

## The Factors Shaping Turkish Involvement in Libya: Exploring Determinants and Regional and international Interests (2010-2021)

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** This study aims to identify the factors shaping intervention in Libya, including political, economic, social, and security factors that influence the decision-making process. Additionally, it aims to analyze the impact of international interventions and local dynamics on the Libyan crisis.

**Methods:** The study employed the following methodologies to address the research topic of intervention factors in Libya: descriptive-analytical methodology, which focuses on studying the phenomena accompanying the intervention, describing them objectively and precisely by describing the phenomenon and explaining its characteristics qualitatively or quantitatively. Additionally, it utilized the theory of power, which is one of the scientific theories used to organize society, and is considered one of the theories of interest to social organizers when dealing with society.

**Results:** The study showed that interventions in Libya have been characterized by an attempt to impose a specific political vision aimed at achieving stability through the establishment of a legitimate government capable of controlling the security situation to prevent the spread of jihadist threats to regional and international security.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that international interventions have led to temporary stability and the containment of the jihadist threat in the eastern region, but the security situation remains fragile, with the potential for escalation, particularly in the absence of comprehensive political solutions.

**Keywords:** Determinants, Factors, Involvement, International Interests, Intervention

### عوامل التدخل التركي في ليبيا: دراسة المحددات والمصالح الإقليمية والدولية (2010-2021)

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### ملخص

**الأهداف:** هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى بيان العوامل المشكلة للتدخل التركي في ليبيا من خلال التعرف إلى الخلفية التاريخية، والمحددات والسياسية والاقتصادية التي تقف وراء هذا التدخل، وما أفرزه من تداعيات عبرت عنها المواقف الإقليمية، وما رتبته من آثار عبرت عنها المواقف الدولية.

**المنهجية:** استخدمت الدراسة في تناول موضوع الدراسة (العوامل المشكلة للتدخل التركي في ليبيا) على المناهج الآتية: المنهج التحليلي الوصفي، الذي يهتم بدراسة الظواهر التي رافقت التدخل، ومن ثم وصفها وصفا موضوعيا دقيقا من خلال وصف الظاهرة، وتوضيح خصائصها كميّا أو كميّا. أيضا، استخدمت نظرية القوة، وهي من النظريات العلمية التي تعتمد عليها طريقة تنظيم المجتمع، وتعتبر هذه النظرية إحدى النظريات التي تهم المنظم الاجتماعي عند التعامل مع المجتمع.

**النتائج:** بينت الدراسة أن تركيا قامت بتنفيذ تدخلها في ليبيا عبر تقديم المساعدة المباشرة لحكومة الوفاق الوطني برئاسة فائز السراج لمواجهة قوات الجيش الليبي الذي يقاوم تحت إمرة المشير خليفة حفتر.

**الخلاصة:** خلصت الدراسة إلى أن ليبيا أصبحت جزءا من الأمن القومي التركي ومصالحها في منطقة الشرق الأوسط، وشرق المتوسط تحديدها، وبات استمرار حكومة الوفاق الوطني، التي يرأسها فائز السراج في الحكم، أمرا استراتيجيا لتركيا. الكلمات الدالة: المحددات، العوامل، الوجود، المصالح الدولية، التدخل.

## 1. Introduction:

Turkey's apparent support for the Government of National Accord in Libya against the Libyan army units representing the Tobruk government that refuses to recognize the Government of National Accord revealed the nature of the Turkish intentions to return to Libya. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's regime views this return as an essential component of the Ottoman Empire's lost legacy, which had a direct presence between 1515 and 1911 in this Arab country. Moreover, Libya enjoys unique geopolitical advantages, making it the center of the attention of several international powers who seek to achieve their interests in the Middle East and North Africa.

It seems that the Turkish support for one of the two sides of the Libyan equation has been reflected in the local dispute, making it appear as an armed conflict in light of the ongoing struggle between two fronts. However, each front is accepted and supported by international parties and active regional powers in Libya and international and regional affairs. The features of this dispute crystallized after the forces of Khalifa Haftar, the commander of the Libyan army, were able to advance toward the capital, Tripoli, in an attempt to control it. This intervention turned Libya into a source of concern for its neighbours, the region, and the world's countries as a whole.

The Turkish position and direct intervention in the Libyan Crisis was not a coincidence, especially since the issues it raised were many after Turkey signed a twofold agreement. One on security and the other on demarcating the maritime borders with Libya, especially since Turkey had previously been conservative towards the Libyan Crisis and the UN Security Council resolution related to imposing a no-fly zone on it (Murshe et al., 2023). However, its provision of actual military support to one of the parties to the conflict confirms the radical changes in the Turkish position, which is fuelled by several transformations that are taking place in the Middle East region as a whole. Perhaps the most important of which is Turkey's deep awareness of the new balances that are leaning towards other regional powers that have intervened in the region's crises, such as Iran, which plays a role in causing a significant power imbalance in the Middle East.

## 2. General Framework of the Study:

### 2.1 Problem of the Study:

The research problem is reflected in answer the main question: To what extent do the political and economic factors influence the Turkish intervention in Libya.

### 2.2 Hypotheses of the Study:

This study attempts to research the determinants behind the Turkish intervention in Libya. It also looks into the underlying causes that led to it. In addition to these reasons, it assumes that many determinants played a role in Turkey's foreign moves to achieve its regional project in Libya. Moreover, it will make up for its economic loss.

A significant hypothesis emerges from this, indicating the crystallization of a set of developments, the latest in the Turkish position, towards its direct intervention to protect and support a particular party at the expense of another, and this is part of a significant phenomenon related to the responsibility to protect imposed by chronic dilemmas.

In light of the central hypothesis, a sub-hypothesis related to the attitudes of the international and regional powers toward the Turkish intervention in Libya was established based on the legal frameworks for the intervention. It concluded that the intervention did not put any weight on moral values, especially since it clashed with the interests of those powers and resulted in severe consequences for Turkey, which could lead to results that contradict the objectives pursued by the Turkish decision-maker.

### 2.3 Questions of the Study:

Given the main question, some sub-questions also need to be answered, namely:

- What are the economic and political determinants and the historical background behind the Turkish intervention in Libya?
- What effects of the Turkish intervention were expressed by international positions?
- What are the political, economic, and social repercussions of the Turkish intervention in Libya?

#### **2.4 Objectives of the Study:**

The research aims to identify Turkish geostrategic interests in Libya within the scope of:

1. Expanding Turkey's political influence in North Africa to enhance its regional role in this context.
2. Identifying the key determinant factors that led Turkey to intervene militarily in the Libyan conflict and their relative significance.
3. Analysing Turkey's intervention in Libya to determine the primary geopolitical and strategic objectives that guided its involvement to investigate the economic motivations behind Turkey's intervention in Libya, including the pursuit of trade agreements, contracts, and investment opportunities

#### **2.5 Significance of the study:**

This research has evident importance in the following two areas:

##### **1. Theoretical significance:**

The study contributes to deepening the understanding of researchers in international relations studies related to the Middle East and the fact that this region has become the epicentre of crises in the world because several active regional powers are competing for influence in the region. The situation escalated due to the state of international tensions and sectarian recruitments practiced by these regional powers, along with the interests of many major international powers.

**2. Practical significance:** The significance of the practical study is highlighted by the many options it presents based on foundations that are beneficial for political decision-makers in the region, in addition to those concerned and who closely follow the Arab affairs, as it informs them of the justifications for Turkish intervention in Libya on both the historical and contemporary levels, primarily since the Turkish political system, led by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), seeks to revive the ancient Ottoman glory and return to rule the Arab world in its Asian and African parts as a preliminary stage, and then launch its largest project towards the lost legacy in the lands of the European continent.

#### **2.6 Limitations of the Study:**

The time frame of this study adopts specific dimensions that extend between the following years:

1. 2011: It is a year that marks the beginning of the changes that Libya witnessed following the fall of the regime of President Muammar Gaddafi, which allowed international and regional interventions to take place in Libyan affairs.
2. 2021: It is the year in which the Turkish intervention took place in the development of events in Libya, mainly the armed conflict that erupted between the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj, and the forces of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar.

#### **2.7 Determinants of the Study:**

Begin by introducing the determinants section and its importance in understanding Turkish involvement in Libya. Such as: historical context, political factors, economic factors, security concerns..etc.

#### **2.8 Terms of the Study:**

**Factors Shaping:** It is a term that refers to the influence or impact that various factors have on shaping a particular outcome or situation. In a political context, it can refer to the different elements or variables that contribute to shaping the political landscape or decision-making process. Understanding the factors that shape a political situation is crucial for policymakers and analysts as it helps them assess the various forces at play and make informed decisions. By studying these factors, one can gain insights into how different elements interact and influence political processes (Ali, 2014).

**Involvement:** This study is based on examining a fundamental concept in international relations, i.e., the concept of Involvement, which refers to external Involvement. This concept is one of the most controversial phenomena because changes in the structure of values and the powers dominating the regional and international systems have imposed significant transformations on this phenomenon. It changed the justifications for this Involvement, the patterns of the involving parties, their motives, and the legal and ethical frameworks for the authority to intervene. As a result, there seemed to be an erosion of the principles of sovereignty and non-involvement in the affairs of states, approved by international conventions Involvement is also defined as the coercive or dictatorial interference of one state or sovereign state in the

internal or external affairs of another state. The intervention is usually considered unlawful, but some interventions are legitimate (Martineau & Pastoriza, 2016).

**International interests:** They define the state's goals and ambitions, whether economic, military, or cultural. It is one of the most important concepts in international relations, as each country seeks to achieve its own national interest. Still, the basis is the survival and security of the state is the pursuit of wealth, economic growth and power (Leeds, Mattes & Vogel, 2009).

**Determinants:** They are used to understand the complex web of factors that contribute to a particular outcome and can be used to develop strategies and interventions to influence or modify these factors for desired outcomes (Leeds, Mattes & Vogel, 2009).

### **3 Theoretical Framework and Literature Review:**

#### **3.1 Theoretical Framework:**

The theoretical framework is based on the theory of power as it is one of the scientific theories on which the method of organizing society depends. This theory is critical to the social organizer when dealing with society. This theory is based on the following foundations:

Power theory is a framework used to analyse international relations by focusing on the distribution and exercise of power among states and other actors on the global stage. Various power theories exist, each emphasizing different aspects of power and its role in shaping international dynamics. Understanding power is not merely a historical or theoretical exercise; it is paramount for predicting international behaviours and outcomes. For a statesman, comprehending the power dynamics of potential allies and adversaries can mean the difference between a successful treaty and a diplomatic debacle. For the scholar, a grasp of power's nuances can shed light on past events and provide a roadmap for future geopolitical shifts.

The evolution of power dynamics underscores the fluidity of international relations. While the actors, challenges, and instruments of power may change, the underlying quest for dominance and security remains constant. Analysing these shifts is paramount for understanding contemporary global politics and forecasting future trajectories (Al-Aras, Al-Afaishat, & Al-Tibi, 2020). There are different schools of thought within power theory, including realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Each theory offers a unique perspective on power's role in shaping international relations. Realism, for example, emphasizes the anarchic nature of the international system and the pursuit of power for survival. In the 20th century, Hans Morgenthau, a luminary in the annals of IR scholarship, further crystallized realist thought with his seminal work, "Politics among Nations". He posited that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws rooted in human nature. For Morgenthau, the insatiable lust for power is ingrained in the human condition, compelling states to continually seek dominance. He famously noted, "International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power" (Wechsler, 2007).

Liberalism, on the other hand, emphasizes cooperation and institutions as tools for managing power dynamics. Yet, as the 20th century progressed, the realist paradigm evolved. Kenneth Waltz, in his ground-breaking work, "Theory of International Politics", introduced the concept of neorealism or structural realism. Waltz moved away from Morgenthau's emphasis on human nature and instead concentrated on the anarchic structure of the international system. In this system, states, lacking a higher authority to regulate their actions, are perpetually concerned about their security, leading them to acquire power in order to safeguard their sovereignty (Quinn, 2017).

Constructivism focuses on how ideas and norms shape power relations. **Power Projection:** Examine how states project power beyond their borders by applying a hard and soft power. The hard power involves military interventions, and soft power includes economic influence, and cultural diplomacy among other factors (Atkinson, 2006). The study uses the power theory to examine and explain the Turkey's role in the Libyan crisis. Turkey's use of power in Libya to increase its influence has encompassed various dimensions, including military, strategic, economic, security considerations and diplomatic efforts.

Also, it is important to note that the situation in Libya and Turkey's involvement is complex and multifaceted.

International relations are influenced by a wide range of factors, and different stakeholders may interpret events differently based on their own perspectives and interests. The following is how Turkey uses both of hard power such as (Bakir, 2021).

1. Military Support: Turkey provided significant military assistance to the Government of National Accord (GNA) led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, which was recognized by the United Nations. This support included including the deployment of troops and military equipment, sending military advisors. This military assistance was crucial in helping the GNA defend itself against the forces of General Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA).

2. Security Agreements: Turkey signed a security agreement with the GNA, which outlined cooperation in areas such as training, intelligence sharing, and defence. Also, they signed an agreement on maritime boundaries and security cooperation. This agreement further solidified Turkey's role as a key security partner and allowed it to exert influence over the GNA's policies.

3. Direct Intervention: Turkey's deployment of troops and equipment to Libya signalled a direct military commitment to the GNA's cause. This intervention not only bolstered the GNA's capabilities on the ground but also demonstrated Turkey's willingness to use force to protect its interests.

4. Regional Alignment: Turkey's involvement in Libya was influenced by its broader regional strategy, which included cooperation with Qatar and alignment with Islamist-leaning factions in the Middle East, its position on the conflict in Syria, and its stance on energy exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean.

5. Proxy Engagement: Turkey's involvement in Libya was partly aimed at countering the influence of other regional powers that were supporting General Haftar's LNA. By supporting the GNA, Turkey aimed to establish a counterbalance against its rivals in the region.

As far as the soft power use the followings:

a. Economic Interests: Turkey sought economic interests in Libya, including contracts for construction, trade and infrastructure projects. These economic ties provided a means of fostering dependency and strengthening its position in the country.

b. Diplomatic Engagement: Turkey engaged in diplomatic efforts to garner international recognition and support for the GNA's legitimacy. It also participated in talks and conferences aimed at finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict, such as the Berlin Conference on Libya and presenting the GNA as a legitimate government.

c. Media and Information Influence: Turkey used media and communication channels to shape the narrative of its involvement in Libya. This helped portray its actions as supportive of the internationally recognized government and as contributing to stability. Turkey leveraged its cultural and historical ties with Libya to build goodwill and influence among the Libyan population. This was particularly evident in the use of Turkish television shows, cultural events, and humanitarian aid to foster positive perceptions.

### **3.2 Literature Review:**

According to a study by Fajarini & Anam, 2022 entitled "Turkey Involvement in Libyan Civil War Under the Government of Recep Tayyip Erdogan 2019-2020" the study focuses Amid the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping the world, the internal conflict in Libya has escalated as the country's rival powers reject the UN's call for a 'global ceasefire'. Troops loyal to Khalifa Haftar are stepping up attacks on the country's cities. To counter the attacks of Khalifa Haftar who led the Libyan National Army (LNA), Turkey, as the main supporter of the Government of National Accord (GNA), began deploying its military to areas controlled by the LNA. This study tries to explain Turkey's involvement in the Libyan internal conflict in 2019-2020. The theoretical approach in this study uses a foreign policy approach that explains the role of various elements in shaping a country's foreign policy. The results found in this paper indicate that the Turkish Government decided its involvement in the internal Libyan conflict in 2019-2020 based on the domestic political conditions controlled by the AKP, the interests of creating stability and securing Turkey's economy in Libya, and Turkey's ambition to expand its influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition, this study opens a wide space as a form of better development in the future.

According to a study by Péter, S. (2020), Libya has sunk into chaos since Muammar Gaddafi was deposed by a Western-led military intervention in 2011. Since then, the Libyan crisis has escalated into an internationalized armed conflict, and a major power struggle between Turkey, Qatar, Italy, and Russia, Egypt, France, and the United Arab Emirates. In the last few years, General Khalifa Haftar has become Libya's most prominent military commander, who is now ruling the eastern part of the country, as the head of the Libyan National Army. His military offensive, launched in April 2019, to capture the capital Tripoli forced Turkey to help the UN-backed Government of National Accord to avoid defeat. But Haftar too received additional military support, especially from Abu Dhabi and Moscow. This escalated the conflict even further, spurring Ankara for another, this time more consequential intervention, which was able to change the local balance of power, so diplomatic efforts and the peace process could get another chance.

According to a study conducted by Hasar (2021), Turkey's 2020 intervention in the Libyan conflict at the invitation of the Libyan government reveals highly relevant and ample evidence of State practice and opinion juries – components of customary international law – on the part of the protagonists, Turkey and Libya, and third States, with regard to this controversy. Given its importance, this article aims to assess the precedential value of this intervention for the purpose of contributing to determining the state of customary law on the subject, without necessarily attempting to assess all the relevant facts and circumstances in order to reach a conclusive judgment on the lawfulness of the intervention.

### **3.3 What distinguishes this study from previous studies:**

This study stands out from other studies, it's essential to emphasize its unique contributions and distinctive features. Emphasize the specific time frame (2010-2021) to highlight the contemporary relevance of this study. Offer a nuanced analysis of critical junctures, providing a deep understanding of the contextual factors. Also, Analyze the evolving factors over this period, capturing recent geopolitical shifts and events. Incorporate detailed case studies or specific events within the determined time frame to illustrate key determinants.

## **4. Methodology of the Study:**

### **4.1 Study's Approaches:**

In dealing with the issue of the Turkish intervention in Libya, the following approaches are used:

**Qualitative Content Analysis:** This method involves systematically analysing qualitative data, such as texts, documents, and media reports, to identify patterns, themes, and narratives related to Turkey's intervention in Libya. You can analyse news articles, official statements, diplomatic documents, and academic writings to gain insights into the motivations, strategies, and impacts of the intervention.

**Case Study Analysis:** It conducts an in-depth case study of Turkey's intervention in Libya, analysing various dimensions such as political, economic, diplomatic efforts, military strategies, regional alliances, and outcomes. Using gather data through interviews, document analysis, and media sources among other things.

### **4.2. Study's Area:**

**Turkey** is a transcontinental country located mostly on the Anatolian Peninsula in western Asia, and a more minor part on the Balkan Peninsula in south eastern Europe. Eastern Thrace, the European part of Turkey, is separated from Anatolia by the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits. Istanbul, which straddles Europe and Asia, is the country's largest city, while Ankara is the capital (Howard,2016).

**Libya:** It is an Arab country located in North Africa, bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, Egypt to the east, Sudan to the southeast, Chad and Niger to the south, and Algeria and Tunisia to the west. With an area of approximately 1.8 million square kilometres (700,000 square miles), Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa and the 17th largest country in the world (Dunne & Gifkins,2011).

## **5. Study Topics: Assumptions and Perceptions from an Analytical Perspective:**

### **5.1. The nature and the determinants of Turkey's toward Libya:**

Since the uprisings of the so-called "Arab Spring," Libya has witnessed conclusive transformations in its contemporary history because of structural changes to its ruling political system engendered by international perceptions of the state of

security based on offensive strategies, whose declared objective was to combat terrorism. The result was a series of wars and crises that created countless humanitarian and environmental catastrophes. Moreover, since 2011, Libya entered a crisis caused by regional powers that succeeded in exploiting its state of weakness, the shrinking of state authorities, the loss of the pillars of its sovereignty, and the disruption of its institutions. Let alone the state of "no-state" that extended from 2011 to 2020.

Moreover, several expansion projects grew in Libya, provoking further crises, leading to the turmoil that has consequently nurtured several armed organizations that have resorted to violence as a means of confronting their opponents militarily as a method imposed by the reality of the negotiations that take place from time to time, to satisfy projects that are empirical and expansionist in doctrine and behaviour (Mohiuddin, 2016). This is the reality of the situation in Libya; a country that witnessed several interventions, the last of which was Turkish, relying on the objectives set by the Justice and Development Party in its political program vis-à-vis the Arab region since its rise to power in 2002, and the consequent developments that made Turkey develop a promising regional project towards the region.

### **Historical determinants:**

Ottoman rule expanded to include some North-African countries (Libya, Tunisia, and Algeria) from 1551 until the French and Italian occupation. Throughout this period, militants and administrators were dispatched to the region in addition to several Ottoman families who settled there, and gradually, a Turkish-Balkan community was formed in the region. Libya, like many North-African countries (Algeria and Tunisia), enjoyed many advantages; in 1571, for example, the Ottomans invaded Libya entirely and defeated the Knights of Malta. This invasion resulted in Libya's introduction to political, administrative, cultural, military, and artistic influences that carried it into a new historical framework known as the first Ottoman period, extending through the years 1551-1711, with 41 governors succeeding to rule, most of whom took power for only a short period. Some were either incapable or abstinent; others were simply interested in financial gains (Ismail, 1966).

After 1711, Libya underwent fundamental changes in its political structure, especially after the weakening of the Ottomans. During the era of the Karamanlis, Libya became almost entirely independent from the Ottoman Empire. Ahmed Karamanli, commander of the cavalry, established his dynasty in 1835. These events that took place in the region during that epoch had a significant impact on the social, political, and cultural atmosphere of the countries in that region (Al Balushi, 2006).

Afterward, thirty-two governors followed in succession throughout the years 1835-1911, the period that was known as the Second Ottoman period, during which the Ottomans were able to exercise direct control over Libya. Furthermore, in an attempt for the Ottoman government to prove effective, a Pasha (wali) was appointed for no less than four years; the Central Ottoman administration in the Empire's capital witnessed some administrative reforms that consequently affected the Ottoman provinces. Therefore, the Ottoman government determined the duties and the degree of independence of governors to increase the tightening of direct control over the provinces at that time (Al-Marzouki, 1978).

The Ottoman Empire afterward witnessed a major setback as a result of its defeat in World War I, during which Italy invaded Libya and then occupied it in 1911. This occupation was not a spur-of-the-moment idea; it was a colonialist project that fell within a unified European strategy linked to mutual political, military, and economic interests in the Mediterranean and the Arab East (Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, and Russia). This strategy became apparent during the international conferences held among these countries since the mid-nineteenth century and continued later. The most important of these conferences was the Congress of Paris (1856) and the Congress of Berlin (1878). Some alliances emerged from these conferences, such as the Alliance of the Triple Entente (Britain, France, and Russia) in 1907 (Mohammad, 2010).

Thus, Italy imposed its will on the Ottoman Empire, obliging it to renounce Libya following the Treaty of Lausanne of 1912. Moreover, following the end of World War I, the founder of modern Turkey and its historical leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, was able to establish a modern political system in 1923 according to the foundations and principles of the secular

model, where he was successfully able to develop the form of this regime in modern Turkey, after having faced internal challenges that formed the political problem, that has been imposing itself on the Turkish presence, which reflected on the political life in Turkey that was reaching a dead-end by 1980, prompting the military institution to control the levers of power in Turkey, thus, the successive governments were soon in the hands of the Neo-Ottoman leaders from the Development and Justice Party in 2002.

### **Political determinants:**

The political system, led by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) from the Turkish geopolitical system, characterized by the multiplicity of its neighboring sub-regional systems, has benefited in the development of an effective foreign policy, as the Turkish intervention and direct geographical link with the West through the European gate and its unique geostrategic position contributed to the diversity of regional aspirations of the consecutive governments formed by the AKP, prompting them to engage in these aspirations vigorously and exponentially since its accession to power in 2002, since Turkey is a believer in the principle that its relationship with a specific country should not compromise its relationship with other countries, the same applies for its relationship with certain regions. Therefore, under the leadership of the AKP, Turkey has made tremendous efforts to reform its relations with its neighbors in the Middle East due not only to its prominent role in this vital region but also because it shares historical and religious connections with the Arab region, by virtue of civilization and common history during the rule of the Ottoman Empire in the region, which lasted for four centuries (Vila, 2023)

Looking at the Turkish intervention in Libya, one cannot simply believe that it is disconnected from the old Arab-Turkish conflicts, even though these conflicts are no longer on the agenda of international and regional conferences, nor collective and bilateral meetings, where the Kemalist principles approved the form of peace that Turkey seeks internally and externally, contrary to what was reported by the Turkish political system led by the AKP which succeeded to power in 2002, in light of the theory of the strategic depth, established by Ahmet Davutoglu (Al-Ghazawi, 2019).

Libya was not far from the orientations of the Turkish political system when tendencies to dismantle the state appeared in Libya after the revolution of 17/2/2011, as it dealt with these tendencies not as a direct response to the state of injustice, marginalization and oppression of the three central regions of the state (Tripoli, Cyrenaica, Fezzan) during the rule of former President Muammar Gaddafi, but rather by looking at it as a dilemma of a state whose geographical, economic and social structure since independence tends to disintegrate, a state that is decentralized in its authority rather than unified (Ali, 2014).

Then, Turkey dealt with the new reality, referred to as the post-fall of the regime of President Muammar Gaddafi, characterized by the growth of the attempts of political divisions and armed conflicts in Libya after the escalation of tribal conflicts along with the emergence of the transitional period, two governments competed for legitimacy and control of the country, and the efforts of the United Nations to unite the parties at war declined. The United Nations supported the Government of National Accord (Wefaq), based in Tripoli in the West, against the interim Libyan government, based in the eastern cities of Al-Bayda and Benghazi.

The deterioration of the situation in Libya in 2014 allowed the country to enter a state of insecurity as a result of the failure of a political solution between the parties to which the affairs of the authority came after the escalation of terrorist operations at the hands of the forces of the so-called Islamic State (ISIS), which had previously achieved a remarkable expansion in some Arab countries (Iraq and Syria), as well as their actual presence in the vast Libyan territory, but this did not last, as ISIS lost control of Sirte in December 2016. In January 2017, when the remaining ISIS forces in Benghazi fled the city, some ISIS-linked fighters remained in areas south of Sirte and Bani Walid (Hassan, 2019).

This was preceded by the AKP government providing support to Muslim Brotherhood movements abroad in 2010 and 2011, as Turkey sought to fund branches of the Muslim Brotherhood, while the efforts of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan focused on compensating for the failure to establish governments linked to the Muslim Brotherhood movement in the East Ankara-based Middle East and North Africa, by expanding the Turkish military presence in Libya, through supporting the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze al-Sarraj in its fight against the Libyan National Army,



which opposes Turkey's intervention in Libya for geopolitical reasons in the region (European Centre, 2020).

Under these circumstances, direct Turkish intervention took place in Libya, where the memorandum of understanding -between Turkey and the Government of National Accord led by Fayeze Al-Sarraj, on security and military cooperation and the demarcation of maritime borders-was signed, and has become the subject of widespread controversy expressed in official positions against successive Turkish interventions in more than one Arab country, as the regime of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is working to strengthen his country's influence in the eastern Mediterranean by supporting an armed political organization that controls the capital, Tripoli, an organization from which the Libyan army seeks to liberate Tripoli in order to restore the Libyan state.

### **Economic determinants:**

The Turkish economy is witnessing a severe downturn, the first in a decade, which prompted the government of the Turkish AKP, headed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to search for solutions to address that downturn. The Turkish intervention in Libya was one of the requirements within those solutions. Therefore, the economic determinant constitutes the main motive in most of Turkey's interventions in the affairs of other countries. Some may understand the motives for Turkey's intervention in Syria or Iraq because of the common borders between these two countries. As for Libya, which is thousands of kilometers away from Turkish territory, it is caused by the ambitions of the Turkish project in the region because Turkey found in its distinguished relations with Libya a vast spectrum, pushing it to seek to harness these relations in supporting its economy that is almost reaching the stage of collapse, enabling the Turkish companies that have been working for decades in Libya to enhance their chances when the oil-rich country was reconstructed.

Economy is one of the most important determinants that prompted the Turkish government to intervene in the Libyan Crisis, and to take the decision to directly intervene through the Turkish President obtaining a mandate from the Turkish Parliament on January 2, 2020 to intervene militarily in Libya for a period of one year, as it possesses critical economic interests in Libya since the rule of President Muammar Gaddafi, that cannot be only described as relations dominated by the economic aspect, as the value of trade exchange before the outbreak of the Libyan Crisis was estimated at 10 billion dollars, and Libya provided investments worth 100 billion dollars for Turkish companies until 2013 with a value of 15 billion dollars in the field of building and construction, and since 2010 the number of projects that have entered into force has reached 160, while the works that reached the delivery stage before the civil war are estimated at 3-4 billion dollars (Al-Rantissi, 2019).

Therefore, Turkey worked to sign an agreement with the government of Fayeze al-Sarraj demarcating the maritime borders between the two parties; making it a starting point and an important economic determinant that gives it a legitimate character in consolidating its presence in the Mediterranean, especially after the European rejection of Turkey's oil exploration operations in the Mediterranean on the Cypriot coasts, which Greece described as geographically preposterous for ignoring the presence of the Greek island of Crete between the two coasts, the Turkish and the Libyan. In addition to the Mediterranean, Turkey aspires to the energy sources in Libya, as well as reconstruction projects and future investments in the Libyan economy, which has reached the stage of collapse (Ayoub, 2020).

Libya has become the third in terms of embracing Turkish projects with about \$30 billion, and this means that the cessation of Turkish investment due to the Libyan Crisis incurred significant losses for Turkish investors, as the value of pending projects for Turkish companies in Libya was estimated at \$19 billion, and their dues at \$1 billion, while insurances amounted to \$1.7 billion. In comparison, the value of damages to equipment and machinery amounted to \$1.3 billion (Ayoub, 2020).

The head of the liquidity committee at the Central Bank of Libya in the Libyan governorate of Al-Bayda revealed in a statement to Al-Arabiya Net on May 20, 2020, that the Libyan Central Bank in Tripoli transferred an amount of \$4 billion from its cash reserves to the Turkish Central Bank as a deposit without obtaining a return on it. The statement indicated that this deposit would increase the foreign currency reserves of the Turkish Central Bank and would have a positive impact on the stability of the exchange rate of the Turkish lira. In addition, this deposit will also guarantee the agreements concluded

between the Turkish side and the Government of National Accord.

As a result, Libya has become a guarantor of Turkish national security and its interests in the eastern Mediterranean. The continuity of the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj in power has become a strategic matter for Turkey to preserve the maritime rights agreement to confront the plans of the eastern Mediterranean countries, and accordingly, the Turkish military intervention was mandatory after the attempt of the Libyan National Army led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar to overthrow the Government of National Accord and enter Tripoli.

### **5.2. The impact of the determinants of Turkish intervention in Libya during 2010-2021:**

The fact that regional systems are affected by developments in other events in the global system cannot be ignored. External interventions in regional systems increase if the regional hierarchical situation contradicts the preferences of the major international powers. Regional systems stabilize if they are compatible with the interests of the dominant global powers and vice versa. This fact indicates that the principle of regional conflicts has involved several significant powers without any escalation in intensity to reach the territories of those powers, and the impact of regional wars has been limited to the distribution of resources and capabilities within them only.

In the Libyan Crisis, it is hardly far from these perceptions due to the state of intervention that Libya experienced in its conflictual affairs after 2011, such as the major countries: France, the United States of America, and Russia, in addition to the Italian interests that spared no effort to interfere in the affairs of one of its most critical old colonies (Lounnas, 2020).

#### **Political Repercussions:**

A significant part of the strategic analyses indicates that the Turkish intervention in Libya has created many crises. It led to a weakening of the institutional capacities in the country and forced most of them to become politically, economically, and militarily dependent, which added fuel to the flames of internal conflicts and their intensities. In that context, all standards point to a waning in the power of the Libyan state and a slowdown in its performance in various domains, and this has been made clear through the indicators revealing the nature of local decline, in addition to the state's exposure to international interventions by various mechanisms that are usually consistent with the weaknesses or inabilities resulting from the Turkish intervention in Libya (Lounnas, 2020).

It is quite clear that the Turkish intervention in Libya, coupled with a set of political and military indicators, has contributed to making Libya among the failed states, based on the fact that the failure of a state in fulfilling its internal and international obligations is what allows the intervention of local actors who receive external support from international parties at the state level, and other actors who acted to negatively influence those obligations; after having taken advantage of the internal conflicts to achieve certain interests. And this can be seen through a set of indicators that emerged as a result of the Turkish intervention in Libya, which created a set of political, military, and security repercussions.

The development of events in Libya following the Turkish intervention unveiled the existence of a large overlap between the soft determinants of value, and the hard intrinsic security determinants in particular, as it was not possible to focus on some of these soft determinants alone due to what the idealistic nature could lead to when analyzing the interventions that took place, also, ignoring the military determinants means moving away from the humanitarian efforts undertaken by the United Nations and other regional parties who sought to contain the conflict, such as the Moroccan and Tunisian efforts to strengthen their roles in order to provide Arab perceptions of the state of collective security and the protection of human rights, by proposing criteria that represent curbing determinants for the decision of external military intervention in the conflict between the parties in Libya (Al-Jabra, Al-Afaishat, & Al-Aras, 2022; Lounnas, 2020).

The resignation of the Prime Minister of Fayeze Al-Sarraj's government and its resumption during the last week of October 2020 can only be considered as one of the local repercussions caused by the Turkish intervention in Libya, and this is because the intervention created a turbulent internal situation and severe external tensions over the Libyan file, and did not set an accurate path to establishing a comprehensive political solution that would end the internal state war and implement the suspended roadmaps (Lounnas, 2020).

Fayez al-Sarraj announced his intention to resign in a speech he addressed to the Libyan and international public opinion, calling upon the Dialogue Committee entrusted with forming the new executive authority under the supervision of the United Nations to choose a new presidential council and cabinet to succeed the two appointed councils in accordance with the decisions of the Skhirat Conference in the Kingdom of Morocco in 2015. Mr. Fayez al-Sarraj pointed out that "the political and social climate witnessed a state of sharp polarization and alignment, rendering all peaceful attempts to prevent bloodshed extremely difficult, moreover, some intransigent parties are still deepening this alignment and are betting on the option of war to achieve their illegitimate goals" (Salama, 2020).

Al-Sarraj's reference to the United Nations comes from being the most prominent international body that supported his government unprecedentedly, qualifying it to be a legitimate party in the negotiations to resolve the Libyan Crisis with the rest of the conflict parties, whose work has embraced several Arab and international countries, but the turbulent Libyan situation did not allow one party in particular to be the only influential actor in the Libyan Crisis that erupted in early 2011.

### **Economic Repercussions:**

The Turkish intervention in Libya represents a new pattern of interventions by external parties in internal conflicts since it is linked to a shift in the nature of the conflict between the two sides of the Libyan Crisis, whose negative effects have increased in the wake of the political division in the country, which granted the Government of National Accord the right to represent the state in the activities supervised by the United Nations, on the other side is the Libyan army led by retired Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, who was able to gain the support of some other international and regional powers, in a way that imposed new roles in which Turkey was no longer the only external party that plays a role in this conflict, whether locally, regionally or internationally, the Turkish intervention in Libya allowed armed actors to set the course of the conflict and direct it (Lund, 2022).

It is obvious that the Libyan Crisis has greatly influenced the decline of Libyan economic growth with the continuous tension and instability in the country and the state of hit and run witnessed through the military confrontations between the Libyan parties after the political division, before and after the Turkish intervention. The export of oil has stopped, and its revenues have receded with the increase of losses and the exacerbation of multiple deficits (the general budget deficit and the balance-of-payments deficit) with the return of the ghost of inflation.

The Turkish intervention has also increased the decline or divergence of development allocations; as a result of the two sides of the Crisis adopting unilateral economic policies that are based on regional foundations between the state's regions and groups, leading to inequality in the distribution of income, and the distribution or even lack of services between one region and another, in addition to the absence of advanced services for all residents, especially in areas that were becoming like informal settlements (Duman, 2020).

Moreover, the Turkish intervention in Libya gave rise to some challenges, such as poverty and the deterioration of the economic conditions of the Libyan people in general, in light of the decline of either government's ability to provide services and to fulfil the needs of citizens as a result of budget deficits, high debt, unemployment, absence of youth employment, the decline in purchasing power, major problems in the balance-of-payments, and the decline in the per capita GDP due to the decline in growth in this outcome (Lund, 2022).

The Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord, Fayez Al-Sarraj, had no choice but to disclose the condition of the economic deterioration in Libya when he announced in a press conference he was holding in February 2020 that his country would face a financial crisis and a budget deficit for 2020, due to the continuation of groups loyal to Khalifa Haftar to close oil facilities, saying: "The continued closure of the oil facilities will lead to a financial crisis and will reduce it to its minimum levels" (Altan, 2020), emphasizing that Libya has lost more than 1.4 billion dollars since the beginning of the closure.

Fayez Al-Sarraj's announcement of this economic deterioration is based on the significant decline in Libya's oil production since the beginning of 2020; when the closures of oil facilities began, the Libyan National Oil Corporation said that crude oil production fell to 163,684 thousand barrels per day, while production before the 2011 revolution was about 1.6 million barrels per day.

### **Social Repercussions:**

The rejection of most of the Libyans for the Turkish intervention in their country was not based on misconceptions about the huge social repercussions that this intervention could have. Most of the popular communities predicted that such an intervention would worsen the intensity of internal conflicts, perpetuate political division, push the country into civil war, and pave the way for the chaos of direct interventions from other international parties, and this is what happened after the Wefaq government requested military assistance from the United States, Britain, Italy, and Algeria; in order to defend Tripoli, confront organized crime, and illegal immigration.

On the other hand, the battles in Libya between the forces of the Government of National Accord, backed by Turkey, and the forces of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, backed by other international and regional parties, had social repercussions that resulted in negative consequences affecting various situations in the country. These repercussions exceeded those left by the battles that accompanied the so-called Arab revolutions at the beginning of 2011 that led to the fall of the regime of President Muammar Gaddafi after the intervention of NATO forces led by France, or even those that erupted between the Libyan parties following the conflict fuelled by external parties, especially the fighting that has erupted in eastern Libya since May 2014, resulting in the displacement of thousands of civilians from Benghazi and Ajdabiya, who sought shelter in the east of the country. The forces of the Libyan national army accused these displaced persons of terrorism and thus detained them, then attacked, burnt, or stole their houses (Kersten, 2016).

These battles had catastrophic effects on the population, as dozens of displaced people from Benghazi were arrested in Misrata and Tripoli-based on dubious allegations linked to terrorism, while the deteriorating living conditions of these displaced people continued, pushing large numbers of them to consider emigration, and in particular, to a number of European countries. Although the number of migrants and asylum seekers who crossed Libya on their way to Europe decreased significantly during 2020 compared to 2017, the number of those who died trying to reach Europe via the so-called Central Mediterranean route rose, and those who ended up being detained in Libya were subject to ill-treatment and inhumane conditions by guards in official detention centers run by one of the two rival governments, and in unofficial places of detention controlled by militias or traffickers and smugglers.

Unaccountable militias continued to feud in different parts of the country, while efforts to reconcile the main parties in the east and West were unsuccessful. Some of these militias were linked to the ministry of interior and defence in the "Government of National Accord" back by the United Nations. Other militias are linked to the "Libyan National Army" of the competing transitional government. In southern Libya, the Tebu and Tuareg tribes and the Arab armed groups continued to fight for control of land and resources.

### **5.3. The repercussions of the Turkish intervention in Libya during 2010-2021 at the bilateral, regional and international levels:**

The past Arab-Turkish disputes no longer had any resonance or influence in the course of bilateral relations between Turkey and the Arab countries, which has been scorched by its presence in the Arab world. Despite this, controversy often arises regarding the evaluation of this presence. Viewing the Turkish intervention as conquest and not an occupation can change local, regional, and international attitudes. This gives researchers in this intervention a broad scope to develop the appropriate description, especially since the local position in Libya and the regional positions in the Arab world and its surroundings varied in view of this intervention, not to mention the international positions that almost unanimously refute it (Lunad, 2022).

Accordingly, the nature of the relations between Turkey and the parties whose position on the intervention is to be studied is the main criterion that determines the proximity or distance of this intervention from being considered as an "occupation," especially the countries that have normal relations with Turkey, unmarred by political differences, while the description would be different at the time of political crises between both sides, so that the description of the occupation is strongly present, turned into an issue of public opinion by the local, Arab and international media.

### **Regional Positions:**

Clarifying the regional position towards the Turkish intervention in the Crisis of the conflicting forces in the Libyan scene does not require strenuous efforts to dismantle, in order to know the secrets of those forces, their connections, and their references, because they came in line with the repercussions of the Qatar-Gulf crisis; the Saudi-Egyptian-Emirati alliance stands by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, who had previously met Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz before launching his attack on the western region of Libyan territory. In return, the Turkish President did not hesitate to declare his support for the Fayez al-Sarraj government and its affiliated forces, providing them with all means of support at a time when Iran provided a ship loaded with weapons and ammunition to the Tripoli and Misurata forces (Al-Raddad, 2019).

As for the Egyptian position on the Turkish intervention in Libya, it visibly constituted a firm and clear expression of rejection for the Turkish trends in the Arab North African countries, which are embodied by the Turkish behaviour and its position on the Crisis between the Libyan parties. This was explicitly declared by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Sisi, in reference to the Turkish interventions on the western borders of his country, when he pointed out that these interventions no longer represent a significant development in the course of the Libyan conflict but that they constitute a turning point in the regional confrontation with the Turkish-Qatari Brotherhood axis imposed by Turkey's attempt to besiege Egypt from its western borders, and that Egypt's experience with groups affiliated with the Turkish-Qatari axis, which controlled eastern Libya, made his country uncomfortable with the increasing Turkish military support for what he called "Al Wefaq militias," of which the "Brotherhood" organization constitutes the vast majority, and that it includes in its ranks the elements of movements that emerged from "Al-Qaeda," taking active roles in the North African Arab.

The changes in the situation in North Africa indicate that the Arab Maghreb countries, which were united by the past in the Arab Maghreb Union, were unable to reach a clear, unified position regarding what is happening in Libya and that their foreign policies are affected by multiple regional factors, represented obstacles to the direct Turkish intervention in Libya and its tendencies to turn this country into a pure sphere of influence, and this is rejected by international actors and influencers in the situation inside Libya, which has created serious security problems.

Tunisian President QaisBin Said expressed his country's position on the Turkish intervention in Libya by saying: "The reference of his country regarding what is happening in Libya is the law, not the buzzing of planes" (Al-Salman, 2020), and this phrase seemed to be directed at the Libyan leader Khalifa Haftar, and the interpretation of this is the existence of an effective Tunisian-Turkish alliance that builds upon the strength of the relationship that unites the Tunisian Ennahda movement, as it represents one of the wings of the Muslim Brotherhood movement led by the Turkish AKP. Nevertheless, despite this, many political changes took place in the political life in Tunisia that stopped the Ennahda movement from enjoying a freedom of movement towards the Turkish brotherhood leaders, and the Tunisian President retorted by saying that international legitimacy is the reference and that we must move to Libyan legitimacy (Azzam, 2020).

While ambiguity prevailed over the Algerian position regarding the Libyan Crisis due to the different nature of the relationship that the political system maintains in Algeria with the parties in Libya, especially when Turkish and Libyan parties pushed their media wings to promote "strange" news that calls for a response from Algeria, when Turkey urged Algeria to sign a joint defense agreement with the government of Fayez Al-Sarraj, with the aim of providing it with support from the West in its battle against the forces of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar. In that context, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a phone call with Algerian President AbdelmadjidTebboune on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr in 2020, during which Algeria said that an agreement had been made to intensify efforts to impose a ceasefire in Libya, as an introduction to facilitating a political solution between the two combating Libyan parties, and based on the foundations of respecting the legitimacy that guarantees Libya's sovereignty and unity, while the Turkish President did not mention this and explained that its President discussed with his Algerian counterpart bilateral relations and regional issues, and exchanged good wishes on Eid (Yahi, 2020).

### **International Positions:**

International positions vis-à-vis the Turkish intervention in Libya, in particular the positions of the United States of

America, Europe, and Russia, serve to clarify the image of this intervention towards the events in Libya, i.e., the war between the forces of the Libyan National Army, led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, against forces with an Islamic reference that managed to gain a foothold in the western region of Libya represented by the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj. These positions raise a number of questions about the reality of the events in Libya, as they do not stop at the nature of the warring forces, the reality of their references and supporters but rather go beyond them to reach the nature and contexts of international support for the parties of the Libyan Crisis, and by comparing this support with the events in Syria, or the extent of compatibility with the approach that the Syrian regime is fighting “terrorist” organizations (Al-Raddad, 2019).

### **1. The French position:**

The Turkish intervention in Libya comes to reveal the reality of the increasing Turkish ambitions to control Libya's resources and its strategic location, thus becoming the most prominent factor in pushing international powers to move at an accelerated pace in order to confront it and its consequences that are moving in a direction different from international interests, among them the interests of France, which found that this intervention contradicts its perceptions of the region. Therefore, France has become one of the most prominent European countries to welcome Cairo's initiative to resolve the Libyan Crisis, which stipulates a ceasefire and a return to the political process. This initiative is rejected by Turkey and the Government of National Accord, with the US State Department backing this rejection.

France had previously been the first to intervene in Libya in 2011 to overthrow the regime of President Muammar Gaddafi, which can be explained by seeking to get rid of a regime that competes with it in Africa and hinders its interests in Libya, especially after the annulment of the gas exploration deal in the Nalut Basin. Therefore, France's criticism of Turkey was justified by Turkey's sending mercenaries and weapons to Libya, siding entirely with Cyprus and Greece in rejecting the maritime border demarcation agreement between Turkey and the Tripoli government (the Government of National Accord), despite the Libyan authorities' attempts to lure Paris into gas exploration contracts for the company Total in the disputed area (Kibli, 2020).

In addition, France did not hide that the Turkish position could not be separated from the struggle for power in Libya by adopting military force between the internationally recognized Government of National Accord and the Government of Tobruk, which is contested by the authority, represented by the Libyan army led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, and Turkey's intervention militarily to support The Government of National Accord on the developments on the economic scene in the eastern Mediterranean, especially after the discovery of gas fields in the Mediterranean, as well as the rest of the countries that intervened in Libya and toppled the Gaddafi regime, along with France, especially since Turkey has benefited from huge investments in Libya during the last years of Gaddafi's rule. And this was a strong indication of shaking the interests of major countries, most notably what France's position in investing was exposed to, not only in Libya; but, rather, in all of Africa, especially in the CFA franc (Kibli, 2020). In light of this, the French position vis-à-vis the Turkish intervention in Libya received Arab support from several countries, led by the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Since 2014, France has supported the Libyan army led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar in its war against other groups, and on more than one occasion, it responded to efforts to issue a European decision to condemn the army or its commander.

### **2. The Russian Position:**

On the Russian side, the Libyan Crisis gained a political interest of great value to Russian decision-makers in addition to its economic dimension. Dmitry Medvedev, who was President of the Russian Federation at the start of the Crisis, refused to use the Russian veto when voting on Resolution 1973 of 2011 in the Security Council, which paved the way for the NATO forces for military intervention in Libya. Thus, the Russian position gradually escalated until the Libyan Crisis became among the controversial topics that Russia took to dealing with after the successive defeats suffered by Khalifa Haftar's forces in Libya during May 2020 and the unprecedented strikes against the Russian assault and defensive weapons systems performed by the Turkish drones, and amid unclear political and military movements after speculation increased

about whether the Russian position on the Libyan Crisis is heading towards supporting a peaceful solution or direct military intervention, similar to what has been happening in Syria for years, increasing the risk of direct conflict with Turkey there (Lshetiar, 2019).

Despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's repeated denials that his country officially supports Khalifa Haftar's forces in Libya, dozens of pieces of evidence confirmed that Haftar's forces received advanced Russian weapons, most notably the Pantsir defense system and electronic jamming systems, in addition to proving the presence of nearly 2,000 Wagner mercenaries in Libya. And there is talk of Russia's supervision of sending Syrian mercenaries to fight alongside General Khalifa Haftar's forces, in addition to this general's political support and defense in the face of international resolutions in the UN Security Council (Jamal, 2020).

In light of the security and political chaos in the Libyan arena, talk about the American position remains reluctant, especially after the field and military transformations that Libya witnessed in the wake of the National Accord Government's recovery of vast areas of land controlled by the forces of General Khalifa Haftar. The American position in this regional competition taking place in one of the most heated and important arenas remains unclear, as it is satisfied with the role of observer, in contrast to the growing Turkish military role that threatens American interests, according to military and strategic reports, as it also affects vital targets of other regional and international partners, through the Turkish President's attempt to exercise influence to gain the riches of the eastern Mediterranean (Shafiq, 2020).

### **3. The American Position:**

The US President Donald Trump's administration did not object to the Turkish intervention in Libya because the American side felt that Turkey's achievement of satisfactory results would lead to a negative impact on Russian ambitions in this oil-rich country, which during the years of President Muammar Gaddafi had close relations with Russia (Al-Hanahneh, 2023). Therefore, the US foreign policy towards the Libyan Crisis was characterized by disclaiming responsibility, and contradictory messages were sent in terms of support for the government of Libyan Prime Minister Fayeze Al-Sarraj, and then President Donald Trump made a phone call to Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar (Lund, 2022).

It seems that Turkey was able to read the impact of the US presidential elections 2020 on the Libyan Crisis through the re-emergence of the element of fighting the Russian expansion in the region again, which serves to support the Turkish military expansion in Libya, but under the terms and conditions of the US and not in the absolute, as the US Forces Command in Africa declared its rejection of the Russian military presence in Libya, and through President Donald Trump's policy not to involve the US army in the conflicts of the Eastern Mediterranean, the best option would require controlling the movements of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and any potential way for Russian intervention, by supporting the Turkish military presence in Libya in order to create a military balance on the ground, that will eventually lead to the start of serious political negotiations (Lund, 2022).

The United States of America played the role of a secret and unofficial mediator between Turkey and Egypt in order to reach a compromise in the Libyan Crisis that would prevent a direct military clash between the two countries in Libya, as the outbreak of a direct military confrontation between its two allies, Egypt and Turkey, would open the way for wider intervention from Russia, or even Moscow's support for the Libyan National Army, which the Americans refuse. But the US mediation is still confronted with the ideological position of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan towards recognizing the regime of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and his position on the Muslim Brotherhood, which Erdogan refuses to classify as a terrorist organization. While the Libyan oil issue is currently considered one of the most important issues because depriving the Libyan Government of National Accord, headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj, of oil revenues means increasing the cost of military action on Turkey, which is currently selling Libyan oil secretly through its banks, in order to strengthen the value of the Turkish lira and get pay off weapons and salaries of fighters from the Government of National Accord (Lund, 2022).

### Conclusion and Finding:

The study answered its research questions adopted based on the research problem. In addition, the study tested the hypothesis and achieve its aims as well. The study shows that the border demarcation agreement between Turkey and the Libyan Government of National Accord, headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj, represents an entry point to the Turkish military intervention in Libya, and the military presence in Libya includes many of the expansionist ambitions of the neo-Ottomans in North Africa. But, apart from that, Turkey's support for the Fayeze al-Sarraj government did not carry expansion motives, and economic benefits only but rather sought to protect and spread the Muslim Brotherhood project again in the countries of the region.

Another key result is that Turkey has found that the delay in implementing its intervention in Libya meant losing its investment in the resource-rich country. Despite the Libyan situation, Libyan-Turkish trade is still active, as Turkey's exports to Libya amount to about \$2 billion annually, and imports are \$350 million. According to reports issued by specialized Turkish economic organizations, which indicate that in light of the suspension of projects in Libya, the value of delaying Turkish contracted works in Libya amounts to 16 billion dollars, including an amount ranging between 400-500 million dollars for projects that have not yet begun, and to compensate for these losses and obtain investments, the Turkish ambitions returned to lay their hands on the money and resources of Libya, even if this was at the expense of regional and local security and stability. Therefore, the Turkish decision-maker had no choice but to put in place the necessary plans to give the internal determinants into account as a necessary condition to enable its intervention in Libya only with the availability of the auxiliary determinants, which remain categorized between soft ideological, political, legal, and challenging economic and military determinants.

The findings also indicate that Turkey implemented its intervention in Libya by providing direct assistance to the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze Al-Sarraj to confront the forces of the Libyan army that fought under the command of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and by providing logistical and military support, which played an essential role in the Government of National Accord's achieving many gains. Furthermore, Turkey has intervened in Libya through a direct and undeclared approach, through forces of Syrian and Tunisian mercenaries. Besides, it is found that Libya has become a guarantor of Turkish national security and interests in the Middle East, and the eastern Mediterranean in particular, and the continuity of the Government of National Accord headed by Fayeze al-Sarraj in power has become a strategic matter for Turkey in order to preserve the maritime rights agreement; to confront the plans of the Eastern Mediterranean countries, therefore, the Turkish military intervention was mandatory after the attempt of the Libyan National Army led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar to overthrow the Government of National Accord and enter Tripoli.

Additionally, results reveal that the Turkish intervention led to the weakening of the European, especially the French, role in the Libyan Crisis, as well as the countries that supported the French position on the Crisis, particularly the Arab Emirates. Likewise, the Turkish intervention in the regional strategic axis takes two features. The first is to achieve influence on the Mediterranean Sea and influence in the Libyan interior. As for the Mediterranean, it is essential to mention the specific issue of the island of Crete, whose existence was ignored by the border demarcation agreement, and this is an issue that must be raised in the context of its determinants.

- Addressing the second axis, the Libyan arena: The Egyptian-Turkish dispute intensified when the Wafaq forces began to advance towards Sirte, Al-Jufra, and the Egyptian President threatened to mark it as a "red line," and the matter came to an escalation with the military threat.
- Addressing the African depth and the importance of having an arena that enables Turkey to support its armed groups in unstable African countries.
- Addressing the importance of military intervention in the battle of Tripoli, as it was a qualitative shift in the balance of power as a result of the Turkish intervention.



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