

Libya: If democracy is the keyword used to justify the destruction of human lives and property, then God help us all!

Ghana Joins Nigeria and Does Obeisance To NATO

By [Global Research](#)

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After what recently happened in Libya, one is apt to wonder what democracy really stands for. If democracy is the keyword used to justify the destruction of human lives and property, then God help us all!

Yes, the NATO-aided NTC rebels have apparently managed to do away with Muammar Gaddafi, and Ghana, among other African countries has, after a little hesitation, decided to do obeisance to the western powers by recognizing these anti-Gaddafi miscreants.

The question now remains: does a post-Gaddafi Libya hope to become a land of milk and honey? Believe me, that would be a very tall order because actually, whether you like Gaddafi or not, Libya, by all appreciable standards, had the highest standard of living in Africa, under Gaddafi.

If western-style democracy was a yardstick for determining developmental success, Ghana, Nigeria and other countries in Africa would not be in their present predicaments. Let's take a look at some of the comforts and benefits Libyans enjoyed under Gaddafi and draw our own conclusions.

When Gaddafi took over, Libyans had an average annual income of about \$60. His government brought Libya from poverty and debt to prosperity and debt-free status. Education from the kindergarten stage through college was free. Health care was free as well. Under Gaddafi's oil-revenue-sharing program, each Libyan had \$500 (five hundred US dollars) deposited into his or her bank account each month. After marriage, each couple was given as much as \$60,000 (sixty thousand US dollars) to spend. Libya gave free land and seeds to anyone who wanted to take up farming as an occupation.

Water and electricity were free in Libya. Petrol/fuel was sold at 75 cents a gallon under Gaddafi. There was virtually no homelessness as everyone was given a home. Undernourishment in Libya under Gaddafi was as low as 2% - a figure lower than that of the world center of "democracy," the USA. For any medical care or health treatments that were unavailable in Libya, the Libyan citizen's full expenses for travel, treatment and accommodation to wherever was required for treatment were borne by the Libyan government. Before Gaddafi, literacy in Libya was only 10%. Under Gaddafi's leadership, literacy has risen to over 80%. Unlike some Arab states, women in Libya under Gaddafi had

equal rights; not only as a philosophy, but in practice.

Libyans had a direct participatory democracy based on people's conferences. The Gaddafi regime invested billions to bring freshwater from southern Libya's desert to coastal areas like Tripoli and Benghazi. This man-made river is a worldwide acclaimed achievement that stands as a testimony to Gaddafi's huge contribution to the economic development of Libya. Folks, note that this project which cost Libya about \$35 billion (US dollars) was exclusively financed by Libya's Central Bank without borrowing a cent from abroad.

So, if these eye-popping achievements are not enough, then what exactly is the NATO agenda? What are they bringing to Libya that is better than what Gaddafi achieved? I sympathize with Libyans - and why not? In the name of western-style "democracy," a hitherto affluent African nation has decided to take a dangerous u-turn and thus join the large group of third world countries in Africa.

The western propaganda machine is so deadly that they pick-and-choose what to report to the outside world with regards to the situation in Libya. Whatever event goes against their interests and machinations is not reported. How can NATO bomb roads, ports, buildings and oil fields' equipment and yet claim to be assisting in a just cause? It's about democracy, they contend; and some of us have ignorantly bought into that nonsense! If this maze of confusion and corruption in Ghana is what democracy is about, I'd rather take a Gaddafi-type system any day. Ultimately, life is about the search for the best means of achieving improved and quality lifestyles. Did Gaddafi fail Libyans in that regard?

For NATO, it's been a job "well executed." They have managed once again to bring a strong and thriving economy to its knees. Even as these ignorant rebels chant and wave flags, they are yet to come to grips with reality; they do not realize that they are now in the full clutches of the west - they have now become YES-MEN; and would listen to and obey their NATO masters. As Ghanaians and Africans, we must honestly ask ourselves whether our so-called leaders have what it takes to stand up to the west when it comes to issues that are not in our interest. The usual "uncle Tom" attitude exhibited by our leaders does not bode well for the African continent. What is the essence of the AU if our leaders cannot take an emphatic stand and come to the aid of one of their own in times of need? A bunch of "uncle Toms," that's what they are!

Ghanaian and African leaders had better wake up and get their acts together! If the Libyan situation has nor served as an eye-opener to our recalcitrant and NATO-serving leaders, I don't know what will. God bless mother Ghana!

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