PANDORA'S BOX: UPDATING THE LIBYAN CONFLICT MAP

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Abstract

This study examines the second Libyan conflict by using the conflict mapping technique that was introduced by Paul Wehr. At this point, the study analyses the Libyan conflict within the framework of context, issue, actor, and dynamic of the conflict. The reason for analyzing Libya in the research is that it is one of the complex conflicts of the last period, and thus deeply affects the regional dynamics. The significance of the research arises from its contribution to the literature by presenting an alternative road map of the conflict in Libya. The study conducted using secondary data sources is based on the qualitative research design. The results of the study reveals that the way to end the conflict is through reaching the root causes of the conflict and a solution acceptable to both sides. Besides, the necessary pre-condition for a peaceful, fair, and lasting solution to the conflict in Libya supports a democratic process. Accordingly, the success of United Nations (U.N)-led reconciliation is quite significant to stability in Libya.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict mapping, Libya

PANDORA'NIN KUTUSU: LİBYA ÇATIŞMA HARİTASININ GÜNCELLENMESİ

Öz

Bu çalışma, Paul Wehr tarafından ileri sürülen çatışma haritalama tekniğini kullanarak ikinci Libya çatışmasını incelemektedir. Bu noktada çalışma, Libya çatışmasını, bağlamı, konusu, aktörü ve dinamiği çerçevesinde ele almaktadır. Çalışmada, Libya sahasının analiz edilmesinin nedeni, Libya'nın son dönemin en karmaşık çatışmalarından biri olması ve dolayısıyla bölgesel dinamiklerini derinden etkilemesinden ileri gelmektedir. Çalışmanın önemi, Libya'daki çatışma sahasına alternatif bir analiz haritası sunarak literatüre katkı sunmasından ileri gelmektedir. İkincil veri kaynakları üzerinde yapılan çalışma, nitel araştırma tasarımına dayanmaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, çatışmayı sona erdirmenin yolu, çatışmanın temel nedenlerine ve her iki tarafın da kabul edebileceği siyasi bir çözüme ulaşmaktan geçmektedir. Ayrıca Libya'daki çatışmaya barışçıl, adil ve kalıcı bir çözüm için gerekli ön koşul, demokratik bir sürecin desteklenmesidir. Buna göre, Birleşmiş Milletler (BM) öncülüğündeki uzlaşmanın başarısı, Libya'daki istikrar için oldukça önemlidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çatışma, Çatışma haritalama, Libya

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Introduction

> *"War then, is a relation – not between man and man but between State and State and individuals are enemies only accidentally not as men, nor even as citizens but as soldiers not as members of their country, but as its defenders…"*
>
> *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*

The change in Libya's regime after Gaddafi's rule did not provide an optimistic atmosphere, on the contrary, it gave to increasing conflicts between armed groups, the existence of radical terrorist organizations, refugee issues, and uncontrollable border problems. In this context, the conflicts becoming visible rapidly progressed to a process that all struggle against with all. Ultimately, this process reached such a point that in Libya, in which the second civil war broke out in 2014, there has been a fragmented structure. Libya, in which was divided in an unprecedented form, was far from democracy and much closer to chaos than before (Droz-Vincen, 2018:435). At this point, the second Libyan civil war that claimed tens of thousands of lives, not only created instability in its region but also became the focus of competition, especially in geostrategic terms (Megerisi, 2020). These competing groups have also struggled for influence and power, in an environment of zero-sum, with the support of external actors (Blanchard, 2020). In this way, the conflict in Libya, in which problems inherited from the Gaddafi era prevail, such as the weakness of institutional structures and the absence of democracy, presents a complex issue that is localized on the one hand and internationalized on the other (al-Shadeedi, Veen, and Harchaoui, 2020).

From this general perspective, the research analyzes the Libyan conflict by using the Conflict Mapping technique of Paul Wehr. The reason for analyzing Libya in the present study is that it is one of the complex conflicts of the last period, and thus deeply affects the regional dynamics. The significance of the research arises from its contribution to the literature by presenting an alternative road map of the conflict in Libya. In this context, the main research questions of the study are as follows: a) What are the issues of the Libyan conflict? (b) How do the actors affect the overall situation in Libya? (c) When the regional interests are concerned, possible to achieve peace in Libya?

In this context, this study, in which qualitative research design was used over secondary data sources, is structured as follows: firstly, brief information about the conflict mapping technique will be given in the study. Following the presentation of the conflict context and actors, the issues will be described in fact-based, interest-based, and value-based. Finally, after determining the dynamics regarding the conflict, the study will be ended with the conclusion part.

1. CONFLICT MAPPING AS A TECHNIQUE

As Wehr (Wehr and Bartos, 2002:67) emphasized in his study, "*even the simplest conflict has many elements and a conflict that involves multiple parties, large numbers of people, and complex organizations can become enormously complicated.*" Thus, the "conflict mapping" provides assistance to clarify the complex arising from the conflict. More clearly, the main purpose of using the mapping technique in the research is to provide a clearer understanding of the context, actors, issues, and dynamics of the conflict. The steps of Wehr's map that has developed a tool to respond to social and international conflicts. Accordingly, the steps of the mapping, which also visualizes the conflict, are identified into:

The first step in analyzing a conflict is to consider the historical background of the conflict. Accordingly, it is necessary to analyze its historical development, in order to understand the nature of a conflict and states it properly. When analyzing a conflict, it is important to know that the conflict does not occur in any vacuum. At this point, the cases, in which one conflict is intertwined with another are also possible. In such cases that the "facts" are not what they seem, defining the context of the conflict is quite significant (Wehr and Bartos, 2002:68). Another critical step in mapping is determining the parties. Accordingly, Paul Wehr characterized the parties as primary, secondary, and third. At this point, it can be noted that the primary actors are the direct parties to the conflict, as well as having a direct interest in the outcome of the conflict. While the secondary parties, which are generally allies of the primary parties have a direct utility from the result. the third parties, are actors that intervene to facilitate resolution drawing attention to the difficulty of specifying the issues of conflict (Wehr and Bartos, 2002:68).

Wehr states that as conflict progress, the causes and consequences of conflict can get more complicated. Accordingly, issues are specified as facts-based, values-based, interests-based, and nonrealistic. Facts-based issues are about what is because of how parties perceive what is. While values-based issues are about what should be, interest-based issues are over who will get what in the distribution of resources. Finally, nonrealistic issues include the interaction style used by the parties (Greco, 2008). Conflict incorporating the process of change and transformation exhibits a dynamic structure. Accordingly, the dynamics of the conflict consist not only of the actions and reactions of the parties but also of the events that result from these actions. Determining alternative routes to solve the problem in the mapping of the Wehr is another point (Wehr and Bartos, 2002: 68).

2. CONFLICT CONTEXT

After the Arab Uprisings spread to Benghazi in February 2011, Gaddafi's 42-year-rule of Libya has come to an end, and a new era began in Libya. Considering the developments in Libya since this period, it can be stated that the general phases have emerged as follows (Blanchard, 2020):

• The period from October 2011 to July 2012 was the focus on determining interim leaders and get over the challenges of the 2011 conflict.

• The transition period, in which it is determined interim institutions could be legitimized, and whether they could be maintained or not, from July 2012 to May 2014.

• It is the period from May 2014 to the present, when multi-faceted conflicts occurred between parties, and third parties mediated.

In this context, following the ending of Gaddafi's rule, the National Transitional Council (NTC) became the de facto government of Libya for a period of ten months, between 2011 and 2012 (Willcoxon, 2017).

Even though low-intensity conflicts between rival groups occasionally occurred in this phase, these events did not more than the element of pressure. Thereby, the political process that has not yet reached the turning point continued to progress.

From this perspective, it can be emphasized that there was a fragile structure in the region before the July 2012 elections, and NTC performed a substantial role in providing relative balance in this blurred period. For instance, even if some regional disputes turned into small-scale armed conflict in a few of the ballot boxes, the interim government of Libya explained that 94 percent of boxes opened normally, and voter turnout is the percentage of 62 percent. In this way, the NTC handed over power to the General National Congress (GNC) in August 2012., and this was the first peaceful transition in Libya's modern history (Molesworth and Newton, 2015:29).

On the other hand, the NTC focusing primarily on the transition period, issued a constitutional declaration to govern this process and called to the appointment of 60 experts for the constitutional committee (Mezran, 2014:22). Although initially it has been decided that 20 experts were assigned from each of the three historical providences of the west, east, and south, this decision was changed afterward to appease the federalist movements. The NTC, which did not also fulfill this decision, re-changed the declaration before the election, and this time announced that the members of the constitutional committee would be elected by the public (Pickard, 2012).

However, the process for a new constitution, starting with great hopes and expectations that the democratic order would be constructed, did not sustain, and a range of political and social problems emerged soon after. Accordingly, the various groups in a political setting have led to competition and polarization increase, and the political atmosphere gradually deteriorated by the effect of rising tensions in Libya. The disputes between groups have deepened after the escalate of the political unrest across the country during 2013. The elections executing to delegate the GNC's task to a House of Representatives (HoR) failed, and the results of elections have not been accepted by all members of the GNC (Droz-Vincen, 2018).

On the other hand, the Political Isolation Law (PIL), which was prohibited commanders or bureaucrats of Gaddafi's regime from the political scene, was passed by the GNC in May 2013 and was presented to the whole world in English on 14 May (GNA, 2013). At this point, as a result of the GNC's failure to re-establish the layout and built consensus, one of the wings of the political spectrum formed of the jihadists, while the other constituted of fractions that distance-standing to jihadists (Eriksson, 2016:822). Ultimately, Libya has become a country in which subsisted intensify conflicts, was divided politically, and had two governments and legislative by early 2014 (Morana, 2019).

Besides, in the post-Gaddafi period, in which radical jihadist movements have increased their effectiveness in the region due to the vacuum of authority and mistrust, the conflicts have started between terrorist organizations, such as Ansar al-Sharia and ISIS, which are radical jihadist groups having settled in Benghazi in the insecure atmosphere of Libya, and law-enforcement officers. These developments indicated the darkness to fell over Libya and the country's political future (Aliboni, Ben Salem, El Sagezli, Dias, and Nabli, 2017).

After the conflict in Benghazi has expanded and spread to Tripoli and the number of assassination and suicide bombs has increased in the country, the failure of the present power to provide security has led the country to instability. In this way, as a result of the elections held within the roadmap that has been drawn up by the National Transition Council, many different local actors that were supported by armed militias emerged in Libya (Gartenstein-Ross and Barr, 2015).

One of the most important events in the conflicts is the challenge to the Libyan administration by Haftar within this period. Accordingly, Haftar's challenge[1] by declaring that he derecognized the GNC in February 2014, increased the level of polarization between the opposing groups (Shennib, 2014). The division and political polarization increased in Libya that unable to turn the transition period into a stable and inclusive process, and then turned into open armed conflict in the second half of 2014, leading to rival governance. In addition, Libya is also divided into three main geographical regions: Tripolitania in the west, Fazzan in the southwest, and Cyrenaica in the east. This division of Libya was based not only at the point of geographically in the "western" and "eastern", but also on ideology within the framework of Islamism and nationalism (al-Shadeedi, Veen, and Harchaoui, 2020).

In the period between late 2014 and early 2015, one country's two governments emerged because of one failed election in Libya. Accordingly, the government that supported by the vast majority of the HoR, remained in

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[1] Haftar forces and allied tribes entered Tripoli on May 18, 2014, and declared that the parliament was suspended. Although Haftar announced that this was not a coup, there were some who did not interpret the situation in this way. In response to Haftar's announcements, while some Libyans considered these assaults as a military coup, the others suggested that this definition would lend more legitimacy. (Elumami and Laessing, 2014)

Tobruk, while members recognizing the GNC remained in Tripoli (Eriksson, 2016: 822-823). As Droz-Vincent argues that "the transition in Libya did not lead to a compromise between the new revolutionary forces and the remnants of the old system, but instead led to polarization" (Droz-Vincen, 2018:449)

Although the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) indicated unity amid the external actors that were supporting the agreement, the failure of political institutions to reach consensus has also led to the support of external actors being more superficial. At this point, external actors focused more on their interests rather than seeking a comprehensive solution to the crisis.

During this period of conflict, the UN also attempted to initiatives, and after the dialogue process, the agreement was signed by members of the GNC, and the HoR in Skhirat in December 2015 mediated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). In this agreement, it was decided to establish a unity government consisting of representatives of Libya's rival fractions under the presidency of Fayez al-Sarraj, and the majority of the GNC deputies should be integrated into the High State Council (HSC) (Watanabe, 2019). It can be stated here that the existence of radical organizations triggered international concerns and accelerated the formation of GNA. After this, the GNA quickly focused on the struggle against radical organizations (al-Shadeedi, Veen, and Harchaoui, 2020:11-12). However, the LPA[2] - due to failure to ratify the LPA by HoR- failed to satisfy the expectations in Libya facing threats, such as radical organizations, and international migration (Tekir, 2020:196).

After the radical organizations expanded their influence in the region, Egypt, Russia, France, and the UAE supported the LNA forces. As a result of international support, radical organizations such as ISIS were expelled from the country, and the Libyan National Army/Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LNA/LAAF) expanded its control in the east of Libya. Similarly, it is noted that the GNA led by al-Sarraj also exerted various struggles against militant groups operating in its field. While the GNA received substantial backing from Turkey and Qatar at this stage, it also received limited from Italy, and this situation has been decisive in expanding the GNA's influence in western of Libya. On the other hand, in the southern parts, where the population is much less, there were groups that supported both sides, as well as groups, who were in favor of maintaining autonomy. As of the end of 2016, conflicts have intensified again because of various reasons such as internal divisions, tribal differences, and the proliferation of militias (Quamar, 2020: 2).

On the other hand, while fighting continued in 2016, al-Sarraj's government crossed to Tripoli on an Italian naval ship in March 2016, but had difficulty operating in one city controlled by the militia. The abstention policies of international actors to support the GNA, and the preference for

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[2] It is also noteworthy that LPA, which emerged as a result of the prolongation of the negotiations and the deepening of the crisis in Libya, has little local legitimacy and has a minimal level of structural ability (Megerisi, 2020, p. 6).

policies regarding non-state actors has weakened the GNA's status[3] (Megerisi, 2020: 4-5). In Libya, in which the political process is progressing in its current form, Haftar's forces, which was on the rise during this period, owning the oil terminals without resorting to violence between Sidra and Brega, enabled them to be further strengthened their position. As of 2017, Hafter's forces expanded their control area to include Benghazi. In 2018, Haftar forces launching an offensive on Derna against the Islamist coalition, and then assaulted Fezzan in January 2019 after inflicting heavy losses on the Islamist coalition. Haftar forces that sustained progress during this period, launched a large-scale attack on Tripoli in April 2019 (Harchaoui and Lazib, 2019: 6-7).

Besides, during 2018-2019, a new inclusive process-reflecting the fragmented structure of Libya- started under the mediation of the UN Special Representative Ghassan Salamét, and then an agreement was signed between Haftar and al-Sarraj in Abu Dhabi at the end of February 2019. However, the lack of extensive support of groups in Libya to this agreement, which includes a power-sharing, led the current situation to be controversial. Haftar, who desired to take power because of all these developments, attacked Tripoli in March 2019 (Megerisi, 2020:5-6). The western Libyan wing united to defeat Hafter's forces and forced these forces to withdraw from northwestern Libya in 2020. After 18 months of conflict, a ceasefire was signed in October 2020. The United Nations has launched a new round of negotiations aimed at a political solution to the civil war in Libya (Fener, 2021).

The Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF), consisting of 75 representatives, conducted the negotiations between November 2020 and February 2021. Libya's parliament which divided into two since 2014, has approved the interim government as part of the UN-backed peace plan for gathered the fragmented country together (al-Warfali, 2021). In this way, the UN decelerated a new National Unity Provisional Government (GNU), which will rule the country until the elections on December 24, 2021 and adopted Resolution 2570 inviting the parties to prepare the ground for national elections (United Nations Security Council, 2021).

3. WHO IS WHO IN THE LIBYAN CONFLICT?

It can be noted that to define Libya as a field of struggle for internal/local actors, is a quite reductionist approach. When the conflict zone is examined, today's Libya is in pieces, and factions are so divided (Combaz, 2014). However, this issue does not constitute an obstacle to determining the main/major actors. Accordingly, there are main parties and a few smaller groups within this conflict.

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[3] This situation became more visible in the Haftar-al Sarraj meeting hosted by France in 2018. More clearly, this conference is important as it demonstrated the creation of equivalence between the country's legitimate civilian leader and the commander of many armed groups. It is also a noteworthy development over shaping Libya's future that al-Sarraj was forced to negotiate with Haftar (Megerisi, 2020, p. 5).

At this point, the primary actors of the Libyan conflict are as follows (Blanchard, 2020): The Government of National Accord (GNA), the High State Council (HSC), the House of Representatives (HoR), and the LNA/LAAF.

The GNA led by Fayez al-Sarraj in Tripoli that the UN assisted to establish to consolidate opponent groups emerging as a result of the 2014 elections and approved officially is the national government in Libya[4] (Libyan Political Agreement, 2015). The armed forces of the GNA, which controls sections in the west of Libya, consists of Libya's Official army, as well as local militias (al-Shadeedi et al., 2020).

The HSC, which is a consultative body established by the LPA provisions in 2016, can provide advice to the HoR and the GNA, as well as can make the necessary consultations with them (Representatives, 2016).

The political block of the HoR, which is headquartered in Tobruk, consists of different groups. This block supporters believe that the 2014 election was legitimate, and Hafter is the reasonable leader for Libya (Blanchard, 2020).

The LNA/LAAF, which has been operating since 2014, is based in Benghazi and Beyda, and consists of approximately twenty-five thousand fighters. Haftar, the leader of LNA/LAAF, declared his aim as relieving the country from jihadists groups and militias, and taking control of Tripoli. Besides, it is known that Haftar, assigned members of the Ferjani and Zway tribes, who supported his family, to elite units of the LNA/LAAF (Pusztai, 2019; Harchaoui and Lazib, 2019).

Figure 1: Conflict Mapping of Libya[5]
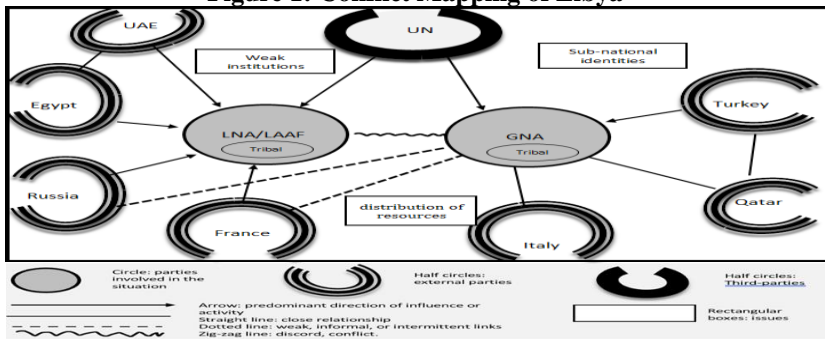
On the other hand, the secondary actors of the Libyan conflict are as follows: Egypt, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Russia, France, Italy, Turkey, Qatar.

Following this, the countries such as Egypt, UAE, Russia, and France are backers of the LNA/LAAF, while the countries such as Turkey and Qatar

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[4] The GNA became operational on 30 March 2016, after the LPA was signed in December 2015.
[5] Tip Sheet1 summaries of Simon Mason and Sandra Rychard have been used in shaping this mapping (Mason and Rychard, 2005:5).

also supported the GNA. However, while Libya has been the focus of the regional conflict between the various camps, these groups do not define as alliances, because of each country has its unique justifications.

From this perspective, to understand the nature of conflict more clearly, it is necessary to set the interests of the secondary parties. Accordingly, first, if one examines the secondary actors supporting Haftar's forces, it can be said that Egypt considered the civil war as critical security, economic and ideological issue. In this context, it evaluates the region as a fragile structure due to the possibility of radical jihadists getting power, terrorist attacks, and the revolt on the Sinai Peninsula. After Egypt evaluated that the political process in Libya is to its disadvantage, it has been more involved in the civil war and supported Haftar's forces, which has been a natural ally of Cairo due to the existing border.[6] However, as of 2019, Egypt became gradually to expands its perspective through its interests. The point to be emphasized herein is that Cairo, which was cautious about Haftar's rapprochement with France, Russia, and the UAE, tried to established ties with the GNA. At this stage, Egypt, which was attentive to create the dynamics of its politics via the African Union, tried to be in contact with both sides and hoped to create an alternative process to the UN. However, Haftar's attack on Tripoli was an obstacle to Egypt's expectations from being realized. In the atmosphere created by Haftar's forces acting with the perceptive of "you're either with us or against us", Egypt sided with Haftar's forces as a result of its interest-otherwise it would have been more costly (Megerisi, 2020: 5).

The UAE, -another pro-Haftar country- like Egypt, was also concerned about similar political developments in Libya, and became more active in the intervention in the conflict. The UAE has also viewed Libya as a struggling area against extremist jihadists. Nevertheless, the UAE that also prioritized its economic interests in the region, considered Libya as the epicenter of the Mediterranean route, and aimed to benefit from the rich resources of the country. On the other hand, it was alleged that the UAE was backing Haftar's forces in terms of military equipment and economy, despite the UN Security Council's embargo.[7] At this point, the logistics and financial support of the UAE, and the strong military and political support of Egypt have strengthened the hand of LNA/LAAF (The National Interest Foundation, 2020).

When examined Russia supporting Haftar's forces, it can be said that Russia aimed to regain the commercial privileges that were lost after Gaddafi's rule, and to penetrate the country through local actors. Russia tries to fill the gap left by the USA by supporting Haftar (Colombo and Varvelli,

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[6] Egypt, which provided military and diplomatic backing to Haftar after Operation Dignity, in 2014, even provided airstrikes to displace the jihadists out of the region.

[7] As mentioned above, UAE hosted one of the rare meetings in May 2017 and facilitated Haftar and al-Sarraj to meet in Abu Dhabi for direct discussions. However, the expectation, which peace might be possible after talks in Abu Dhabi, remained inconclusive (Fayez al-Sarraj meets Khalifa Haftar in UAE for talks", 2017).

2020). It constitutes an instance of this is that Russia was invited to Libya by the Tobruk-based government of Abdullah Et-Tini in 2015, and by this, Russia has been demanded to be more active and provide financial support. In addition to providing military and technical support to Haftar's forces, Russia also stated supporting the GNA that is internationally recognized. In this context, Russia's assets in the country are prominent within the framework of Russian-Libyan economic relations. Accordingly, outputs that are in the gas and oil industries, and transportation or military field are crucial in maintaining Russia's influence in the region (Votradovcová, 2017:111).

As for France and Italy, they also force their main agendas in terms of energy sources in Libya. Accordingly, the rich natural gas and oil fields in Libya have been a competitive factor for both countries. Thus, it can be said that both countries consider each other as rivals in the region. As it is known, while France is another important backer of Haftar's forces, Italy[8] took a side with the GNA. At this point, it can be said that both countries consider each other as rivals in the region. Italy[9] drawing attention to instability and irregular immigration, criticizes France's support to Haftar instead of seeking solutions for immigration and terrorism issues (Megerisi, 2020). When evaluated in terms of France, it is observed that French authorities made statements stating that they are closely interested in the region in order to reconcile both sides (Ghilès, 2020:3). On the other hand, France's political strategy priority -on the pro-LNA/LAAF side- is to limit Turkey's influence in the Mediterranean (Irish and Pennetier, 2020), and to have an influential position on the region against Italy (Pusztai, 2019:6). The economic priority of France is to gain a high share in energy and to profit from its investments (Abderrahmane, 2018).

To look the other side, it seems that Turkey and Qatar did not to be indifferent to the zone and supported the GNA. From this perspective, it is known that Turkey is officially recognized the GNA that is one of the main actors in Libya, and supported the UN-led LPA. Turkey, which realized military intervention in the conflict in Libya in January, helped forces of the UN-backed government of Tripoli, and thus it prevented the defeat of the forces loyal to the Tripoli government against the forces led by Haftar. The significant factor, herein, for Turkey to support the Tripoli government arises from the struggle for influence with rival powers like Egypt, UAE, and Greece intending to limit its economic and strategic influence of the Mediterranean and the Middle East (International Crisis Group, 2020). It is also a fact that Turkey is aware of Italy's interests regarding the town of

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[8] However, after Turkey's intervention, the position of Italy's main backer of the GNA has weakened (Colombo and Varvelli, 2020:87).
[9] Italy's attitude to becoming one of the first countries to open an embassy in Libya, during the transition period in the post-Gaddafi, can be understood more clearly. However, Italy had to close the Libyan embassy in February 2015, because the conflicts continued without slowing down throughout 2014 (Colombo and Varvelli, 2020).

Mistara and its interests in the pipeline that is named Green Stream. (Ghilès, 2020).

One of the key regional actors-like Turkey- in post-Gaddafi Libya is Qatar. Qatar is in line with the UN's policies on Libya. At this point, Qatar did not want its regional rivals such as Egypt and the UAE to gain strength, increased its backing for al-Sarraj (Megerisi, 2020:16). On the other hand, this situation is not unique to Turkey or Qatar. When looking at the conflict zone, it is obvious that the other external actors supporting Hafter, such as Egypt, UAE, and Russia, also consider Libya as a critical geopolitical struggle area.

When examined the third-party actors intervening to resolve the Libyan conflict, it is encountered that the UN has been actively operating involved in the region. In this context, the UN established the UNSML to seek compromises between the various groups (Mezran and Varvelli, 2017:18). In this respect, it can be stated that the UN's approach to ending the civil war process in Libya is based on finding a political solution. Although it is critical to find a viable political solution to the conflict in Libya, the UN continues to be at the forefront of its mediation efforts. The ultimate goal of the UN's efforts is to unite Libya and build peace. At this point, the UN's priority is to reapproximate rival parliaments and associated governments, and thus, agree on a political order acceptable to all (Watanabe, 2019).

4. ISSUES

The issues of the Libyan conflict are fact-based, value-based, and interest-based. However, it is also necessary to say that the grouping does not mean that these issues are not related. From this perspective, when one of the issues in the Libyan conflict is examined, firstly, the facts-based issue is encountered. Accordingly, the lack of consensus on how the political institutions should be organized or based on what principles have led the democratic transition process to become difficult and deadlocked. The fact that Libyans, who were ruled by an authoritarian regime during the Gaddafi period, failed to experience the democratic process also affected on the development of the situation in this way (Iftikhar, 2012:54). The failure to establish institutions with democratic infrastructure had also attended to the creation of a fragile structure in Libya. This circumstance threatens the ability of the state that respond to the country's needs and leads to a weakening of the public's confidence in the system (Molesworth and Newton, 2015:22-25).

Another issue of the Libyan conflict is value-based. More clearly, the division of Libya along with ideological lines, including cultural, ethnic, tribal, and geographical aspects, has caused to fill the power gap in the country by armed groups. In Libya, in which sub-national societal identities have always been determinant, tribes have played a critical role, especially in the geography of Eastern, while the town origin was a unifying element in

the Western wing. From this point, it is known that these groups gradually gained stronger in the post-Gaddafi period. Tribes tried to address disputes in the inner and outer of the ring in order to ensure security. Those, who see the source of instability in the eastern region in the weakness of the tribal structures have also claimed that the city has a more determinant identity in the West. However, there are also political divisions between groups in cities such as Misrata, Bayda, and Zawiya. The unstable structure in Libya, in which insecurity prevails, has led to the political competition between the tribes on the future of the country, and this has also contributed to increasing the role of the sub-national identities (Molesworth and Newton, 2015:52).

Finally, when looking at interest-based issues, both local and external actors are prominent. Accordingly, it can be noted that the unequal distribution of resources has played an important role in experiencing the conflict in Libya (Falk, 2015). Thus, the unequal distribution of resources, which has damaged the rights and preferences of some communities, has felt anger, and promoted unfavorable dynamics between Libyan ethnic-tribal communities (Joffé, 2020:2-4). On the other hand, herein, not only the interests of local actors have, but also of external actors have been decisive. More clearly, it is known that external actors try to establish strategic alliances with different local actors in order to protect their interests. Therefore, this attitude of actors also has been contributed to the breakdown of Libya's political system (Combaz, 2014; Pusztai, 2019).

5. DYNAMICS

When looking at the scenario of the civil war that has been going on since 2014, a dynamic cycle of "a pause in certain periods, re-grouping, political meetings, armed group alliances, and another conflict", is encountered. As can be seen the Figure 2, the action of Hafter's LNA towards the Tripoli government also determined the responding action of the Tripoli government. Herein, it can be said that the parties acted to influence and direct the course of the conflict to their advantage. Besides, the reaction of the parties to the conflict, and the roads by which they preferred to gain their goal, were extremely critical. Parties.

Figure 2: Conflict Dynamics 2014-2020
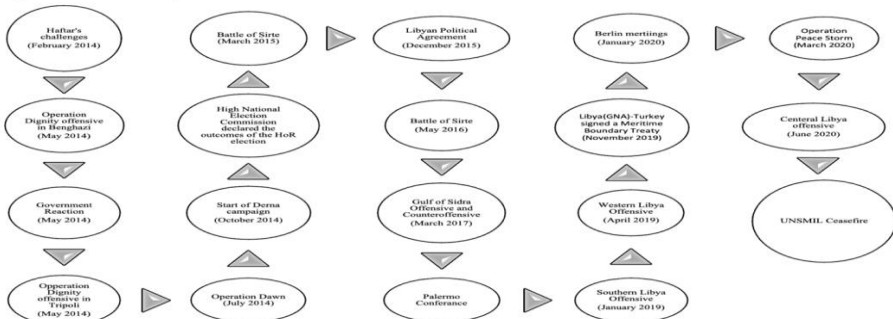
Source: (Rowan, 2019; BBC News, 2021)

On the other hand, it is seen that after the intensification of violence, political solutions and stabilization were also sought through conferences such as Palermo and Berlin by external actors. The point to be emphasized here is that even if the parties were in a deadlock, or the intensity of violence increased, the dynamic of the conflict has kept on shifting within itself. At this point, when the general course of the conflict is examined since the Libyan conflict began in 2014, Libya has witnessed a rise in violence, and this has also had destructive effects for all sides. However, in January 2021, the intensity of the conflict was decreased as a result of Haftar repulsion from Tripoli. By mid-2021, the process proceeds to progress under control. Before addressing this part, it is useful to briefly look at the dynamics that are effective at the beginning of the conflict.

Figure 3: Main manifestations of fragility, conflict and violence in Libya

Source: (Wood, 2019, p. 4)

As mentioned above, firstly, the conflict that started on a small scale in the post-Gaddafi period, progressed to the point, in which the country was actually de facto divided into two separate blocs, and from that moment on, its intensity varied periodically. Herein, one of the prominent factors is that groups competing for control of the state institutions, faced the risk of being liquidated from the "new" Libya by the Political Isolation Law. Another critical factor is that the violent clashes after the election results in 2014, also led to the failure to realize the reforms. In this context, the paralysis of the division and the transition state also led to the economic crisis, and thus the economy gradually contracted. Thus, this predicament encouraged competition on Libyan resources, and the groups-benefiting from the conflict economy-have been in favor of preserving the current situation. The ongoing turmoil in Libya has not only weakened the potential for civic and democratic governance, but also has worsened the situation by creating sub-national conflicts (Wood, 2019:4-7). (see Figure 3)

On the other hand, the Libyan civil war offers a complex mix of both international intervention and highly localized conflict factors. While the present conflict has formed between the GNA and the LNA/LAAF, in fact, the issue is a much more fragmented structure. Considering the

fragmentation of the local actors, it is seen that there are small structures from the Tripoli militia forces to the Salafist armed groups, and some towns and tribes of Libya have also been positioned in the de facto divided structure. In addition to these groups that have been allied due to the lack of military power, there have also been those, who have allied for providing an advantage over rivals (Hamada, Sökmen, and Zaki, 2020). Moreover, the polarization of the groups has also created an opportunity for external intervention, and a new environment, in which countries that intend to intervene in Libya support any side (Güneş, 2018:282). In fact, the prominent phenomenon here is the internal and external groups, have been acting in their interests- to gain power and rich resources in the Libyan state, in which the regional power struggle has escalated (Kirkpatrick and Schmitt, 2014).

Therefore, when the external actors involved in the fragmented structure of the domestic political scene in Libya are examined, different external actors have engaged in struggles for influence on the accompaniment of opponent fractions in Libya, in which the witness of the conflicts that were exitance from the ashes of Arab Uprisings. Hence, one can be said that the protracted civil war between the government of Tripoli and the LNA/LAAF eventually occurred into a multi-sided civil war that was effective by foreign funding and equipment, and by groups of mercenaries (Kharief, 2020). Accordingly, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and the UAE have supported the side that has been tied with Haftar, while the western wing in Libya has been affiliated with Qatar and Turkey (Megerisi, 2020:2).

From this point, when considering the dynamics in the last period, it is encountered Haftar and militias' attack on Tripoli first, and then the UN-backed peace plan. More clearly, following the attack of Haftar and militias-conducting assaults against jihadist groups from 2014 to 2019- in Tripoli in April 2019, the civil war in Libya reached another round. Well, when the question asked, "on what grounds Haftar bases these attacks", it is encountered the allegation to save the country from criminal militias and extremists (Blanchard, 2020:4).

Conclusion

This study analyzes the Libyan conflict based on Wehr's technique because of helping to understand the nature of the conflict, in terms of context, actor, issue, and dynamic. From this, as of 2021, although the Libyan conflict has inserted into a pause period, given the actors involved in the conflict and the fluidity of events, it can be said that the region still has a quite fragile structure. It is known that the fragilities, herein, are shaped by the framework of the weakness of the institutions, the questioning of the legality of the actors, sub-national conflicts, distribution of resources, and results of the elections. Besides, it is also noted that there have been not only internal but also external actors have been played a decisive role in the conflict, and this circumstance has arisen from a mixture of foreign

intervention, divisions in Libyan society, and weak state institutions (al-Shadeedi, Veen, and Harchaoui, 2020:7).

Therefore, Libya reveals to pose serious security problems not only in its territory but also on regional and global levels. For instance, it may create opportunities for terrorist groups to improve their positions or for the transit of illegal migrants. More clearly, the prominent points, herein, are not only Libya's economic potential and/or geographical position but also the existence of threats from civil war, such as people smugglers and the formation of military actors (Megerisi, 2020:3).

At this general framework, it is possible to make certain inferences in line with the information obtained from this research which the conflict mapping technique is used. Accordingly, the implementation of international norms is important in stopping the conflict. Thus, all external actors in the region must comply with the mandatory rules of the UN and dispose of the allegations of the violations of the arms embargo.

In the present process of negotiations between the parties, it is pointed out several scenarios such as the political process is agreed, the political process is contested, fragmentation is increased, and the political process is disrupted. There are various situations, from the establishment of the New Executive Authority to the rejection of this institution. While all of them make a solution possible, it is clear that a solution that ignores Libya's multi-ethnic and tribal nature will always lead to a superficial peace. Therefore, another primary for Libya is to establish a ceasefire between local groups, and thereby solidify the foundations of the national ceasefire. What is long-felt needed in Libya is not only to end enmities but also to provide the conditions, which forms the basis for a wave of sustainable peace in the whole region? It is clear that the way to achieve this pass is reaching the root causes of the conflicts and a solution acceptable to both sides. Accordingly, the necessary pre-condition for a peaceful, fair, and lasting solution to the conflict in Libya requires a democratic process. In this context, the potential success of the U.N.-led reconciliation is quite critical. Achieving this reconciliation could provide a new basis for improving stability and new opportunities for security and the economy.

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