

**Observation no: 169 – 171 Ugandan-Tanzanian**

**Country-year: Libya 1978**

**1. Did the current regime come to power in a military coup?**

Yes.

King Idris of Libya was overthrown by Signals Captain Muammar al-Qadhafi on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1969.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Has the country ever experienced a military coup?**

Yes.

King Idris of Libya was overthrown by Signals Captain Muammar al-Qadhafi on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1969.<sup>2</sup>

**3. Is the country's top leader a former military officer?**

Yes.

Muammar al-Qadhafi was a Signals Captain in the Libyan military.

**4. Are ethnic, sectarian, or racial criteria used to exclude segments of the population from the officer corps?**

No

We could not find evidence of this sort of selection process in the officer corps. This may be because Qadhafi sought to create a pan-Libyan identity that would undermine the previous monarchical and tribal sources of authority in the country.

**5. Are there strict ideological requirements for entry into the senior officer corps?**

Yes

Qadhafi's officers had to conform to his anti-monarchical, Islamist revolutionary agenda. See question 7.

---

<sup>1</sup> Simons, Geoff. *Libya and the West: From Independence to Lockerbie*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 43.

**6. Is party membership required for entry into the senior officer corps?**

Yes.

According to Simons, "a government decree (30 May 1972) was passed to render membership of any political party other than the Arab Socialist Union a capital crime."<sup>3</sup>

**7. Does military training involve extensive political education or ideological indoctrination?**

Yes.

Al-Qadhafi's regime's ideology included anti-Israel, pro-Islamist, and anti-imperialist indoctrination.<sup>4</sup>

**8. Has the military been used to repress internal dissent in the last five years?**

Yes.

The country was run by the Revolutionary Command Council, the group of officers who backed Qaddafi's regime. Their efforts to stifle opposition and prevent counter-revolution were by definition military repression of internal dissent.

**9. Has the military been used to govern the country in the last five years?**

Yes.

Al-Qadhafi is a military ruler.

**10. Is there a paramilitary organization separate from the regular military, used to provide regime or leader security?**

Yes.

The Revolutionary Guard Corps guarded al-Qadhafi and his family.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 360.

<sup>5</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 364.

**11. Is there an internal intelligence apparatus dedicated to watching the regular military?**

Yes.

Al-Qadhafi sent “informants and ‘people’s commissars’ into the military” to spy on the officer corps.<sup>6</sup>

**12. Has a purge of the officer corps occurred in the last five years?**

Yes.

Al-Qadhafi “rotated senior officers to prevent them from developing a rapport with the troops.”<sup>7</sup> He also purged the army of dissident officers in the mid-1970s.<sup>8</sup>

**13. Is there an institutionalized forum through which civilian leaders and military officers regularly exchange information?**

No.

No source indicates the existence of such an institution. Additionally, civilian life was strongly curtailed in Al-Qadhafi’s government.

---

<sup>6</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 364.

<sup>7</sup> Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs At War: Military Effectiveness, 1948 - 1991*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, p. 364.

<sup>8</sup> David Blundy and Andrew Lycett, *Qaddafi and the Libyan Revolution* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), pp. 118-119.