston Churchill's visit (during the Second World War). In fact, Blair was enthusiastic about the new co-operation and keen to ensure a solid economic relationship with Libya. He went as far as describing Qaddafi as a "respectable member of the international community" (Ronen, 2006:281). The rapprochement between the UK paved the way for Qaddafi diplomatically, economically, and militarily, and enhanced his position internationally.

In fact, Europe's relations with Libya after 2003 were rewarding for Qaddafi as well as for the European economies. After the sanctions were lifted, the European countries suspended the arms embargo imposed on Libya and started to export military equipment to Qaddafi's regime. That period witnessed a rise in political activities, with several senior officials visiting Libya and trying to convince Libya to participate in different projects and proposing to Qaddafi's regime the sale of conventional arms. Those states which were praising the 'new' Qaddafi, neglected or ignored what was happening within the country such as the lack of genuine democratic reform and a proper respect for human rights. For instance, Italy, Britain, and France secured deals in arms transfer and in energy with Qaddafi's regime. The lifting of the sanctions and isolation of Libya allowed the European states to obtain lucrative oil contracts, which were essential for European oil importers as they were experiencing a definite need to diversify their suppliers and to be less dependent on Russia. Hence, European countries continued to deal with Qaddafi in the arms trade, despite Libya's poor record of human rights. Another crucial element was Qaddafi's willingness to co-operate with the West by controlling immigration from the shores of Libya. This co-operation was welcomed by the

European countries (Lutterbeck, 2009:170-171), keen to attend to their own problems of illegal immigration.

For instance, Italy, one of Libya's closest neighbours in Europe, enhanced its relations with Libya and pleaded for Libya's reintegration within the international community. In fact, since the handover of the Lockerbie suspects, Libya and Italy had established extensive trade and investment ties. Moreover, in 2004 Libya completed a pipeline to supply energy to Italy. The regime also requested amicable reparations for Italy's colonial period and the damage associated with it, and simultaneously it suggested to several other African countries that they too should make claims for compensation from their previous colonisers (Mezran and De Maio, 2007:444).

As mentioned previously, the new phenomenon of illegal immigration by sea from Africa to Europe was a significant matter.³³⁸ The waves of illegal immigration on the southern shores of European countries such as Malta and Italy prompted much debate in Europe, Libya being the point of departure for those illegal migrants. Consequently, the Italian government took measures to tackle the problem and paid the expenses to deport the immigrants from Libya back to their original countries. The Italian government also assisted Libya in establishing a detention centre, and trained its police officers in how to deal with cases of asylum and immigration. On various occasions, Libya claimed that it was unable to serve as the coast guard of Europe and European states to participate by sharing the burden. France also enhanced its relations with Libya, especially in the military and nuclear energy domains (St John, 2012:240). Moreover, Libya's commitment to the regional institutions demonstrated the importance of the regional organisations to Qaddafi's regime. For instance, in May 2002, Qaddafi's regime hosted the Foreign Ministers' Conference of the 5+5 forum, the only Euro-Mediterranean meeting where Libya holds full membership (Núñez, 2012:6).

5.5.1 Libya and the US

In fact, in the aftermath of Libya's nuclear weapons programme dismantlement, the USA began to lift the unilateral sanctions imposed on Qaddafi's regime in 2004, and hence, the basis for establishing better relations between the two countries was implemented. It is worth mentioning that diplomatic relations between the two states had been severed for three

³³⁸ Europe is considered a dream for illegal immigration from the Sub-Saharan Africa.

decades, and there were no functioning embassies in Washington and Tripoli; instead, there was only an ‘interest section’ operated by the Belgian embassy. In mid-2004, the State Department appointed a small number of personnel to the newly-opened Liaison Office (USLO) in Tripoli. The USLO members had to deal with the foreign ministry in passing messages, in implementing the agreement of December 2003, and the removal of the materials of the nuclear programme, and in arranging officials’ visits by the congressional staff. Health, education, and economic interests were all vital aspects of the new co-operation between the two countries. For instance, several Libyan delegations visited USA universities, and American doctors visited Libyan hospitals to assess the country’s health needs (Chorin, 2012:88).

Furthermore, after the lifting of sanctions, Libya was permitted to negotiate its membership with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) since the US also removed its veto in respect of Libya’s membership. In September 2004, President Bush removed the status of ‘national emergency’ which Reagan had declared in relation to Libya in 1986, and in November he asked Congress to lift the US bar on Export-Import Bank loans to Libya, an extremely important step for US investment in Libya. In return, the Libyan regime granted US companies eleven exploration and production licences. Furthermore, in 2005, the US removed the travel ban on Libyan diplomats, allowing them to move freely in the US. This was followed by a major step by Washington to expand its military co-operation with Libya (St John, 2012:245).

Indeed, after Libya joined the global alliance on the war on terrorism, Qaddafi’s regime succeeded in adding its own enemy to the US list of terror groups. For instance, in 2006 the US government maintained that the LIFG was one of the terrorist groups threatening international peace and stability. In this matter, the Bush administration stated: “the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group threatens global safety and stability through the use of violence and its ideological alliance with al Qaida and other brutal terrorist organizations”.³³⁹ By its participation in this way, Qaddafi paved the way for his regime’s acceptance by the US, the most powerful state in the world, and this new alliance with the US facilitated the commemoration of a new chapter in Libya’s US relations.

³³⁹ See, the US Department of Treasury, “Treasury Designates UK-Based Individuals, Entities Financing Al Qaida–Affiliated LIFG”, published on 8 February 2006. Article available at: <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/js4016.aspx>

In July 2007, Gene Gretz was nominated ambassador to Libya, and Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State, paid a visit to Qaddafi in September 2008. In fact, Rice was the most senior official to visit Libya ever since the visit of Vice President Richard Nixon in 1957. During her visit to Tripoli, Rice stated “[i]t is a historic moment and it is one that has come after a lot of difficulty and the suffering of many people that will never be forgotten or assuaged, American in particular, for who I am very concerned” (Kawczynski, 2011:179-180). The appointment of a US ambassador to Libya and Rice’s visit to Qaddafi represented the full normalisation of Libya’s US relations as well as acceptance of Qaddafi.

In 2010, the Obama administration requested the financing of various projects such as providing training to Libya’s security forces, and co-operating in the improvement of Libyan security capabilities, particularly in sensitive areas such as the control of the Libyan borders, the fight against terrorism activities, and the monitoring of Libyan imports/exports.³⁴⁰ The objective was to develop Libya’s air transport capabilities through the training of the Libyan Air Force (LAF), and to train the Libyan Coast Guard for all types of activities they might have to conduct. Accordingly, Obama requested specific Foreign Military Financing for Libya. The US was also concerned about the volatile situation in the Sahel (Mali–Niger in particular). Consequently, it sought further funding through the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) initiative. This initiative focuses essentially on providing assistance for anti-terrorism, financially helping counter-terrorism efforts, preventing eventual terrorist activities, and attempting to weaken promoters’ ideology in various ways, either through appropriate education, the strengthening of local cultures, and/or information programming (Moss, 2010:17). The US support for Qaddafi’s regime since Libya ended its support for terrorist groups, and dismantled its nuclear weapons programme and long range missiles in 2003, enhanced Qaddafi’s prestige and leverage globally.

5.6 Theoretical Discussion

From the above discussion regarding the Libyan dismantlement of its nuclear programme and the change in its policies in this particular period (2001-2003), it is evident that the behaviour of the Libyan regime was influenced by various factors (i.e. internal and external), which

³⁴⁰ In 2010, Obama requested \$350,000 in International Military Education and Training (IMET). The US president wanted to use this funding for a programme to train Libyan security forces, and establishing strategic links with Libyan officers after a gap of nearly four decades.

forced the regime to denuclearise. This means that the realist assumptions are more relevant than those of other approaches, such as constructivism. On the one hand, it was clear that the regime tried to avoid a military confrontation, particularly with the powerful states, which did not spare any efforts to pressurise the Libyan government to the degree to which they threatened to use force. On the other hand, the international isolation, in addition to the economic sanctions, which adversely affected the economic and political attitude of Qaddafi's government, had played a crucial role in the change in Libya's external policies. This in turn, left the Libyan population discontented due to their suffering twelve years of sanctions and isolation, which had made life inside the country miserable. In fact, this opened another door which forced Qaddafi's regime to find a way to lift those sanctions and end its isolation.

Indeed, the change of Libyan policies and its nuclear weapons dismantlement were not a result of respect for the regional and international norms, as constructivists claimed. Rather, this can be understood as a response to external pressure imposed by international institutions such as the UN and the EU, or by individual states such as the US, UK, and France. An interesting point to be underlined here is the fact that some relevant mechanisms with the responsibility of dealing with the problem of nuclear weapons (i.e. IAEA), were ineffective, particularly in the Libyan case. For example, it is clear from the above analysis that the role of the powerful states was more influential in securing the abandonment of Libya's nuclear weapons programme than any other actors, including the IAEA. In fact, the regime agreed to eliminate its nuclear stockpile including its long range missiles under a stringent verification by US, British experts and IAEA inspectors. This is evidence that realism is the best approach to explain and then understand the motives of states' nuclearisation and denuclearisation. This conforms to one of the main realist assumptions that international institutions do not have any independent effect without the involvement of the powerful states. Moreover, internal pressure made it necessary for the government to seek an exit to all its problems with the international community.

Contrary to the first period 1969-1981 and similar to the second period 1982-2000, the approach of neoclassical realism appeared to be on the increase. For instance the internal dynamics of Libya had increased from the last period (i.e. there was an increase in domestic pressure by different segments of the Libyan strata). Despite the fact there were calls from within the reformist groups and the close circle of Qaddafi to make political reforms, the response of Qaddafi's regime to the internal pressure and the reformists was elusive.

Regardless of the rise of domestic pressure and calls for change in the third period, the internal dynamics of Libya influenced the policy shift of the regime but on a small scale and it was intangible. Indeed, the domestic reforms which occurred in Libya during the last decade of Qaddafi's rule were not on time (i.e. release of LIFG prisoners, increase wages and economic). These reforms came in the aftermath of Libya's denuclearisation in 2003. The causes of Libya's transformation were mainly driven by external effect; internal pressure was not sufficient to coerce Qaddafi's regime policy change.

To sum up, the change in Qaddafi's regime behaviour was due to a combination of internal and external factors, which forced Libya to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. One of the important lessons of the Libyan case study regarding the proliferation of its nuclear weapons programme is that states cannot give up their nuclear weapons programmes without coercion and enforcement approach.

5.7 Conclusion

In a similar fashion to the previous chapter, this one has investigated a set of major issues identified in the theoretical framework and highlighted their relevance to the last phase of Qaddafi's rule. The chapter began by analysing the domestic issues which had been influenced by international isolation, the economic sanctions, and the association of Libya with terrorism. The dire consequences of these factors had alienated and changed the public attitude towards the regime. Indeed, the Libyan people suffered from twelve years of economic sanctions in which their socio-economic lives became very hard. Moreover, the isolated status of Libya, and the country's association with terrorism had adversely affected several segments of Libyan society (i.e. businessmen). This in turn, created a big gap between Qaddafi's government and its own people which simultaneously exerted an internal pressure on the government to change its policies in order to find an exit from its self inflicted problems with the international community.

The chapter then analysed the regional and external pressures imposed on the regime. In this regard, a particular focus was given to the involvement of powerful states regarding many issues such as Lockerbie, UTA, the Berlin discotheque, and the nuclear weapons programme. Furthermore, this section analysed the involvement of the UN through imposing the economic sanctions, and the state of isolation. Without any doubt, this external pressure had a

crucial impact on the Libyan government and eventually compelled it to change its foreign and security policies, including dismantling its nuclear weapons programme. From this perspective, it is clear that the Libyan policy shift was due to both internal and external pressure, which confirms the theoretical argument of this study that the realist theory is the most relevant to explain and understand the attitude of Qaddafi's regime. More specifically, the growing influence of the domestic pressure on the regime and various external pressures including international isolation economic sanctions and threat of military action were behind the shift in Libya's policies, in particular its nuclear weapons programme. These empirical results represent a huge challenge to the constructivist accounts that states can cooperate and obey international norms in this context.

Accordingly, the transformation of the regime's policies had changed its image on both levels (internal and external). On the internal level, the regime started to make some reforms in the economic and political spheres. For instance, it tried to liberalise the economy and attempted to reconcile with the opposition groups both inside and outside Libya. On the international level, the regime took significant steps towards reconciling with the international community. These are seen firstly, through the regime's changed attitude towards terrorism and its subsequent removal from the US terrorist list; and secondly, through the regime's compliance with the conditions associated with Lockerbie, the UTA, and the Berlin discotheque being met, and the subsequent removal of the economic sanctions and effectively, its political isolation. These events effectively allowed the country to re-involve and reintegrate within the international community and become an important actor on the security and economic level. Regarding the security realm, Qaddafi's regime collaborated with many international actors in relation to the war on terror. For example, it became involved in many activities with neighbouring states such as Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen as well as with powerful states such as the US, UK, and France regarding the exchange of intelligence information that on many occasions, led to the capture of terrorist figures. On the economic level, the Libyan economy widened its activities with several clients from different parts of the world (i.e. Africa, Europe, Asia, and the American continents). Indeed, the shift of Libyan policies did benefit the regime and its elites who were loyal to the regime (they were allowed to have a stake in high street shops such as Marks and Spencer, and in private aviation companies such as Buraq air), although it brought no advantage to the Libyan public. Furthermore, the regime condemned terrorism, and this announcement in particular, increased Qaddafi's regime

credibility. Nonetheless, all these improvements in the country's political and economic situations, were not reflected on the living standards of its people and their prosperity.

This successful conclusion regarding the Libyan case provides important lessons to the international community in dealing with similar cases of nuclear proliferation. In fact, the internal and external pressures obliged Qaddafi's government to transform from the rogue state it was, to an effective actor in the international community. As discussed previously, the pressure by the powerful states either through economic and military embargo or the threat of military action, compelled the regime to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. Similarly, the consequences of the UN economic sanctions and international isolation which had been imposed on the regime and had been sustained for many years, did play a role in Libya's nuclear non-proliferation. In the same vein, the growing internal pressure had its effect upon Libya's behaviour, adding to the forces for change. These facts can enrich the literature and provide considerable tools in dealing with nuclear non-proliferation in other instances. Respectively, the Libyan case could be considered as a good example to reduce nuclear weapons proliferation.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In the aftermath of the Cold War, nuclear non-proliferation has emerged as one of the most important challenges in international relations and international security. Indeed, the efforts of some states to acquire nuclear weapons have focused international attention on the phenomenon of nuclear weapons. The most significant element which has been observed regarding the research in this area is the fact that the majority of literature available in this field has concentrated on the developed world, with little attention having been directed to developing countries, especially in regions such as the Middle East and North Africa. Some such countries were at one time keen to acquire nuclear capability but realised later that this ambition was counter-productive and eventually decided to dismantle their programmes in this respect. Accordingly, the present research was conducted to fill this gap in the existing literature by considering the specific example of Libya. In doing so, the study has focused on Libya's nuclearisation and denuclearisation as a case study, the findings from which could be generalised to other Middle Eastern, African and Asian countries such as Syria, Iran, India, Pakistan, North Korea and South Africa. This thesis argues that Libya would not have abandoned its nuclear weapons programme without internal, regional, and international pressure. Hence, the factors being used to examine and analyse the reorientation of Qaddafi's policies, specifically the dismantlement of Libya's nuclear weapon programme in 2003, are internal, regional, and international ones. The internal factors cover oil, ideology, colonialism, and domestic pressure. The regional factors include pressure from neighbours, isolation, and containment. And finally, the international factors cover pressure from the major powers and other institutions, economic sanctions, the threat of military action, and diplomatic isolation.

6.2 The Empirical Contribution

The first period between 1969 and 1981 shows that Libya's desire to acquire nuclear weapons was in fact motivated by regional and external factors. The Cold War, proxy wars, bipolarities, hegemony, regional rivalries, struggle for power, regional as well as external pressure, and leadership in the region were prominent factors behind the Qaddafi regime's

security policies and its desire to obtain nuclear weapons. As discussed in Chapter Three, the regime's nuclear weapons ambition in the early 1970s was motivated by a number of regional and international factors. At the regional level, Qaddafi and the Free Unionist Officers found themselves amidst the Cold War alliances and proxy wars in the volatile region of the Middle East and North Africa. Additionally, the Libyan regime's fear of its neighbours (i.e. the Egyptian attack on Libya in July 1977) was an important influence in the drive to acquire conventional and unconventional weapons. At an international level, Qaddafi's antagonism with the Western world in general and the US in particular, encouraged the regime to pursue the acquisition of nuclear weaponry. Further, Qaddafi's intention to become an international leader could not be fulfilled in the absence of him possessing deterring power (i.e. nuclear weapons).

Moreover, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) did not consider Libya completely sovereign due to the presence of foreign military bases. The RCC believed that Libya was a weak state and its military would be unable to deter or prevent any foreign aggression against Libyan territory. For these reasons, the new rulers of the regime wanted to transform Libya into a powerful state of the Middle East and Africa. In fact, throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Libyan regime sought to obtain various conventional and unconventional military equipment and consequently approached a number of countries (i.e. Russia, UK, France, China, Pakistan, and India) in order to buy an 'off the shelf' nuclear bomb. This in turn reflects that the regime was seeking military power and intended to become a powerful state in the region. Furthermore, regional and external pressure, security imperatives, power and leadership in the Arab World during the 1970s and 1980s were crucial factors in Libya's desire to acquire nuclear weapons.

Libya's financial capacity served as an enabling factor in the regime's ambitions to accumulate military power, pursue aggressive foreign and security policies, and arm itself with unconventional weapons. This factor was present from the early period of the Qaddafi regime, being underpinned by the flow of oil revenues which facilitated the regime's efforts to obtain military hardware in order to become influential in regional and international politics. Overall, the Qaddafi regime wanted to play a leading role in both regional and international politics, unlike its predecessor which was much more passive and less ambitious in respect of overpowering its neighbouring countries. Additionally, the regime realised that the country had to be militarily strong to face any regional threats or foreign aggression.

Undoubtedly, oil was a crucial element among the internal factors analysed in the first period, since oil wealth allowed the Libyan government to finance and equip several movements around the world, which were perceived by the international community as a threat to international peace and security. The availability of oil revenues to Qaddafi's regime encouraged the regime's nuclear ambitions and facilitated its nuclear programme.

The ideological beliefs of Qaddafi and the military officers were also an important factor in Libya's quest for conventional and unconventional weapons. Qaddafi came to power during the Cold War era, while the world was divided into Eastern and Western blocs. It was also during the heyday of Arab nationalism, which was led by the charismatic Egyptian President Nasser, who tried to unite the Arab World but failed in most of his unification initiatives due to leadership rivalries and different views on Middle Eastern politics. Indeed, those leaders (Nasser, Assad, Qaddafi, and Numeiry) all wanted powerful Arab countries with military capability able to counter foreign aggression. Moreover, the ideological conviction of Qaddafi was an important aspect of his policies. However, it was observed that this ideology came into play only when the issue was outside the Libyan boundaries and not affecting Libya's national security (i.e. Arab World, Africa, Latin America).

The regional pressure and rivalries between Libya and other countries was very much a concern of the Qaddafi regime and policies, as has been shown specifically in the first empirical chapter. In fact, regional insecurity and regime insecurity, particularly in the countries neighbouring Libya, produced fear of the Qaddafi regime within Libya's immediate periphery. Such a hostile stance on the part of Libya resulted from the fact that Libya's rulers perceived the country to be weak, and to be surrounded by powerful neighbours (i.e. Egypt, and Algeria), meaning that it was necessary to acquire military armaments to strengthen the country in order to protect it from any threats. Furthermore, the Libyan regime feared that it might be targeted by its larger neighbours because of its natural resources (i.e. oil and gas) and small population, and thus, the imperative for the regime to build its military as a counter to regional aggression was even more pressing.

On the international level, the pressure of foreign actors during this first period encouraged the regime to acquire nuclear weapons and pursue aggressive external policies (i.e. the support for revolutionary movements, and international terrorism). Since the onset of Qaddafi's coup in 1969, Libya had opposed the West, unlike the monarchical regime that had had close ties with the West in general, and Britain, US, and France in particular. Moreover,

Libya post-1969 had changed its posture socially, economically, and politically as it had become an antagonistic state seeking to export its revolution and destabilise the region. After Qaddafi's regime secured the evacuation of the British and US military bases from Libya, the regime changed its behaviour and attitude regarding the US and Britain. Accordingly, Qaddafi had aligned his country with the Soviet Union and maintained the same stance for decades in terms of his rhetoric and deeds. The result was that during that period, the regime came into several direct military confrontations with the US.³⁴¹ Additionally, the Libyan regime was on a collision course with Britain and the US through its completely opposing views on world issues, and specifically issues in the region (i.e. Palestinian/Israeli question and support of the IRA).

To sum up, the analysis of the period between 1969 and 1981 demonstrates that the effect of internal (domestic) factors had a weak impact on the regime's policies despite the fact that the domestic factors had an impact during the monarchical era (1951-1969).³⁴² Although the regime used colonialism, oil, and ideology to justify the path of its policies, especially external policies, their impact was relatively lower than the other factors as noted in the first chapter. For instance, Qaddafi's ideology was not significant, specifically if there was a threat to the regime from a neighbouring country. In fact, Qaddafi used his ideology more when the subject was further away from its periphery. Despite the fact that the regional influence was stronger than the domestic one in the period analysed, external pressure was overwhelmingly a prominent driver for the regime's external policies. Indeed, the first empirical chapter confirmed that internal, regional, and international factors provided the motivation for Qaddafi's calculations to acquire nuclear weapons and to opt to pursue adventurist policies. The internal factors, such as oil, ideology, and colonialism were also motivating factors in the regime's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

On the regional level, the effect of regional factors on Libya's policies was more prominent than internal pressures. In spite of the fact that the regime was aligned to Egypt (in Nasser's time), Algeria, and Sudan during the early years of Qaddafi's rule, the regime nonetheless feared that it might be targeted or that one of its powerful neighbours might expand its territory and seize its oil fields or invade the country as Sadat actually did in the late 1970s. There were also other regional issues such as Libya's conflict with Chad, and Qaddafi's

³⁴¹ See St John, B. (2002:125) "*Libya and United States two centuries of strife*"

³⁴² See pages (81-149) regarding the influence of the domestic factor during the monarchical era.

regime enmity with other countries in the region (i.e. Morocco, Iraq, Sudan, and Tunisia). Indeed, Libya's tensions with other countries in the region were due either to its desire for leadership in the Arab World, to the position of other Arab countries on the Arab/Israeli issue, or to the wish to acquire military capability in order to become a regional power. Accordingly, the first chapter suggests that the influence of the regional factors (i.e. regional rivalries and regional insecurity) is stronger in comparison to the domestic factors. In fact, the effect of regional dynamics on the Qaddafi regime's policies was higher in the period analysed. In this regard, the regional factor played an important role and was more influential in Libya's pursuit of its policies and its quest to acquire nuclear weapons.

International pressure in various forms was the core driver of the Qaddafi regime's nuclearisation effort. These specific outside threats from powerful states, and its antagonism with the Western states motivated the Libyan regime to acquire nuclear weapons. Indeed, the Libyan regime's attempt to obtain nuclear weapons capacity was driven mainly by security imperatives such as deterring foreign intervention from powerful countries (i.e. US or UK). Qaddafi's regime also reiterated that Libya's pursuit of nuclear weapons would enhance the status of the Arab World and counter Israel's nuclear capability and long range missiles, both considered as security threats. The most important factors in the first period analysed can be seen to be regional and international pressures, arising from several events and situations. The Cold War, antagonism with the US and Britain, the need to deter external threats to Libya's security, and regional insecurity and rivalries, all served as sources of threat to Libya.

Analysis of Libyan behaviour during the period suggests that states may change their foreign and security policies under continuous international, regional, and internal pressure. These last two are relatively moderate in comparison with the first one. Indeed, for the second period (1982-2000), it has been shown that there are several elements which affected Libya's external policies. This period did in fact, witness the peak of Libya's attempt to develop a nuclear capacity and to conduct an adventurist foreign policy. Libya's pursuit of nuclear weapons was accelerated especially following the US air raids on the country in 1986 to punish Qaddafi's regime for its involvement in international terrorism. The regime realised that the country was more vulnerable to outside aggression and further military attacks. However, decades of constant international pressures in various forms, such as threat of military force, economic sanctions, and international isolation, together with regional and

domestic pressure, compelled the regime to abandon its radical and defiant policies and to opt for more conciliatory ones (i.e. from a rogue state to a compliant state).

Moreover, the analysis of the same period, shows how the Libyan regime had abandoned Qaddafi's ideology and attempted, on more than one occasion, to approach the West in general and the US in particular, in order to resolve outstanding issues. However, although the regime did attempt to normalise its relations with the international community, it was simultaneously pursuing nuclear weapons due to Qaddafi's fear that it would become a military target of its powerful neighbours or from further afield. In addition, the international, regional, and internal pressure exerted on Libya for decades, weakened the country economically, politically, and militarily, thereby increasing the domestic pressure on Qaddafi's regime. The Libyan public did, in fact, suffer for several years from the economic circumstances which negatively affected the nation's education, health, and unemployment, bringing under-development and a travel ban. Public opinion was that Qaddafi's misbehaviour as authorised by the regime's hostile policies was the reason for the population's sufferings.

Over time, these cumulative pressures compelled Libya to affect a shift in its external policies from them reflecting a belligerent stance to a more lenient one in comparison to the previous two decades. In brief, this chapter suggests that Libya's policies in the mid-1990s started to witness the initial departure of Libya's hostile attitudes and the advent of more ones towards the international community. To meet its obligations, the regime had handed over the Lockerbie suspects in 1999, pledged to compensate the victims' relatives, and end its support for terrorism. In this regard, the Libyan regime, after several years of negotiations with the powerful actors, complied with and fulfilled the demands of the UNSC resolutions. Furthermore, the international community and the US in particular were not only seeking to coerce Libya in respect of Lockerbie and UTA, but also regarding Qaddafi's efforts to acquire non-conventional weapons and long range missiles.

In terms of the influence of internal, regional, and external factors, the second period found that the effects of the above three elements were diverse, especially in comparison with the outcomes of the first period. In contrast to the first period analysed (1969-1981), there were relative variations in the internal, regional, and international factors assessed between 1982 and 2000. Indeed, the effect of internal factors in this period varied due to a number of

reasons (i.e. creation of opposition groups outside Libya, domestic stagnation because of the regime's internal economic policies, growing militant Islamists groups, and the diluted role of the military because of its failed attempts to topple Qaddafi). It was shown that Qaddafi's ideology had no impact on Libya's policies at all.

In fact, the role of ideology was confined to areas far away from Libya's periphery (i.e. colonialism, imperialism, and Arab nationalism). These were the themes that Qaddafi used in his ideological speeches. As Black argues (2003:254) "Qaddafi's ideology and rule are constantly changing". For instance, on the one hand Qaddafi's regime used its ideology when the affair was far away and did not threaten Libya's national security or the regime. On the other hand, ideology was neglected by the regime when the affair threatened the regime. Interests and pragmatism were considered more significant in Qaddafi's policies specifically in trade and security.

Regarding the role of oil on Libya's policies in the second period between 1982 through to 2000, the chapter shows that the influence of oil was different from in the first period. The declining oil revenues and exports in this second period had adversely affected the ability of the government to implement its domestic and foreign policies due to the imposed sanctions and isolation. While in the 1970s, oil revenues secured domestic support and boosted several projects (i.e. pursuit of nuclear weapons, and internal developments), the subsequent period (1982-2000) had a negative impact on the regime's policies. For instance, due to the sanctions, the oil industry received relatively low income and this affected the national economy, subsequently compelling the regime to change its behaviour towards terrorism. However, and despite all these challenges, the pursuit of Libya's nuclear programme continued during this difficult period, and ultimately forced Qaddafi's regime to reorient its policies. Accordingly, internal factors, such as oil and ideology did not play a crucial role, and were no longer assets in terms of supporting the regime's policies due to the nature of the external pressure being exerted on the regime. Moreover, the effect of domestic pressure on Qaddafi's regime was stronger in comparison to the previous period.

The influence of the regional dynamic (1982-2000) in the second period remained the same. In fact, regional reaction to Libya's policies had increased from simply being antagonistic, to being one characterised by the wish to isolate and contain Libya. Qaddafi's subversive policies and involvement in the internal affairs of Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania,

and Morocco, posed a threat to these varying neighbouring countries. For instance, Libya backed separatists' movements in Sudan, meddled in Egyptian domestic affairs, supported the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara conflict, and attempted to export Qaddafi's version of revolution to its neighbours (Mauritania and Algeria). Moreover, there were several occasions when Qaddafi's regime clashed with other Arab governments as a result of various incidents, some ideological, and others concerned with Qaddafi's efforts to export his personal version of revolution. This behaviour compelled these states to counter Qaddafi's activities by isolating his regime in different regional forums and international institutions. Other regional issues such as Libya's involvement in Chad, provoked the reaction of the international community (France, the US, Egypt), and compelled the regime to end its military intervention and withdraw its troops. By the mid-1990s Qaddafi's regime was forced to abandon its aggressive policies in order to lift at least the regional pressure.

The regional isolation forced regime in Libya to change, and by the end of the 1990s, the regime's political orientation was towards Africa, rather than the Arab World where it had initially focused. The new direction was taken in order to generate new alliances and leverage. And despite the fact that there was co-operation between Libya and the Arab countries in various fields such as security and the fight against extremism, Qaddafi's regime considered the rapprochement with Africa more promising than the engagement with the Arab World. The new focus of Libya's policies towards Africa and away from Arab World reflected Qaddafi's desire to re-establish himself as a regional as well as an international leader. Qaddafi's shift of policies in favour of African states was considered as the best strategy to adopt in order to fulfil his leadership aspirations (i.e. leadership of the African Union), and move away from the intricacies of relationships within the Arab World. Therefore, the regime reinforced its ties with several African countries, by contributing to their development through investment in various political, economic, and agricultural projects. It is worth underlining here that when the Arab countries boycotted Qaddafi's regime during the sanctions period (1992-2003), several African presidents came to Libya by air in violation of the UNSC resolutions (748). Qaddafi also wanted to enhance his influence and leadership in the African institutions through financial means, and particularly by supporting African regional and international organisations (e.g. IGAD, ECOWAS, CEN SAD, and AU).

The second period (1982-2000) confirms a continuation of the influence being brought to bear on the regime by international pressure. Indeed, this element had grown such that specifically in the late 1990s, it had a strong role in forcing change in some of Libya's policies. The Libyan regime had to meet the demands of the UNSC in return for the easing of international sanctions and the situation of isolation it had been placed in. Qaddafi had insisted that Libya was a victim of 'neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist powers' through the UN, after proposals by the Libyan government to put the Lockerbie suspects on trial by the Arab League or alternative international institutions failed. When the regime complied with the international community by handing over the Lockerbie suspects for trial at Hague in the Netherlands, the UNSC lifted its travel ban that had been implemented in 1992. In response, Qaddafi maintained that his government's agreement with the UN was a success for Libya (Stottlemeyer, 2012:194). However, Libya's initial compliance in the mid-1990s did not provoke the immediate lift of all unilateral and multilateral sanctions (i.e. ILSA). As a weak state, Libya could not defy the international community and the powerful actors. Hence, it can be understood that Libya's policy change in this period was overwhelmingly the result of international pressure, whilst domestic and regional pressures had played a relatively modest role in influencing the change in Libya's behaviour. In brief, the impact of the external factor was stronger than internal and regional factors in this period.

The analysis of third period investigated (2001-2003) confirms the argument of this study that states can change their foreign/security policies and abandon their nuclear weapons programme in response to a combination of factors such as internal and international pressure, economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and threat of military force. The findings of this study have the potential to provide important lessons to deal with such similar cases in order to reduce the proliferation of nuclear weapons, make war less likely, increase regional and international stability, and promote international peace and security. Indeed, the period 2001-2003 witnessed a complete change in Libya's behaviour, especially regarding its domestic policies, and its attitudes towards terrorism, and the possession of nuclear weapons. A window of opportunity emerged for the Libyan government after the events of 11 September 2001. This atrocity motivated Qaddafi to approach the US again and attempt to rejoin the international community's effort to tackle militant Islamist groups.

In fact, Libya was one of the countries that supported the US war on terror efforts, and its intelligence apparatus provided information on some terror groups that the regime had known

previously. As discussed in detail in Chapter Five, the Libyan regime opted for compliance and co-operation with the international community and did not challenge the UNSC resolutions mentioned earlier. Nonetheless, despite Libya's co-operation in the war on terror, other unresolved issues, such as Lockerbie, and the country's possession of unconventional weapons, stood in the way of any genuine rapprochement between Libya and the world's powerful actors (the US and the UK). Consequently, Libya's foreign and security policies in this period shifted in various aspects (i.e. declining support for terrorism, compliance with the UN resolutions, and attempting to promote peace in some conflicts in Africa).

With regard to Libya's previous subversive activities and its meddling in several countries, it was decided to change these behaviours by promoting regional institutions and frameworks, to end all forms of support for terrorism, and also to renounce its unlawful activities in the region. The ultimate and most significant change which occurred in Libya's security policy was in fact in December 2003, when Libya's foreign minister announced that it had decided to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme and long range missiles. This came as the result of a sustained coercive attempt by the major world powers and institutions to effect change in Libya's foreign and security policies, and through the impact of other domestic, regional, and international factors.

In as far as the effect of internal, regional, and international factors in the third period is concerned, the chapter attempts to demonstrate that regional factors played only a modest role in this period, whereas internal and international factors were crucial components in Libya's transformation. There was no regional pressure exerted on the regime by its neighbours or by other regional institutions as had been the case previously. Libya had become an active member in several regional frameworks and institutions, especially after the partial removal of the sanctions, and the issues that had once cause animosity were under control or had dissolved. Hence, the regional incentive did not appear to be an influential factor in Libya's shift in its security and foreign policy. Libya had opted for regional co-operation, especially on issues such as security and economy, between neighbouring countries. A significant aspect of this regional co-operation was Libya's security integration with its periphery. Other initiatives such as the proposal of a United Africa, were intended to extend the regime's influence throughout African countries especially through providing financial support for African institutions.

The internal factor, on the other hand, was seen to quite definitely exert a very significant impact on Libya's policies. Indeed, internal pressure on the regime had been mounting for many years, but it increased in particular, after the imposition of the economic sanctions. For instance, the military establishment remained marginalised for several years and the regime depended on the security apparatus and security brigades for national security. Hence, experiencing such marginalisation, the military did not influence Qaddafi's policies due to the regime's dependence on alternative forces loyal to Qaddafi, for its security. The regime also had control of some militant Islamist groups inside, especially after the events of 11 September 2001.

Moreover, the regime attempted to implement some internal reforms concerning its economy and investment in order to pacify the population who were disappointed with the stagnation of Libya's domestic economy. Therefore, with the assistance of some technocrats, the Qaddafi regime attempted to change the nation's economic policies by for instance, opening doors for investment, and privatising some state-run organisations and companies. The technocrats and reformists were backed by Qaddafi's son Saif al-Islam who, with the approval of his father, had supported Libya's new economic reforms in order to reduce youth unemployment and find new prospects in the local job market. The reformist group had also advised the Libyan regime to develop good relations with the international community in order to sustain the economic, political, and social viability of Libya in the age of globalisation. On the political level, there was an attempt to draft a constitution as this would permit transition of power from Qaddafi, allow political parties, and eventually bring change in the political system. However, such political reforms and developments were inconceivable for a regime like Qaddafi's.

With regard to the effect of the external factor, the chapter confirms that the international pressure in various forms was the essential force behind Libya's policy shifts. In fact, there was constant international pressure throughout the years of Qaddafi's rule. Even though Libya had approached the US on more than one occasion in the past to normalise its relations, it was only after Libya complied with the demands of the international community regarding the Lockerbie affair and the UTA bombing, that the sanctions were eased. Libya's decision to compensate the victims and accept responsibility for bombing Pan Am 103 flight over Lockerbie, the UTA the French airliner, and the Berlin discotheque had partially contributed to the lifting of the UN sanctions and the ending of Libya's isolation in 2001.

The most decisive moment and important aspect of Libya's change was its denuclearisation in December 2003, a step that surprised many observers and analysts of Libya. Although the negotiations started nine months before the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the decision to dismantle the nuclear weapons programme was accelerated due to that war. The capture of a ship loaded with thousands of centrifuges en-route to Libya, in a joint effort by the US, Italy and Britain intelligence, greatly assisted in securing the compliance of Qaddafi's regime with the powerful actors' wish for it to denuclearise (Müller, 2007:87). Indeed, in order to completely normalise its relationship with the international community and fully return to the fold of the moderate countries, Libya had to comply entirely with the demands of the UNSC resolutions. In the aftermath of the Qaddafi regime's compliance, and as a result of the coercion exercised by the powerful actors such as the US, UK, and France, Libya transformed itself from a rogue state to a moderate state. Accordingly, Qaddafi's regime promised an international inspection/verification of its unconventional stockpile and agreed to accede to treaties such as the CWC and the MTCR. Furthermore, Libya was co-operative and non-confrontational during the dismantlement process and international verification by the relevant agencies. Qaddafi's cooperation with the international community confirmed the regime change in respect of its foreign and security policies.

In return for the nuclear concession made in 2003 and Libya's compliance with the international community, the remaining sanctions were lifted, thereby ending the isolation endured by Libya. The unprecedented step towards international peace and stability taken by Libya by its nuclearisation was welcomed by the international community, which became willing to relate with the country once again. Moreover, Libya managed to attract foreign companies to build its infrastructure and develop its oil fields especially after the US lifted the ILSA. It is worth underlining that Qaddafi had also gained more leverage and status after exiting the self-inflicted predicaments. For instance, Qaddafi visited several European capitals (Brussels, Paris, and Rome) and also attended the UN meeting in 2009. In fact, gaining a seat in the Security Council in 2009 could be considered as an example of Libya's acceptance by the rest of the world, as an effective actor in the international arena.

Certainly, the reluctance of Libya to comply and change its posture towards the powerful states and the international community, had kept Qaddafi's regime under international sanctions and diplomatic isolation. Additionally, the threat of using military force against the

regime if its policies regarding the acquisition of nuclear weapons, did not change, was also very real. It is evident, therefore, that there would have been no rapprochement had the Qaddafi regime not bowed to the combination of international pressures. An important observation to be made here is that the regional influence was not as great as it had been previously, and as discussed in Chapters Three and Four. In fact, Chapter Five has revealed that it was a continuation of internal pressure (i.e. domestic stagnation, public pressure, unemployment, and low wages) and external pressure (i.e. international diplomatic isolation, sanctions, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003), that prompted Qaddafi to seriously re-consider his political stance. Undoubtedly, the overall shift of the Libyan regime's foreign and security policies, and its nuclear concession were motivated by both internal and external factors.

In the last decade of Qaddafi's regime (2003–2011) apparent steps were taken towards implementing the political and socio-economic reforms promised to the country, and a new outlook was presented by the regime in dealing with the international community. However, the new initiatives did not reflect the real intentions of the political leadership, as was evident from the harsh reaction against the Libyan population following the peaceful protests of February 2011. With the coming of the Arab Spring, Qaddafi's government had to face not only the domestic rebellions, but also the international community as a whole, which eventually led to the collapse of the regime. It should also be noted that the change in 2011 did not only occur in Libya but was across the Middle Eastern and North African regions. This longed-for transformation among the various populations involved dramatically impacted upon countries in the region such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria in various aspects - socially, economically, and politically.

In the light of the foregoing, it is empirically evident that there were internal, regional and international factors behind Libya's nuclearisation and denuclearisation. These factors can be applied to understand other cases and to determine the relevant policies which could decrease the proliferation of the nuclear weapons phenomenon. However, these lessons can only be applied to autocratic regimes (i.e. Libya) or weak states with a weak economy. For example, the relevant policies applied to the Libyan case have the potential to influence nuclear policies in authoritarian states like Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia and North Korea. In contrast, these policies are worthless when it comes to dealing with big and powerful states such as India, Pakistan, South Africa and China.

6.3 Scholarly Contribution

Despite the fact that there are various theories in the international relations field which can explain and understand the phenomenon of nuclearisation and denuclearisation (i.e. deterrence theory, balance of power theory, and the English School), this study concentrates on constructivism and realism as the leading theories in IR. Indeed, the majority of literature in this regard has focused on these theories as the best approaches to explain the motivations of nuclear weapons acquisition and dismantlement.

6.3.1 The Constructivist Approach: Unmet Expectations

Constructivism has been considered by several scholars to be the most appropriate approach to explain the Libyan incentives to acquire, and then surrender its nuclear weapons. Indeed, constructivism can explain parts of the Libyan regime's reorientation, specifically regarding the shift in Libya's external policies. Scholars such as Rublee (2007 and 2012), and Hochman (2006 and 2009) have associated Libya's denuclearisation and the change in Libya's behaviour with the need to adhere to regional and international norms. According to these scholars, the Libyan regime and its leadership were affected by changes in ideas, beliefs, and norms as espoused by regional and international institutions. Hence, the regime is believed to have respected the expectations of moderate behaviour from states, especially in terms of terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and adventurist foreign policy.

Even though Libya was an active member of several regional and international institutions, it can be observed that the regime did not join those institutions with genuine intentions. Indeed, the motivations demonstrated by the Qaddafi regime were far from being associated with the principle of new beliefs in international institutions, or with regional and international expectations of moderate behaviour from states (i.e. such that rogue states become moderate states) which respects international law and human rights. Additionally, the Libyan regime's active membership in several regional institutions was a ploy used in order to extend Qaddafi's influence on some countries, especially in the African continent. Within this context, the reorientation of the regime's policies was driven by self-interest, pragmatism, desire to increase power, and obtain leverage in different spheres. It was not driven by regional or international norms, as Libya under Qaddafi's rule, was an authoritarian state. Hence, respect for international institutions and international law, respect for human

rights, freedom of speech, and tolerance of political parties, were all absent from the regime's calculations. In fact, the comparative empirical examinations undertaken in Chapters Four and Five reveal that the Libyan regime did not abide by regional and international norms. The regime adherence to international norms was purely the result of external pressure exerted for more than two decades by the international community and powerful actors such as the US, UK, and France. This is not to imply that the constructivist approach does not have explanatory power in respect of the pursuit of nuclear weapons and subsequent dismantlement. However, the Libyan case can be better explained by the realist theory.

6.3.2 The Realist Approach: An Appropriate Explanation

Libya's initial shift began in the mid-1990s when Libya approached the US regarding the possibility of normalising its relations. The turning approach, and the most important aspect of Libya's change was when Libya agreed to hand over the Lockerbie suspects in 1999 in compliance with the UNSC Resolution 748. As shown previously in Chapters Three and Four, Libya found itself exposed to regional pressure in some instances, and to unilateral/multilateral external pressures for several years because of its policies. Qaddafi's regime was under constant threat of more economic sanctions and isolation, and on some occasions, under threat of military force (i.e. Reagan 1986, and Bush post-2001). All these elements became unbearable for the Libyan regime, especially as the regime knew that the threat of military force was not an empty one. Decades of isolation, international economic sanctions, and threats by the Bush doctrine of enforced 'regime change' induced Libya to change its stance from one of defiance to one of compliance. The Libyan regime had to seriously consider the demands of the international community, among which were demands to end its support for terrorism, accept responsibility for the actions of its citizens, and compensate the relatives of the victims of the Lockerbie, UTA, and the Berlin Discotheque terrorist bombings.

The consequences of the economic sanctions, the international isolation, and later the invasion of Iraq, were certainly behind the concessions made by Qaddafi's government. Another condition in Libya's rehabilitation and readmission to the international community was for it to end its nuclear weapons programme. Interestingly, Libya had to fulfil those conditions in return for an end to the international economic sanctions, the international isolation it had experienced, and the threats of enforced regime change. The use of coercion

by powerful actors and the international community with Qaddafi's regime, through political and economic tools, and military threat, was the principal force behind Libya's rehabilitation. From the analysis in this chapter, it is evident that the consequences of the domestic and external pressure, isolation, economic sanctions, and the threat of military action left Qaddafi's regime with no option but to change its policies, included in which was the concession regarding its nuclear programme in 2003. These aspects can only be explained by the realist theory.

During the last decade of Qaddafi's rule (2001-2011), two major events (i.e. 11 September, and the Invasion of Iraq) might have accelerated the co-operation of Qaddafi's regime by demonstrating the potential for Libya to be facing a similar violent fate to that of the Iraqi and Taliban regimes. Indeed, Libya seemed to have grasped this as a real possibility, and had in fact been seeking an opportunity for several years to try to emerge from its isolated position on the international stage, to secure the removal of economic sanctions, to attract foreign investments, and to normalise its relations with the international community. As a response to the above-mentioned events, the Libyan regime complied and collaborated actively with the US, Britain and the rest of the international community on the 'war on terror'. From the first instance, Libya showed its profound interest in assisting the international community to tackle the phenomenon of Islamic extremism. Indeed, the Libyan regime realised that it would be in its interests to comply with the US and to fully co-operate in eradicating extremist activities. The regime did not tolerate any domestic opposition, especially clamping down on Islamist groups, since one such group had attempted to topple Qaddafi's regime by the use of force on more than one occasion.

It is evident from the preceding chapters that the Libyan regime's policies and rehabilitation were influenced by a combination of internal, regional, and external factors. But, as explained in detail throughout the thesis, and particularly in the three empirical chapters, the external factor was more apparent in its influence. Regarding the most appropriate theoretical framework for explaining the change in Libya's policies after the mid-1990s, this thesis argues that a greater understanding of Qaddafi's policy reorientation in the fourth decade of his rule is obtained by the use of realism. Libya's accession to certain treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2004 (CWC), was not due to Qaddafi's consideration of the taboo associated with chemical weapons but instead resulted from the pressure exerted by powerful states (i.e. the US and UK) in their negotiations with Libya.

After the collapse of the regime in 2011, a huge chemical stockpile was discovered in Libya. Such a finding confirmed that Libya was pressured to adhere to the CWC, rather than willingly agreeing to respect international institutions and treaties.³⁴³ This discovery also shows that Qaddafi's regime feared that all the concessions made would not be sufficient to deter potential threats and protect the regime from such external threats and foreign aggression. Qaddafi remained convinced that despite all his agreements with Western powers, he still had to be prudent and cautious regarding his nuclear concessions.

In fact, Qaddafi's regime had hidden a chemical stockpile, including mustard gas, from the concerned agencies and did not declare it when Libya agreed to dismantle all its unconventional weapons. The regime intended to hide the undeclared chemical stocks in order to use them in some future conflict, thereby flouting all the rules concerning unconventional weaponry. This supports the argument of the study that realism remains the most robust theory for explaining Libya's nuclearisation in the early 1970s and its denuclearisation in 2003 which was considered as an unprecedented move towards non-proliferation success.

To sum up this section, the behaviour of Libya and its change regarding domestic, regional, and external policies were induced mainly by external pressure such as sanctions, isolation, and the threat of military force. Had the regime not changed its posture regarding the issues that were associated with it before its rehabilitation,³⁴⁴ it would have suffered major negative consequences, which would certainly have included further economic sanctions and greater, and eventually the use of military force to remove it. The domestic and regional factors were also important, but they did not play a constant role throughout the years. Applying the constructivist and realist frameworks to this case study in different periods of time suggests that the realist approach is more relevant in understanding and explaining the motivations behind the desire to acquire nuclear weapons and simultaneously the factors influencing the decision to dismantle nuclear stockpiles. An important lesson that can be learned in this

³⁴³ For more information see Kulesa, L (2013) "Eliminating chemical weapons stockpile" published by the *Polish Institute of International Affairs*. Available at: <https://ip-journal.dgap.org/en/ip-journal/topics/eliminating-chemical-weapons-stockpiles#.U3XzO2rI2ow>

³⁴⁴ Libya was previously known as a 'rogue regime' and 'state of concern' because of the bad image and behaviour related to it during the first two decades of Qaddafi's rule.

regard is that military and economic instruments of coercion are more persuasive and influential than political ones.

6.4 Observations

The Libyan case which has been thoroughly investigated in this study, provides a contemporary example of a dramatic shift in policies and behaviour. Qaddafi's regime realised that its core interests changed, and believed that its nuclear weapons programme would be seen by the international community as a strategic liability and not a potential deterrent to its security. Thus, Libya's decision to denuclearise in 2003 came after the regime's gradual change in its economic and security perceptions throughout the years it was in power. Indeed, Libya's shift in foreign and security policies, and specifically its nuclear weapons programme reversal, were demonstrated in response to a combination of targeted sanctions, political isolation, intelligence sharing on nuclear activities, and export controls to prevent the acquisition of fissile materials. Using these economic and political tools, the international community made it extremely difficult and expensive for states, and especially those with weak economies, to obtain nuclear weapons. Consequently, states might be prompted to forego their ambitions to arm themselves with nuclear weaponry.

On the whole, and because of the specificity and complexity of the Libyan case (i.e. the regime's aggressive foreign policy, its support for terrorism, and decades of dictatorship), it might be challenging to replicate the denuclearisation path taken by Libya, in other circumstances. Certainly, countries such as North Korea, share some similarities with Libya such as the dominance of one single figure in the political system, and that individual's influence on decision-making and its implementation. Applying the same tools might convince such leaders to dismantle their nuclear weapons or abandon their nuclear weapons programme in return for rewards such as the removal of sanctions and the normalisation of diplomatic relations. In some circumstances, the threat of using military force can also be considered as a useful tool, especially when used with a combination of other measures such as economic sanctions and political isolation, as was the case with Libya. An additional support to the above argument that states do surrender their unconventional weapons when exposed to extensive international pressure, is the recent example of Syria. When the Syrian regime used chemical weapons against Syrian people in August 2013, the international

community led by the US threatened the regime with military intervention. As a result of such pressure and the real possibility of military action by powerful actors in the world, the Syrian regime agreed to give up its chemical stockpile in a specific timeframe (Mills, 2014:9). Undoubtedly, this type of response is considered hard to achieve in other instances, such as the case of Iran, or with other states which are strong economically and militarily.

This study observes that the international community needs to be aware that the regional rivalries in the Middle East and North Africa motivate states to pursue nuclear weapons. Accordingly, it is by addressing the security concern for states in the region (i.e. reassuring regional governments) that nuclear weapons proliferation can be reduced. For instance, Israeli nuclear capability has always been a subject of anxiety for the Arab countries and Iran, and criticism has been expressed in various negotiations concerning the non-proliferation treaty (NPT). The Israeli refusal to accede to the NPT treaty, or to allow the IAEA inspectors to check its nuclear facilities, has been and will continue to be used as a justification by potential nuclear weapons proliferators. Moreover, Israel as an undeclared nuclear power could also be an instigator for Iran's desire to obtain nuclear weapons, and this in turn triggers other states in the region to follow suit. In other words, Iran's nuclear aspiration to become a nuclear power in the region, would eventually lead other countries to consider the nuclear option. For example, the Gulf countries feel threatened and therefore, need to protect themselves from the Iranian expansionist policies such as that country's involvement in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Bahrain, and Yemen. Additionally, that same prediction would apply in North Africa, involving for example, Morocco, Algeria, and or Egypt, all potentially equal in perceiving nuclear weapons capability as a deterrent against expansionist interests of close neighbours.

The UN and other institutions should be neutral in dealing with member states regarding nuclear weapons acquisition. Several states accuse the international institutions of using double standards in their dealings with developing countries. Therefore, it is vital to encourage regional nuclear weapons-free zones by international institutions such as the IAEA without any exceptions (Elbaradei, 2011:236). Indeed, for common interest and for international peace and stability, it is imperative to support the establishment of regional nuclear weapons-free zones, especially in troubled regions such as the Middle East and North Africa. Accordingly, the international community in general, and the US in particular, should encourage Israel to accede to the NPT and join a regional nuclear weapons-free zone.

States that are willing to dismantle their nuclear capabilities or their nuclear weapons programmes should be rewarded by the international community. However, not all states are willing to concur with such an idea, and Iran and North Korea both consider that the dismantling of Libya's nuclear programme was a suicidal move since there was little reparation from the international community for its denuclearisation, and indeed there was NATO intervention in 2011. Such intervention could stand to deter any chances of denuclearisation by countries similar to Libya (i.e. North Korea, and Iran). Indeed, for some countries the acquisition of nuclear weapons is believed to be vital for their survival due to the fact that nuclear weapons states have not been attacked (i.e. Pakistan, and North Korea), while non-nuclear weapons states (i.e. Iraq, and Libya), have been. A good example in this regard is the recent tension between Russia and Ukraine. In fact, if Ukraine still had its nuclear weapons stockpile, Russia might not have seized Crimea and defied international community demands. The forceful downfall of Qaddafi in 2011 will justify the pursuit of nuclear weapons capability by states that feel threatened. This in turn will weaken and undermine the post-Cold War non-proliferation vision. Consequently, any threat of military action will certainly discourage any effort to renounce nuclear weapons acquisition.

6.5 Final Remarks

To sum up, I would like to review for the final time, the essential value of this thesis. Considering again the following three main questions of this research project: *What were the factors behind Libya's desire to obtain a nuclear weapons programme? What are the causes of Qaddafi's regime transformation and concessions to denuclearise? What are the effective tools to persuade states such as Libya to dismantle their nuclear weapons programme?* I believe this thesis makes a valuable contribution to debates surrounding nuclear proliferation and non-proliferation by comparing and analysing three different periods of the Libyan case. In short, the proposed answer is that states can indeed give up their nuclear weapons programmes. However, denuclearisation depends on both internal pressure such as unemployment and public pressure and constant international pressure such as economic sanctions, international isolation, and the threat of military force.

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Appendix

Interviews

The interviews took place in summer 2012 in Tripoli, Libya. It is necessary to specify the fact that many officials from different institutions were unwilling to be named as well as certain diplomats and analysts, particularly those who are closely involved in Libya's foreign policy and the nuclear weapons programme. Indeed, the attitude of some interviewees is completely understandable in view of the sensitivity of such areas. Therefore, only one interviewee was willing to be named and signed the consent form out of nineteen interviewees.

Saad Mujber held senior positions in Qaddafi's government such as, Deputy of Head the General People's Congress 'Parliament', Deputy of foreign minister 2002, Former ambassador at France, Algeria, and Iran.

The Questions for Qualitative Interviews

1. Did the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War affect the course of Libya's foreign policy?
2. Were there internal, regional and external motivations behind Libya's nuclear aspirations?
3. What effects have the attacks on 11th of September 2001, and the subsequent war on terror, and United States foreign policy had on Libya's foreign and security policy?
4. Has Libya changed its course of foreign policy to preserve its regime survival?
5. Did Libya's nuclear weapon programme face financial, technical and economic hardship which affected its discontinuation?
6. What effects have the invasion of Iraq in 2003 on Libya to dismantle its nuclear programme?
7. Did the UN sanctions affect the continuation of Libya's nuclear weapons programme?
8. Did Libya opt for dismantling its nuclear weapons programme to end international isolation?
9. Did the seizure of ship loaded with key elements for Libya's nuclear programme affected its continuation?

10. Did Libya approach the United States and Britain to negotiate the end of its nuclear programme?
11. What was the role of the United States and Britain in convincing Libya to discontinue its nuclear weapons programme?
12. What were the repercussions of Libya's nuclear programme dismantlement on the international scene?
13. What were the motivating factors that led Libya to voluntarily dismantle its nuclear weapons programme?
14. What were the incentives behind the shift in Libya's foreign policy ?
15. What did Libya gain from the policy change regarding its nuclear weapon programme and foreign policy as a whole?
16. Was the international community's response satisfactory to the Libyan regime?
17. What are the lessons that the Libyan case can provide in order to decrease the nuclear weapons proliferation?