

Libya Faces Heightened Threats of Renewed Western Intervention

Aerial bombardments prompt the closure of the border with Tunisia

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Recent reports related to Libya claim that Islamic State (IS) camps have been set up in the North African state, a country in chaos since the United States-NATO led bombing and ground war of regime in 2011 resulting in the ousting of the Gaddafi government and the destruction of Africa's once most prosperous and stable state.

At present there are two identifiable centers of neo-colonial power in Libya with the Islamic oriented government based in Tripoli and the other more secular regime headed by Prime Minister Abdullah Al-Thani which has been driven out of the capital and is meeting in a hotel in the eastern city of Tobruk. The ongoing divisions and internecine conflict in Libya has impacted the production and export of oil, the country's largest foreign exchange earner.

In a recent statement by U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) leader Gen. David Rodriguez, IS has established training camps which house approximately 200 fighters. He indicated at present that the alleged bases have not engaged in military operations.

"It's mainly about people coming for training and logistics support right now," Gen. Rodriguez emphasized. "As far as a huge command and control network, we have not seen that yet."

Over the last six years the presence of U.S. military and intelligence personnel has substantially increased. The military destruction of Libya was the first full-scale offensive operation on the continent coordinated by AFRICOM and it was conducted under the current administration of President Barack Obama.

Now with the mention of such an allegation related to IS on an official Pentagon level could very well be signaling a renewed aggressive military posture towards developments in Libya by the White House. Obama announced nearly two years ago after his re-election for a second term that 3,500 additional Pentagon troops would be deployed in 35 African states.

Another report published by the Australian on Dec. 6 said of the situation involving U.S. policy towards Libya that

"The U.S. is plotting to expand its military campaign to Libya after fighters loyal to Islamic State were seen training in the east of the country. A U.S. commander has acknowledged that discussions are under way in Washington about broadening the anti-Islamic State campaign to Libya." (Australian.com)

This same article continued saying that Gen. Rodriguez when “Asked whether consideration was being given to targeting the militants there, he replied ‘That policy discussion is ongoing and we’ll see how that goes.’”

IS Being Used to Escalate Imperialist War in Middle East and North Africa

The United States, its NATO allies and their surrogates in the Persian Gulf have escalated tensions in Syria and Iraq through bombing operations against the Islamic State (IS). Even though the U.S., Britain, France, Turkey and other allied regimes have been supporting armed opposition groups in efforts to overthrow the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad, these rebel organizations have remained divided and incapable of achieving their strategic objectives in Syria and Lebanon.

Earlier in 2014, the IS seized large swaths of territory in northern Iraq taking control of some oil fields and other key assets of the Iraqi government which was largely set up by the U.S. With the resumption of Pentagon and NATO led air strikes against alleged IS bases in Iraq and the Pentagon operations against purported IS bases in Syria on the border with Turkey, hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) have sought assistance from the United Nations and other relief agencies.

Libya is facing the worse crisis since it gained independence from Italy in 1951. Since the overthrow of the Jamahiriya under Col. Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the country has been a major source of IDP and refugee problems in the region. Such an atmosphere is not conducive to economic development and social reconstruction.

Aerial bombardments by the US-allied regimes in Egypt and UAE supplemented by its local surrogates will not serve to stabilize Libya and the region of North Africa. If the U.S. administration decides to resume air strikes inside the country the anti-Washington sentiment will accelerate among the population.

A recent bombing during early Dec. on the border with Tunisia allegedly coordinated by longtime Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative and renegade general under Gaddafi, Khalifa Heftar, prompted the closure of the border between the two neighbors.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Mongi Hamdi told Asharq al-Awsat news agency that

“Tunisian military and security forces have been placed on high alert along our borders with Libya. The Tunisian government is closely monitoring what is happening in Libya and does not want to become a party to the internal conflict [in Libya].” (Dec. 6)

The actual history of imperialist intervention in Libya since 2011 has brought only disaster to the country and other people throughout the region. Any solution to the crisis in Libya and the North Africa region must be found within these states absent of western interference which is at the root of the current crisis of underdevelopment and destabilization.

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