POLICY BRIEF

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LIBYA – TIME FOR AN INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION?

Wolfgang Pusztai

A Peace Support Operation (PSO) in Libya is a last resort measure. Once decided and after several preconditions are met, the scope of the mission should remain rather limited. Such a PSO deployed to the greater Tripoli area in order to stabilize the situation in and around the capital and to help the new government to get on its feet could make a significant difference anyway and would be a viable option.

The composition of the international force needs to be discussed with the Libyans. In any case it can be assumed that enabling capabilities will be required from western countries.

The presence of terrorist organizations on the ground, the danger of being into the civil war and the contest about the legitimacy of the House of Representatives could eventually result in a quite high level of risk for the security of the international force.

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Introduction

Chaos is ruling in Libya. Since the elections for the House of Representatives (HoR) in late June the already difficult situation has escalated further on.[1]

In August **Tripoli** was the scene of the worst fighting in the capital since the fall of the Gaddafi regime. This needs to be seen in context with the struggle for influence of the two major military powers in Tripolitania, the Misrata and the Zintan, and the location of the natural resources of Libya. Neither Zintan nor Misrata have oilfields, an oil terminal or major fresh water resources on their own territory (although there are pipelines in the vicinity of Zintan), but both played major roles in the war. Now they want to keep their influence by any means.

The Islamist assassination campaign in **Benghazi** resulted in several hundred people killed. "Operation Dignity", launched by desperate members of the doomed security forces and led by the dubious renegade General Khalifa Heftar did not succeed in getting the city under control. In the contrary, the "Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries", an umbrella organization of the Islamist militias, claims to have defeated Heftar's elite troops, the "Saiqa Special Forces" of Colonel Wanis Bukhamada. Heftar´s troops have been expelled from Cyrenaica´s capital by and large. Operation Dignity is barely able to defend Benina airport.

In the **Fezzan and in Kufra** there are century-old disputes between the original inhabitants of the region, the Toubou and various Arab tribes, in particular the Al Zuwayya and the Awlâd Sulaymân. The absence of the state makes it possible for AQIM[2] to use the western and south-western part of the Fezzan as a Safe Haven and as a logistic base.

Due to the skyrocketing **crime rate** all over the country many Libyans have the perception that nowhere in the world there are so many criminals loose with so many guns.

The **political isolation law** pushed by Misrata and the Muslim Brotherhood was also an attempt to keep many potential competitors away from power. This includes then President of the GNC[3] Mohamed Yusuf Al Magariaf, several leaders of the Zintani tribe and many members from former Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril's political party, the liberal-leaning National Forces Alliance, which had won the 2012 elections for the GNC to the dismay of the Muslim Brotherhood. Of course, this inten-

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[1] See also W. PUSZTAI, "An International Stabilization Force for Libya?", Atlantic Council – MENASource, 17 August, 2014, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/an-international-stabilization-force-for-libya.

[2] Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

[3] General National Congress, Libya's first elected interim parliament.

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tion was understood by the other side. Therefore the law contributed significantly to the split of the society.

About 630.000 people voted in the recent elections for the House of Representatives. The **turnout** was **significantly lower** than in the GNC elections.[4] Due to the security situation the elections for 12 out of 200 seats could not take place yet (e.g. in eastern Islamist stronghold Derna). Altogether this makes it easy to challenge the legitimacy of the new parliament. Exactly this happens now by the losers of the election and by those, who did not participate.

The **resurrection of the GNC** on 25 August was an unexpected move - and an insult to the many people voting for the HoR. Allegedly only about 94 members showed up (just meeting the minimum requirement for quorum; according to other sources only a few dozen were really there), but nevertheless a new "prime minister", the Islamist Omar al-Hassi, was designated. Now Libya has two governments.

1. Reasons for the Current Situation

In between all the chaos **four major threats to a positive development** of Libya can be identified.[5]

- The first major threat is the inability of the legitimate government to impose its will and retain the monopoly on violence. Almost three years after the end of the war there are still numerous larger and smaller militias with various agendas. Altogether they count probably more than 150,000 members, maybe even 270,000, although less than 80,000 were actually engaged in the struggle against the regime at the end of summer 2011. Many of them are nominally part of the Libyan army or the police, but in reality the loyalty of almost all of them belongs to their own leaders, cities and tribes. This was demonstrated in a tragic way in August, when the government was not able to stop the fighting between Misrata and Zintan in Tripoli although both forces are in theory subordinated to the Ministry of Defence or Ministry of Interior.

- The second major threat is the rising influence of radical Islamists. There are various groups active, some of them heavily influenced

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[4] According to UN DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs) Libya is a country with a population of at least 6,355 million (2010). Around 2.3 million are under the age of 18. This means roughly 4.1 million potential voters (excluding several Libyans living abroad who are also eligible to vote). According to initial statements of the High Election Commission finally 1,805,540 people voted in July 2012 (= 44% following the UN DESA figures).

[5] See W. PUSZTAI, *Libya: A Country on the Brink. Root Causes of the Current Situation and Possible Solutions*, ISPI Policy Briefs, No. 226, March 2014, http://www.ispionline.it/en/node/9931.

by al-Qaeda. They want to prove that the current path to democracy is a mistake. To this end they are undermining any positive development[6] and are destabilizing the country more and more. Of particular concern is that some radical Islamists are getting more and more influence on Misrata. Libya´s third largest city owns the countries' most powerful military force.

- The third major threat is the legacy of the chaotic administration of the state under the Gaddafi regime. The administration of the new Libya does not work properly. Corruption is even worse than before the revolution. There is no functioning legal system – although almost all the civil courts and roughly 75% of the criminal courts are in theory operational. Basic supplies like electricity, fuel and water cannot be guaranteed. The situation is worsened by the ongoing fighting in several parts of the country.

- The fourth major threat are the numerous century old tribal conflicts in several parts of the country. There has been a struggle of the coastal city of Misratah with the hinterland since the middle ages. The fight of Arab tribes against the original inhabitants of the Sahara, the Touareg and the Toubou is rooted in the contest about the control of the ancient trade/smuggling routes and the newer ones in the Cyrenaica, which got importance when it became necessary to bypass the Nile Valley during the conflicts in the Sudan in the 19th century. There are old troubles between the tribes loyal to the Ottoman rulers, who were sometimes used as taxmen, with the others. There have been disputes between nomads and peasants about land and water. Sometimes these conflicts were fueled by Gaddafi by intent (e.g. settling the nomadic Mashashiya in the traditional tribal areas of the Zintani and other tribes or settling Arabs in the Berber territories). Frequently these tribes were also on different sides during the revolution.

Further on the **rise of federalism** as a consequence of neglect of the Cyrenaica by the Gaddafi-regime and the perceived ongoing neglecting of this region since the end of the revolution must be taken into account. The aim of the federalists is a state in accordance with the 1951 constitution[7]. In particular the Salafists are firmly opposed to federalism. If a

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[6] This is also the reason why the American Ambassador Chris Stevens was killed in September 2012.

[7] *The Libyan constitution of 1951 calls for a federal constitutional monarchy that grants much authority to the provinces*, Democracy Reporting International, "Assessment Of The 1951 Libyan Constitution According To International Standards", Briefing paper 28, July 2012, http://www.democracy-reporting.org/files/dri-ly-bp28-1951_libya_constitution.pdf.

semi-independent province of "Barqa"[8] should become reality, it can be assumed that the Salafists will use force against it.

2. The Strategy of the Radical Islamists

Currently the rise of the radical Islamists is, in particular of the Salafist Jihadists, is of highest concern. They reject democracy and human rights in the western sense. Their **ultimate goal** is the establishment of an Islamic fundamentalist state. As many Libyans are quite open-minded they have failed to achieve their goal with the help of elections. Therefore they are turning evermore to violent means. Regrettably there are also increasing numbers of disappointed moderate Islamists turning radical.

It can be expected that the radical Islamists will follow a **double strategy**. On one side they will **escalate the armed struggle** in order to get key facilities and as much territory as possible under their control. In addition they will continue to assassinate former regime supporters and political opponents. The more chaos they are able to create, the better it is for their strategy.

On the other side the Islamists will **increase their welfare programs** for the needy, in particular for the families of the "martyrs". They will show the population that the wellbeing of their followers is a major goal for them.

With the help of this strategy the radical Islamists want to convince as many people as possible, that **"Islam is the solution"** for all the difficulties of the country. According to them is only necessary to literally follow the Koran and the Hadith, the reports of the teachings, deeds and sayings of the prophet Muhammad. The strict implementation of the Sharia is mandatory to end the criminal threat and to protect morality. Whoever cannot be convinced is considered an enemy of Islam will be overwhelmed by force.

3. Options for the International Community

The **situation** will **deteriorate** further on. It is very unlikely that even if the current situation with the two competing governments is solved, the next government will be able to get the country under control and can implement the rule of law in the foreseeable future. A full-fledged civil war is on hand. The international community has several options to react.

One **option** is to continue more or less as now and to do nothing to directly face the escalation. This would most likely mean that the country slides into a Lebanonization with a weak central government and a civil war in

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[8] Barqa is the Arabic name for the Cyrenaica.

several regions. As a consequence there will be spill-over effects to neighboring countries. Human trafficking to Europe will skyrocket. Terrorists will use Libya as a safe haven and as an operational base for attacks in various parts of the world. It is unlikely that any international strategy to facilitate state-building in Libya will work under these circumstances.

A second **option** would be to facilitate negotiations and reconciliation while applying at the same time political pressure on all the parties. Targeted sanctions against individuals and groups hindering peaceful solutions could be implemented as accompanying measures. Although this must be given a try, it is doubtful that this strategy will be able to stop the descent of the country.

A third **option** would be to "accept" the Lebanonization of Libya while trying to contain the conflict and mitigate the risks. The Libyan borders could be sealed off from outside by and large. "Surgical strikes" on terrorist targets could be conducted inside the country while keeping the risk for the own forces at an acceptable level. Eventually one of the warring parties could be supported. Such a strategy of containment and risk mitigation could be sufficient for the U.S. to achieve its strategic objectives in Libya with regard to the fight against terrorism. But it is doubtful that it will be adequate to protect the interests of other nations in northern Africa and in (southern) Europe. The economic relationships with Libya could not be revived under these circumstances. Human trafficking would not be stopped. Moreover it is unlike that all terrorist activities out of Libya could be prevented.

Probably the best option would be to deploy an international peace force in order to help the new government to get on its feet. A functioning government is absolutely necessary to make any state building strategy work.[9]

4. The Right Timing

A Peace Support Operation (PSO) in Libya is a last resort measure. But it needs to be taken into account that there will be only a **narrow "window of opportunity"** for launching such an operation successfully.

If the PSO is launched **too early** (i.e. before the bulk of the Libyans is really fed-up with the rule of the militias and the mob and looks for outside assistance) it will be difficult to get local acceptance. Many would consider

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[9] See W. PUSZTAI, "A Western Strategy for Libya", The German Marshall Fund of the United States & Istituto Affari Internazionali, Opinions on the Mediterranean, June 2014, http://www.gmfus.org/archives/a-western-strategy-for-libya/, http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=1128.

the international force just as a "foreign intervention" to get the wealth of Libya, regardless its real intention. It is necessary to wait until the bulk of the population is "desperate enough" to welcome as a last resort foreign soldiers and policemen to better the chance for a success - even if this looks at the first glance inhumane.

If the International Community is too hesitant and the operation is launched **too late**, it will be next to impossible to get the situation under control. Therefore it is crucial to implement the mission at the right time.

Although at the recent Madrid Conference the idea of a military intervention in Libya was unanimously rejected by Libya´s government and the 15 participating nations[10], it seems to be that this "window of opportunity" is **coming closer**.

5.   What Kind of Operation?

5.1 The Scope of the Mission

One of the most important decisions for an eventual PSO in Libya is about the **scope of the mission**. It should be rather limited, because:

- A force sufficiently covering the whole country would need **a very high number of troops** (and many airplanes/helicopters). Keeping the limited resources of most of the potential TCN[11] in mind, it is not realistic to find enough troops from countries suitable for a PSO in Libya. Moreover such a huge force would look like an "occupation army"– and this needs to be avoided anyway.

- Any direct intervention in the Cyrenaica, in particular in **Benghazi and Derna** would most likely result in a **high number of casualties** as the Salafist Jihadists would consider the international force for certain as enemies and attack them. It is unlikely that the TCNs are willing to pay such a price.

- An **intervention in the Fezzan** would **stir a hornet´s nest**, which is - keeping the fragility of the Libyan state in mind - right now not desirable. In addition this would trigger terrorist attacks on the facilities of the hydrocarbon industry as well as on the pumping stations and pipelines of the "Great Man-made River"[12]. As a

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[10] See "*Libya meeting rejects military intervention*", Al Jazeera, 18 September 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2014/09/libya-meeting-rejects-military-intervention-201491861846558452.html.

[11] Troop Contributing Nations

[12] The Great Man-made River GMR draws water from aquifers beneath the Sahara and channels it along a network of pipelines and pumping stations to the coastal areas of Libya. For more information see: http://www.water-technology.net/projects/gmr/.

consequence an even higher number of troops would be required to secure the potential targets. The Fezzan must be dealt with after the north of the country is sufficient stable.

- It would be very **difficult** (and costly) to **sustain** a larger international force in southern Libya (Fezzan and Kufra) anyhow.

- The **desired end-state** must be set relatively low (or it will not be reached in the foreseeable future).

5.2 The Objective and the Desired End-state

Each **government** since the end of the Gaddafi regime was **blackmailed** by various militias on several occasions. Numerous armed groups directly interfered with the work of the ministers and the administration. The building of the GNC was occupied by armed groups more than once. Even the prime ministers themselves have not been safe. Ali Zeidan was kidnapped. Interim Prime Minister Abdullah Al-Thani and his family were targeted in an armed attack. No parliament and no government can function under such circumstances.

A PSO limited to the greater Tripoli area in order to stabilize the situation in and around the capital could make a significant difference and would be a viable option. The objective should be to allow the government to consolidate itself and to build up reliable security forces able to maintain a safe and secure environment at least in the capital area. This should mean a realistically achievable desired end-state.

The **International Stabilization Force** would need to establish a security zone by conducting the tasks of the to a great extent absent Libyan security forces until they are ready to take over.

Having achieved this, the **government must expand** the "security & prosperity-bubble" further on and stabilize the whole country step-by-step.

5.3 What to do about Benghazi?

The very **difficult situation** in Benghazi is a major issue to be taken into consideration. If nothing is done to stabilize the city, its population could feel abandoned. It is likely that under these circumstances Ansar al-Sharia and other radical Islamists could foster their position further on. This would make it later on for the Libyan government even more difficult to get its second largest city under control and could eventually facilitate the split-up of the country. Therefore is necessary to **find options** to provide international support to Benghazi short of "boots on the ground" in order to prevent the city from becoming an Ansar al-Sharia stronghold.

But if the Islamists continue to launch terrorist attacks from Libyan territory on **Egypt** it is quite likely that the well-trained and equipped Egyptian Armed Forces will intervene to end the threat anyway. The Egyptians could establish a "security zone" on the Libyan side of the border and conduct strikes against terrorist targets. It might well be that this is even welcomed by many of the opponents of the Islamists in the Cyrenaica, especially as there are historic and some tribal ties between eastern Libya and Egypt. Possibly the powerful Egyptian Air Force could provide even direct support for "Operation Dignity".

6. Preconditions for a Peace Support Operation in Libya

There are several preconditions to be met for the employment of an International Stabilization Force in Libya.

First and foremost there must be an **invitation by the legitimate Libyan Government** backed by the vast majority of the House of Representatives. Without such an invitation the mission would not have the character of an international PSO, but of a foreign invasion. This underlines the necessity that the newly elected House of Representatives designates a new Prime Minister very soon. The invitation will also contribute to a positive attitude of the bulk of the population in the greater Tripoli area towards the international force.

An **UN-mandate under Chapter VII** of the UN Charta **or a robust mandate by a regional organization** (i.e. the African Union or by the League of Arab States) are compulsory in order to give the mission international legitimacy. The UN-mandate would be the preferred option[13], but keeping the current crisis in Ukraine and the strained relationship between Russia and the West in mind this is not very likely, although President Putin is probably well aware that a stable Libya, able to prevent terrorist to operate from its soil, is also in the interest of his country.

Many recent PSOs have been hampered by a lack of nations willing to contribute **an adequate number of troops and assets**. Without several capable nations dedicated to the success of the missions it is impossible to launch such a difficult stability operation. The International Stabilization Force needs to be a very robust one, able to deter any aggression and to react swiftly in the case of an attack. Any signs of weakness must be avoided under any circumstances from the very beginning, as they will for sure be exploited. It will be a major challenge to get a sufficient large and capable force together. But there are quite a few nations with direct or

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[13] See also: K. MEZRAN, "Three Steps to Pull Libya Out of its Crisis", Atlantic Council, 24 July 2014, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/three-steps-to-pull-libya-out-of-its-crisis.

indirect strategic interests with regards to Libya, so at the end it should be possible.

Once requested and properly mandated the operation must be **launched as soon as possible**, but not later than within several weeks. Any delay will make it more complicated to implement the mandate.

A **preliminary intervention by a rapid-reaction force** (an "initial entry force") should take place before the deployment of the bulk of the forces in order to secure Tripoli International Airport and the harbor of the city. The airport must be operational again for civilian air traffic very quickly after the beginning of the intervention in order to demonstrate immediately a first benefit of the arrival of the international force.

A **consensus for the employment** of the International Stabilization Force by both, the leaderships of Zintan and Misrata, and by all the other militias in Tripoli would be desirable. But unfortunately this is at least with regard to some Islamist groups not very likely. Nevertheless all kinds of armed forces not entirely subordinated to the will of the government are needed to be withdrawn from the capital, regardless where they are coming from. This demand needs to be underlined by a credible threat of force by the international forces.[14]

If all these conditions are not met, it is quite likely that the force will end up being dragged into the emerging civil war.

7. Composition and Leadership

The **International Stabilization Force** needs to encompass land, air, maritime and special operations components as well as a police force.

The **land component** must include a sufficient number of combat troops (in particular infantry and some mechanized forces), combat support (including artillery) and combat service support units. Army aviation is crucial to provide high mobility and fire support for quick reaction forces.

The **air component** needs to have the capability for airborne surveillance, reconnaissance, transport and close air support / strike. The later one is crucial for deterrence. Keeping the proximity of Malta in mind (200 nautical miles), the air component does not necessarily need to be based in Libya.

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[14] See also: K. MEZRAN, "Three Steps to Pull Libya Out of its Crisis", Atlantic Council, 24 July 2014, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/three-steps-to-pull-libya-out-of-its-crisis.

The **maritime component** is required to patrol the stretch of the sea border of Libya which is included in the "Area of Responsibility" (AoR) of the International Stabilization Force (and maybe even outside of this AoR).

As the **Libyan police** is not able yet to fulfill its duties an international police force must support them and conduct police tasks on behalf of them.

The achievement of the desired end state will strongly depend on the ability of the Libyans to **build up their own security forces**. The General Purpose Force (GPF) initiative is a major step into the right direction, but it is facing some severe problems. The numbers trained in the near future will be in any case by far too few to secure the whole capital. But these well-trained GPF-troops could serve as a backbone and as rapid reaction force for other locally trained security forces. Regrettably currently it doesn't seem that a significant number of reliable and loyal soldiers and policemen trained in Libya will be available in the near future.

As a consequence the International Stabilization Force needs to include a **training element** to conduct training in place and to assist in the development of Libyan security forces training structures and institutions. The aim is to build up an effective and sustainable training capability that addresses the needs of the country.

The international forces must be accompanied by a large number of experts (**"state-building teams"**) to implement a proper international support strategy for building the Libyan state.[15] The European Union would be particularly well suited to provide the majority of these teams.

A very important question is, **who should contribute** the bulk of the troops and assets required for the International Stabilization Force and who should lead it. There are several options to be thoroughly evaluated.

7.1 A NATO Mission?

NATO helped the Libyans to get rid of their dictator, but this was obviously not enough to ensure the positive development of their country. Libya is unable to consolidate, unable to protect its citizens and its wealth. There is a moral obligation for NATO after successfully completing the first phase of the support to Libya to help also in the second phase. But deploying non-Muslim soldiers to a Muslim country could be perceived by some people as inappropriate, even if they are coming from the Alliance that contributed decisively to the defeat of Gaddafi.

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[15] See W. PUSZTAI, (2014).

7.2 An EU Mission?

As the military structures of the European Union are not very well developed it is unlikely that they would be able to conduct such a complex and difficult operation without NATO (i.e. American) support. Nevertheless as several European nations (e.g. Italy) have vital interests in Libya they should also play a major role in any International Stabilization Force for the country, regardless who is in charge of it.

7.3 The first Peace Support Operation of the League of Arab States?

Keeping the involvement of several Arab nations in domestic Libyan politics in mind, it would be not very wise to use troops from these countries. They would certainly not be considered by everybody as impartial. The Arab League as an organization would not be prepared to lead such an operation anyway.

But the Arab Nations should contribute their share by providing financial resources, as stability in Libya is – of course – also in their own interest.

7.4 Troops from non-Arab Muslim Countries?

It could be argued that even if forces from most of the Arab states are not a very good choice for this International Stabilization Force it would be beneficial to use troops from other Muslim states as Pakistan, Indonesia or from Black Africa. But before inviting these countries to contribute, their reputation in Libya must be carefully evaluated country by country.

At the very end the question, who should provide the bulk of the International Stabilization Force and who should lead it, needs to be discussed with the Libyans. In any case it can be assumed that enabling capabilities (like logistics, intelligence, command & control capabilities, maritime and air assets) will be required from western countries.

8. Duration of the Operation and American Involvement?

It would be **very, very difficult to sell a PSO in a Muslim country lasting several years** to the participating nations. The appetite for such an endeavor is very limited after more than ten years of operations in Afghanistan and overstretched UN-missions. It can be assumed that it would be almost impossible to get all the forces together for a longer or even an open-end mission in Lbya.

As **"all politics is domestic"** it is essential to keep the upcoming U.S. Presidential elections in mind. It is unlikely that President Obama wants the Democrats to enter 2016 with a major campaign in Libya, in particular if Hillary Clinton runs for Presidency. Therefore the desired end state

of the mission must be within sight in early 2016, if the U.S. is to contribute a significant part.

All this underlines once again the **necessity to restrict the operation to limited objectives**. The concrete strategic objective must be defined carefully. On one side it must be challenging enough to make a difference on the ground. On the other side it must be achievable in the given timeframe.

As mentioned, the operation should just give the government the opportunity to consolidate itself and establish the rule of law in the greater Tripoli area as a basis for further expansion. Such an objective would also match the rather limited strategic interest of the U.S. in Libya.

9.   The Risks

At least in the greater Tripoli area, in several other major cities and in the Jabal Nafusah area there is altogether a **very positive attitude** towards the west. But despite this, this should not be overestimated. In particular it must be taken into consideration that there are several smaller groups with very strong anti-American resentments.

It is rather unlikely that all the militias will accept the presence of foreign soldiers on Libyan soil. This can be even out ruled for **terrorist organizations** like Ansar al-Sharia and AQIM. These groups will for sure use the opportunity for terrorist attacks. It is well known how much damage even a small group of fanatic terrorists can inflict.

Depending on the concrete developments on the ground the International Stabilization Force could be **compelled to use force against one or the other militia**. Such a situation could even evolve at the very beginning of the operation if one of the major militias is not willing to subordinate itself entirely to the government, disband or leave the capital. The subsequent necessary action by the international force could be perceived as an end of impartiality and could drag them into the civil war.

It can be expected that the **legitimacy** of the House of Representatives and the future Libyan government will be **heavily contested** further on. After inviting an international force both will be under increased pressure while attempting to stabilize the country. It cannot be ruled out that the government breaks up or that it will be forced to resign while the International Stabilization Force is still in Libya. This could bring the PSO into a very complicated situation. All this could eventually result in a **quite high level of risk** for the security of the international force. It is rather unlikely that after Afghanistan the bulk of the western nations are willing to accept this if no vital interests are on the stake.

It should be possible to achieve the desired end state described above within about two years. But in spite of that a delay must be taken into consideration. Moreover it is also important to **withstand any temptation to expand the mandate or the area of responsibility**, even if the operation goes very well. ISAF should be a good warning example.

Conclusions

As the political decision making process and the force generation for a PSO normally takes several months it is **urgently necessary to launch a discussion** in order not to miss the narrow "window of opportunity." If the debate starts only when Libya´s current political process has irretrievable failed, it is probably already too late and Libya will descend rapidly into total chaos.