

Libya: NATO's War Of Aggression Against A Sovereign African State

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-The use of Western troops in Africa – particularly in the case of France – the use of its paratroopers, first in Ivory Coast, and now in Libya, represents a new strategic declaration of war against Africa, the African interest, and the African continent. In NATO's disregard of AU, there is without doubt a remanifestation of that ontological disease of the Western mind that regards Africa as simply a place without history and without agency.

France and Great Britain, leading a NATO alliance, are effectively at war in Libya on the pretext of a United Nations' mandate. The United States, led the early charge against Libya's Ghadaffi from the air, but has taken something of a back seat, and allowed Britain and France to continue what can now be considered a war of aggression against a sovereign African state, far beyond the mandate of the UN.

They have been bombing Libya relentlessly from the air. They have killed Ghadaffi's son in a direct personal attack on the home of the Ghadaffis. The relentless strafing of Tripoli, the Libyan capital, in the past two weeks has also led to serious civilian casualties which the Libyan authorities have reported and which NATO has denied. The NATO alliance at the fore of this new colonial war in Africa has now moved beyond its mandate to seek regime change; to undermine the sovereignty of Libya, and create a civil war situation in this North African country and member-nation of the African Union.

The French have positioned their aggression against Libya as a fight to free Libyans from the tyranny of Moumar Ghadaffi. They have not hidden the fact that they wished to make it impossible for a transition of power from Ghadaffi to a newer generation of Libyan nationalists who may follow in the state policies of Ghadaffi, particularly as it affects oil. It is not a secret that Libya sits on the vastest oil field in Africa and that Ghadaffi has prevented the international oil cartel from exploiting Libya's oil and had forced them to comply with the strictest standards in oil production.

It is no longer a secret that behind this NATO alliance war on Libya, and far beyond the "do-good" face it places or wears as its mask as its reason for bombing Libya to smithereens, is the quest to control the oil fields of Libya, guarantee Western access to energy sources in the face of growing concern over the rise of China and India and their own emergent gluttony for oil, and, of course, solve the problem of an intransigent African nationalist challenge to Western shenanigans. It is the 19th century all over again.

Libya is the first flashpoint in the resource war that is bound to once more make Africa the battlefield of the great industrial powers. Once they take out Ghadaffi, that challenge to organise and fund a formidable African resistance against a new colonial mandate using the

UN will weaken.

The new scramble for Africa will more than likely commence. It is, therefore, ridiculous that Nigeria, a more than likely victim of this potential threat sits idly, voting with those who have launched a new aggressive war on Libya. The Nigerian government under President Goodluck Jonathan has failed to understand the wider dimensions of this NATO campaign on Libya.

The Nigerian delegation was among those African countries who sided with the voters in the UN to commence the operations in Libya. The mandate, of course, was for a low-grade, protective operation against the potential of the Libyan military use of force against civilian populations, particularly in Benghazi, the so-called outpost of the Libyan resistance.

Last week, at the G-8 meeting in France, and, in justifying America's participation in the fight in Libya, the US President Barack Obama said it was a pre-emptive action by the NATO alliance, presumably the world's chief defenders of humane mores and democratic freedom, to prevent a possible massacre of wide proportions against the Libyan civilian opposition against Ghadaffi. But the Libyan opposition is not a civilian opposition, it is an armed rebellion.

The UN decision in which Nigeria participated basically tied the hands of the legitimate government of Libya behind its back, gave ammunition to a fringe rebellion, and has aided a civil war in Libya in which Libya's national Armed Forces was prevented through relentless air attack from defending the territorial integrity of the Libyan state for which it is established. The West has aided a small fissiparous and ill-organised militia to destroy an African country.

It is like NATO deciding to bomb the Nigerian Armed Forces if it goes after the increasingly organised Boko Haram militia in the North. Nigeria has in voting with France and Great Britain and the NATO alliance given ammunition to the new conquest of Africa and this is why she is seen roundly in Africa and by most Africans as the handmaiden of the West. This image of Nigeria as a consistent ally of the West against the interests of a free, independent, and prosperous continent is why most Africans and African nations do not take Nigeria seriously, and even, in fact, are amused by its claims of leadership in Africa.

They think her quest for the UN seat is a joke given the weakness of its leadership and the inconsistency of its foreign policy. But contrast this with the strategic position of the South Africans on this matter, leading the African union to demand an immediate NATO cessation of the bombing of Libya. Last week, Jacob Zuma, the South African President went to Tripoli for consultations with the Libyan authorities, and the African Union issued a demand for NATO to stop bombing Libya.

It is a follow-up to AU's earlier intervention in which they have proposed a negotiated settlement between Tripoli and Benghazi. But NATO countries, busy setting up new embassies, and cutting new oil deals with the Libyan rebels against the long-term interest of Libya, are fobbing off any attempts for the Africans to sort out the situation in Libya and ease off Ghadaffi with less sanguinity. It is remarkable that Nigeria's own president has continued to play possum to this NATO disregard of the African Union. Indeed, within the week of Zuma's visit to Tripoli, NATO announced heightened military action against Ghadaffi's Libya, and the use of more direct boots on the Libyan streets.

The use of Western troops in Africa – particularly in the case of France – the use of its paratroopers, first in Ivory Coast, and now in Libya, represents a new strategic declaration of war against Africa, the African interest, and the African continent. In NATO's disregard of AU, there is without doubt a remanifestation of that ontological disease of the Western mind that regards Africa as simply a place without history and without agency. It is not surprising that Sarkozy is leading this war in Africa. Here was a man who came to Africa, at the Cheik Anta Diop University in Dakar to declare that "the African man has not entered history;" he is still a hewer of wood fit only for the enlightened charity of France and the West.

At the core of Sarkozy's racist mind lies this quest to cut Libya and Ghadaffi down to size and seize her property – the oil. But here is the irony: the West had to wait for a weakened Ghadaffi, weakened by his decision to dismantle his nuclear arsenal and open up to the West, before the NATO alliance in a joint and cowardly effort decided to attack him from the air using a UN mandate.

What is the lesson here? Nigeria must be alert to its duties to the continent and join the AU effort to more forcefully demand NATO's cessation of her bombing operations in Libya, failing which it must then regard further operations in Libya as an open act of war and aggression against an African country. Africans have a right to defend themselves and their continent by all means necessary. Perhaps, it is time to re-open the discussions about an African High Command.

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