

# Pro-U.S. Candidate Slated to Win Sham Elections in Libya

By [Abayomi Azikiwe](#)

Global Research, July 11, 2012

[Libya 360°](#) 11 July 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)  
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Corporate media outlets based in the United States and Europe have already proclaimed the western-backed party of Mahmoud Elwarfally Jibril, the National Forces Alliance, as the winner of the first post-Jamahiriya elections. Jibril, who was educated in the U.S. at the University of Pittsburgh, will undoubtedly uphold the current policies of the National Transitional Council (NTC) which was installed by the Pentagon and NATO during August-October 2011.

Although Jibril served as a previous minister in the Col. Muammar Gaddafi government, he was one of the earlier defectors from the loyalists during the U.S.-supported and financed uprising last year. He played a significant role in serving as a public face to the rebel NTC which was utilized by the Obama administration to justify the bombing and forced removal of the internationally-recognized government of Gaddafi.

Jibril had been forced out as the interim prime minister of the NTC earlier this year in a factional dispute. Although final results would not be available in regard to the elections until several days later, the imperialists have welcomed Jibril as the new "leader" of Libya.

The U.S.-backed operative told the international media that "We extend an invitation, continued as before, to other political forces to come together in one coalition under one banner. This is a sincere call for all political parties to come together. There are no extremists." (Guardian, UK, July 9)

*Yet the only political program enunciated by the NTC rebel regime is a firm alliance with the imperialist states and the suppression of the loyalist forces that are still supportive of the Jamahiriya government of the martyred [Muammar Gaddafi](#). [The NTC was put in power through a massive bombing campaign, naval blockade and economic sanctions against the previous government.](#)*

The elections held on July 7 represent a continuation of the same process of regime-change aimed at bringing Libya fully into the fold of western domination. Jibril, hailed as a moderate, advances no political ideas independent of Washington and London.

Despite the claims that the elections represented a major development in the history of this North African state, the actual turn out at the polls were low. Even in Tripoli, the capital, many stayed away as a result of the threats of violence, the lack of information on the candidates involved and the rejection of the process which seemed alien to people inside the country.

The NTC government said that the participation rate was 60 percent. Yet it did

not appear that this was the case from the media reports issued by correspondents in Tripoli and other cities.

Even if the rebel regime's figures are taken at face value, it would still indicate that 40 percent of the people rejected the polls which will bring into question the legitimacy of the outcome. Libya had not had a political party system since 1952 under the monarchy where election violence resulted in the banning of parties.

Under the Jamahiriya, the system was based on direct democracy through people's committees.

Reflecting the problems associated with the newly-imposed system under the NTC, most candidates were designated as "independent" although the pro-U.S. party of Jibril was anointed the victors.

What is never mentioned by the corporate media in the entire election process is that the supporters of the Jamahiriya were excluded from participating in the elections. All former officials who remained loyal to the Gaddafi government were banned from running and therefore the outcome was skewed in favor of the imperialist-backed parties and candidates.

[Seif al-Islam, the son of Muammar Gaddafi and his heir apparent, was denied the right to participate in the elections.](#) Seif is currently being held by the Zintan militia which operates outside the authority of the NTC rebel regime based in Tripoli.

Thousands of supporters of the Gaddafi government remain imprisoned and exiled.

The former Prime Minister [Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi](#) was recently extradited from Tunisia as is being held by the NTC rebels in Tripoli.

When members of the International Criminal Court (ICC) visited [Seif al-Islam](#) several weeks ago, they were arrested and held for over a month until the imperialist states applied pressure for their release. Although the ICC assisted along with the United Nations Security Council in providing a pseudo-legal rationale for the war against Libya, [its personnel were put on notice to not interfere in the broader imperialist designs for this oil-rich nation of seven million people.](#)

### **Regional Division Reinforced by Elections**

The events leading up to and during the elections illustrated clearly the political chaos that has defined Libya since the overthrow of the previous government. The eastern region of the country was the scene of attacks on election offices where ballot boxes were trashed and voting materials were burned.

Several officials in the electoral commission were killed and injured in attacks. The eastern region of the country was given a lower disproportionate number of representatives than the West, who will be seated in the so-called "National General Congress." Some elements within the east of the country have been calling for autonomy from the western region where the capital Tripoli is located.

In the south of the country, factional fighting over the last few months has created a serious security situation. In Kufra fighting between indigenous Africans and Arabized ethnic groups prevented the delivery of ballot boxes in many areas.

The South was given the least amount of representation in the new parliament. These developments will only exacerbate the existing divisions in the country which resurfaced during the anti-Gaddafi rebellion of 2011.

Overall it was reported that more than 100 voting stations were unable to stage elections on July 7. The following day the NTC government said that some of these facilities were opened but these claims remain unconfirmed.

## **Lessons for Syria and Iran**

Developments in Libya over the last seventeen months point to the imperialist designs for Africa and the Middle East. The toppling of independent governments, the privatization of national wealth and the imposition of puppet leaders who will follow the dictates of the U.S. and NATO countries, is the course of action set out by the capitalist ruling classes in the West.

In Syria a similar scenario is unfolding. The legitimacy of the government of President Bashar al-Assad is denied by the imperialist states and their allies leaving open the potential of direct military intervention.

The rebel Syrian National Army and other armed elements are financed, equipped, given political cover and coordinated by the U.S. and other allied regimes. Sanctions are imposed, as was done in Libya, in order to stifle the country economically in an effort to turn people away from the legitimate government.

Efforts aimed at removing the government of Syria will open a broader path toward the same program for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran has been under tremendous pressure from the U.S. and Israel through sanctions, corporate media vilifications, the targeted assassinations of scientists and military intimidation tactics in the Persian Gulf.

Consequently, the anti-war movement in the U.S. and Europe must stand firm in opposition to the imperialist interventions in Syria and Iran. Wars of occupation only result in the impoverishment and oppression of the people within the targeted countries right alongside increased austerity and suppression of democratic rights even within the imperialist states themselves.



Abayomi Azikiwe is the editor of [Pan-African News Wire](#) , an international electronic press service designed to foster intelligent discussion on the affairs of African people throughout the continent and the world. The press agency was founded in January of 1998 and has published thousands of articles and dispatches in newspapers, magazines, journals,

research reports, blogs and websites throughout the world. The PANW represents the only daily international news source on pan-african and global affairs. To contact him, click on this link >> [Email](#)

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