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THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: LIBYA AS A CASE STUDY

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Solo Flight

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By Major Juan Mejia-Prieto

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INTRODUCTION

In the international system no supranational entity exists with the authority to compel countries to make laws or resolve disputes. “Anarchy is therefore said to constitute a *state of war*: when all else fails, force is the *ultima ratio* – the final and legitimate arbiter of disputes among states.”¹ The Libyan revolution of 1969 led to the overthrow of King Idris I, who had been an ally of Western interests since World War II by favoring the installation of NATO military bases in Libya for the control of the Mediterranean.² Muammar Gaddafi, who identified himself as a promoter of the Third International Theory by rejecting the opposing socio-political models during the Cold War,³ came closer to the Soviet bloc than to the U.S. and its allies.

The Libyan leader openly supported almost 50 revolutionary, terrorist and separatist organizations around the world,⁴ which made him a serious concern for the Western countries. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the counterweight to American influence faded, and much more repressive measures were taken to modify Libya's behavior within the international system. The U.S. unilaterally adopted economic sanctions whose effectiveness is still widely debated.⁵ Later, in 1986, and in consequence of the direct support to terrorist activities in which American citizens died, the U.S. carried out the application of military power that included a direct attack on Gaddafi and his family.

¹ Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues* (Pearson/Longman, 2007), 2.

² Richard M. Brace, review of *Libyan Independence and the United Nations*, by Adrian Pelt, *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 5, no. 3 (1972): 488, <https://doi.org/10.2307/217101>.

³ Muammar Al-Qadhafi, *The Green Book* (Garnet Publishing, 2018), chap. 3.

⁴ G. Simons, *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*, 2nd ed. (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1996), 281–83, <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230380110>.

⁵ Stuart E Eizenstat, “Do Economic Sanctions Work,” *The Atlantic Council of the United States*, February 2004, 16, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/10995/doc_11026_290_en.pdf.

Despite the seriousness of a confrontation with the U.S., Gaddafi continued to support terrorist organizations that perpetrated, among many others, attacks on commercial flights that left hundreds of victims. From 1992, the United Nations adopted much more severe sanctions to limit the economic capacities of the regime and force it to stop sponsoring such organizations. Sanctions were extended and tightened throughout the 1990s until they had a significant impact on Libyan foreign policy, leading to compensation of victims, rendition of alleged perpetrators, and public acknowledgment of the renunciation of such actions.

This paper seeks to answer the research question, how did the economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council and the U.S. impact Libya and compel it to change its foreign policy regarding support for international terrorism? To provide information that answers this question, the paper analyzes Libya's involvement in terrorist attacks and then explains the economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. Subsequently, it examines the scope and economic impact of Security Council resolutions 731, 748, and 883.

On the other hand, this document does not seek to analyze in-depth or propose a new definition of terrorism beyond its widely accepted use. Nor does it try to apply the concept of terrorism to specific organizations, in particular, taking into account their political or ideological basis. The definition proposed by Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman in 2017 was used as a conceptual framework. This particular consensus was reached after analyzing more than one hundred concepts of terrorism and interviewing their corresponding authors.⁶

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi)clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby -in contrast to assassination- the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based

⁶ A. J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature* (Routledge, 2017), 28.

communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.

LIBYA'S INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Qadhafi's association with acts of terrorism began shortly after he came to power. On January 4, 1974, a Brussels newspaper known as *The Brussels Times* published an article accusing the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council of sponsoring the creation of the Arab Nationalist Youth for the Liberation of Palestine. This organization was blamed for the terrorist attacks at Athens International Airport on August 5, 1973,⁷ and the terrorist attack at Fiumicino Airport in Rome on December 17, 1973.⁸ The article argued that during a 1973 speech, Qadhafi demonstrated his support not only for these two terrorist attacks but he spoke in favor of the May 30, 1972 attack on Israel's Lod Airport, now known as Ben Gurion International Airport.⁹

In 1981 the CIA's National Foreign Affairs Center issued a memo entitled "The supporters of international terrorism." The document explains that Libya's support for terrorism included:¹⁰

Financing for terrorist operations, weapons procurement and supply, the use of training camps and Libyan advisors for guerrilla training, use of Libyan embassy facilities abroad as support bases for terrorist operations, and the use of the Libyan Intelligence Service as an instrument of international terrorism.

⁷ The New York Times, "Arabs Kill 3 and Wound 55 In Athens Airport Lounge," *The New York Times*, August 6, 1973, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/08/06/archives/a-rabskill3-and-wound55-in-athens-airport-lounge-a-palestinian.html>.

⁸ Los Angeles Times, "17 Killed in Airport Raids by Terrorists at Rome, Vienna: 116 Wounded in Attacks Apparently Aimed at El Al; Palestinians Blamed," *Los Angeles Times*, December 28, 1985, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1985-12-28-mn-29569-story.html>.

⁹ *The Brussels Times*, January 4, 1974 as cited in; Enrica Oliveri, "Libya before and after Gaddafi: An International Law Analysis" (Italy, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 2013), 22, <http://dspace.unive.it/handle/10579/2506>.

¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "The Supporters of International Terrorism," January 29, 1981, 2-3, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp84b00274r000100040012-9>.

The memo also explains that the terrorist groups sponsored by Libya included “all major Palestinian groups”, particularly the Popular Front of Liberation of Palestine; the Provisional Irish Republican Army, Baader-Meinhof Gang (Red Army Faction in West Germany), Moro National Liberation Front (Philippines), The Polisario Front (Morocco) and various Latin-American and Iranian terrorist groups (before the Iranian Revolution).

Later in 1985, CIA Director William J. Casey issued a document called "Libya's Qadhafi: The challenge to us and western interests," in which he made critical statements regarding the Libyan regime. Initially, the document acknowledged Qadhafi's significant impact in the region through support for subversive organizations. It also identifies those countries with radical regimes such as Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua, which were of great interest to Libya. Qadhafi's desire to attack American targets is expressed as long as there is no perception of retaliation by the U.S. At that time for the CIA, "Qadhafi is not controllable. He believes his own precepts, and no array of external pressures is likely to alter his policy goals or his will to adventurism."¹¹

The Soviet Union played a crucial role in protecting Qadhafi amid the Cold War. Libya's attempts to undermine Western interests indeed coincided with the goals of Soviet foreign policy. However, despite the apparent good relations between Libya and the USSR, Qadhafi was not willing to cede military bases to external powers, one of the pillars of his discourse throughout the Arab world. The CIA document ends by broadly summarizing U.S. sentiment on Libya's foreign policy in the 1980s.¹²

Qadhafi's continued disregard for international law and convention -reneging on international agreements, abusing diplomatic privilege for terrorist purposes, and blatant use of violence against opponents- undermines international norms of behavior and may,

¹¹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Libya’s Qadhafi: The Challenge to Us and Western Interests,” March 1, 1985, 4, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp08s02113r000100310001-4>.

¹² Central Intelligence Agency, 23.

over time, encourage other states or groups to do likewise. The international perception of a gap between US rhetorical criticism of Qadhafi's behavior and actual US policy toward him also undermines US credibility on this issue.

It is worth mentioning that the targets of Qadhafi-supported terrorist actions were not only located in the Western world. Many of his terrorist attacks targeted Libyan dissidents and even moderate regional leaders like Hosni Mubarak who supported the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel (Camp David Accords).¹³ Between 1980 and 1985, Qadhafi carried out twenty-five terrorist actions against Western targets and forty-six against Arab and African targets.¹⁴ During the same period, Dennis Pluchinsky, an expert in the Threat Analysis Division of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the U.S. State Department, analyzed seventy-five Libyan-sponsored terrorist attacks that produced 75 deaths and over 500 injured. Most of the attacks were against Palestinian and Arab targets while only six were against Libyan targets and five against American targets.¹⁵

Despite unilateral U.S. economic sanctions on Libya since 1973 and subsequent U.S. military intervention in 1986, Qadhafi's regime continued to support terrorist organizations with the same determination. Two terrorist attacks were particularly significant for the international community and became the argument for much more drastic measures. On December 21, 1988, Pan American World Airways Flight 103 (Boeing 747) was meant to cover the London - New York route. At 07:03 pm a bomb exploded in the cargo compartment. The explosion damaged the plane's electrical system so severely that it did not even have a chance to make the distress

¹³ Atif Abu Bakr, Al Arabiya show reveals Qaddafi plot to assassinate Mubarak and Hassan II, July 31, 2015, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/media/inside-the-newsroom/2015/07/31/How-Qaddafi-planned-to-assassinate-Egypt-s-Mubarak->.

¹⁴ Simons, *Libya*, 283.

¹⁵ Louis Eaks, Alan George, and Phil Kelly, *From El Salvador to the Libyan Jamahiriya: A Radical Review of American Foreign Policy Under the Reagan Administration* (USA: Third World Reports, 1981) as cited in; Simons, *Libya*, 284.

call. 270 people lost their lives when the aircraft crashed at over 200 miles per hour, generating a tremor of 1.6 on the Richter scale detected by a nearby monitoring station.¹⁶

On September 19, 1989, a DC-10 plane of the French airline Union des Transports Aériens (flight UTA 772) took off from Congo. After a stop in Chad, the aircraft flew over the Sahara Desert. Just after 1:00 pm, a bomb exploded, tearing the plane to pieces. Parts of the aircraft and mutilated passengers were later found in an area of 640 square kilometers in the Ténéré desert in Niger. Such was the outcome of the explosion that the cockpit was found 5 kilometers from the fuselage. 170 people lost their lives in what is considered the worst terrorist attack suffered by France so far.¹⁷ Although Gaddafi's support for terrorist organizations had been constant since 1970s, some authors establish that these attacks did not take place in a political vacuum within the international system.¹⁸ The attacks occurred in fact due to the U.S. bombing of Tripoli in 1986¹⁹ and the accidental shooting down of an Iranian Airbus passenger plane by the U.S. Navy in 1988.²⁰

In 1987 and 1992, Muammar Qadhafi was interviewed by Donald Treford, who at the time was the editor of *The Observer* (U.K.). The interviews came after the U.S. attack on Tripoli in 1986 and had made the Libyan leader an elusive target. During the last meeting, Qadhafi admitted his "errors" in the past and acknowledged that during the 1970s, "we might have behaved in a way that was not in accordance with international law, but not now. Curiously,

¹⁶ The Guardian, "What Really Happened on Flight 103?," *The Guardian*, February 27, 2000, sec. UK news, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/feb/27/lockerbie.life1>.

¹⁷ Robert J. Art and Louise Richardson, *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (US Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 141.

¹⁸ Simons, *Libya*, 5–14.

¹⁹ See Bernard Weinraub, "U.S. Jets Hit 'Terrorist Centers' in Libya; Reagan Warns of New Attacks If Needed," *The New York Times*, April 15, 1986, <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/15/politics/us-jets-hit-terrorist-centers-in-libya-reagan-warns-of-new-attacks.html>.

²⁰ See George C. Wilson, "Navy Missile Downes Iranian Jetliner," *The Washington Post*, July 4, 1988, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/flight801/stories/july88crash.htm>.

when I really was a revolutionary, an extremist, my image was not so black with the British and Americans as it is today." Trelford asks Qadhafi for his current views on those expressed in previous decades, and he answers, "in the 1970s, we supported liberal movements without knowing which were terrorists and which were not. In the 1980s, we began to differentiate between terrorists and those with legitimate political aspirations."²¹

U.S. UNILATERAL ECONOMIC RESPONSE TO LIBYA

Qadhafi took power in 1969 as the U.S. and the Soviet Union sought tirelessly to expand their influence over the Third World. Despite the overthrow of King Idris I of Libya who had been a Western ally, the U.S. was willing to tolerate Qadhafi in the international arena. Qadhafi was, after all, "just the sort of authoritarian anti-communist that Washington tended to welcome on the world stage."²² However, since Qadhafi came to power, he demonstrated his rejection of Western interests, and as a ruler, he took positions accordingly. Starting in 1970, Libya expropriated Italian and Jewish property,²³ nationalized foreign banks,²⁴ broke diplomatic relations with Jordan²⁵ and Morocco in 1984.²⁶ He even angered the U.K. by openly supporting the independence of Malta²⁷ and the Irish revolutionaries.²⁸ In 1977 the U.S. discovered a plan to

²¹ Donald Trelford, "My Meeting with Gadaffi," *The Guardian*, March 28, 2004, sec. Politics, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2004/mar/28/foreignpolicy.libya1>.

²² Simons, *Libya*, 316.

²³ See *The New York Times*, "Property of Italians and Jews Confiscated by Libyan Regime," *The New York Times*, July 22, 1970, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/07/22/archives/property-of-italians-and-jews-confiscated-by-libyan-regime.html>.

²⁴ See *The New York Times*, "All Foreign Banks in Libya Are Nationalized," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1970, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/12/23/archives/all-foreign-banks-in-libya-are-nationalized.html>.

²⁵ See Reuters, "Jordan Plans to Revive Its Relations With Libya," *The New York Times*, September 24, 1987, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/09/24/world/jordan-plans-to-revive-its-relations-with-libya.html>.

²⁶ Dargin Justin, *Rise of The Global South, The: Philosophical, Geopolitical And Economic Trends Of The 21st Century* (UK: World Scientific, 2013), 135.

²⁷ Michael Briguglio and Roderick Pace, "Malta," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Democracy in the European Union*, ed. Jean-Michel De Waele, Fabien Escalona, and Mathieu Vieira (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), 282, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-29380-0_13.

²⁸ Sean Boyne, "Jane's Intelligence Review," August 1, 1996 as cited in; Public Broadcasting Service, "The Ira & Sinn Fein," 1996, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ira/inside/weapons.html>.

assassinate Herman Frederick Ellis, its ambassador in Cairo, whose collaboration with President Anwar Sadat was seen by Qadhafi as a betrayal to the Arab cause.²⁹ On August 5, 1980, U.S. President Jimmy Carter declared:³⁰

There are few governments in the world with which we have more sharp and frequent policy differences than Libya. Libya has steadfastly opposed our efforts to reach and carry out the Camp David Accords. We have strongly differing attitudes toward the PLO and the support of terrorism. Within OPEC, Libya has promoted sharply higher prices and the interruption of oil shipments to the U.S. and other Western nations.

Legal basis for the U.S. imposition of economic sanctions.

The Export Administration Act of 1979 (EAA) provided the President of the U.S. with the necessary mechanisms to economically sanction other countries without the need to resort to emergency laws. The provisions of the EAA are divided into two categories, national security, and foreign policy. In both cases, the President is authorized to regulate exports of goods or services.³¹ All exports from the U.S. require a license, and economic sanctions are effective as these licenses become much more difficult to obtain. The EAA expired in 1983, but Congress enacted the Export Administration Amendments Act in 1985 (EAAA), which renewed the provisions previously contained in the EAA.³² Concerning import controls, the authority to impose restrictions for national security reasons is introduced in section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.³³ Ultimately, the President has the powers granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977 (IEEPA) which allows him to regulate commercial

²⁹ Simons, *Libya*, 317.

³⁰ Mahmoud Gebril, *Imagery and Ideology in U.S. Policy Toward Libya 1969–1982* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 122.

³¹ GovTrack, “Export Administration Act of 1979 (1979 - S. 737),” GovTrack.us, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/96/s737>.

³² GovTrack, “Export Administration Amendments Act of 1985 (1985 - S. 883),” GovTrack.us, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/99/s883>.

³³ See The United States Senate Committee on Finance, “Breaking Down Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962,” The United States Senate Committee on Finance, June 19, 2018, <https://www.finance.senate.gov/chairmans-news/breaking-down-section-232-of-the-trade-expansion-act-of-1962>.

activities by declaring a state of emergency as a result of a threat "which has its source in whole or substantial part outside the U.S.."34

U.S. economic sanctions and diplomatic measures taken on Libya

By applying the mechanisms contained in the previously mentioned acts, the U.S. unilaterally sanctioned Libya in pursuit of three main objectives. First, to coerce Libya to change its terrorist policies and its radical government; second, to punish the country for the subversive policies put in place; and third, to impose economic sanctions that will symbolically show the U.S.' opposition to the behavior of the Libyan regime.³⁵

U.S. sanctions began in 1973 when the government blocked the sale of eight Lockheed C-130 Hercules that Libya had already paid for.³⁶ The U.S. also decided not to sell any weapons or equipment that "could add significantly to Libya's military capabilities."³⁷ The U.S. refusal to sell military equipment to Libya was made worse by its involvement in the Yom Kippur War in 1973³⁸ and the signing of two arms agreements with the USSR in 1974.³⁹ In 1975, the U.S. delayed the sale of a \$200 million air defense system and refused the entry of Libyan air force training aircrafts for maintenance.⁴⁰ In 1978 the State Department reaffirmed its position on the sale of military equipment to Libya by prohibiting the sale of spare parts for the C-130s that the

³⁴ GovTrack, "Text of H.R. 7738 (95th): International Emergency Economic Powers Act (Passed Congress Version)," GovTrack.us, 2020, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/95/hr7738/text>.

³⁵ John Frederick Cooke, "The United States' 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have They Worked," *Md. J. Int'l L. & Trade* 14 (1990): 198–200.

³⁶ Harold D. Nelson, *Libya, a Country Study*, 3rd ed. (USA: The American University, 1979), 268.

³⁷ David Newsom, "Statement before Senate Foreign Relations Committee" (1969) as cited in; Gebril, *Imagery and Ideology in U.S. Policy Toward Libya 1969–1982*.

³⁸ Shaul Bartal, "Yom Kippur War Influence at the PLO Recognition and the Palestinian Problem," *Journal of History Research* 5 (December 28, 2015): 2, <https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-550X/2015.04.005>.

³⁹ See Central Intelligence Agency, "Libyan-Soviet Relations" (Central Intelligence Agency, June 20, 1975), 2–3, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79B01737A002100190001-8.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Tim Niblock, *"Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan* (USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 27.

country already had in its air fleet. It also recommended that the licenses for the purchase of two Boeing 727s that Libya had ordered since 1976 not be issued.⁴¹

Although the U.S. ambassador had been recalled in 1972, the burning and looting of the American embassy in Tripoli in 1979 forced the removal of the remaining diplomatic personnel in 1980, and the embassy was officially closed.⁴² The U.S. government closed the Libyan Embassy (known as Libya's Peoples Bureau) in Washington on May 6, 1981, after alleging its support of international terrorism, its attempt to subvert governments in Africa (especially Chad, Sudan and Egypt), and its sponsorship for killing Libyan dissidents on American soil.⁴³ In October of the same year, the U.S. government ordered its citizens in Libya to leave the country and prohibited the travel of citizens to that destination.⁴⁴

Also in 1981 the U.S. imposed controls on the export of aircraft, spare parts and avionics to "limit Libyan capacity to support military adventures in neighboring countries."⁴⁵ On February 26, 1982, the Reagan administration ordered an oil embargo from Libya to impact the regime's ability to support terrorist acts. The embargo "would place Libya in the same category as the Soviet Union."⁴⁶ At that time, the oil trade from Libya was 150,000 barrels per day, which represented 3% of U.S. imports and 15% of Libyan exports.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Nelson, *Libya, a Country Study*, 268.

⁴² United States Department of State, "History of the U.S. and Libya," U.S. Embassy in Libya, 2020, <https://ly.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/io/>.

⁴³ See Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. Expels Libyans and Closes Mission, Charging Terrorism," *The New York Times*, May 7, 1981, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/05/07/world/us-expels-libyans-and-closes-mission-charging-terrorism.html>.

⁴⁴ Steven R. Weisman, "Reagan Requests Americans to Quit Libya Immediately," *The New York Times*, December 11, 1981, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/11/world/reagan-requests-americans-to-quit-libya-immediately.html>.

⁴⁵ General Accounting Office, "Administrative Knowledge of Economic Costs of Foreign Policy Export Controls" (Report to Senator Charles H. Percy, September 2, 1983), 4 as cited in; Gary Clyde Hufbauer et al., "Case 78-8 and 92-12," in *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, 3rd ed. (USA: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2008), 248, <https://www.piie.com/commentary/speeches-papers/case-78-8-and-92-12>.

⁴⁶ Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. Decision to Embargo Libyan Oil Is Reported," *The New York Times*, February 26, 1982, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/02/26/world/us-decision-to-embargo-libyan-oil-is-reported.html>.

⁴⁷ Gwertzman.

In December 1983, the U.S. blocked the sale of 12 Boeing commercial aircraft worth \$600 million.⁴⁸ Finally, in 1986 President Reagan invoked the IEEPA to impose the strictest economic sanctions the U.S. had ever issued against Libya.⁴⁹

They include the blocking of all property and property interests of the Government of Libya and the central bank of Libya, both within the United States and in the possession or control of U.S. persons, including overseas branches of U.S. banks. They also prohibit services trade between the United States and Libya, imports from and exports to Libya, and travel to or from Libya. The asset freeze has exacerbated the cash shortage facing the Libyan government during this period of a soft oil market. We also expect the Libyan economy to face considerable disruption due to the loss of technical expertise and imports, especially spare parts, from the United States.

Despite the bombing of Tripoli and the sanctions issued by the U.S. in 1986, Libya continued to be blamed for supporting terrorism without further economic sanctions. Between 1989 and 1993, the initial sanctions against Libya were extended through Executive Orders 12543⁵⁰ and 12544⁵¹. Flight and commercial restrictions increased, and the U.S. froze another \$260 million in Libyan assets for a total of \$950 million.⁵² From 1991 to 1992, the U.S. Treasury Department blacklisted 94 Libyan companies with which it prohibited any trade relations.⁵³ As a last measure in 1996, Congress issued the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA), which imposed sanctions on non-U.S. companies that exported goods, services, or technology prohibited by

⁴⁸ The New York Times, "Boeing Seeks U.S. Approval to Sell \$600 Million in Aircraft to Libya," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1982, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/12/23/world/boeing-seeks-us-approval-to-sell-600-million-in-aircraft-to-libya.html>.

⁴⁹ Michael P. Malloy et al., "Expanding Uses of Presidential Emergency Economic Powers," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)* 80 (1986): 196, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25658308>.

⁵⁰ See Ronald Reagan, "Executive Order 12543--Prohibiting Trade and Certain Transactions Involving Libya," National Archives, August 15, 2016, <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12543.html>.

⁵¹ See Ronald Reagan, "Executive Order 12544--Blocking Libyan Government Property in the United States or Held by U.S. Persons," National Archives, August 15, 2016, <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/12544.html>.

⁵² Ronald Bruce St. John, *Historical Dictionary of Libya* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), xxxvi.

⁵³ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Libya Country Report*, 3rd ed. (London, 1991), 8, 16 as cited in; Niblock, "Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East, 32.

resolutions 748 and 883 of the UN Security Council or that invested more than \$40 million annually in Libya's oil sector.⁵⁴

Impact of the U.S. sanctions

The sanctions adopted by the U.S. until 1982 were somewhat symbolic and specifically aimed at the trade of military technology. However, since the oil embargo promoted by the Reagan administration, the economic impact was much more significant. Imports from Libya fell from \$5.5 billion in 1981 to \$1.5 billion in 1982. Exports declined similarly from \$809 million in 1981 to \$533 million in 1982. The reduction in both imports and exports continued from 1982 to practically zero in the late 1980s.

Table 1 – U.S. trade with Libya 1985 – 1989 (U.S. dollars)

Date	Exports	(%) ^a	Imports	(%) ^b
1985	311,000,000	.15	47,000,000	.01
1986	46,200,000	.01	1,600,000	(^c)
1987	101,000	(^c)	7,322	(^c)
1988	29,660	(^c)	46,749	(^c)
1989	2,621	(^c)	0 ^d	(^c)

^a Libyan portion of all U.S. exports for that year

^b Libyan portion of all U.S. imports for that year

^c Less than 0.1 percent

^d Commerce reports a zero figure but this amount may actually be so small that it simply was not recorded

Source: Cooke, “The United States’ 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have they worked”, 221.

During the 1990s, trade between countries was virtually non-existent with a slight upturn in the early 2000s as a result of Gaddafi's attempts to commercially reintegrate himself into the international system. Sanctions imposed on Libya through ILSA ended in 2006 but were extended for Iran until 2011 under what it became known as the Iran Sanctions Act (ISA). The

⁵⁴ Benjamin A. Gilman, “Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996,” Pub. L. No. 104–172 (1996), <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-110/pdf/STATUTE-110-Pg1541.pdf>.

same year the U.S. State Department removed Libya from the list of state sponsors of terrorism and restored full diplomatic relations.⁵⁵

Table 2 – U.S. trade in goods with Libya 1992 – 2006 (millions U.S. nominal dollars)

Date	Imports	Exports
1992	0	0
1993	0	0.2
1994	0	0
1995	0	0
1996	0	0
1997	0	0
1998	0	0
1999	0	0
2000	0	18
2001	0	9
2002	0	18.3
2003	0	0.2
2004	331.5	39.2
2005	1,590.3	83.8
2006	2,472.2	383.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division, “Trade in goods with Libya”

The effectiveness of the sanctions adopted by the U.S. is strongly questioned. Initially, the U.S. did not have strong enough economic ties to impact Libya through the sanctions imposed.⁵⁶ Secondly, other countries such as Italy, Germany, and the U.K. exported to Libya enough goods and services to fill the vacuum left by the U.S.. These countries exported \$4.3 billion to Libya in 1987 (one year after ILSA was issued).⁵⁷ As shown in Figure 1, countries in Europe increased imports of Libyan oil after 1986, which mitigated the decline in imports by the U.S. Finally, both the 1986 Tripoli bombing and the U.S. economic sanctions were aimed at

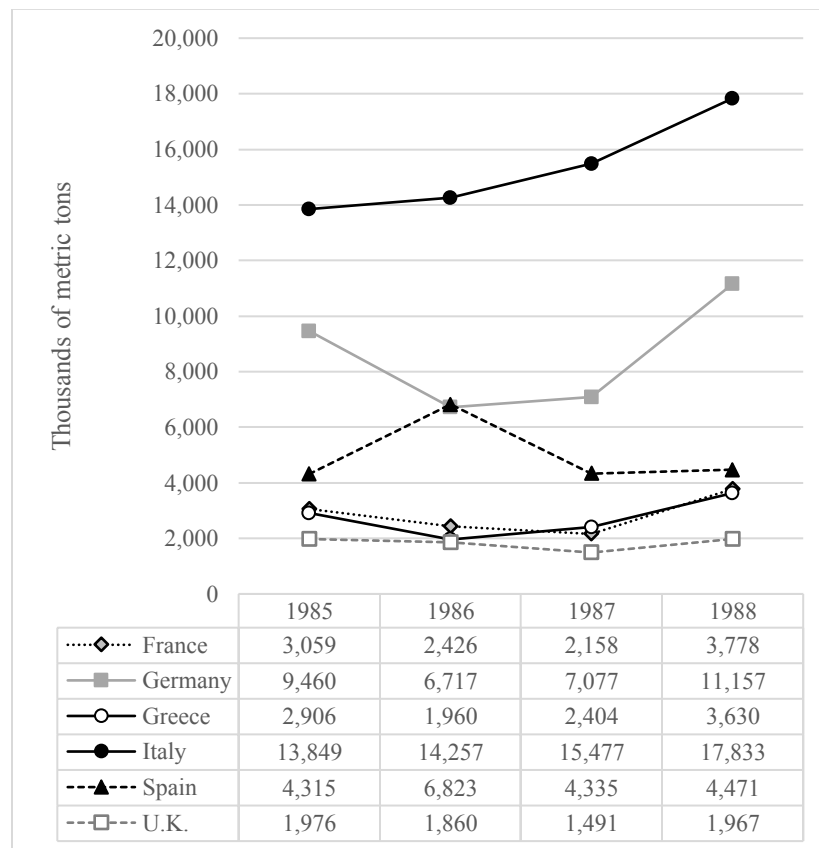
⁵⁵ St. John, *Historical Dictionary of Libya*, 386.

⁵⁶ Cooke, “The United States’ 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have They Worked,” 221.

⁵⁷ U.S. Department of State Bureau Public Affairs, “Background Notes: Libya,” September 1989, 7 as cited in; Cooke, “The United States’ 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have They Worked,” 221.

changing Libya's foreign policy. However, the airstrikes had the opposite effect and ended up increasing the support for Qadhafi against U.S. imperialism.⁵⁸

Figure 1 – Total imports of Libyan crude oil, natural gas liquids and refinery feedstocks by Libya’s oil importers.



Source: Own elaboration. Data are taken from Cooke, “The United States’ 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have they worked”, 223.

For the U.S., there was no alternative but to convince the big Libyan oil importers to adopt similar economic measures.⁵⁹ This opportunity arose after the terrorist attacks on Pan Am Flight 103 and UTA 772 when subsequent investigations determined the undeniable Libyan involvement in such events. Under the pretext of forcing the extradition of the alleged

⁵⁸ Waniss Otman and Erling Karlberg, *The Libyan Economy: Economic Diversification and International Repositioning* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2007), 44.

⁵⁹ Cooke, “The United States’ 1986 Emergency Economic Sanctions against Libya - Have They Worked,” 224.

perpetrators, the UN Security Council imposed economic sanctions on Libya, which later achieved the results not delivered by the unilateral efforts of the U.S.

UNSC SANCTIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON LIBYA

The investigations carried out after the attacks on Pan Am 103, and UTA 772 were conclusive. The detonators that exploded on both planes were the same as those found on two Libyans captured in Senegal in 1988.⁶⁰ In the same way, the chain of events related to the Pan AM flight 103 allowed the authorities to trace the origin of the suitcase containing the bomb to Malta. It was even possible to find the shop where two Libyan citizens bought the clothes that were in the suitcase.⁶¹ On November 27, 1991, the U.S. and the U.K. issued an indictment against Abdelbaset al-Megrahi and Lamin Khalifah Fhimah, alleged Libyan intelligence officers.⁶² Two weeks before the U.S. and U.K. indictments were issued, France issued four arrest warrants against Libyan officials accused of involvement in the bombing of UTA Flight 772.⁶³

Despite serious accusations against Libyan citizens involved in the attacks, Libya refused to hand them over to countries interested in trying them. The U.S., the U.K., and France took the matter to the United Nations Security Council, where it was taken very seriously. The Security Council issued five resolutions between 1992 and 2003 regarding Libya and its support for terrorism. The first one condemned the acts of terrorism perpetrated with Libyan support while the next two imposed economic and diplomatic sanctions. The fourth reaffirmed the previous

⁶⁰ Michael Wines, "Libya Now Linked to Pan Am Blast," *The New York Times*, October 10, 1990, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/10/10/world/libya-now-linked-to-pan-am-blast.html>.

⁶¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Remembering Pan Am Flight 103," Story, Federal Bureau of Investigation, December 4, 2018, <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/remembering-pan-am-flight-103-30-years-later-121418>.

⁶² George Lardner, "Pan Am Flight 103 Report," *Washington Post*, November 15, 1991, sec. World, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/panam103/stories/libyans111591.htm>.

⁶³ See Alan Riding, "4 Libyans Charged by France in Air Bombing," *The New York Times*, October 31, 1991, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/10/31/world/4-libyans-charged-by-france-in-air-bombing.html>.

resolutions and threatened with worsening the sanctions already in place. Lastly, the fifth was aimed at lifting all the sanctions after achieving the handover of the suspects.

Resolution 731 (1992) strongly deplored "the fact that the Libyan government has not yet responded effectively ... to cooperate fully in establishing responsibility for the terrorist acts ... against Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772" and urged the Libyan government to "provide a full and effective response to those requests so as to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism."⁶⁴ Resolution 748 (1992) reaffirmed Resolution 731 and acting under Chapter VII of the letter decided mainly:⁶⁵

1. Libya must comply with the requirements addressed by the U.S., the U.K., France, and Northern Ireland.
2. That the Libyan government must abandon support for terrorism through concrete actions.
3. To deny permission to any aircraft to land, take off or fly over Libyan territory except for humanitarian flights.
4. To prohibit the supply of aircraft parts, components, engineering, or maintenance services to Libya.
5. To prohibit the sale of arms, ammunition, military vehicles, and any other equipment to Libya.
6. To withdraw from Libya agents and military advisers of all Member States.
7. All Member States have to suspend the operation of all Libyan Arab Airlines offices.

⁶⁴ See UN Security Council, "Resolution 731" (United Nations, January 21, 1992), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/731>.

⁶⁵ See UN Security Council, "Resolution 748" (United Nations, March 31, 1992), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/748>.

8. All Member States must deny entry or expel all Libyan citizens involved in acts of terrorism.

In 1993 the United Nations Security Council worsened sanctions against Libya with the issuance of resolution 883. This resolution reaffirmed resolutions 731 and 748 and adopted new measures designed to impact the Libyan economy by ordering the Member States to:⁶⁶

1. Immediately close all offices of Libyan Arab Airlines and prohibit any commercial transactions with the company.
2. Prohibit the entry of nationals into Libyan territory to provide maintenance, aircraft parts, training to pilots or engineers, or issuing insurance for aircrafts.
3. All Libyan financial resources should be frozen except for those derived from the sale of petroleum or petroleum products.
4. Prohibits all member states from supplying Libya with the material necessary for the extraction and processing of oil, such as pumps, refinery equipment, equipment required for oil exports, etc.

Since 1993, Libya has tried in various ways to reach an agreement that would allow the lifting of the sanctions imposed. The Libyan government "tried directly to persuade the Western powers to change their positions, contested the sanctions in international law, and sought to mobilize support in African and Arab countries.⁶⁷ In 1992, Libya provided the U.K. with detailed information on its support given to the Provisional Irish Republican Army without softening the UNSC position on economic sanctions.⁶⁸ As an alternative to handing over the suspects to the

⁶⁶ See UN Security Council, "Resolution 883" (United Nations, November 11, 1993), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/883>.

⁶⁷ Dar al-Jamahariya lil-Nashr, *Al-Thawra Libya Fi 30 'Ama* (Tripoli, 1999), 207–48 as cited in; Niblock, "Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East, 45.

⁶⁸ United States Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism* (U.S. Department of State, 1996), 26.

U.S. or the U.K., in 1994, the Libyan delegate to the Arab League Ibrahim al-Bishari proposed that the two suspects should be tried by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) under Scottish law by a court of Scottish judges.⁶⁹

In 1995 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued Resolution 1566 in which it supported the idea of trying the suspects in a neutral country.⁷⁰ In response to the U.S. and British rejection of these proposals, in 1997, Libya again turned to the ICJ. It claimed that under the 1971 Montreal Convention to which the U.S. and U.K. were signatories, suspects could be tried in their native country.⁷¹ At a meeting in 1997, OAU heads of state called for the lifting of the sanctions imposed on Libya using as a pretext the devastating effects they were having on the population.⁷² A year later, the OAU heads of state determined not to continue implementing the sanctions if they did not receive a response from the Security Council regarding the proposal to try the suspects in a neutral country.⁷³

The decision of the OAU influenced the Arab League to move in the same direction putting at risk the entire sanctions regime across the UN.⁷⁴ On August 24, 1998, a week before the deadline imposed by the OAU to unilaterally stop imposing sanctions, the U.S. and the U.K. finally proposed to try the suspects in a court in the Netherlands with three Scottish judges. Three days later, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 1192, welcoming the proposal for

⁶⁹ International Court of Justice, *Case Concerning Questions of Interpretation and Application of the 1971 Montreal Convention Arising from the Aerial Incident at Lockerbie (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya v. United Kingdom)* (Netherlands: International Court of Justice, 1995), 134.

⁷⁰ Organization of African Unity, “Resolutions Adopted by the Sixty-First Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers” (Organization of African Unity, January 27, 1995), 42, https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/9617-council_en_23_27_january_1995_council_ministers_sixty_first_ordinary_session.pdf.

⁷¹ International Court of Justice, “Questions of Interpretation and Application of the 1971 Montreal Convention Arising from the Aerial Incident at Lockerbie (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya v. United States of America),” 2020, <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/89>.

⁷² A. A. Yusuf, *African Yearbook of International Law, 1997* (Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1998), 349.

⁷³ Alexander Orakhelashvili, *Collective Security* (UK: OUP Oxford, 2011), 345.

⁷⁴ Niblock, “Pariah States” & Sanctions in the Middle East, 47.

the trial in the Netherlands and indicating that all sanctions imposed through Resolutions 741 and 883 would be suspended upon handover of the suspects. Similarly, Resolution 1192 expresses the intention to "consider additional measures if the two accused have not arrived or appeared for trial promptly."⁷⁵

The negotiations for the handover of the suspects lasted almost eight months and addressed five areas of concern. Firstly, it was necessary to define the location of the trial, secondly, the conditions under which the defendants would be held, and thirdly the guarantee that sanctions would be effectively lifted after the surrender. The fourth concern was Libya's need for the trial not to be politicized by the U.S. or U.K.; the last concern was the post-trial events if the defendants were found guilty.⁷⁶ The defendants were finally sent to the Netherlands by a UN plane on April 5, 1999,⁷⁷ but their trial would not begin until May 3, 2000.⁷⁸ Abdelbaset al-Megrahi was found guilty of 270 counts of murder on January 31, 2001, while Lamin Khalifah Fhimah was not found guilty of any crime.⁷⁹

The impact of the UNSC sanctions

In early 1998 a formal analysis issued by the Libyan secretariat for foreign liaison estimated the cost of the economic sanctions at \$24 billion.⁸⁰ In mid-1998, the Arab League also issued a financial analysis that estimated the cost at \$23.5 billion at the end of 1996. The most significant losses were in the commercial sector (\$5.8 billion), the industrial sector (\$5.1 billion),

⁷⁵ See UN Security Council, "Resolution 1192" (United Nations, August 27, 1998), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1192>.

⁷⁶ Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 55–57.

⁷⁷ Marlise Simons, "2 Libyan Suspects Handed to Court in Pan Am Bombing," *The New York Times*, April 6, 1999, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/06/world/2-libyan-suspects-handed-to-court-in-pan-am-bombing.html>.

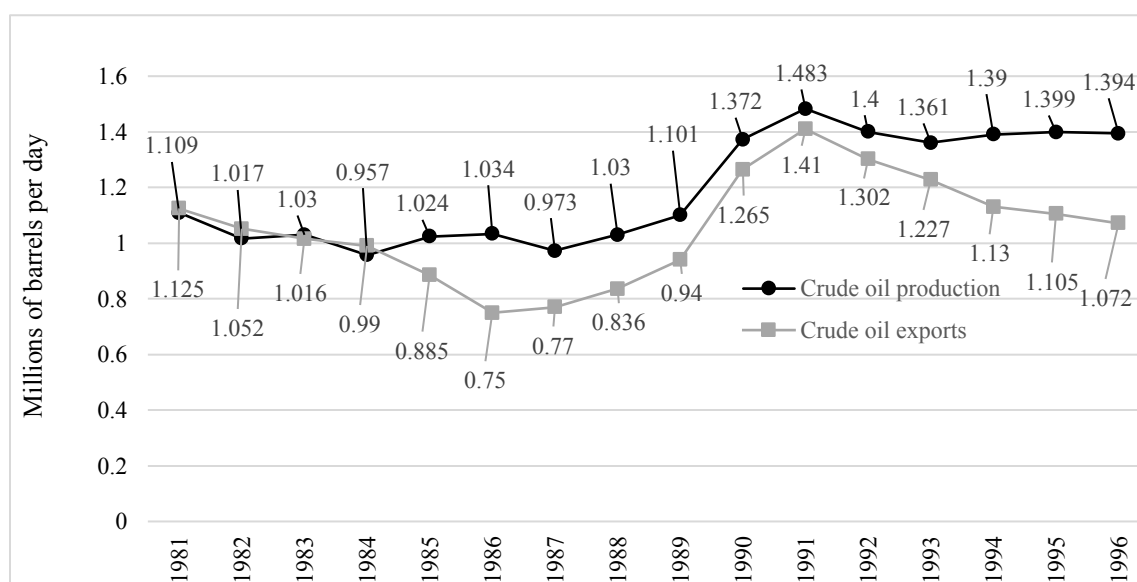
⁷⁸ M. J. Stephey, "The Lockerbie Bomber: Abdel Basset al-Megrahi," *Time*, August 21, 2009, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1917851,00.html>.

⁷⁹ BBC News, "Timeline: Lockerbie Bombing," *BBC News*, March 10, 2020, sec. Scotland, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-34541363>.

⁸⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Libya: Country Report, 2nd Quarter 1998* (UK: EIU, 1998), 14 as cited in; Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 63.

the energy sector (\$5 billion), the transport and communications sector (\$2.5 billion), and the agricultural sector (\$337 million).⁸¹ Despite this apparent significant impact on the Libyan economy, the reality is that the regime managed sanctions quite well to protect the energy sector. While the sanctions did not ban the sale of oil, they did impact the purchase of equipment needed for oil exports, and yet Libya exported more oil in the 1990s than in the 1980s. Variations in oil production were due to the quota set by the OPEC rather than the difficulties presented in Libya. Between 1983 and 1993, Libya's production quota was 1.1 million barrels per day. The quota was raised to 1.39 million barrels per day between 1993 and 1996. Finally, the quota was increased to 1.52 million barrels in 1997.⁸² Although Libya fell short of the quota in 1997 and 1998, it was already exploiting the Murzuq field to meet OPEC's expectations effortlessly.⁸³

Figure 2 – Libyan oil production and oil exports, 1980-1996.



Source: Own elaboration. Production data are taken from Dar al-Jamahiriya lil-Nashr, "*Al-Thawra Libya Fi 30 'Ama*", 343. Exports data are taken from National Corporation for Information and Documentation, "*Statistical Yearbook 1998*", 29 as cited in; Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 64.

⁸¹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Libya: Country Report, 3rd Quarter 1998* (UK: EIU, 1998), 17 as cited in; Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 63.

⁸² Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 64–65.

⁸³ See D. Worsley, *Geological Exploration in Murzuq Basin* (Elsevier, 2000), 296.

After the initial sanctions of 1992, Libya was already waiting for an eventual resolution to freeze its foreign assets. Thus, resources in OECD banks fell from \$4.428 billion to \$1.611 billion in 1993.⁸⁴ All the money was transferred to institutions that were not under UN supervision. The remaining money in the banks was derived from the oil trade, so it could not be frozen. By 1996 Libya's resources in OECD banks had again increased to \$5.688 billion, all outside the scope of the sanctions imposed by the Resolution 883.⁸⁵

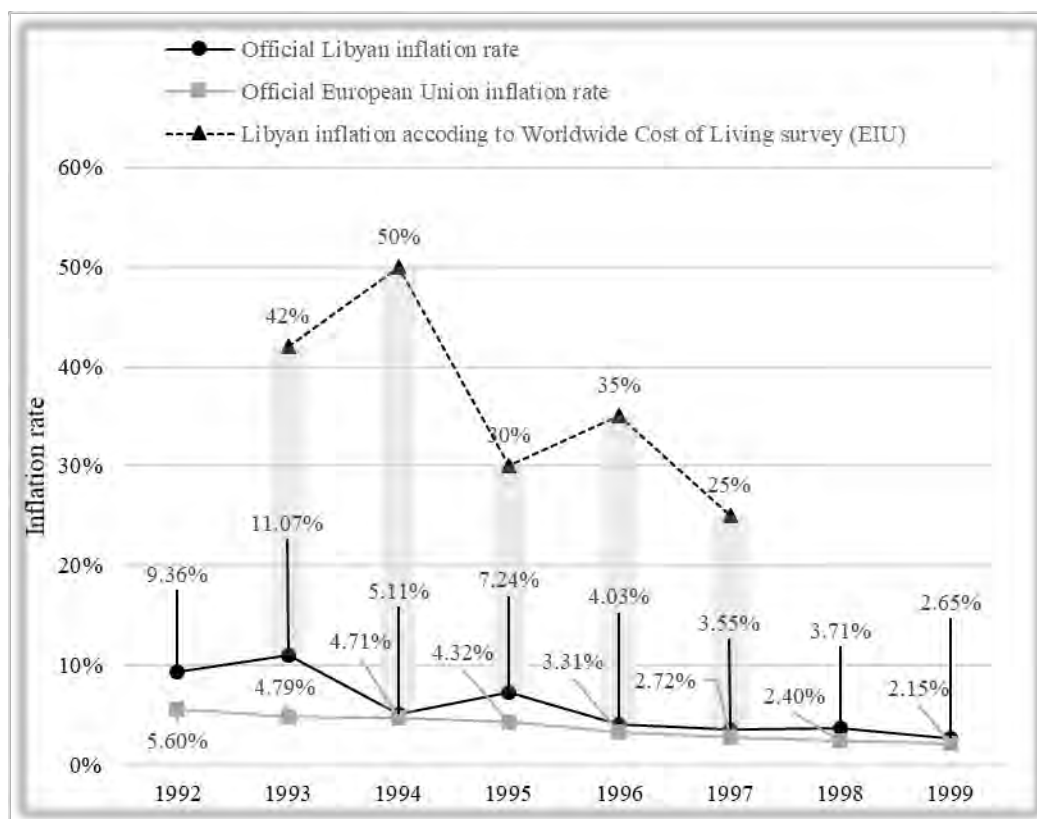
The apparent macroeconomic success of evading the sanctions did not represent a real benefit for the Libyan population. A disastrous consequence of the sanctions was the worsening of inflation. To understand the impact of inflation, it is worth noting that approximately 80% of the Libyan workforce worked for the public sector for which wages were fixed since 1982. Surprisingly, the Libyan regime avoided increasing the salaries of public servants despite normal fluctuations in the prices of goods and services year after year. Most wages were in the range of LYD 150 to LYD 600 (equivalent to \$21 to \$85 according to the black market exchange rate in 1998). This cumulative loss of purchasing power of the local currency reduced the real value of wages by more than 35 percent on average (annually) between 1993 and 1997.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Libya: Country Report, 4th Quarter 1995* (UK: EIU, 1995), 19 as cited in; Niblock, "Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East, 65.

⁸⁵ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Libya: Country Profile, 1998/99* (UK: EIU, 1999), 42 as cited in; Niblock, "Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East, 65.

⁸⁶ Niblock, "Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East, 68, 74–75.

Figure 3 – Libyan inflation rates 1992-1999



Source: Own elaboration. Data are taken from WorldData, “Development of inflation rates in Libya” and The Economist Intelligence Unit, “Libya: Country Profile 1998/99”, 17 as cited in; Niblock, “Pariah States” & Sanctions in the Middle East, 68.

As a consequence of this situation, the population no longer had the resources to satisfy basic needs, which forced the government to assist with subsidies. By 1997, 750,000 families (almost the entire population) were registered as beneficiaries of subsidies to cover basic food needs. The state subsidization of consumer necessities went from LYD 23 million in 1992 to LYD 160 million in 1997.⁸⁷ Social inequity worsened with the emergence of new elites, degrading the official discourse rooted in egalitarianism. The air blockade and lack of resources

⁸⁷ Dar al-Jamahariya lil-Nashr, *Al-Thawra Libya Fi 30 'Ama*, 356 as cited in; Niblock, “Pariah States” & Sanctions in the Middle East, 75.

avored the rise of traders and smugglers who ignored the government's regulated prices thanks to rampant corruption.⁸⁸

Since the Libyan government assumed that sanctions would eventually prohibit the sale of oil, it focused on increasing reserves and assets abroad, which reduced public spending significantly. The most affected sectors by the decrease in social investment were health and education. The average budget for the health system between 1981 and 1990 was LYD 60.3 million. After the economic sanctions, the 1993 budget was LYD 4.6 million, with a slight recovery in 1997 and 1998. The average budget for the health system between 1991 and 2000 was LYD 46.58 million, 22.3 percent less than the average allocated in the 1980s. In percentage terms, the average allocated to the health system during the 1990s was 6.58 percent. This portion of the budget was significantly higher than the average of the 1970s (3.11%) and 1980s (4.1%) due to the air blockade that made it particularly challenging to acquire medicines and equipment necessary for the operation of the hospital network.⁸⁹

The situation for the education sector was no different after resolutions 748 and 883. Although Libya allocated an average of 11.47% of the public budget to education between 1986 and 1999, it was not enough to prevent its degradation. In 1982 the budget for the education system was LYD 194.3 million, a ceiling reached thanks to the profits from the oil bonanza of the early 1980s. With the imposition of the U.S. oil embargo and subsequent UN sanctions, the average budget between 1986 and 1999 decreased to LYD 72 million. The lowest point was 1993 when the budget was LYD 17.8 million, the same amount of money allocated 20 years earlier.⁹⁰ Compounding this situation was the steady increase in primary and secondary school

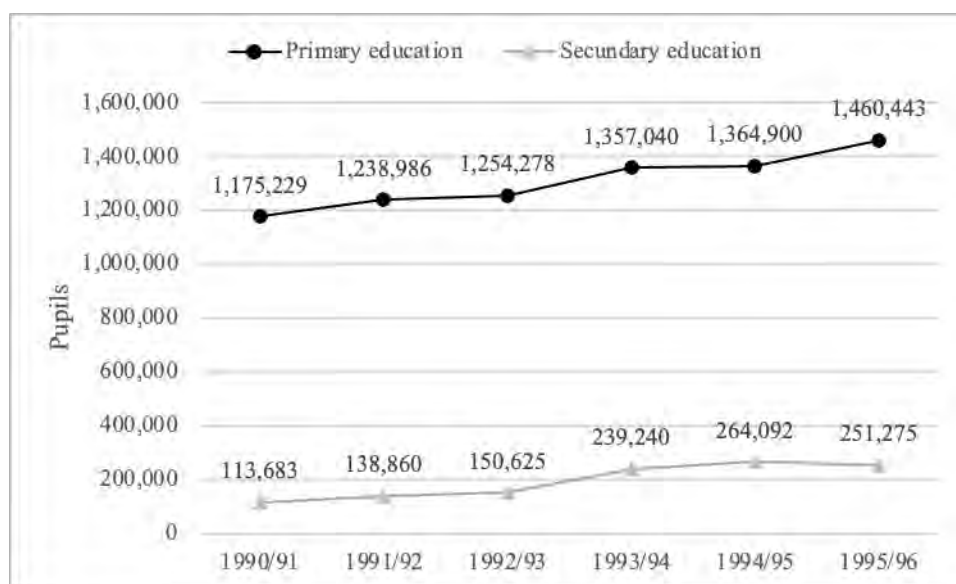
⁸⁸ Niblock, *"Pariah States" & Sanctions in the Middle East*, 77–78; See also Otman and Karlberg, *The Libyan Economy*, 383–91.

⁸⁹ Otman and Karlberg, *The Libyan Economy*, 122–23.

⁹⁰ Otman and Karlberg, 106–9.

students as a consequence of a mostly young population. With more young people in need of education and a significant reduction in resources allocated, the degradation of Libya's education system was evident, especially between 1992 and 1996, when the country ceased even purchasing books for university libraries.⁹¹

Figure 4 – Numbers of pupils in Primary and Secondary Education 1990-1996



Source: Own Elaboration. Data are taken from National Corporation for Information and Documentation, “*Statistical Yearbook 1998*”, 24 as cited in Niblock, “*Pariah States*” & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 79.

The sanctions were suspended by the UN in 1999⁹² and officially lifted in 2003 when Libya agreed to compensate the victims.⁹³ However, the U.S. maintained its sanctions until 2006 when the issue of weapons of mass destruction was solved.⁹⁴ Finally, Libya renounced terrorism and the development of WMD to lift the imposed sanctions and achieve a profitable relationship with the

⁹¹ Niblock, “*Pariah States*” & *Sanctions in the Middle East*, 79–80.

⁹² See UN Security Council, “S/PRST/1999/10” (United Nations, April 8, 1999), <https://undocs.org/S/PRST/1999/10>.

⁹³ See UN Security Council, “Resolution 1506” (United Nations, September 12, 2003), <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1506> See also; Matthew L. Wald, “Libya Is Offering to Pay \$2.7 Billion for Pan Am Blast,” *The New York Times*, May 29, 2002, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/29/world/libya-is-offering-to-pay-2.7-billion-for-pan-am-blast.html>.

⁹⁴ Nicholas L. Miller, *Stopping the Bomb: The Sources and Effectiveness of US Nonproliferation Policy* (Cornell University Press, 2018), 146.

U.S. Other scholars have argued that part of the success was also due to the Iraq war in 2003, which, using WMD as an excuse, legitimized the U.S. invasion and overthrow of Saddam Hussein.⁹⁵

In summary, the population suffered more severe economic repercussions than the elites close to the regime. The efforts to protect the energy sector were of little use, considering that the quality of life of the population was significantly degraded which forced the regime to rethink its position in the international community. The worsening social conditions in Libya between 1992 and 2006 could not be remedied before the Arab Spring, which finally exploited all the social resentment in a civil war in 2011 under the auspices of the United Nations' responsibility to protect.⁹⁶

CONCLUSIONS

Economic sanctions are undoubtedly an important alternative for shaping global policy and, in particular, changing the behavior of some countries within the international system. The imposition of sanctions on Libya unilaterally by the United States had limited impact due to a lack of support from the international community. Many countries maintained and increased trade relations with Libya, which diminished the economic impact expected by the United States. The unilateral sanctions ended up being a mechanism of political rejection of the practice of supporting terrorism but did not represent a significant modification in Libya's foreign policy. Not even the 1986 air strikes were useful in modifying Qadhafi's interest in supporting terrorist organizations antagonistic to Western interests.

⁹⁵ Paul Kerr, "News ANALYSIS: Libya's Disarmament: A Model for U.S. Policy?," *Arms Control Today* 34, no. 5 (June 2004): 36–38, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/211289460/abstract/D98B98E679A4202PQ/1>.

⁹⁶ See A. Hehir and R. Murray, eds., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), chap. 1.

On the contrary, the economic sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council had a significant impact. Despite the Libyan regime managed to protect the energy sector, the consequences on the quality of life of the population were devastating. The effectiveness of the sanctions cannot be understood without the regional and global context. Although Libya's macroeconomic variables demonstrate the effect of the sanctions, the 2003 Iraq war represented a turning point in U.S. interventionism against regimes supposedly developing WMD as Libya was at the time. Qadhafi's decisions to hand over the suspects required by the U.K. and the U.S., to renounce the development of WMD, and to compensate victims after abandoning the support of terrorism remain a matter of academic debate. Finally, the deterioration of social conditions in Libya since the 1990s as a result of sanctions was undoubtedly one of the catalysts of the Arab Spring in 2011 that ended with NATO's intervention under the responsibility to protect and facilitated the overthrow of Qadhafi.

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