

BROOKINGS DOHA CENTER

LIBYA'S POLITICAL TRANSITION:
THE PATH AHEAD

Doha, Qatar

Monday, January 19, 2015

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. SHARQIEH: Hello, everyone. This seems to work just fine.

First of all, I'd like to welcome everyone for our discussion today on a very important topic on Libya. As you know, there have been a lot of developments in Libya.

First of all, let me just explain that there is a preference since this is going to be broadcast on Al Jazeera Arabic and also all the speakers, they speak Arabic, so there is a preference to have the discussion in Arabic. So we will be talking Arabic, so we have simultaneous translation. When it comes to the questions, please feel free to ask in English or any other language that we have translation for it. German or French. And we have translation for them as well.

Again, it's a pleasure for me to welcome all the participants and the panelists to speak about a topic which is one of the most important topics that we have been witnessing for the past four years, a

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topic that began since the very beginning of the launch of the Arab Spring in Tunisia and then in Libya and in the region and the jungle.

Libya has always been present in the minds of everybody, the biggest challenge. Or at least in the beginning the biggest challenge was about the conflict against the regime. And then when the regime collapsed in Libya, there was a lot of interaction and sympathy in the world. I was one of the analysts who followed the news at that time and we always tried to understand and follow the developments of the situation in Libya. And there was a lot of optimism that things would be going smoothly and that there will be a transition to multiparty and phase in the history of Libya. But in transition periods usually there are challenges. And this is something not restricted to Libya only, to something known worldwide. All the countries of the world that witnessed the transitions, political transitions from one regime to another had faced a lot of difficulties and challenges and some of the, in fact, a big number

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of them, the majority of these countries witnessed some transition periods accompanied by violence. So they were violent transitions.

At the end of the day, Libya is not the exception. I don't want to imply that this tense and difficult transition of Libya is something exceptional. No, the contrary. In fact, there are a lot of countries that had witnessed something similar. Nevertheless, at the same time I would like to confirm that what is different, and I hope this will not be the situation of Libya. All through the periods of tense transitions when countries go into such a transition or violent transition, usually there's a risk that this might turn into a failed state and that the country will be sunk in problems and difficulties which is something we would not wish for Libya because the situation is dire and seems to be a very difficult situation at the present time or the stage that we have come to within the transition period.

There are many questions and many challenges. And in fact, we are happy to have three

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experts and politicians, in fact, from Libya, and I would like to apologize that the fourth speaker, Abdallah Atamna, couldn't come because of the visa that he couldn't obtain on time so he couldn't come. So I'm sorry.

Once again, we are very much grateful to our panelists to come here to share with us their opinions, to answer the questions that are on the minds of everybody about where is Libya now? Where is it going? And what should we expect? Then we can get out. What's the exit strategy? How can we get out of this situation? So there are many questions, and we'll give some time to the audience to raise their own questions also.

I would like to welcome the panelists beginning with Dr. Osama Kubbar. Dr. Osama Kubbar is a political activist and a senior consultant and special advisor, Qatar Strategic Studies Centre and we are very happy to have Dr. Osama because there are so many questions about the revolution in Libya. Dr. Osama was a candidate for the presidency in Libya and

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he is the one who supervised the political exclusion law. He played a big role in adopting that law of exclusion, and Dr. Osama earned his Ph.D. from Queens University, Canada. And he has three patents in his name and has dozens of research papers in different scientific journals.

We will give each panelist five to 10 minutes. We are a bit flexible. Dr. Osama, tell us what you think and what's your concept about the situation in Libya and to get out of it.

MR. KUBBAR: Thank God I arrived today from Libya. In fact, I arrived at dawn and I have spent a month of leave there. It was not really leave; it was a business trip, in fact. The situation Libya now, they're seeing a lot of fast developments. Things in my opinion have entered a very critical phase. I was very much optimistic in the past, but now with the Geneva dialogue, we all know that Geneva and what happens there, the attempts at containments and posed policies. That's what we see, the sort of settlement according to the information I received (inaudible)

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and I am a very dedicated follower of the situation in Libya and the situation on the ground there.

There is an international settlement being prepared or being imposed now on Libya, and some personalities specifically have been chosen to go to Geneva, and this choice of this personality is a western one, not a Libyan one. I personally don't see that in Libya there is any legal or legitimate entity that says that quite frankly I wrote about it in a clear way. So I'm not saying something new, and I always say what I know and what is in my mind. The general national conference has no legitimacy at all. The Deputies Council or the parliament has been void and has no longer any legitimacy in Libya. But unfortunately, the international system and all the foreign united nations and (inaudible) countries are still in touch with some specific personalities without getting in touch with any real entities that have any legitimacy. They have not gotten in touch with the parliament for choosing the personalities that went to Geneva and the parliament said they are

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not by the parliament and there were not contacts with the national conference and the communication or touch, I mean, choosing who wanted to go to Geneva, these people represent only themselves those who go to Geneva, and personally, I think what's happening in Geneva is a farce, a big farce. There are some attempts to impose a solution on Libya.

Unfortunately, the Geneva talks are dividing the Libyans and the Libyan society, and now we have some voices within the rebels calling for a settlement or to accept some solutions that are not good and are not bad to Libya.

Unfortunately, I usually speak the truth and (inaudible) giving any bright images that are false, not realistic. The revolutionaries are in Libya, and the revolution of Libya are not passing a final test, and who will this development go to or where will it go to, it's very difficult to speak of any way out or exit. The only thing is the military solution which is not possible now, and I personally am not partial in this conflict. I am part of one of the conflict

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parties. I am part of the revolution and the revolutionaries in Libya. But can they end or settle this issue militarily? No. There answer is no because there is international intervention that is helping Haftar and his forces. And there is the Egyptian Emirates intervention in Libya. If things were left to the Libyans, things would have been ended and settled a long time ago. But unfortunately, there are a lot of external hands that are playing and manipulating the situation.

I strongly believe the Libyan revolution is a blessed and divine one for liberation and I'm sure that God Almighty will open the door for us and with his help the revolution will be victorious. We have done a lot of sacrifices, a lot of martyrs, wounded people. Men, women, and children were killed. And all the sacrifices, all this investment will not be lost because there are people, there are strong men that have made a pledge to safeguard these sacrifices and not let them be wasted.

I think we are facing a very big crisis in

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Libya. I was optimistic two months ago but now after what's happening in Geneva now and these talks in Geneva and this division, the ranks of the revolutionaries, things are very troublesome for me and I am not happy with them.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you very much, Dr. Osama. I would like now to move to Mr. Mohamed Eljarh. Mohamed Eljarh has come to us from Tobruk, from the eastern part of Libya. He's going to talk about his vision, vis-à-vis the situation in Libya. He is a political analyst, very distinctive political analyst when it comes to the situation in Libya. He's a nonresident fellow in the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle Eastern Studies, political analyst on Libya. He is a very distinctive writer. He's contributed a great deal when it comes to the Libyan situation. He writes in The New York Times and the Foreign Policy Magazine. He has given a number of consultancies to a number of renowned institutions about the transitional phase in Libya and the Libyan situation. We would like to thank Mr. Mohamed for

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coming today, and I'm going to give him the floor now.

MR. ELJARH: May the peace and blessings of God be upon you. I would like to thank the Brookings Center for extending this invitation to me. There are many things that I would like to talk about when it comes to Libya and the situation in Libya, but I'm going to try in the five or 10 minutes -- I hope that you will be flexible with me -- I'm going to talk about a historical vision about the situation in Libya. Why have we reached the situation that entails the presence of Al Karama, (inaudible) Libya, or the Libya (inaudible), and also the Geneva talks. Why weren't we able to solve the situation in three years? I'm going to talk about the relationship between the Libyan military and also General Khalifa Haftar and also the House of Representatives in Tobruk. And I'm going to talk about the rule of the constitutional court and the repercussions of this rule. And I'm going to talk about a number of details regarding a number of rulings in other democratic states, such as Italy and Germany. And after that I'm going to talk

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about the Geneva talks and also scenarios of the future. I'm going to talk very briefly, very quickly, and after that I'm going to receive your questions.

So first of all, I would like to bring to your attention a number of -- the historical view is concerning a number of incidents that were very important in my opinion, vis-à-vis the democratic transformation in Libya in July 2011. On the 29th of July 2011, in that particular day, Abdul Fatah Younis -- General Abdul Fatah Younis was assassinated and the perpetrators were not punished, although they were known by the transitional counsel at the time. They have not been sued in court. Ahamad Aba Attalla was one of the people who were accused and an interview held with him at CNN, and he said, "I am in Benghazi. So if you can reach me." That was kind of a defiance, a challenge to the Libyan authorities that were not established at the time. But he had the tone of voice that was very much defiant of the Libyan authorities. And he's now in a Libyan court due to the role that was carried out against the American Embassy in

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Benghazi.

The second incident was in 2012. There was kind of a parallel power authority of the concept of the institutions of the state. Such forces, such authorities. The revolutionaries who contributed in operations against Gaddafi, the maximum number of them, was 30,000. Thirty thousand people. And after that, a person decided that he's going to pay money to these people because they have liberated the state from a dictatorship. After this declaration they have moved from 30,000 to 250,000. Such a parallel power has led to many problematic issues that we have seen on the ground today.

There is another incident, and I would like to tell you that the groups that have been established who call themselves the revolutionaries, they want to be called revolutionaries. And they believe that the revolutionary legitimacy is much greater than the democratic legitimacy or the rule of law legitimacy. That's what they believe.

The other date is August 2012, when there

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was a kind of democratic transformation from the transitional council into the general national congress. For the first time, we have seen a peaceful transition of power, and this was harmed by (inaudible), who objected to the fact that there was a lady presenting or MCing the event because she was not wearing a head scarf, and he insisted that she should leave. And people responded to him, and the president of the state at the time responded to him and said, "Yes, one person imposed his opinion in front of 200 freely elected people by the Libyan people." And nobody could object, even the delegations of international institutions were invited but nobody stood against that person. And from then they started a process of imposing opinions in Libya.

Another incident is Derna city, which is in the eastern part of Libya. Since 2012, Derna did not participate in the democratic process in Libya because it is under the control of a hardline group that does not believe in democracy, does not believe in elections. And they said that they're not going to

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have any elections. After the General National Congress, they have control of the city and there is no representation of this city in the constitution drafting, I mean, entity, and also in Tobruk.

The fifth incident is before May 2014.

There was no less than 500 assassinations that have targeted activists, political personalities, judges, and also they have targeted the officers in the military and the different security apparatuses. And no case of these 500 have been investigated. This has made common Libyan people feel that the democratic process will not be a success in Libya. It has made many people feel that the security choice is the first choice. Many people have thought or started thinking that freedom comes after security. And there are some members who have come to take advantage of this kind of situation. So we had a number of institutions in Libya that were not able to reassure common Libyan people.

I would like to move to the second phase.

So the appearance, the rise of al Khalifa Haftar,

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General Khalifa Haftar came to take advantage of all this failure, and he said, "I have the security solution. I'm going to solve the situation in Syria from a security perspective." And he announced on the 14th of May 2014, that he's going to conduct or carry out al Karama operation and we have seen a great deal of impetus, especially in the eastern parts of Libya. And many are calling for the establishment of a military counsel in that particular area because they see in Khalifa Haftar, General Khalifa Haftar was able to find a solution because they have seen a great deal of advancement achieved by Khalifa Haftar in Benghazi, in Tobruk, in El Badr. Such an advancement, such a development has made the Libyan people believe in Khalifa Haftar.

What is the relationship between Khalifa Haftar and the House of Representatives? It is not a good relationship as many people believe. There are so many people in the House of Representatives who have fears and concerns, vis-à-vis the aspirations of Khalifa Haftar because they feel that he's going to

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establish a kind of military rule and that democracy would not pursue as a rule in Libya. There is a great deal of concern in the House of Representatives in Tobruk, although they are an ally of Khalifa Haftar.

So very quickly I would like to move to the ruling by the constitutional courts. The constitutional court has issued its ruling that the elections law that has led to the establishment of the House of Representatives was not constitutional, but they have not given any explanation. Up till today, they have not come up with any explanation that has led to the ruling that was carried out by the constitutional court, so they have not explained. I would like to give you a kind of comparative example. I would like to go back to January 2014. The constitutional court in Italy, I would like to compare now to Italy. It says that the Italian Parliament's decision or ruling was not constitutional, but I have given an explanation and they have said that it's not going to lead to dissolving the House of Representatives because the continuation of the

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institutions of the state is more important than having a problem in the law of elections. And this parliament is going to issue an elections law, and after that we're going to have new elections taking place.

Another example, or three other examples were in Germany in 1993 and also 2008 and 2010. The constitutional court in Germany has issued a ruling saying that the parliamentary elections ruling was not constitutional, but also the court has given a number of explanations saying that the continuation of the institutions of the state is more important than such a mistake. So the outcomes of this law is more important than the situation that they have found themselves in. But the international community said let's take advantage of this opportunity that such a ruling has been issued. We would like to tell and invite all parties, all different components of society to meet at the discussion table. But this was not successful. This has led to aggravating the situation, and this has led us to the UN sponsored

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talks in Geneva. We have got two governments now. We have two prime ministers. So the Geneva talks is kind of a bright kind of project. There are people who believe that these talks would lead to the right solution or to the right outcome. And there are so many people who have participated in the first round of talks. Misrata has sent its representatives, and also, the House of Representatives in Tobruk also has sent its representatives. And also, the General National Congress, they have also sent representatives. And also, the Justice Party also welcomed the talks they can place in Geneva. So there are so many people, so many entities that have welcomed the talks.

But there are some other entities that refused the talks. Those who want to have a military council do not want to have dialogue because having dialogue would be (inaudible) to the idea of having a kind of military council. And also, the Karama initiative. And some people see it as a conspiracy and they say that the revolutionary legitimacy is the

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decisive factor. And that would not lead to the results that they want. So, so many parties did not accept this democratic process because they feel they won't have achieved anything. They wouldn't lead to anything to be achieved on the ground through such a democratic process.

I would like to talk very quickly about the scenarios, expected scenarios for Libya.

The scenario that I hope does not occur is the continuation of chaos, which would put an end to all institutions such as the Central Bank, the Petroleum Institution, and the Foreign Investment Organization. If these institutions collapse, the state of Libya will collapse. And I think the continuation of chaos and fighting will lead to the expiry of these institutions, and that, in my opinion, will put (inaudible) on the international sponsorship or guardianship.

The other scenario is that one of the conflicting parties might win the battles. Five months ago it would not be possible, but now one of

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the parties making real progress on the ground, which is the Karama operation because they are well helped and have external existence that might help them to win, but this victory for them will not be in the interest of Libya because this will be defeated and this fight will begin what we call a guerilla war. And so this means that this will lead to a new kind of instability in the country.

The third scenario is the regional or international intervention in Libya. Some people (inaudible) but nevertheless, for example, Egypt, the Egyptian regime, is now speaking about the national security of Egypt and the weapons coming from Libya to Egypt, and there must be a sort of buffer military zone between the two countries for protection of the security of Egypt. And France (inaudible) intervention south of Libya. The prime minister and minister of defense -- the minister of defense was in Libya (inaudible) and was discussing the creation of a military base in Chad. So this is another possibility. Italy also spoke about peacekeeping

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forces.

The last scenario before I end my speech, and I hope this scenario will take place, that is there will be a sort of agreement between most of the parties. There will be no agreement between all the Libyans. No, this is impossible. But maybe sort of an agreement with some parties. These parties that met in Geneva. But this scenario is faced by the extremists on both sides who don't want any dialogue or talks because they want to fight on the ground. But stopping the fights on the ground is not in their interest. This scenario might be successful if those who are taking part continue to call for talks and give some concessions, one to another, so that one can naturalize the extremists. Thank you.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you very much for this vision that you have given us about the situation, and now I give the floor to Dr. Guma El-Gamaty. Guma El-Gamaty, who was the coordinator of the council in Britain since the beginning of the revolution, and he is one of those leading opposition figures in Britain

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against the al-Gaddafi regime for more than 30 years. He lived in Britain and he was an activist within the opposition.

Dr. Guma obtained his Ph.D. in Political Science from Westminster University of Britain and he's also the head or the president of the Taghyeer Party, the change in Libya, and he is now living in Libya leading his party. So we thank him for being here. And I give him the floor.

MR. EL-GAMATY: Thank you, Dr. Ibrahim. In the name of God, the most merciful and compassionate.

First of all, I would like to thank Brookings Doha Center for this very nice invitation to be here with you and to speak about our Libya and to share with you our concerns and to shed some light on one of the hot issues in our Arab region in the Middle East. So I very much thank Brookings Doha Center for inviting me.

I will try to shed light on this issue from an angle that might be different from that of my colleagues so that we may be more comprehensive in

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dealing with this issue. First of all, I would like to begin from a simple analysis of the specificity of the situation in Libya compared to the countries known to be the Arab Spring countries. There are five Arab countries that witnessed revolutions -- Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Libya. But Libya has its own special case politically, historically, economically, socially that needs to be (inaudible) so that we understand some of the political developments that took place in the country and where the country is going.

One of the specificities of Libya compared to the other four countries is that it is a country that has national resources, a lot of natural resources given its special geographic position. It has the biggest gas and petroleum reserves and it represents the fifth largest reserve of shell oil or shell gas in the world, and in fact, Libya's reserves had (inaudible) 474 billion barrels, so it is a very rich country in natural resources in addition to the minerals that have not been discovered so far.

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And Libya has a very large area and its size is eight times larger than England, and it occupies a very specific important position close to Europe. And the population is really limited. Libya has six countries nearby. Four of them are Arabic and two African -- Algeria and Chad. The total population of these six are 200 million people, as the population of Libya is only 5,700,000. This gives you an idea about the geopolitical importance and economic importance.

What does it mean that Libya has all these natural resources? This means that in the past 60 years since the petrol was discovered in 1960, the (inaudible) has become a (inaudible) country in a special way. And this means that it has a sort of culture in Libya that the Libyan citizens think that they have a right in these riches where they welcome (inaudible) money from the government. It's considered by the citizens that it's a right they don't have to work for. This culture (inaudible) anywhere else to get money without working for it. This also means that there was no social economic

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development in Libya to build a state. There was no state building and there has not been a civilization. This is a small part of (inaudible) monarchy (inaudible) in the '50s and '60s. But with al-Gaddafi's arrival until the revolution, for 42 years, Gaddafi had (inaudible) all aspects of civilization that existed during the monarchy.

So this also gives the dubious specificity in such a way that the revolution took place in 2011 October and we find ourselves and we were in a complete void and no institutions, no state, no military establishment, no security establishments that are strong. There are no real state institutions. And the consequences of this was that the Libyans certainly began to face and to deal with power and riches that because of the spoils they obtained as sort of a reward for them. So this culture of being rewarded was the prevailing one after the revolution, along with the fragility of the situation during the transitional period when they transitioned from that situation to a new state, along

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with the weakness of the leaders, including myself, the political leaders who were leading this transition period.

This also led to the fact that the Libyans are dealing with the power, with the state, and the constructive of conflict, not management. And what they referred to does not exist. The '98 bid in the form of institutions. So they're fighting on riches and money and everybody wants to be in the decision-making position to control the richest. And then they will reach to (inaudible) which means that everybody wants to win at the expense of the others or to delete the others. (Inaudible) is competing to control the different aspects of the power or the authority before having the necessary requirements that sustain democracy, elections, authority, institutional; that they were competing for something without having the requirements. In addition to the fact that lapses of some important cultures. We spoke about the culture of spoils, about conflict, the culture of avoiding the other. Now, there's the culture of demonization of

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the others. And with the absence of some important cultures -- the culture of dialogue, the culture of differences, the culture of co-existence and accepting others and tolerance. All these cultures are almost completely absent from the Syrian-Libyan culture.

There's another fact after the revolution, which is the external factor. Historically speaking, the external factor has always been strong in Libya. The birth of the modern state of Libya was the result of some international external agreements and the UN played (inaudible) in 1951. And now we find the external factors are also playing a big role and still playing by the intervention of the Security Council to protect the (inaudible) or to stop the conflict. Now we must (inaudible) now a new project that is appearing because the revolution went out, was derailed from its track of democracy and could not fulfill the needs or the situations of the people. We find that there are some new projects, external projects led by internal forces, such as to put an end to the revolutions of the Arab Spring by not allowing

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the Islamists to come to power. This is a project that was applied successfully in Egypt and maybe it will be -- it is successful in Libya and they try that in Tunisia. Who was trying to do this in my opinion: Haftar and the so-called el-Karama projected, wanted to put an end to what's happening in Libya and to stop the arrival of Islamists to power. But this was under the justification of we'll put an end to terrorism.

But the fact is that putting an end to Terrorism is just a pretext. Fragile, that is just something for the media. It does not really exist on the ground. Also, the International Forces, unfortunately, were those who are still supporting Haftar and Al Karama operation. I'm still encouraging the conflict through logistical and financial and military intervention, as if they are pouring oil on the fire. That's why. The revolution was in danger and the real revolutionaries must do something. They must protect the revolution, and that's why we found the (inaudible) of Libyan forces who are described as terrorists but they are, in fact, not at all

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terrorists. I'm not an extremist. They are only a political party that wasn't to protect the revolution and to face who was trying to apply the Egyptian model? And Libya, because you always say that you very much admire that CC personality. In fact, Haftar wants to unconsciously, become the CC of Libya.

So what has this led to? What is the solution now? Very fast I can say that we must distinguish between the forces that Libya after the 17th (inaudible) revolution to become a democratic country; a country of institution and the rule of law. Even though the beginnings are difficult but they were be a sort of accumulation. But with other tendencies and forces that do not want democracy; they want military. They want a Supreme Court military council led by Haftar and they want to put us back to their previous culture of al Gaddafi, that of the (inaudible) system and regime. So (inaudible) these forces. And I think the international forces. The lesson that I have. The (inaudible) should distinguish between these two groups and the

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international forces should stop those who do not want to (inaudible) Democrats for Libya are two groups. The Haftar group and the group we don't believe in democracy and civil society. And there again, democracy and civil society institutions. These two groups must be neutralized and oh, the other groups should be supportive. Those groups that believe in democracy and centralization of the state. They're supposed to -- by bringing them together of negotiations so that they can go into talks and then go into an agreement about a new track for Libya because the differences are only the vision of programs and not in principle so that the alternative to Gaddafi will be a democratic state and state of institutions. I think that talks are important. What the United Nations is doing is important and necessarily. And historically speaking, (inaudible) have always played a very good role in Libya. I don't see it's a conspiracy. I don't see -- and also there is one important thing that this revolutionary culture that says we, the revolutionary, we have led the

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revolution and we must rule and be in power and that democracy is something of the western that's a danger and a risk for us, and that will derail us from our track. Thank you.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you very much, Dr. Guma for your intervention. So you have given us ample information about the situation in Libya.

I would like to start with Dr. Osama. Dr. Osama, I have studied a number of transformational experiences -- civil wars and change of regimes into pluralistic and democratic regimes. The main component of this success is the ability of the state to contain the previous fighters, revolutionaries, prisoners to contain them in the different, I mean, official institutions of the state, which is called DDR, the ability of such people to integrate in the institutions of the state. We cannot deny the role played by the revolutionaries in Libya in the war against the previous regime since 2011-2014. And throughout these three years there was a great deal of rejection from the part of the revolutionaries. They

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did not want to integrate in the institutions of the state, and I have discussed a great deal such an issue with the revolutionaries. There was a kind of rejection because they don't want to integrate, take part in the institutions of the states, and this is one of the most important impediments that impede the success of the transformation process in Libya because they justify their position by saying, "We are the protectors of the revolution and we have to be outside the institutions of the state." And the revolutionaries who fought during the previous (inaudible) is estimated between 30,000 and 40,000, and the revolutionaries even said that they have reached 200,000 people. And the commanders of the revolutionaries, I conducted some talks with them and they said that we fear that the revolution would be harmed because there's a kind of number of people who are taking advantage of this revolution. Those who have joined the revolution after the fact, after the top limb of the regime.

So the revolutionaries have been facing an
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acid test for three years, but they have not sought, they have not achieved any transformation. So why are we surprised vis-à-vis the changes and transformations that have been taking place such as the rise of or appearance of Haftar interventions and so on and so forth. So things that I have discussed also with many Libyans, so many Libyans said that we are not with Al Karama operation but we are not going to accept and approve of the current situation. So the revolutionaries, how have they contributed to the situation that we have today?

MR. KUBBAR: Thank you very much for your question, and I hope that you would give me ample time to answer this question. I cannot answer this question in very limited period of time. So in truth, and people following us and watching us know that there is a great deal of, I mean, given false information about the situation in Libya, and we have seen so much of such information is being disseminated, claiming that this is the situation in Libya. So I'm talking to you and I have lived the

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situation in Libya, the revolution in Libya. I've come from the ground in Libya and I am very sure of every word that I'm pronouncing here. So Libyans, the revolutionaries have not been allowed to preserve, to protect their revolution. They have not been allowed to build the state of Libya in an adequate manner. There wasn't a state when al-Gaddafi was toppled. There wasn't a state. There were many mistakes that were committed from the part of those who were representing the political life in Libya. I mean, the belligerent parties were not part of the ruling people of Libya. The constitutional declaration and Mustafa al-Jaleel, who was in charge of the transitional phase, there were many procedures, many decisions that were taking place of which the price we are paying today. So there was a proposal given to Mr. Mustafa al-Jaleel to have an apparatus that would include all revolutionaries, for them to be able to guarantee the security of the state and also, because there wasn't a state, try to secure the people in the different territories. And they're a legitimate entity which is

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a transitional council but Mustafa al-Jaleel did not go further in that issue.

The revolutionaries did not refuse to take part in the military and the police, but when you come with leadership and commanders from people who were with al-Gaddafi and to ask the revolutionaries, you have to be part of such institutions and to tell them that these commanders would be giving the orders, this is a mistake. They are not going to accept that. So these things have made the revolutionaries face a quagmire.

So how can you enlist and join a security apparatus, a security apparatus that was torturing these revolutionaries? These apparatuses were torturing people. They were torturing the revolutionaries. They were in the presence of al-Gaddafi. So how can you ask the revolutionaries to take part to adjoin this, I mean, these apparatus with the corrupt doctrine? These people have a corrupt doctrine. They are calling not for the worship of God; they are calling for the worship of

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personalities. This has led the revolutionaries not to accept this.

So there were a number of proposals. And I was part of the proposal of the, I mean, National Guard that was presented by Noral Abbott, a very respectful person, and this proposal was refused. This project was not accepted. We do not know whether al-Azaden who refused it or rejected it or the General National Congress. Those who follow the situation in Libya, they should be fair to the revolutionaries in Libya because they were the ones who secured the ballot boxes during the General National Congress and also the 60 committees and also in parliament. Many federals tried to target the ballots. I mean, officers, especially in the first elections that took place, there was a plane. A person in that plane was targeted because they wanted to take these ballot boxes from one area to another. The revolutionaries were the ones who secured the transitional democratic situation in three elections Libya. Derna also participated at the beginning but there were a number

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of personalities that have seen that there were a number of mistakes that were committed, and these mistakes were not rectified here in the General National Congress. Not only in Derna but also in other regions. The MSZ also refused to take part in the elections, so the election is not an Islamist problem.

There were a number of visions and opinions that tried to, I mean, called for certain demands for these minorities, such as Tarak, such as MSZ. So what I would like to say is that the revolutionaries, the total number of the revolutionaries was not 30,000. Those who were in the eastern front were 17,000, and in Misrata, they had 24,000 fighters and there were a number of brigades.

So I do not say the revolutionaries or the total number of revolutionaries is 250,000, but there were so many mistakes committed by Mustafa al-Jaleel who paid in excess of 4,000 to a number of people, and we had a number of bogus brigades and they bought weapons and they formed a number of brigades. We have

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to differentiate between the real revolutionaries and those who joined afterwards and called themselves and named themselves revolutionaries. So what can we do to these people?

And last, I would like to say General Khalifa Haftar, he is a criminal. In February 2014, the general prosecutor issued a ruling that he should be, I mean, sued because he was trying to lead a kind of toppling, I mean, notes or a kind of a coup note, and the general prosecutor, eh called for his detention, and now he's claiming that he's a champion, that he's fighting and combatting terrorism. There are so many mistakes that have been presented in my colleagues' intervention. Thank you very much.

MR. SHARQIEH: As for Karama operation, we all agree that the situation was very bad before the 14th of May 2014, but General Haftar appeared in this Karama operation to put an end to that and announced goals for that operation weren't unrealistic goals at all. That's to say to put an end -- that's to say -- they said this was to put an end to the standard

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revolutionary or the other -- call them whatever you like. These were the goals that were unrealistic at all in the operation, Karama operation.

But at the end of the day we judge by the results. Anyone who follows the situation before and after the 14th of May can say that the situation has worsened, and Libya, unfortunately, the war became bigger and bigger, and we're now speaking about a real civil war. So this situation, this Karama operation, for any follower, has moved this situation from Libya for some tensions to civil war, officially civil war. And you know that civil wars in this way have now victorious and defeated parties. The geostrategic necessities and political policies do not allow for any party to win over the others. The civil war in Lebanon continued for 14 years and continued on because no one party could win over the other because of the regional interventions in a way that the war continues forever. In the end, the appearance or the beginning of the operation, Karama put Libya into a more developed violent situation in such a way that's

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really more difficult to deal with compared to the past. What do you think? Definitely. When things are bad and become worse day after day, and to be even worse and worse every day, this is something very normal. Now, I'm going to ask some questions and answer them myself.

Is General Khalifa Haftar the best choice for Libya along with (inaudible)? Definitely no.

The other question, was there any other choice or option on the ground? Was there anyone who could convince the citizen, normal Libyan citizen (inaudible) leads to the support of this operation? Was there any other party you could (inaudible) another option? No. There was no other option.

So although there will be some differences and there will be some bad things made to the Karama operation, but the problem is that the enemies of Haftar, those who are against Haftar and against the Karama operation are the winning card in the hands of Haftar. They are his best asset as he says in English.

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And here is the problem. I also want to clarify that. Not only those who call for the Supreme Military Council want to put an end to democracy in Libya. No, the other party also. The other party also does not recognize democracy. When did the official Libya operation begin? It began after the elections of the House of Representatives in June 2014, and the operation didn't begin except after the first announcement of results that showed that the political (inaudible) had lost the elections in Libya. After that, the war was declared. The war was declared three or four months before or after. (Inaudible) the purpose was to put an end to the malicious intent, but they were there for several months. So the question is that the (inaudible) Libya operation began in my opinion because some parties rejected the political and democratic process because they did not obtain what they wanted from it.

The other point, the Prime Minister of the National (inaudible) who is the leader of the (inaudible) operation discussed (inaudible) that they

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are revolutionaries. So there is something wrong. Maybe (inaudible) is not a terrorist (inaudible) but this person supports and cooperates and interacts with some groups that are classified internationally speaking as terrorists. So there is something wrong. They might not be terrorists but they deal with terrorists and they give some legitimacy to the terrorists and give them some cover that might be used or needed by them. So the answer, as I said, is the Karama operation the best? Definitely no.

Another point. When the Karama operation was announced or declared on the 14th of May 2014, General Haftar said that the military operation in Benghazi would take three to 12 months. He did not say it would be overnight. He did not say it would be easy. Things would be worse and tougher because there will be war. So nobody gave any guarantees that things will become better, but the difference is that now everyone is being prepared, is preparing in Benghazi to completely liberate the city as they say.

Another example, the (inaudible) between

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(inaudible) and another state, it was difficult to take these roads and travel them a few months ago but now you can easily travel and use these roads because there are checkpoints. So the Karama operation gives something, an idea to the citizens that this person, this man can institutionalize the country, the states. Thank you.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible) The situation in Libya is very complex now, and we are using the term officially, the term of civil war. So the question, is this civil war (inaudible) in Libya, is it a Libyan war or is it a war by proxy? Are there revolutionary partners who are having the world by proxy?

This is a clear question and the very frank answer which is yes, this is a war by proxy, proxy war, and to the extent of intervention, Libya is very much effective and influential. Libya is also susceptible to international intervention since its creation 60 years ago, and consequently, the external revolution was strong but it was positive in the interest of the people. But the intervention in the

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past eight months was very negative, and against the interest of the Libyan people. In this intervention, who are the parties? There was this project called Karama project headed by this retired officer Haftar. He wants to put an end to terrorism in Libya. And at the same time he said that he will put an end to all Islamists and kill them, including Islamists who believe in a peaceful political process and elections and are not against democracy. So he's doing (inaudible). It is clear in the Arab region, as we saw through the Arab Spring revolutions, some Arab countries, especially in the Gulf States. And frankly speaking, the Emirates and Saudi Arabia and Egypt later on when there was this change and the return of the military establishment to Egypt. This led to what is called in Libya, a project call to put an end to terrorism, the project of stopping the Islamists from coming to power which is a project which calls to put an end to any democratic transitions.

These countries, including France, supports these countries because there's a very strong

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relationship between France and the Emirates (inaudible) and there are a lot of Emirates investments in France and there are a lot of pro-military French projects in the Emirates. So the French support these acts of Emirates Egypt to support and finance Haftar, the military leader, logistically, by mission, by advice, military advice, experience, to the extent that military jetfighters left the Emirates and were refueled in Egypt, and reached Libya to bombard many cities, saying that they were fighting terrorism.

This is something that is factual, and as long as this access of Emirates Egypt in support of Saudi Arabia and France continues to support el-Karama, they will continue provoking the war. And at the same time, you must recognize that (inaudible) Libya also enjoys a lot of political support from Turkey, and to some extent from Qatar. I say historically from Qatar because Qatar, during 2011, during the revolutionary months, was the country that supported the Libyan revolution in an unlimited way,

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to the full extent financially, logistically relief, played a very good role and an important role in the success revolution. This was counted for some specific forces saying that Qatar supported Islamists only. This is wrong. Mahuchaman, who was secular and liberal who was against Islamists, was supported by Qatar and they created for him a very big media institution that (inaudible) a few months ago. Anyone who says Qatar supports Islamists in Libya only, this is wrong because Qatar has supported the liberals, the seculars (inaudible), and the elders of (inaudible) tribe came to Qatar and they were supported and welcomed there and now they're fighting with Haftar.

So this political support given by Turkey -- by the way, Qatar has taken a step backwards now and is no longer supporting Libya (inaudible) strategies and this is its own right. It can do what it likes and it can continue to stop any strategy policies it wants. But the real support that is really provoking the war in Libya is the support coming from the access Saudi Arabia, Emirates Egypt supported by France. If

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you want to stop this fire in Libya and to push everybody to come to the table for negotiations we must do something because civil war never puts an end to anything, just as was the case in Lebanon. Usually, the end of the civil war has to go to the table negotiations to reach some sort of political solution. So why not gain time and stop the suffering and save Libya from more bloodshed (inaudible) Arab countries stop supporting and encouraging this killing in the country. I think this is a clear answer.

Just allow me a small remark. My dear brother, Mohamed said that Haftar and Kamara are legitimate operations against terrorism in Libya. What I say to him, can one really fight terrorism this way? There are small groups in Derna and Benghazi, only hundreds of people who have the (inaudible) fight and dash. So should we fight them by running airstrikes for eight months? Should we fight them by airstrikes west of Libya (inaudible) who have nothing to do but fight for six cities in the west of Libya, randomly bombarded by Haftar's planes? Isn't what

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Haftar did also terrorism? What is the international definition of terrorism? It is using force to intimidate civilians. What Haftar is doing is terrorism.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you very much, Dr. Guma. Thank you, Mohamed. Thank you, Dr. Osama. We'd like now to open the floor for your questions. We'd like to start with his Excellency, the Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR: In the name of God, the most compassionate and most merciful, I would like to thank the different panelists. They have given us a lot of information, a lot of facts. Many things were not very clear to us, although the dialogue included a number of slogans and a number of emotional statements. But I've got a question here.

In the light of the image that was portrayed here, and it is not a rosy picture here, we feel very much concerned when it comes to the situation in Libya and the future of Libya. My question, the model which is close to Libya, the Tunisian model and what has

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taken place in Tunisia, can that be a model that can be emulated in Libya to give hope to the Libyans, that would give them the opportunity to run away from the situation in Libya, the options available on the table in Libya, because they are not very optimistic. So we have a number of models in the Arab Spring. We feel that the Tunisian situation is a distinctive situation, although it is a sole and only situation. These are your neighboring countries, your neighbors. To what extent can that be an exit for everybody in Libya for the future of Libya?

MR. EL-GAMATY: Thank you very much, Your Excellency, the Ambassador. I would like to thank you for your question. Many of our brothers in Tunisia might disagree with you and think that this model is not a success. What they see and what I see is a kind of soft coup vis-à-vis the revolution that took place in Libya -- in Tunisia, sorry. So the return of Beja Kadasepsy, who was one of the main pillars of the regime of Ben Ali, as president of Tunisia, the deep state is still there, it's still present in Tunisia.

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The party in Tunisia includes all the leadership that was existent during the period of Ben Ali. All what has changed in Tunisia is Ben Ali himself, who has departed and left Tunisia. Perhaps the new constitution that they have voted for and that have been approved by Tunisians, this is maybe the only positive thing maybe and it is not very much different from the previous constitution. The situation in Libya is different. There is no refusal, there is no objection to the dialogue. We are talking about a number of red lines that should be delineated. There shouldn't be any compromise towards vis-à-vis such red lines. We're talking about the principles of the 17th of February revolutions that should be preserved. The blood that was spilled as a result of the revolutionaries taking to the street, so we cannot sit with those who have committed crimes against Libyan people. There was a great deal of bloodshed. The resources of Libyan people have been used. General Haftar should not be part of the dialogue, of the talks. The talks should respect the sovereignty of

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the states. I mean, the presence of people from the House of Representatives as parliamentarians, this is not accepted. There is a high court that has given a ruling saying that the House of Representatives is void and null. It has been canceled. And there is a kind of implicit ruling saying that this is null. And I've seen on Al Jazeera and other channels that experts from other countries other than Libya who have talked about the ruling of the high court in a positive manner, and they have commanded this ruling.

If you allow me.

MR. SHARQIEH: Yes, go ahead, sir.

SPEAKER: And here, sure, I'm going to agree with Dr. Guma. I hope that in Libya we will see the Tunisian situation or scenario and not the Egyptian scenario. Hamad Hamami was one of the candidates and he said in a press conference -- he said in Tunisia we agree, we coordinate, and we can coexist. And this was proven in Tunisia. There is a respect of the results of the ballots. You have to accept that, whether it is a coup or a return to the previous

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regime, we have to accept the vote of free Tunisians. We have to accept and respect the vote of Tunisia. We hope that will be emulated in Libya.

There is no doubt that hadn't we had the revolution in Tunisia and Egypt, we wouldn't have seen any revolution in Libya. We have been very much influenced by the revolution in Tunisia and, I mean, thankfully (inaudible) and I think that the Tunisian model is a good model. I think that the Tunisian revolution was perhaps the only Arab Spring country's revolution that was a success. We have been very much influenced by both Tunisia and Egypt. Khalifa Haftar, in his el-Karama operation and his, I mean, operations that are influenced and supported by many Arab countries, they want us to emulate the situation in Egypt, this authoritarian regime. We would like to emulate the situation in Tunisia. We have to emulate this wisdom, this kind of balance when it comes to the rules of the game. I think this is all thanks to the wisdom of al-Beja Kadasepsy and al-Hanushi because these intakes were very much not excluding Tunisians.

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It was kind of a culture that instilled a culture of dialogue, a culture of coordination, and we have to thank also Borkaba for that. All these components, potential components of power and strength. All these components have led to the success of this revolution. Al-Beja Kadasepsy, although he is part of the previous regime, he cannot become an authoritarian president because there are new rules of the game that are taking place which are the constitution, the conformity, and also a kind of participatory system, and he cannot be a new dictator. He's going to be democratic because there are new rules of the game and I hope that this kind of new system would be very much entrenched in Tunisia, and we, in Libya, are going to do our best to try to emulate the situation and the scenario in Tunisia to be successful and to benefit from the situation in Tunisia.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you very much, Dr. Guma, for your intervention. Go ahead.

MR. EL-GAMATY: In fact, the other panelists have given us very good information and detail. But

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I'm giving first an overview from far away to the situation in Libya. There is a poem that says don't ask about a person but ask about his friends because knowing his friends you know who that guy is. There's another proverb that says birds of feather flock together.

So judging by -- one of the parties to the conflict are well supported and publicly supported (inaudible) and the division of the country and to the territory in (inaudible) those who support this party, that's to say Haftar's party and the so-called operation of Karama, then you can say that -- one can say that this is an operation of alienation and counterrevolution movement by Haftar and others such as Cici. So don't you as Libyans think that the solution in Libya is the unification of your ranks so that you can put an end to this Haftar phenomena what Haftar is doing. Just as the Egyptians unified their ranks to put an end to the coup in Egypt. Don't see that unity is the only solution you have to confront Haftar and then to put an end to the crisis.

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MR. SHARQIEH: Mr. Mohamed, I give you the floor.

MR. ELJARH: Thank you for these questions.

Although I am against the terms that you used, such as the el-Karama operation (inaudible) represent a very important part of the Syrian people - - sorry, Libyan people who supported. So say that this mean phenomena, this means that you are describing a lot of Libyans as being mean. So, please, when you ask a question, don't use such words that might be harmful or insulting some members of the society.

I am against this also. Please let me continue. The other thing, there is a saying that birds of a feather block together. Also, there are some people who support (inaudible). There are some people who support the extremists in Libya. So this saying that you brought is not correct and not proper.

But to answer the question about intervention, Egyptian Emirates intervention in Libya is against the interest of Libya because it does not

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represent the Libyans themselves but represents some of the tools used by these countries. And another example is the states of Qatar and Turkey who are supporting the other group financially, logistically. So the same intelligence reports are being used and published in the New York Times. I read them all and I know personally who wrote this report. The same report speaks about weapons (inaudible) through Sudan, provided by the state of Qatar. So there are two parties who are supporting the two parties to the conflict in a direct way. And this is something that must stop. And the international community must intervene and oblige all these parties to stop intervening because the intervention of Qatar is not in the interest of Libya, and the intervention of the Emirates is not in the interest of Libya. It is only for their own interest of these two countries.

MR. SHARQIEH: Dr. Osama.

MR. KUBBAR: Thank you for this question.

In fact, when one speaks about Qatar or Turkish intervention in Libya, and I say this with fully

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knowledge and I'm fairly close to the situation, if there is no military intervention, then (inaudible) has come to an end since 2011. And even the international reports and (inaudible) report is only a report written by a journalist in a newspaper but there is nothing to prove that.

At the same time, we see with our own eyes the Emirates jetfighters and the conspiracy that is being supported by the Emirates and Saudi Arabia and Egypt. We see this with our own eyes in Libya. There's support to the Haftar group. As for the Karama operation, yes, there is some part or segment of the Libyan people that support this operation but it's not a big segment. And as for the level of Haftar, when you discuss them, you find that they hate Haftar but they are sick of this chaotic situation in Libya and want to put an end to it. And according to their culture and their knowledge, they think that military intervention might put an end to that situation.

Of course, there are some ideas that were

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said today that are not quite correct saying that Haftar, speaking of the coming days in which he will liberate Benghazi, he's been saying this for a long time and this is nothing but bullshit. And anyone who can do something is the Benghazi revolutionaries and at the same time Haftar and his people are using airplanes and jetfighters to destroy Benghazi, which is the second biggest city. All its educational institutions have been destroyed and demolished because the airstrikes do not distinguish. And even hospitals were shot.

MR. SHARQIEH: Dr. Guma?

MR. EL-GAMATY: Yes, I agree with what was said in the main part of the question from the gentleman that the Libyans should unify their ranks and that they should come together. And we definitely do need that to avoid the violence, bloodshed, and exclusion of others. And to the option of dialogue and managing the differences, there are two kinds of differences. There's a difference between Libyan groups about have we -- do we need to have an

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alternative regime or was the past regime better? There are some personalities in Egypt who say that what happened in Libya was a disaster. We should go back to the old situation. This is difficult to accept. If they are not legally prosecuted, they should come back to the country and take part in the building of the country.

As for the other kind of difference (inaudible) we have led the revolution to put an end to (inaudible) to create a new kind of state that is quite different from the past with democracy, but we have different interpretations. This should be managed through dialogue, through political means. Haftar forces, I might disagree with him complete and have no common ground with him, but there are some personalities in the House of Representatives with whom I have very good personal relations, like Dr. (inaudible) who adopts the federal choice (inaudible) I believe in decentralization. So we might come together to talk and agree upon something. But because we both want to have a new state that is based

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on the constitution and democracy. So this kind of difference is something good because the real democracy is that it has different ideas that enrich the political life.

MR. SHARQIEH: Thank you, Dr. Guma. And also, thank Dr. Osama and Mohamed. And in fact, these different ideas and points of view, and this handling of the topic from different angles has enriched the discussion and has helped us to better understand the complexity of the Libyan situation. That's why I would like to once again extend my thanks to the panelists for their time and for their ideas about this topic. We must all admit that this topic is not easy and it is a very complex issue. And the Libyan situation is getting more and more complicated day after day because there are different interventions from inside the society that have contributed to the complexity of this issue.

And we must also not forget that there are some talks. Talks are taking place now, and we need some hope. I understand the reservations made by some

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of the colleagues as was seen in Tripoli, but at the end of the day there must be some hope. There must be an alternative, a substitute to the military solution, and we hope that everybody, all the parties will understand in Libya that the civil war is not the solution, the solution to the crisis in Libya. And the conflicting parties who cannot put an end to the battle by zero sum game, but the only solution is that Libya will pay a very high price if the fight continues there. We hope that this is a real clear message that there must be an alternative, and the alternative is a political solution that will be agreed upon by all and we hope that Libya, when it begins its transition period, we all hope that to be a smoother period that lead Libya to a new situation.

Mr. Ambassador gave Tunisia as an example, but Tunisia by itself is not enough to create a regional change. We needed other countries. We were betting on Yemen that maybe Yemen is witnessing a transition period at the success of the National (inaudible) Conference, but unfortunately, we find

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that the situation also is complicated in Yemen, and that's why we also again look upon Libya hoping that there will be success in the transitional period and we should avoid the bloodshed of Libyans to have a better future.

I once again thank the audience and thank Al Jazeera channel for covering it. Thank you all, and I wish that we will meet again in the near future.

(Applause)

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