

With “Friends” like these... : America’s “Contact Group Industry” is Overthrowing Governments

By [Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya](#)

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Anybody who has studied how the US and NATO worked to topple the Jamahiriya in Libya knows that the US has tried to replicate the same regime-change mechanism in Syria.

The formation of multilateral contact groups supporting proxy oppositions has been a key to this process. What most people do not know is that the Americans’ contact group industry started in Somalia.

2006 was a critical year for Somalia, because by its end it appeared the war-torn African country was going to be stable once more after decades of civil war. Somalia’s autonomous northern regions, Puntland and Somaliland, had been run relatively peacefully. The south, however, had seen continuous fighting since 1991. The Islamic Court Union (ICU) defeated most the warlords and united most the south under its rule, managing to bring law and order. Peace talks were also in the works to unite Somalia. There was high anticipation that a period of relative peace in 2007 was about to begin.

Then the US and its regional ally Ethiopia launched major hostilities on December 20, 2006. General John Abizaid, the commander of CENTCOM who was directing the wars in Iraq and NATO-garrisoned Afghanistan, had visited Ethiopia about three weeks earlier to hold a low-profile meeting with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on December 4. The two had planned what would become the US-Ethiopian invasion of Somalia. US warplanes, ships, intelligence, and special force units all took part in the war while the Ethiopians sent the bulk of the ground force to fight the ICU.

To justify the invasion the US invoked the Global War on Terror and portrayed the ICU as an affiliate of Al-Qaeda.

The ICU would fall into disarray and a power vacuum would emerge as a result of the US-Ethiopian invasion. The Somali Transitional Federal Government (STFG), a rival US-supported foreign group that declared itself Somalia’s legitimate government, would be imported to take the ICU’s place. Sounds familiar? It should. This is essentially what would happen — only on a larger scale and with an armed opposition — to Libya four years later when NATO would usher in the National Transitional Council (NTC). This is also what the US, NATO, and the Arab petro-sheikhdoms want to do in Syria with the Syrian National Council (SNC).

Somalia’s status as a divided, lawless, and unstable state has been the model for the now

divided and lawless Libya and what the US sees on the cards for a Syria plagued with civil war — 1975-1990 Lebanon-style. Somalia-ization is at play here.

The US and NATO also have a role to play in the emergence of the pirates phenomenon that has turned the Gulf of Aden into “pirate alley.” They have watched as foreign vessels looted Somalia’s fisheries and as foreign corporations dumped deadly toxins off Somalia’s shores that transformed desperate local fisherman into armed pirates. The destruction of the Libyan economy has also created an unemployed armed class, which is now being exported for America’s McJihad in Syria — and then possibly Algeria, Lebanon, Iranian Baluchistan, China’s Xinjiang, or Russia’s North Caucasian Federal District?

In Somalia, several African countries planned on sending a US-backed multinational contingent, but were foiled in June 2006 when the ICU took full control of Mogadishu. It was at this point that the US and its allies formed their regime-change “template” with the Somalia Contact Group.

Through the Somalia Contact Group an appearance of international legitimacy was given to the ICU government’s STFG rivals and to foreign intervention. Sound more and more familiar? This “contact group” would become the basis for the NATO-dominated Libya Contact Group (Friends of Libya) created in 2011, which imposed the NTC through “missile diplomacy” in Tripoli, and later the Syria Contact Group (Friends of the Syrian People) created in 2012 to impose the SNC in Damascus.

America’s contact group industry has undemocratically imposed foreign-based collaborationist clients on to states where the Atlanticist cabal from NATOistan has a strategic or economic interest of expanding their influence. The usual suspects have all been involved.

Aside from the US, the Somalia Contact Group’s members included the UK, EU, Italy, Norway, and Sweden. NATO would join in June 2009, to secure its military role in Somalia and the waters of the Horn of Africa. All these players would have recurring star roles in Libya. Now they are trying to recreate the same scenario in Syria under the backdrop of a foreign-armed and supervised insurgency that has been deliberately targeting civilians to pave the way for interventionism.

In Somalia, African Union forces were deployed under NATO supervision with the primary mission of protecting the STFG, just as NATO has stood on guard as subordinate foreign-controlled institutions have been erected in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, and now Libya.

The agenda of the STFG was set by the US to “reconstruct Somalia’s institutions and economy” with the help of so-called “foreign experts.” The program is the same for the Muslim Brotherhood-dominated SNC and NTC. The NTC has privatized Libya’s assets and siphoned off its wealth under the management of Libyan-American neo-liberal economist turned “oil and finance minister” Ali Tarhouni. Libya’s oil is no longer in the hands of Libyans, who are now too busy fighting one another with RPG launchers, armored vests, and light infantry rifles, courtesy of NATO.

In Somalia and Libya what has replaced the ICU and Jamahiriya is a never-ending state of “transition” and enclaves of guarded bureaucrats tied to Washington, Brussels, the IMF, and World Bank, who are detached from the violent reality in their countries.

Outside of these bureaucratic offices, the rule of law has crumpled and the streets are run by militias and thugs. The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) took over in Libya and Al-Shaabab ran wild in Somalia, both with the help of foreign fighters. This is the future that is in store for the Syrian Arab Republic if Hillary “Bomb ‘em” Clinton and Obama are successful in installing the SNC.

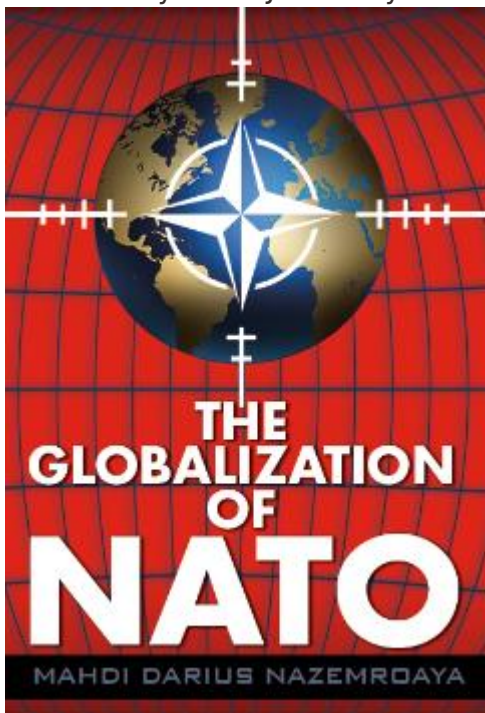
We can see a sneak peak from the destroyed streets of Aleppo to the scarred landscape of the Damascene countryside, the persecution of Syrian minorities, desecration of churches, murder of Syrian civil servants, extrajudicial executions of government supporters, exodus of Syrian professionals, abduction and murder of journalists, terrorist bombings of civilian centers, killing of doctors, and kidnapping of foreign nationals that has taken place under the Syrian Free Army.

Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya is an award-winning author and geopolitical analyst. He is the author of **The Globalization of NATO** (Clarity Press) and a forthcoming book **The War on Libya and the Re-Colonization of Africa**. He has also contributed to several other books ranging from cultural critique to international relations. He is a Sociologist and Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), a contributor at the Strategic Culture Foundation (SCF), Moscow, and a member of the Scientific Committee of Geopolitica, Italy. He has also addressed the Middle East and international relations issues on several TV news networks including Al Jazeera, teleSUR, and Russia Today. His writings have been translated into more than twenty languages. In 2011 he was awarded the First National Prize of the Mexican Press Club for his work in international journalism.

To learn more about NATO’s involvement in Somalia and Africa get *The Globalization of NATO*.

The Globalization of NATO (Clarity Press) by Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya.

Foreword by Denis J. Halliday.



“Nazemroaya’s book is a must-read for any European or other NATO state citizen who wants to understand the danger the American-driven Alliance presents to world harmony and peace. I would hope that having done so, the reader would accept appropriate responsibility for actively pursuing ways to terminate this war machine that seeks out opportunities for warfare for all the wrong reasons. . . Reading this book, may be the first step to finding ourselves before it is too late.”

**From the Foreword by
DENIS J. HALLIDAY
United Nations Assistant Secretary-General
(1994-98)**

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About the author:

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