# Canada in Libya
*Strategic Lessons Learned*


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# Canada in Libya

*Strategic Lessons Learned*

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## Abstract

In March 2011 Canada formed *Operation MOBILE* in response to the humanitarian crisis in Libya. This operation became part of the US led *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* and later joined the international coalition Operation *UNIFIED PROTECTOR* in response to UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973. Publicly framed as a humanitarian mission, and described as the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, the mission served as an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate its value and relevance as an ally and coalition member. This paper explores the strategic lessons of the Libya intervention for Canada.

This paper first provides an overview of Canadian foreign and defence policy in the post- Second World War era. Next, it discusses Canadian strategy and Canada's specific strategic interests in the Middle East. This provides the framework for the analysis of domestic and international considerations which influenced Canada's role in the intervention and the scope of its commitment in Libya. The paper concludes with eight strategic lessons that Canada and the CF should learn from Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR.

## Résumé

En mars 2011, le Canada met sur pied l'opération *Mobile* afin d'intervenir face à la crise humanitaire en Libye. Cette opération devient une composante de l'opération *Odyssey Dawn*, sous commandement américain, et, ultérieurement, de l'opération *Protecteur unifié*, menée par la coalition internationale en application des résolutions 1970 et 1973 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies. Présentée publiquement comme une mission humanitaire, et décrite comme la concrétisation du principe de la responsabilité de protéger (RdP), elle est l'occasion pour le Canada de montrer son importance et son utilité en tant qu'allié et membre d'une coalition. Ce document vise à examiner les enseignements stratégiques que peut tirer le Canada de l'intervention en Libye.

Il fait d'abord un tour d'horizon de la politique étrangère et de défense canadienne dans la période postérieure à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Il y est ensuite question de la stratégie canadienne et des intérêts stratégiques précis du Canada au Moyen-Orient. Cette information forme le cadre de l'analyse des considérations d'ordre national et international ayant influé sur le rôle du Canada dans l'intervention et sur la portée de son engagement en Libye. En conclusion, le document énonce huit enseignements stratégiques que devraient tirer le Canada et les Forces canadiennes (FC) de l'opération Protecteur unifié.

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# Executive summary

## Canada in Libya: Strategic Lessons Learned

**Rachael Bryson; Katie Domansky; Rebecca Jensen; DRDC CORA CR 2012-271; Defence R&D Canada – CORA; November 2012.**


Canada's contribution to the 2011 intervention in Libya, which stemmed from UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, included 635 personnel, seven fighters, two patrol aircraft, two tankers, two frigates, the commander of the mission, as well as its involvement as part of a broader coalition. Publicly framed as a humanitarian mission, and described as the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, the mission served as an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate its value and relevance as an ally and coalition member. This paper explores the strategic lessons of the Libya intervention for Canada.

The basic principles underlying Canadian foreign policy have remained constant since their first explicit articulation in Louis St. Laurent's Gray Lecture of 1947. This statement specifically addressed a national responsibility to defend political liberty and the rule of law abroad while maintaining national unity at home. The subsequent 1964 White Paper on Defence presented participation in international organizations and collective defence as on a par with territorial defence as Canadian priorities. These fundamental aspects of Canadian defence policy endure today, as a trend toward multilateral interventions with a humanitarian element accelerated in the post Cold War years. A dominant element of Canada's post-1989 defence strategy includes advancing human security as a means of preventing threats from growing and reaching Canada. Promoting stable and accountable governments has the dual effect of increasing democratic control over the military, and reducing the risk that it be used against its own people. This consideration has shaped Canada's Middle East strategy since the end of the Cold War, as has the increasing number of family and economic connections between Canadians and countries in the region.

These factors and the consistent principles underlying defence policy since the end of the Second World War are represented in Canada's Libya contribution. Canada's participation in Libya advanced Canadian interests in two different ways, each with domestic and international implications. First, the CF assisted in enhancing human security in Libya, an intrinsic good and also a factor in promoting stability in the broader region. Second, the mission demonstrated a willingness and capacity for Canada to play a meaningful role in coalitions, and as a partner with the United States.

Although the Libya mission took place before and during a federal election, electoral and partisan politics played a minimal role in determining whether and how Canada should participate. While public opinion on the intervention was tepid, senior members of all major parties showed little disagreement about the necessity or the nature of Canada's role in Libya. Voters, too, did not identify Libya, the military, or defence as factors influencing their vote during pre-election polling. Explicit political concerns appear not to have been a significant influence on the government's decision to join the Libya coalition.

Judged by narrowly defined goals – preventing the Gadhafi government from using military force against its own citizens – the mission was a success. From a broader humanitarian perspective, the verdict is mixed. Violence against the population continued after the coalition ceased operations, as rebel groups and other factions fought for power and dominance. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb has also gained influence as well as access to weaponry. Canada acted to fulfill the responsibility of the international community to protect the Libyan people from their government of the day, but it is not clear that successor governments will be more responsible in this regard. While regime change was never an explicit part of either UN resolution, it became a de facto part of the mission to protect the Libyan population.

Initially tasked with enforcing a no-fly zone, Canada's CF-18s progressed to carrying out bombing missions. Despite contributing only 3.5% of total aircraft and 4.5% of total personnel in the international mission, Canadian aircraft carried out 10% of total sorties during the intervention. Canada thus demonstrated an ability to make a meaningful contribution to the coalition effort, even with minimal dedicated resources and little planning time. It also positioned itself as a reliable partner for humanitarian interventions, particularly in contrast with the more tepid response from most NATO member countries.

On balance, then, the mission was largely a success for Canada. Gadhafi was removed from power and the Libyan population is no longer at the mercy of his regime, although in the longer term the situation may deteriorate again. With respect to Canada's place in the international community, Canada demonstrated its worth as an ally, contributing both operational capacity and leadership.

It is likely that Canada will soon be asked once again by NATO, the UN, or a 'coalition of the willing' to commit its armed forces to similar action overseas. Before that time, it is imperative that Canada evaluate its experience in Libya from a strategic perspective, with respect both to the planned role in the intervention and to its execution, to determine where such commitments fit within overall Canadian defence strategy and how Canada should approach similar situations in the future.

The following, in no particular order of importance, represent the strategic lessons Canada should learn from its intervention in Libya, and which should be taken into consideration before the next time the nation considers a major military commitment.

1. Canada must articulate national interests as motivating factors in mission participation.

2. Canada must make proportional commitments to international operations.

3. Canada must develop contingency plans for shifting mission priorities.

4. Canada must consider preventative elements of the R2P while also ensuring that its intervention results in a net benefit to the affected region.

5. Canada must maintain an expeditionary capability, beyond just "boots on the ground."

6. Canada must contribute to maintaining the viability of NATO.

7. Canada must strive to maintain positive relations with the United States in future international interventions.

8. Canada must develop a strategic voice.

# Sommaire

## Canada in Libya: Strategic Lessons Learned

**Rachael Bryson; Katie Domansky; Rebecca Jensen ; DRDC CORA CR 2012-271 ; R & D pour la défense Canada – CARO; novembre 2012.**

La contribution du Canada à l'intervention de 2011 en Libye, en application des résolutions 1970 et 1973 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies, a donné lieu au déploiement de 635 militaires, de sept avions de combat, de deux avions de patrouille, de deux avions de ravitaillement en vol et de deux frégates. À cela s'ajoutent le détachement d'un commandant de la mission ainsi que la participation aux efforts déployés par une coalition élargie. Présentée publiquement comme une mission humanitaire, et décrite comme la concrétisation du principe de la responsabilité de protéger, cette opération a été l'occasion pour le Canada de montrer son importance et son utilité en tant qu'allié et membre d'une coalition. Ce document vise à examiner les enseignements stratégiques que peut tirer le Canada de l'intervention en Libye.

Depuis que l'ancien secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures Louis Saint-Laurent les a énoncés explicitement pour la première fois, lors de la première série de conférences Gray, en 1947, les principes fondamentaux de la politique étrangère canadienne demeurent inchangés. Le secrétaire d'État évoquait spécifiquement la responsabilité nationale de défendre la liberté politique et la primauté du droit à l'étranger, tout en maintenant l'unité nationale au Canada. Ultérieurement, dans le *Livre blanc sur la défense* de 1964, la participation à des organisations internationales et à la défense collective est présentée comme l'une des priorités canadiennes, au même titre que la défense territoriale. Ces aspects fondamentaux de la politique de défense canadienne demeurent les mêmes aujourd'hui, d'autant que, dans les années de l'après-guerre froide, l'augmentation des interventions multilatérales avec un volet humanitaire s'est accélérée. Après 1989, l'un des éléments dominants de la stratégie de défense du Canada consiste à promouvoir la sécurité humaine comme moyen d'empêcher que les menaces ne s'amplifient et n'atteignent le Canada. La promotion de gouvernements stables et responsables a pour double effet d'accroître le contrôle démocratique de l'appareil militaire, et de réduire le risque que celui-ci soit utilisé contre la population. Depuis la fin de la guerre froide, c'est sur ce principe que se fonde la stratégie du Canada pour le Moyen-Orient, ainsi que sur l'épanouissement des liens familiaux et économiques entre les Canadiens et les pays de la région.

Ces facteurs et les principes immuables qui sous-tendent la politique de défense canadienne depuis la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale trouvent leur expression dans la contribution canadienne en Libye. En effet, les efforts canadiens au profit de ce pays ont aidé à promouvoir les intérêts canadiens de deux façons différentes, chacune ayant des conséquences d'ordre national et international. Premièrement, les Forces canadiennes (FC) ont aidé à accroître la sécurité humaine en Libye, ce qui est en soi une bonne chose et a également contribué à promouvoir la stabilité dans la région élargie. Deuxièmement, la mission a permis de montrer que le Canada avait la volonté et la capacité de jouer un rôle utile au sein de coalitions, et en tant que partenaire des États-Unis.

Même si la mission en Libye s'est déroulée avant et pendant une élection fédérale, la politique électorale et partisane a joué un rôle négligeable lorsqu'il s'est agi de décider si le Canada devait

y participer, et selon quelles modalités. Si l'opinion publique a manifesté peu d'engouement pour une intervention, par contre les têtes dirigeantes de tous les principaux partis n'ont contesté ni la nécessité ni la nature du rôle du Canada en Libye. Dans un sondage réalisé avant le scrutin, les électeurs ont déclaré, quant à eux, que la Libye, le déploiement de militaires ou les questions de défense n'influaient pas sur leur choix électoral. De même, des préoccupations politiques évidentes ne semblent pas avoir beaucoup influé sur la décision du gouvernement de participer aux efforts de la coalition en Libye.

À l'aune d'objectifs strictement définis – à savoir empêcher le gouvernement du colonel Kadhafi de recourir à la force militaire contre ses citoyens –, la mission a été une réussite. Dans une perspective humanitaire plus générale, le résultat est moins évident. C'est ainsi que les violences contre la population se sont poursuivies après la fin des opérations de la coalition, et que des groupes rebelles et d'autres factions se sont affrontés pour ravir le pouvoir et asseoir leur supériorité. Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (AQMI) a aussi gagné en influence et eu accès à de l'armement. Si le Canada est intervenu, c'est pour aider la communauté internationale à s'acquitter de sa responsabilité de protéger le peuple libyen contre le gouvernement de l'époque. Toutefois, il n'est pas certain que les gouvernements qui lui succéderont se montreront plus responsables en ce domaine. Même si un changement de régime n'avait jamais été prévu explicitement dans les résolutions des Nations Unies, dans les faits, cela est devenu l'un des objectifs de la mission, afin de protéger la population libyenne.

D'abord chargés de faire respecter la zone d'exclusion aérienne (ZEA), les chasseurs CF-18 canadiens ont procédé ultérieurement à des missions de bombardement. Et, même si le Canada n'a déployé que 3,5 p. 100 des aéronefs et que 4,5 p. 100 des effectifs de la mission internationale, les avions canadiens ont effectué 10 p. 100 des sorties durant l'intervention. Le Canada a donc montré sa capacité à apporter une contribution utile aux efforts de la coalition, même par l'affectation d'un minimum de ressources, y compris sur court préavis. Il a aussi montré qu'il était un partenaire fiable dans le cadre d'interventions humanitaires, tout particulièrement eu égard au peu d'engouement manifesté par la plupart des autres membres de l'OTAN.

Tout bien considéré, la mission a été, dans une large mesure, une réussite pour le Canada. Le colonel Kadhafi a été renversé et la population libyenne n'est plus à la merci de son régime, même si, à la longue, la situation pourrait se détériorer à nouveau. S'agissant de la place du Canada au sein de la communauté internationale, celui-ci a montré ce dont il était capable en tant qu'allié, par sa contribution aux ressources opérationnelles et au commandement.

Prochainement, il est probable que l'OTAN, les Nations Unies ou une « coalition des volontaires » demandent au Canada de s'engager à nouveau à déployer des forces dans le cadre d'une intervention similaire à l'étranger. D'ici là, il est essentiel que celui-ci évalue son expérience en Libye dans une perspective stratégique, en ce qui concerne à la fois le rôle prévu dans l'intervention et l'exercice de ce rôle. L'objectif est de déterminer la place qu'occupe de genre d'engagement dans la stratégie de défense globale du Canada, et d'examiner l'approche qu'il doit prendre dans des situations similaires à l'avenir.

Voici, sans ordre particulier de priorité, les enseignements stratégiques que le Canada devrait tirer de son intervention en Libye, et prendre en considération avant de s'engager de nouveau à participer à une importante opération militaire :

1. Le Canada doit définir ses intérêts nationaux, étant entendu qu'il s'agit de facteurs de nature à justifier la participation à une mission.

2. Le Canada doit prendre des engagements proportionnels aux opérations internationales.

3. Le Canada doit élaborer des plans d'urgence pour modifier les priorités d'une mission.

4. Le Canada doit prendre en compte les aspects préventifs de la responsabilité de protéger (RdP), tout en veillant à ce que son intervention procure des avantages nets à la région touchée.

5. Le Canada doit continuer à disposer de capacités expéditionnaires, qui ne se limitent pas à des « troupes au sol ».

6. Le Canada doit contribuer à maintenir la viabilité de l'OTAN.

7. Le Canada doit s'efforcer de maintenir des relations constructives avec les États-Unis dans le cadre de futures interventions internationales.

8. Le Canada doit acquérir la capacité de se faire entendre sur les aspects stratégiques.

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# 1 Introduction

Canada played a key role during the 2011 international intervention in Libya. In the conflict, Canadian units carried a burden that ranked fourth among contributing nations, behind only the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and France. This commitment is significant, not only for the scale of Canadian involvement, but also for the questions it raises about Canadian defence policy. To what overall strategic end did the Canadian government contribute to the Libya intervention? Was the decision simply a reaction to commitments already made by others? Did it further Canadian interests? What are the probable repercussions for the Canadian military? Ultimately, *what are the strategic lessons to be learned from the Libya intervention, by Canadian leaders*?

The intervention in Libya occurred in response to state-sanctioned violence against civilians. Peaceful demonstrations in Benghazi, Libya – part of the larger "Arab Spring" movement – began on 13 January 2011, to protest the 42-year rule of Colonel Moammar Gadhafi.[1] These protests were met with violent repression. As the protests developed into armed rebellion, the Libyan government reacted with systematic attacks by air and ground forces, frequently against non-combatant civilians.[2] Gadhafi promised "no mercy or compassion" for those who fought against him, going so far as to publicly threaten the lives of residents of Benghazi on 15 March 2011.[3]

The international community reacted to this violence through the United Nations (UN), which passed two resolutions, both fully supported by the Arab League. The first, Resolution 1970 (2011), created on 26 February 2011, called for an international arms embargo on Libya while freezing the assets of individuals close to the Gadhafi regime or implicated in major violations of human rights.[4] The second, Resolution 1973 (2011), passed on 17 March 2011, condemned the gross and systematic violations of human rights in Libya, involving arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture, and executions. This resolution introduced active measures including a no-fly zone over Libya and authorized member states, acting nationally or through regional organizations, to use "all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians, excluding only a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory.[5] By not precluding the possibility that international forces might destroy the regime, the UN Resolution left open the option of such action in the future.

A coalition joint task force led by US Africa Command under *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* began launching air operations on 19 March 2011 to enforce the no-fly zone described in Resolution

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[1] The "Arab Spring" consisted of a series of popular uprisings that rocked the Arabic-speaking countries of North Africa and the Middle East throughout 2011.
[2] For an interactive timeline of the "Arab Spring" protests see: "Arab spring: an interactive timeline of Middle East protests," The Guardian, accessed 22 March 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline.
[3] David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, "Qaddafi Warns of Assault on Benghazi as U.N. Vote Nears," The New York Times (17 March 2011), accessed 27 May 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/18/world/africa/18libya.html?_r=3.
[4] United Nations, Security Council, S/RES/1970, 26 February 2011.
[5] United Nations, Security Council, S/RES/1973, 17 March 2011.

1973; Canada joined this joint task force the same day.[6] *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* began on 22 March 2011 as a NATO-led maritime mission to enforce the UN-requested arms embargo. By 27 March, NATO assumed responsibility for both of these operations, creating the Combined Joint Task Force (JTF) Unified Protector. On 31 March 2011 Lieutenant-General Charles Bouchard of Canada received command of JTF Unified Protector.[7] Under his command, NATO ships stopped and searched any vessel they suspected of carrying arms or mercenaries to or from Libya, while aircraft enforced the UN ban on all flights in Libyan airspace – except those for humanitarian and aid purposes – to prevent any attacks on civilian populations. *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* was officially suspended on 31 October 2011, after NATO determined that the Libyan people were free of Gadhafi's regime and were finally in a position to protect themselves.[8]

Canada played a key role in these operations. LGen Bouchard served as the commander of the NATO mission, while air and naval assets were assigned to *Operation MOBILE,* the Canadian Forces' (CF) contribution to *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* and later *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*. *Operation MOBILE* began on 25 February 2011 as a non-combatant mission based in Malta to evacuate Canadians and other foreign nationals from Libya. In March 2011 it became a combat mission with air and maritime capabilities based in Italy.[9] During the seven-month conflict in Libya, Canada provided 635 personnel, seven fighters, two patrol aircraft, two tankers, and two frigates. The air forces focused on enforcing the no-fly zone, while the sea component helped to enforce the arms embargo and escort supply ships and other vessels involved in NATO operations.[10]

In a public statement on 28 October 2011, Prime Minister (PM) Stephen Harper announced the end of Canada's mission in Libya, calling it a "job well done." He described the mission in purely humanitarian terms. Canada acted to "protect innocent civilians against a cruel and oppressive regime…saw a blatant wrong being perpetrated by a brutal regime and took a leadership role with Canadian allies to help set it right."[11] Throughout the Libya campaign the Canadian government consistently promoted the protection of human rights as the rationale for Canada's involvement.

Humanitarian considerations were central to the government's decisions about Libya, but many other elements contributed to the Canadian decision to participate. The general idea of the "responsibility to protect" was not a sufficient condition for Canadian or NATO intervention, as

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[6] US Department of Defence (DoD), "Coalition Launches 'Operation Odyssey Dawn'," last modified 19 March 2011, accessed 7 June 2012, http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=63225.
[7] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), "NATO Arms Embargo Against Libya, Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR," Fact Sheet, last modified 25 March 2011, accessed 16 March 2012, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110325_110325-unified-protector-factsheet.pdf.
[8] NATO, "NATO and Libya – Operation Unified Protector," last modified 13 January 2012, accessed 16 March 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-616EB013-53F0F97E/natolive/topics_71652.htm?selectedLocale=en.
[9] Department of National Defence (DND), "Operation MOBILE," National Defence and the Canadian Forces, last modified 21 February 2012, accessed 22 March 2012, http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/mobile/index-eng.asp.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Office of the Prime Minister (PMO), "Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada On the End of NATO-led Libya Mission," Canada News Centre, last modified 28 October 2011, accessed 16 March 2012, http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?nid=634139.

demonstrated by their tolerance of repressive regimes around the world, particularly in the on-going conflict in Syria, which shares much with the Libyan revolution.[12] Many issues beyond the desire to protect human rights must be considered when evaluating the decision to participate in Libya. These include: Canada's obligations and ambitions as a NATO member and ally of the US; the opportunity for a Canadian to command the mission; the chance to show Canadians and the world the operations of the CF, particularly of its fighters, which were slated to be replaced in an expensive and controversial process; and the substantial Canadian investments in Libya.

In order to explore these issues and, ultimately, to illuminate the strategic purpose behind Canadian involvement in Libya, this paper will examine the role of the government and the CF throughout the course of the intervention and determine how the public perceived and understood these actions. It will provide a strategic analysis that combines civilian academic approaches with open source material to answer the following questions: what is Canada's defence strategy? What are Canadian strategic interests in the Middle East? How does the Libya mission, and Canada's military contribution in particular, fit this policy? What was the role of public discussion in the decision-making process that led to Canada's involvement? Finally, what strategic lessons can Canada take away from this experience? The answers to these questions will increase understanding of Canada's foreign and defence policy, and perhaps inform future decisions regarding participation in international interventions.

[12] While many analysts, including the Canadian architects of the Responsibility to Protect, touted Libya as a test case and even textbook example of the doctrine in action, it must be noted that the Government of Canada never formally adopted this as a justification or guiding principle of the Libyan mission.

# 2 Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy

## 2.1 Post-Second World War

The national interests that guided foreign and defence policy within Canada after the Second World War still rule today. These 'basic principles' or 'agreed upon fundamentals' were articulated by Secretary of State for External Affairs, later Prime Minister, Louis St. Laurent in his 1947 Gray Lecture.[13] He recognized that respect for political liberty, human values, and the rule of law shape most Canadian activities at home and abroad. A willingness to accept international responsibilities in defence of these ideals, together with a recognition that this pursuit must never destroy our national unity, forms the foundation for Canadian external policies.[14] Accordingly, Canadian foreign policy since 1945 has identified with the premises of liberal internationalism and its associated doctrines of functionalism, middlepowermanship, and multilateralism.[15]

The 1964 *White Paper on Defence* – the first official post-Second World War articulation of Canadian defence policy – defined Canada's national defence objectives as: the preservation of peace through support for collective defence measures intended to deter military aggression; support to foreign policy within the context of Canadian participation in international organizations; and protection of, and surveillance over, Canadian territory, airspace, and coastal waters.[16] These three fundamental objectives have informed the framework for all subsequent expressions of Canadian strategy. There is remarkably little variation in the objectives espoused by successive Canadian governments, whether Liberal or Conservative, throughout the period from 1945 until today.[17]

This continuity has led Canadian defence policy – in its entirety, including both its domestic and international elements – to be characterized by three distinct themes. First, that national territorial security can be focused predominantly on roles of sovereignty protection (such as surveillance, presence, civil emergency, and search and rescue). This belief demonstrates an acceptance of the fact that a large standing military force will not deter any of the perceived threats facing Canada. Further, it suggests that a primary goal of national defence is the demonstration of sovereignty, especially the ability to exercise some degree of independence from the Americans. As Henning Frantzen notes, the national tasks that Canada assigns to defence "are not so much related to military defence in the traditional sense of the concept." Rather they refer more to symbolic

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[13] The 1947 Gray Lecture, given by Louis St. Laurent at the University of Toronto during the early Cold War in memory of Duncan and John Gray, outlines the basic principles and interests of Canadian foreign policy.

[14] Louis St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs, "The Foundations of Canadian Policy in World Affairs," University of Toronto Gray Lecture given on 13 January 1947.

[15] Jean-Francois Rioux and Robin Hay, "Canadian Foreign Policy: From Internationalism to Isolationism?" A Discussion Paper, No.16 (Ottawa, ON: Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, 1997), 16.

[16] DND, White Paper on Defence (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1964), 6.

[17] For access to all Canadian white papers on defence see the Canadian Defence Policy Archives: http://www.forces.gc.ca/admpol/defence_policy_archives-eng.html.

presence, monitoring, and domestic humanitarian or emergency operations.[18] These ideas are evident in all Canadian policy documents, including the most recent Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS), which focuses on providing "surveillance of Canadian territory and air and maritime approaches; maintain[ing] search and rescue response capabilities that are able to reach those in distress anywhere in Canada on a 24/7 basis; and assist[ing] civil authorities in responding to a wide range of threats – from natural disasters to terrorist attacks" – as the primary tasks of the CF in domestic defence.[19]

While this suggests that Canadian domestic defence provisions have clear and pervasive connotations for sovereignty protection, Frantzen's characterisation of these provisions as entirely "symbolic" underemphasizes their purpose and importance. Both of the latest policy documents produced by DND – the 2005 International Policy Statement (IPS) and the CFDS – clearly state that the defence of Canada is the first priority of Canadian policy. In fact, in 2005 there was a major transformation of the CF command and control arrangements that saw the stand-up of an operational-level command responsible for the conduct of domestic operations, from 'defence of Canada' missions through to surveillance and response. The priority on Canadian defence and security was stated clearly and has remained the top priority.[20]

The second theme is the tendency to view defence as a task to be undertaken with others, the inherent assumption being that Canada recognizes the necessity of collective security and defence to the protection of Canadian national interests. The third theme follows the same logic, in that a belief has developed that multilateralism and peacekeeping are components of defence that facilitate the objectives of securing a voice in international affairs, while preventing Canada from being dragged into war.[21] This latter theme is consistent with the perceived, if not necessarily accurate, non-military culture of Canadians.[22] Both of these themes demonstrate recognition by Canadian policy-makers that Canada's defence, considered in its entirety including both domestic and international considerations, will never be a completely Canadian affair. The comparative value of Canadian material resources is such that the country simply cannot afford to take care of all of its defence objectives on its own. In addition, Canada has seen, over time, the value in collaborating with the Americans and with other regional and international organizations in terms of gaining a voice on the world stage – however large or small at any given time – and in making comparatively smaller resources count.

These themes have ensured that the objectives of Canadian defence have been pursued – to differing degrees at any given time – through four parallel methods: collective measures for the maintenance of peace and security under the auspices of the United Nations, collective defence as embodied in NATO, partnership with the United States in the defence of North America, and

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[18] Henning A. Frantzen, *NATO and Peace Support Operations 1991-1999, Policies and Doctrines* (New York, NY: Frank Cass, 2005), 133.
[19] DND, Canada First Defence Strategy, "Roles of the Canadian Forces," Government of Canada, 2008, accessed 4 August 2012, http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/pri/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_ english_low-res.pdf.
[20] "Canadian Forces in the 21st Century," CBC News (21 April 2008), accessed 29 August 2012, http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdnmilitary/.
[21] Frantzen, *NATO and Peace Support Operations*, 120-124; Colin S. Gray, *Canadian Defence Priorities: A Question of Relevance* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co, 1972).
[22] Eric Wagner, "The Peaceable Kingdom? The National Myth of Canadian Peacekeeping and the Cold War," Canadian Military Journal (Winter 2006-2007): 45-54.

national measures for the security of Canada. While these methods are invariable, the order of priority given to them and the degree to which they have been pursued at any given time is directly related to the particular strategic context within which Canadian defence policy has been formulated. The priority given to each is directly influenced by a number of variables both outside and within government control, such as public opinion or the nature of threats versus the funding allocated to defence.

## 2.2 Post-Cold War

Since 1989, Canadian defence policy has focused primarily on contributions to international and collective security. While independent territorial defence objectives have not been ignored, participation in various continental, alliance, and international security operations have represented Canada's major contribution to the overall security of the democratic world.[23] This is largely a result of the fact that international crises became more – not less – common after the Cold War, placing the entire range of Canada's abilities in conflict resolution and peacekeeping in high demand.[24] In addition, the new spirit of cooperation ushered in by the end of the Cold War did not bypass Canada; Ottawa was inspired by the 'new internationalism' that appeared to support greater interdependence, cooperation between states, and reliance on multilateral institutions.[25] Multilateralism had consistently been emphasized in Canadian strategy and policy, but the growing willingness of other states to use multilateral institutions, at least at first, represented a welcome change.

As the international community involved itself in crises around the world in the post-Cold War era, Canada continued to play an active role, despite significant reduction in the strength of the CF between 1989 and 2003. Throughout the 1990s, Canada maintained its record of participating in almost all UN missions, including major operations in Haiti, Cambodia, and Somalia.[26] It also supported operations undertaken by coalitions of liberal democracies, usually led by the United States in conjunction with major powers in the European Union, which increasingly defined international peace and security in a more activist and robust fashion, going beyond traditional peacekeeping or humanitarian assistance to peace enforcement.[27] Canada contributed to *Operation DESERT STORM* in Iraq, sent a sizeable contingent to the International Force (IFOR) in Bosnia, and participated in bombing runs supporting *Operation ALLIED FORCE* within the former Yugoslavia. This participatory trend has continued into the twenty-first century with few exceptions, the most notable being the Iraq War in 2003. Canada's major contribution to multilateral operations in the twenty-first century was its participation in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Its most recent foray into military operations overseas was its participation in the enforcement of the embargo and no-fly zone in Libya.[28]

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[23] Bill Robinson, "Canadian military spending 2010-2011," Foreign Policy Series, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (March 2011): 4-5.
[24] Alexander Moens, "Revitalizing our Defence and Security Capacity," Policy Options (October 1999): 28-29.
[25] Grant Dawson, Here is Hell: Canada's Engagement in Somalia (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2007), 9-11.
[26] For more information see: http://www.comfec-cefcom.forces.gc.ca/pa-ap/ops/pastops-eng.asp.
[27] Moens, "Revitalizing our Defence and Security Capacity," 29.
[28] For more information on past and present Canadian Forces' operations see: http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/index-eng.asp.

# 3 Canadian Strategy

It is clear that Canada has continued to contribute to multiple military interventions abroad as part of its overall security policy, choosing to "both fight and keep the peace" alongside its allies.[29] This trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, but the question is, *to what overall strategic end?*

To a certain extent, most Canadian expeditionary action in the post-Cold War era has been undertaken explicitly or implicitly in support of 'human security.' There is rarely a direct threat to Canada itself when its forces are dispatched overseas. The world is a chaotic and dangerous place, however, presenting threats that offer indirect repercussions to Canada and which often have the potential to eventually threaten Canadian interests and values directly. In addition, Canadians believe in the rule of law while maintaining a strong sense of responsibility to alleviate suffering. This translates to the belief that Canada should help stabilize the international system by preventing some localized problems from becoming international challenges. The strategic importance of keeping the machinery of war in stable and accountable hands dovetails neatly with the liberal conception of humanitarian intervention, which focuses on ensuring that militaries are not used against civilians in 'failed states.'

Unlike during the Cold War, when the dispatch of Canadian troops to distant places served the national interest by trying to diminish the possibility of a nuclear war, intervention is now seen as a moral imperative in cases of intrastate disorder and massive human rights abuse. Canadian policy accepts the fact that human rights abuses are a legitimate justification for international discussion and intervention. The human security agenda has largely supplied the expeditionary strategic rationale for the Canadian Forces as they currently stand.[30]

Canada's 2005 IPS, Canada's closest approximation to a defence white paper in over seventeen years, is consistent with this human security programme. The Harper government released a more recent defence paper in 2008, the CFDS, but while it marked a new approach to procurement, it did not materially change the substance of the IPS. The IPS provides specific criteria for involvement in expeditionary action, thus providing an effective tool for evaluating Canada in Libya.[31] The IPS recognizes the concept of forward defence (meeting security threats as far from Canada's borders as possible) as a critical component of security at home and abroad.[32] An integrated 'all of government' strategy of diplomacy, defence, and development is included for dealing with complex conflict and post-conflict situations.[33] In military terms, this approach translates into a focus on expeditionary capabilities in failed or failing states and an emphasis on leadership roles in these activities when it is in Canada's ability to do so.[34] This policy is meant to "enhance Canada's status as a responsible and contributing member of the international

[29] Joe Jockel and Joel Sokolsky, "Lloyd Axworthy's Legacy, Human security and the rescue of Canadian defence policy," International Journal 56:1 (Winter 2000-2001).
[30] Ibid., 5-6.
[31] DND, Canada First Defence Strategy.
[32] DND, Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence. NDID A-JS-005-000/AG-001 (2005), 2.
[33] Ibid., 6.
[34] Ibid., 2-3.

community, including in key institutions such as the United Nations and NATO."[35] With a stronger voice on the world stage, Canada can play a more active role in maintaining international peace and stability, thereby contributing to Canadian security as well.

This focus on enhancing Canada's status with its allies – predominantly the United States – rather than implementing a uniquely Canadian strategy is a recurring theme within Canadian defence policy development. Canadian security is inextricably linked to the strategy of others. It could be argued that the true purpose of Canadian defence policy has been to adapt to the strategy of other more powerful states in such a way that Canadian contributions are minimally sufficient to ensure a future voice in security operations, and in diplomatic and trade relations as well. Hence, Canadian defence policy has a decidedly political or diplomatic, rather than strategic, character.

The IPS also includes a commitment to being "selective and strategic" in the consideration of which expeditionary operations Canada should undertake. The conditions specified for the assessment of possible deployments are: 1) the mission supports Canada's foreign policy objectives; 2) the mandate of the operation is realistic, clear, and enforceable; 3) international political and financial support, as well as other resources, are sufficient to achieving the desired end; 4) the proposed forces are adequate and appropriate for the mandate; 5) an effective process of consultation between mission partners is in place; 6) there is a clear exit strategy or desired end-state; 7) there is a defined concept of operations, an effective command and control structure, and clear rules of engagement; and 8) the mission does not jeopardize other Canadian Forces' commitments.[36]

While these criteria for involvement are appropriate to determining if, how, and when Canadian forces will contribute to foreign operations, they do not indicate any attempt to implement a grand strategy. Canada chooses to contribute to international missions instigated by others; while Canadian efforts in any one mission often aid an outcome considered favourable to its allies and itself, Canada's absence would rarely have any strategic impact. Although Canada has certainly made the strategic decision to align with the West within the international community, it has since chosen to relinquish strategic control of its military forces once having volunteered them. Canada continually chooses to develop security as a contributor to a larger cause, attempting to influence the actions and strategy of others, rather than through independent national action with direct relevance to national interests.

Recent efforts, such as the reorganization of the CF in 2005, certainly attempted to focus the efforts of the CF away from numerous small commitments and towards operations with a direct Canadian interest. For the first time in a long while the CF appeared to begin shouldering more of the burden, to 'do the heavy lifting' required to gain the respect of its allies and a desired strategic voice. Canada's contribution to Afghanistan is frequently offered as a case in point, serving as an example of the government seeking to reverse the damage done by denying a role in US Ballistic Missile Defence, or as a case in which the defeat of the Taliban/al Qaeda was identified as a Canadian national interest; moving capable forces into theatre to assist in a collective effort to prevent for future terrorist attacks was a suitable objective for Canadian defence.[37] The issue

[35] Ibid., 3.
[36] Ibid., 27.
[37] Robert W. Murray and John McCoy, "From Middle Power to Peacebuilder: The Use of the Canadian Forces in Modern Canadian Foreign Policy," American Review of Canadian Studies 40:2 (2010).

remains whether the actual Canadian contribution, and the conduct of the CF and the Canadian government throughout the campaign, will support the formation of Canadian strategic influence. Canada provided units in Afghanistan that served an important and necessary operational function, perhaps demonstrating to its allies that it continues to have a valuable purpose within its defensive alliances. As of yet, this has not translated into a "Canadian strategic voice."

## 3.1 Canada's strategic interests in the Middle East

As with Canadian strategy writ large, Canada's Middle East strategy has consistently reflected the centrality of the American-Canadian alliance. While Canada's positions on Israel/Palestine and its decision not to participate in *Operation IRAQI FREEDOM* have differed from those of the US, these differences reflect "differences in tactics and power, not strategy and values."[38] US and Canadian perspectives on Israel/Palestine are similar, with both countries seeking a two-state solution, but the US has the ability and resources to offer much more powerful incentives. With regard to Cuba, as another example, both governments share a concern with human rights violations and a desire to see a democracy there, but Canada has chosen political and commercial engagement over sanctions and isolation in trying to achieve this outcome. Despite these different policy responses, shared values include support for a liberal world order, a preference for democracies over dictatorships, and an emphasis on human security as essential to national interests as well as to international stability. This has included intervention in intra-national, ethnic, and tribal conflict.[39]

During the Cold War era, Canada's Middle East policy was inextricable from its membership in NATO. Since the region was one of many potential flashpoints for indirect conflict between the superpowers, military intervention in the form of peacekeeping served Canada's needs as part of an alliance, and simultaneously advanced humanitarian goals more broadly.[40] This dynamic no longer characterizes Canada's policies in the Middle East in the post-Cold War world. The state was replaced as the primary referent by bodies both larger, in the frames of the broader Arab and Jewish nations and diasporas, and smaller, as with human security. Events of the Arab Spring and the NATO intervention in Libya suggest that the predominant role of state as the most important variable in diplomatic and military strategy is being challenged.

Domestic dimensions have also shaped Canadian security policy and continue to do so. Immigration from the Middle East, North Africa, as well as Southeast Asia makes up more than half of total immigration to Canada, which means that the Canadian public increasingly has personal and familial links to those regions, as well as economic and geopolitical interests there. This adds a new complication to the decades-old preference of the Canadian public that Canada be a moral force in the international community, in that particular preferences can be conflated with national interests.[41] This tension is illustrated by the vocal support expressed by the Harper

[38] Michael Hart, From Pride to Influence: Towards a New Canadian Foreign Policy (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press 2008), 332.
[39] Tami Amanda Jacoby, Canadian Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Case study of the Canada Fund in Israel/Palestine and Jordan (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, 2000), 1.
[40] Jockel and Sokolsky, "Lloyd Axworthy's Legacy," 2-4.
[41] Denis Stairs, David J. Bercuson, Mark Entwistle, J.L. Granatstein, Kim Richard Nossal, and Gordon S. Smith, In the National Interest: Canadian Foreign Policy in an Insecure World (Calgary: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, 2003), 9.

government for the state of Israel, and by the increasingly vehement criticism of this support by factions of opposition parties and within specific communities. In addition, a strain of popular anti-Americanism, and its more benign manifestation as the definition of Canada as non-American, has not driven a wedge between the two countries at the strategic level with respect to the Middle East.[42]

Canadian participation in *Operation DESERT STORM* and in the Balkans marked a shift towards greater military involvement in the comparatively smaller conflicts that characterized the post-Cold War world before 9/11. In addition to emphasizing peacekeeping and membership in institutions oriented towards collective security, Canadian strategy has adopted a more interventionist approach, sometimes called peacebuilding, as the vehicle for promoting human security.[43] In the final years of the twentieth century, the theoretical foundations were laid for integrating military intervention with humanitarian concerns under the concept of the Responsibility To Protect (R2P), itself a Canadian creation.[44] The endorsement in principal of the R2P was part of a trend described by Joseph Nye as a "definition of the national interest [which] does not accept the distinction between a morality-based and an interest-based foreign policy. Moral values are simply intangible interests."[45]

The events of 11 September 2001 were a watershed, but their implications for Canadian Middle East strategy were not necessarily congruent with each other. Canada's immediate response to the first implementation of NATO's Article 5, in which it agreed to contribute to a collective response if the attacks "were directed from abroad," signalled an affirmation of collective defence in theory and in practice.[46] Opting out of Iraq, by contrast, indicated that Canadian strategy with respect to the Middle East, in parallel with most of its NATO allies not including the US, was characterized by a reluctance to use force to neutralize a specific potential threat.[47] Under PM Paul Martin, Canada's participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan became reoriented towards the 3D approach.[48] In the broader Middle East, Canada opted to prioritize collective security and human security over more traditional warfighting or peacekeeping.

More recently, PM Harper has shown a preference for NATO and its priorities over extensive participation with the UN. Membership in both the UN and NATO became a central pillar of Canadian strategy following the Second World War, as the forum for Canada's major

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[42] John Herd Thompson, "Playing by the New Washington Rules: The U.S.–Canada Relationship, 1994–2003," American Review of Canadian Studies (Spring 2003): 5-26.
[43] Murray and McCoy, "From Middle Power to Peacebuilder," 177.
[44] Jockel and Sokolsky, "Lloyd Axworthy's Legacy," 3.
[45] Joseph Nye Jr, "Redefining the national interest," Foreign Affairs 78 (July/August 1999): 24.
[46] Edgar Buckley, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Operations from 1999 to 2003, "Invoking Article 5," NATO Review (Summer 2006), accessed on 18 April 2012, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue2/english/art2.html.
[47] Daniel Drache, Friends at a Distance: Reframing Canada's Strategic Priorities after the Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy (Toronto: Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, York University, 2005), 3.
[48] For more information on Canada's 3D approach in Afghanistan see: "Canada in Afghanistan, Assessing the 3D Approach," a conference report prepared by Julian Wright of the Institute for Research on Public Policy after a conference at the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, Canada, 12-14 May 2005, accessed on 12 April 2012, http://www.irpp.org/miscpubs/archive/wright_cigi.pdf.

contribution to the challenge of the Cold War and as a check on the overwhelming influence of American priorities and actions. The Harper shift to NATO priorities is in keeping with a reorientation towards roles requiring active combat, but also continues to reflect humanitarian and development elements, representing an expansion, rather than displacement, of the soft power positioning of the Chretien and, to a lesser extent, Martin administrations.[49]

While the rhetoric of the Harper government has certainly emphasized a more muscular military and accordingly a strategy more inclined to use that capability, with respect to the greater Middle East there are more continuities than discontinuities between Harper's terms of office and his predecessors'. The leadership role assumed by Canada in crucial Kandahar province dates back to Martin's leadership, and the move towards replacing the CF-18 as the star of the RCAF predates that.[50] While former minister Lloyd Axworthy agrees with the current government on very little, he also conceived of the CF of the twenty-first century as a force capable of stabilizing a region and enforcing a peace as part of R2P. Working solely from open sources, however, which penetrate less into the workings of government and defence issues, it is hard to explain how the decision to intervene was made and how far politicians consulted military experts, or can consider such issues.

On the eve of the intervention in Libya, then, Canada's approach to the Middle East was characterized by several factors. The overarching priority for engagement in the region was to advance Canadian interests through two main channels: the enhancement of human security for its own good and also as a factor in building a more secure international community; and the demonstration of Canada's commitment and capability to play a meaningful role in direct military action within the context of the NATO alliance, and more particularly as a substantial partner with Washington.

The first of these major objectives can be broken down further into a strong desire to protect civilian populations around the world, for altruistic, international and domestic political factors, as well as a willingness to use force against potential perpetrators of crimes against humanity in addition to development and relief efforts. The second consideration suggests that Canada's approach to the Middle East is advanced by making carefully chosen contributions to those operations carried out under the NATO aegis, and to American missions that are broadly compatible with Canadian interests and values. While these elements of Canadian policy were articulated differently under different prime ministers, their general contours have been largely stable since the shock that ran through the international system in the wake of the fall of the USSR.

The Libya intervention is notable in that it harmonized these different considerations. Ensuring human security, strengthening international collective security, solidifying Canada's role as an American ally and NATO member, and demonstrating the need for a strong and responsive CF

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[49] Jack Granatstein, "Harper's foreign policies have made Canada a world player," National Post (30 January 2012), accessed on 18 April 2012, http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2012/01/30/jack-granatstein-harpers-foreign-policies-have-made-canada-a-world-player/.
[50] Andre Pratte, "Libya and Canada's "new" foreign policy," Canadian International Council (24 August 2011), accessed on 12 April 2012, http://www.opencanada.org/features/blogs/roundtable/libya-and-canadas-new-foreign-policy/.

were mutually reinforcing considerations in the intervention, rather than any of them being in tension with the others. This is the framework within which Canada's involvement in Libya is now examined, with respect both to the planned role in the intervention and to its execution.

## 3.2 Canadian public opinion and the federal election

National level governments face the challenge of reconciling the international repercussions of their actions, on economic and diplomatic levels, with domestic political dynamics. Various theorists have suggested that states can act in the national interest without reference to domestic factors, and also that the wellbeing of the government of the day and the interests of existing institutions dictate foreign policy.[51] Robert Putnam's 'two-level game' model reconciles these positions, and describes how governments simultaneously manage their domestic concerns and their relationships with other states, whether friendly or in tension. Putnam's theories consider dimensions of relationships beyond the economic and diplomatic.[52] The interaction of foreign policies and domestic pressures are particularly relevant in the twenty-first century with respect to human rights promotion overseas.[53]

Canada's involvement in Libya falls within the scope of analysis of these theorists. Altruistic elements, such as the desire to advance democracy and protect innocent populations, interacted with pressure exerted by factions within Canada to take or refrain from certain actions, the need to maintain and enhance Canada's role in its alliances, and the desire to maintain stability in a volatile region with which Canada has a trade relationship. The political considerations weighed by the Harper minority government during the first phase of the Libya campaign, during which Canada's involvement was determined, were particularly significant. It coincided with the forty-first federal general election, an election in which observers believed PM Harper had to deliver a majority government or risk losing his leadership of the party.[54]

The writ dropped on 26 March 2011 for an election held 2 May. Due to the turbulence of the political climate, however, the prospect of an election was perpetually in the air. While prior to 26 March there was no official campaign, the pressures of an impending election influenced the behaviour of all parties, even before the election was formally called.

While an impending and then realized election campaign can be expected to increase voter scrutiny of major political issues and party positions, it does not mean that the timing of the Libya intervention piqued Canadian public opinion on Libya or on other related policy issues. From the beginning of 2011, through the election, and continuing to summer 2012, voters never identified defence, foreign policy, national security, or Libya as among their top five priorities.[55] Examining opinion polls, news, and editorial coverage of the Canadian involvement in Libya

[51] Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," International Organization, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer, 1988), pp. 427-460.
[52] William M. LeoGrande, "From Havana to Miami: U.S. Cuba Policy as a Two-Level Game," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs , Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring, 1998), pp. 67-86.
[53] Laura Feliu, "A Two-Level Game: Spain and the Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights in Morocco," Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 8, No. 2-3 (2003) pp. 90-111.
[54] "Anticipating the election that nobody wants," 28 May 2012, Telegraph-Journal [Saint John, N.B] 28 Mar 2011: A.5.
[55] http://www.nanosresearch.com/library/polls/2012-05-IssueE.pdf

shows no significant relationship between the announcement of Canada's mission and electoral intentions, or between actual events in Libya and their coverage in the Canadian media and electoral intentions.[56]

While some analysts, both academic and in the media, argued that Canada's role in Libya would benefit the government of the day in the election, this does not mean that the decision was explicitly influenced by political considerations.[57] Nor did military action in Libya put the governing Conservative party at rhetorical odds during the run-up and actual campaign; the Liberals made few substantial criticisms and the NDP advocated diverting funding from a proposed new fighter to renewed shipbuilding, but stressed that this too would maintain the CF's capabilities.[58]

Parliament sat for five days between the announcement of the deployment of CF-18s to Libya and the dissolution in preparation for the general election. The Minister of National Defence responded on 21 March to an NDP question with the following statement, which characterizes government comments on Libya in Hansard: "I can tell the hon. member that we are there to comply with the resolutions that have been passed by the United Nations Security Council. We are there primarily to protect civilians on the ground in Libya from their own administration. We have clearly seen evidence in the past number of days, if not weeks, that Gadhafi has wreaked havoc on the ground against his own civilians. We are there with an international partnership providing as much protection as we possibly can."[59] Questions posed in the House pertaining to Libya requested clarification of terms of engagement, projected duration of the commitment, expressions of support for the CF, and queries as to why further measures were not being taken to isolate Gadhafi and protect the Libyan people.[60] Opposition discussion of Canada's role in Libya criticized two primary areas: Canada's failure to adopt non-military measures, such as freezing funds and isolating senior regime members, and the absence of a clear "exit strategy", but there were few substantive criticisms of the engagement itself or its nature.

The lack of partisan political dissent at the national level, particularly given the federal election, is noteworthy. Political parties are in the business of winning votes, and on the surface it should therefore follow that when there is non-trivial opposition to any policy – and only 41% of Canadians supported the Libya intervention in an April 2011 poll, with 33% opposing it and 26% unsure – there should be a corresponding movement to capture this vote on the part of a major party. And yet neither the NDP nor the Liberals offered a different position on Libya during the campaign. One explanation is the phenomenon of elite consensus, in which the preponderance of authorities in the field share similar views on the viability or desirability of participation in alliance stability operations, without reference to the popularity of these opinions amongst the

[56] Survey of Globe & Mail and PostMedia newspaper archives January 2011 until May 2011; rolling opinion polling before and during the election from Ipsos-Reed and Nanos.
[57] Iype, Mark, Libya situation hands Harper an image boost, expert says; PM seen with world leaders as election nears," The Ottawa Citizen [Ottawa, Ont] 21 Mar 2011: A.3.
[58] Kevin Libin, "NDP takes a hawkish turn; Pacifist party leans right on foreign policy," National Post [Don Mills, Ont] 09 May 2011: A.1.
[59] 40th PARLIAMENT, 3rd SESSION, EDITED HANSARD • NUMBER 145, Monday, March 21, 2011.
[60] Hansard March 21, 2011 to March 25, 2011

broader public.[61] In this case, structuring the Libya intervention under the aegis of NATO meant that the benefits of joining the coalition may have outweighed the merits of the mission itself for the leaders of all parties and institutions, not simply the government of the day.

## 3.3 The humanitarian dimension

The wording of both UN resolutions regarding Libya was inherently vague, allowing for their initial approval from unenthusiastic states such as Russia or China. While critics later claimed that NATO was overstepping its bounds by pursuing regime change, the removal of Gadhafi from his position of power was implicit in the initial resolutions. NATO and allied government statements on the intervention in Libya tied both the legitimacy and the imperative of intervention to human rights abuses by the Gadhafi government throughout the campaign. If the Gadhafi government could not be dissuaded from these abuses, its displacement was the logical alternative. This reflects domestic political considerations as well as the politics of the international community. Humanitarian intervention is perceived, with some validity, as a tool for increasing international goodwill, by the US in particular but with similar effects for other countries.[62] Domestically, public opinion surveys in NATO member states document more willingness to expend resources and deploy forces for humanitarian purposes than for more traditional military missions.[63]

If humanitarian intervention in Libya is judged solely in terms of Gadhafi government-sponsored assaults, it was a successful undertaking. However, recent reports from a number of aid and news organizations with delegates working within Libya suggest that success, in terms of civilians free from violence – the overall rationale for the NATO mission from the beginning – is far from realized.[64] Evidence of ongoing torture, murder, and racial and religious attacks against civilians is emerging from Libya, as former rebel groups and emergent militias compete for influence and control. Amnesty International reports that widespread torture and ill-treatment of suspected pro-Gadhafi fighters and loyalists is widespread within Libya, and is being carried out by officially recognized military and security entities as well as by a multitude of armed militias operating outside any legal framework.[65] Defining humanitarian success as the displacement of a regime that abused human rights, without regard to whether successor governments will protect their

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[61] Kreps, S. (2010), Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion: Why Public Opinion Hardly Matters for NATO-led Operations in Afghanistan. Foreign Policy Analysis, 6: 191–215.
[62] Richard Wike, Associate Director, Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Does Humanitarian aid improve America's image?" Pew Global Attitudes Project (6 March 2012), accessed on 18 April 2012, http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/03/06/does-humanitarian-aid-improve-americas-image/.
[63] Jamie Shea, "Keeping NATO Relevant," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Outlook (April 2012), accessed 25 April 2012, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/19/keeping-nato-relevant/.
[64] Amnesty International, "Libya: Deaths of detainees amid widespread torture," Amnesty International News, last updated 26 January 2012, accessed 24 March 2012, http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/libya-deaths-detainees-amid-widespread-torture-2012-01-26; Tom Heneghan, "Freed from Gaddafi, Libyan Sufis face violent Islamists," Reuters (1 February 2012), accessed 24 March 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/01/us-libya-sufis-idUSTRE8101LA20120201; Timothy Bancroft-Hinchey, "The West, Syria, and Libya," Moscow Top News, last updated January 2012, accessed 24 March 2012, http://www.moscowtopnews.com/?area=postView&id=2390.
[65] Amnesty International, "Libya: Deaths of detainees," http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/libya-deaths-detainees-amid-widespread-torture-2012-01-26.

populations, is an exceedingly narrow and problematic construction of a desirable end state.

Further complicating the evaluation of Libya as a successful intervention is the issue of ripple effects from the toppling of the Gadhafi regime. The recent conflict in Mali appears to have been fed – at least in part – by arms taken from Libyan arsenals as the government there fell with no clear or organized successor. Similarly, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has gained access to weapons and resources, as well as increased influence in Libya in the months since Gadhafi's ouster.[66]

While the R2P is frequently interpreted as the justification for, or necessity of, armed intervention, the origins of the concept are slightly but significantly different. The notion of formally linking the legitimacy of a state's sovereignty with its protection of its own people was explicitly developed in the 1990s, primarily by UN diplomat Francis Deng. The titular responsibility applied not to the international community writ large, nor to a specific intervening power, but to the government of a state to its people.[67] The Canadian-convened International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) – by whom the R2P was conceived – provided a theoretical framework for integrating this inversion of the state as servant to the people with the principles guiding international relations, and asserted that the R2P takes precedence over non-interference in the sovereignty of a state that cannot or will not protect its citizens.[68]

This was not the tenor of the NATO intervention in Libya. Lloyd Axworthy, one of the founding fathers of the doctrine, states that R2P "is about the protection of civilians, should be considered primarily preventative and considers military action a very last resort."[69] Axworthy and former cabinet minister Allan Rock describe Libya as "the first real test case" of R2P in action, and consider it a victory for the principle.[70] Even stipulating that failed states are a threat to international stability, and further that NATO and Canada have a moral obligation to act in the interests of human security, the harm done by taking actions before the conflict triggered the need for this "very last resort" is not mitigated. From the uprising's first manifestation as protests in Benghazi to the adoption of UN Resolution 1970 a week and a half later, between 300 and 500 Libyans were killed by the Gadhafi regime. Further, a full month passed before Resolution 1973 made provisions for the use of force on humanitarian grounds. In this interval, the absence of mediation or second tier diplomacy, the creation of safety zones, and active negotiations with

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[66] Yahia H. Zoubir, "Qaddafi's Spawn: What the Dictator's Demise Unleashed in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs,* July 24, 2012

[67] F.M. Deng, S. Kimaro, T. Lyons, D. Rothchild, and W. Zartman, Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa (Washington: Brookings Institute, 1996).

[68] International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001).

[69] Lloyd Axworthy, "Don't allow Libya to define R2P," World Brief (13 March 2012), accessed on 12 April 2012, http://globalbrief.ca/lloydaxworthy/2012/03/13/dont-allow-libya-to-define-r2p/.

[70] Lloyd Axworthy and Allan Rock, "Op-Ed: A Victory for the Responsibility to Protect," The Ottawa Citizen (25 October 2011), accessed on 4 July 2012, http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/component/content/article/35-r2pcs-topics/3719-lloyd-axworthy-and-allan-rock-op-ed-a-victory-for-the-responsibility-to-protect.

both the Gadhafi regime and emerging leaders in the opposition "reduced the likelihood of a mediated solution to the crisis."[71]

Officially, Canada began its mission in Libya in support of NATO's objectives of protecting civilians and civilian-populated areas, and in enforcing the UNSC Resolution 1973 (2011). One commentator referred to the mission as "classic humanitarian intervention," particularly as it followed former PM Paul Martin's call to the UN to bring forward a resolution for the use of R2P doctrine.[72] Despite the framing of a humanitarian mission in Parliament, however, comments by Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird alluding to goals of regime change indicate that considerations other than those of a purely humanitarian nature influenced the choice to deploy the CF to Libya, as well as how it operated there.

Baird is quoted as saying that in addition to providing humanitarian assistance, the military mission will "degrade the capabilities of the regime and create the conditions for a genuine political opening."[73] While removing Gadhafi from power was a stated objective of the US,[74] LGen Bouchard repeatedly denied that there was a similar Canadian regime change objective. However, one NATO member after another recognized the Transitional National Council (TNC) as the sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people, attempting to isolate Gadhafi and his supporters in order to ensure that the regime no longer had any legitimate authority in Libya.[75] Canada made a statement in support of the TNC in June 2011.[76] Also in June, representatives of *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* gave voice to the need for a change in regime: on 10 June 2011, Wing Commander Mike Bracken, military spokesperson for *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*, gave a statement arguing that Gadhafi "no longer has any right to call himself [Libya's] leader… Gadhafi will not win this fight. He must go… Gadhafi's only future is out of power and out of Libya."[77]

Canada's role expanded over the course of the Libya mission. Canadian troops originally "went on a mission to rescue people in the line of fire, then to deliver aid, then to escort sorties. Now they are dropping bombs,"[78] and are announcing support for new governments. One Canadian scholar goes so far as to call the humanitarian lens put on *Operation MOBILE* a "weak excuse" to enter a war of choice.[79] Participating in a mission with allies who support regime change,

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[71] Sid S. Rashid, "Applying Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation in Libya: A missed opportunity for the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) and Syria," presented at the CIPS conference, Ottawa, 23 March 2012.
[72] Craig Martin, "Debating Canada's Objectives and Role in Libya," The Huffington Post (13 June 2011) accessed 12 April 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/craig-martin/canada-libya_b_876014.html.
[73] Aaron Wherry, "The Commons: Getting the words right," Macleans (14 June 2011), accessed on 12 April 2012, http://www2.macleans.ca/2011/06/14/the-commons-getting-the-words-right/#more-197125.
[74] Karen Parrish, "Gates Outlines U.S. Role as NATO Takes Over Libya Mission," American Forces Press Service, News, (31 March 2011), accessed on 18 April 2012, http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=63378.
[75] Statement by Oana Lungescu, Press briefing on Libya by Oana Lungescu, the NATO Spokesperson, and Colonel Roland Lavoie, Operation Unified Protector military spokesperson, 19 July 2011.
[76] Statement by Oana Lungescu, Press briefing on Libya by NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu and Mike Bracken, Spokesperson for the Operation Unified Protector, 17 June 2011.
[77] Statement by Wing Commander Mike Bracken, Press briefing on Libya by NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu and Mike Bracken, Spokesperson for the Operation Unified Protector, 10 June 2011.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Barry Cooper, "Libyan Mission is War of Choice," The 3-Ds Blog: Diplomacy, Defence, Development (2 August 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, http://www.cdfai.org/the3dsblog/?p=402.

combined with Baird's statement above, suggest that Canada's evolving role in Libya demonstrated "mission creep,"[80] as the mission grew beyond its originally-stated objectives in *Operation MOBILE* to involvement in driving the Gadhafi regime out of Libya in *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*.[81]

## 3.4 Other drivers of Canadian intervention

If the mission to Libya did not fall completely under the parameters of a humanitarian mission, why did Canada so willingly, even eagerly, commit combat resources to the mission? The timeline for Canada's involvement becomes particularly significant when answering this question. It is important to note that *Operation MOBILE* became a combat mission under the aegis of *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN*, before the NATO mission had been fully formed or approved. In fact, Canada was participating in the air campaign a full eight days before it came under the mantle of the NATO mission. A Congressional Research Service report from April 2012 states that "[some] analysts argued that Canada took part in the mission in order to demonstrate its continuing commitment to the North Atlantic alliance".[82] The allusion to Canada's desire to demonstrate its commitment to NATO is somewhat misleading. Indeed, it was primarily to the US that Canada sought to demonstrate its commitment to a strong defence partnership.

There are several reasons highlighting the importance of Canada's participation in *ODYSSEY DAWN* to the Canada-US defence relationship. First, as J.L. Granatstein notes, the Harper government put significant effort into improving the North American defence relationship and showing the US that Canada is a good ally well before the Libya mission. Granatstein states that the Harper administration prudently recognized the US as the only defence partner on which it can truly rely. He writes: "The Germans won't fight, the Dutch can't, the British can no longer afford a military, and the French want to run everything."[83] It was not the NATO relationship that Canada was primarily tending to during the deployment to Libya, but its relationship with the US.

Cooperation between the two North American states took a prominent place at a joint press conference held between Minister Baird and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on 4 August 2011.[84] But why did Canada choose to take such a strong position in this particular conflict? It was, after all, Britain and France who initially called for collective action in Libya. Derek Burney argues that, in this instance, it was extremely beneficial to both states for Canada to back the US. He writes that the US was not interested in taking the lead on a combat mission in a third Middle Eastern Muslim state. More pertinently, the US did not have an overriding strategic interest in

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[80] John Allemang and Daniel Leblanc, "As politicians hit hustings, Canada's Libya mission flies under the radar," The Globe and Mail (24 March 2011), last updated 25 March 2011, accessed on 12 March 2012, http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/as-politicians-hit-the-hustings-who-holds-the-reins-on-our-cf-18s/article1955970/?service=mobile.

[81] Martin, "Debating Canada's Objectives," http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/craig-martin/canada-libya_b_876014.html.

[82] Carl Ek & Ian F. Fergusson, "Canada-U.S. Relations," CSR Report for Congress (5 April 2012), p.12.

[83] J.L. Granatstein, "A Very Albertan Foreign Policy," The 3-Ds Blog: Diplomacy, Defence, Development (19 September 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, http://www.cdfai.org/the3dsblog/?p=490.

[84] Luiza Ch Savage, "Transcript of Clinton-Baird presson conference on Libya, Somalia and Keystone pipeline," Bilateralist (5 August 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, http://www.bilateralist.com/2011/08/05/transcript-clinton-baird/.

engaging in Libya.[85] There is also speculation that Canada may have additionally benefitted from its involvement by being offered the leadership role for the NATO mission. Mark Collins wrote soon after the announcement that LGen Bouchard would command the mission that the assumption among defence analysts was that a British or French commander would lead in light of their initial call to action. This implies that the choice of a Canadian lead was a surprise one, possibly supported by the US.[86] Canada is the most interoperable with the Americans out of all NATO allies and Canadian leadership rather than European would possibly allow a greater degree of American influence without their appearing to lead the mission. It is evident that "alliance tending" was a motivational factor for Canada's early involvement in *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN*. The question now remains, what other factors influenced Canada's decision to take action in Libya?

As identified in Canada's 2005 IPS, there are eight criteria for Canadian involvement in an expeditionary operation. Only five of the eight criteria were clearly met in the initial stages of the Libya case.

- First, the mission supported Canada's foreign policy objectives in terms of multilateral international action to ensure respect for political liberty and human values.
- Second, there was adequate international political and financial support for the mission, shown by the passage of several UN resolutions and the voluntary participation of many NATO and non-NATO countries, sixteen providing air assets and twelve delivering naval resources.[87]
- Third, there was an effective process of consultation between mission partners in place; the Foreign Ministers of the allies and operational partners participating in the NATO-led mission met regularly to discuss their joint efforts in Libya, and also regularly consulted with UN representatives and other regional actors and international organizations.[88]
- Fourth, the mission did not jeopardize other CF commitments, given the downgrading of the Canadian engagement in Afghanistan.
- Fifth, the total proposed forces were appropriate for meeting the stated mandate. Seven jets represent a significant portion of deployable Canadian air assets. Further, contributing ten percent of total air sorties over Libya represented a commitment commensurate with a meaningful role in a mission of this scope.[89]

Of the three remaining criteria, two can be considered fulfilled if they are liberally evaluated.

- First, the mandate of the operation was realistic, clear, and enforceable in terms of supporting a no-fly zone and an arms embargo. However, intervening to "protect civilians" by "all necessary measures" is inherently vague and unclear. In addition, this

[85] Derek Burney, "Libya: Why Are We Involved, A Policy Update Paper" CDFAI (March 2011).
[86] Mark Collins, "Look Who's in Charge of NATO's Libya Actions," The 3-Ds Blog: Diplomacy, Defence, Development (25 March 2011), accessed 4 June 2012, http://www.cdfai.org/the3dsblog/?p=156.
[87] NATO, "Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR, Final Mission Stats," Fact Sheet (2 November 2011), accessed 18 April 2012, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_11/20111108_111107-factsheet_up_factsfigures_en.pdf.
[88] Statement by Carmen Romero, Joint press briefing on events concerning Libya by the NATO Deputy Spokesperson, Carmen Romero and by Brigadier General Mark van Uhm, Chief of Allied Operations, Allied Command Operations, 12 April 2011.
[89] The Canadian Forces website states that seventy-seven CF-18s are currently in operation by the RCAF, however this number does not reflect the jets grounded for maintenance.

initial mandate became increasingly blurred as Canada began to expand its participation in bombing and regime change related activities.

- Second, there was a defined concept of operations and an effective command and control structure within *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR*, but it is not clear if this was the case within *Operation MOBILE* on its own. Additionally, as was demonstrated by the evolution of the bombings of Libyan targets carried out by the CF, there were no clear rules of engagement.

Finally, the last criterion was not met at all. There was no clear exit strategy in place at the outset of the Libya intervention and only a vaguely described end-state for the mission. At the onset of *Operation MOBILE* the mandate for the CF was the protection of human life, a nebulous directive in the absence of clear parameters and authorizations. The original mandate did not explicitly include regime change, and yet once that had successfully been accomplished, the CF pulled out of Libya.

If the federal government still subscribes to the IPS, why did we choose to go to Libya when these eight criteria were not met? Does this case demonstrate that the Canadian criteria for rapid response deployments need to be reevaluated?

The most prominent Canadian voices from the media relating to the mission in Libya have been those speculating that the mission was used by the government to justify the purchase of the highly controversial F-35 Joint Strike Fighter jets. As the Royal Canadian Air Force participated in bombing for the first time since 1999, the exercise was an illustration of the utility of fighter jets, described by Dan Gardner as the fastest way to respond to unforeseen or rapidly evolving situations.[90] While one writer pointed out that the CF-18s lack of interoperability with NATO allies didn't prevent Canada from participating in the bombing campaign,[91] the majority of voices used the opportunity to highlight the advanced age of the CF-18s and the need for them to be replaced, as well as highlighting the virtues of the F-35.[92] As it is unlikely that the CF will confront a major conflict on any domestic shores, it is a certainty that Canada will maintain an expeditionary capability. Air support is vital to the success of many missions, whether it be close air support or the long-range targeting abilities of jets that could obviate the need for "boots on the ground" and protect these forces when necessary. Libya proved to be a perfect staging ground to remind the Canadian public of this.

Canada also has substantial economic and trade interests in Libya, which is Canada's second largest recipient of investment in Africa. According to the DFAIT fact sheet on Canadian investment in Libya, Canada exported more than $51 million to the country in 2010 alone.[93] While the direct investment figures for that year have not been released, Canadian companies

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[90] Dan Gardner, "Libya shows why Canada needs F-35 jets," The Vancouver Sun (25 March 2011), accessed on 14 April 2012, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/what-the-f-35-brings-to-the-fight/article1977815/.

[91] Aaron Wherry, "Why the F-35?" Macleans (2 April 2012), accessed 12 April 2012, www2.macleans.ca/tag/libya.

[92] For example see: Paul Koring, "What the F-35 brings to the fight," The Globe and Mail (8 April 2011), accessed on 12 April 2012, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/what-the-f-35-brings-to-the-fight/article1977815/.

[93] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), "Libya," last modified March 2012, accessed 17 April 2012, http:www.international.gc.ca/world/embassies/factsheets/libya-FS-en.pdf.

with hundreds of employees in Libya and hundreds of millions of dollars invested, made headlines for rushed evacuations, significant losses in the region, and some questionably close ties with the Gadhafi regime.[94]

Major Canadian companies such as SNC-Lavalin, which holds construction contracts worth over one billion dollars in Libya, are heavily invested in the state. Suncor, through forty-nine percent ownership in Harouge, holds a multi-billion dollar, thirty-year deal with Libya that began in 2008.[95] Suncor's investment in Libya as of December 2011 was estimated to be more than $900 million,[96] but the company suffered financial write-downs of at least $400 million for each of the last three quarters of 2011.[97] So great was Suncor's investment in Libya that members of the company accompanied Minister Baird to the country in October 2011.[98] The combination of money, oil, and Canadian citizens working in Libya makes a convincing argument that Canada may have been eager to protect its business interests there.

A final potential motivating factor is Canada's need to shore up its international reputation in light of having lost the UN Security Council seat just months before the deployment to Libya. Phillippe Lagassé of the University of Ottawa writes that Canada doesn't have enough political capital to truly make a difference in Libya, and so restoring its international reputation must be considered as a possible explanation for the enthusiasm for the mission.[99] Building on this need to save face internationally, it is clear that one driving force behind Canada's participation was a need to fulfill commitments to its largest defence partner, the US, and to NATO.

With so many easily identifiable Canadian interests in Libya, the mission could have been framed as engaging as an active member of a strong alliance, protecting domestic interests, in addition to playing to the Canadian ideology of the protection of human life. The question that must be asked is why Canada chose to frame the mission solely in humanitarian terms given these other potential rationales? Furthermore, having decided to contribute, why did Canada choose to participate in the way that it did?

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[94] Graeme Smith, "SNC-Lavalin developed close relationship with Gadhafi son: documents" The Globe and Mail (14 Jan 2012), accessed 30 March 2012, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/snc-lavalin-developed-close-relationship-with-gadhafi-son-documents/article2302566/.
[95] Chris Sorensen and Erica Alini, "SNC-Lavalin is under scrutiny for its ties to Gadhafi regime," Macleans (13 March 2012), accessed 25 March 2012, www2.macleans.ca/tag/libya.
[96] "Summary of fourth quarter report," Suncor Response, last modified 8 February 2012, accessed 8 April 2012, http:response.suncor.com/libya-operations/.
[97] Ibid; "Discussion of Libya in the third-quarter results," Suncor Response, last modified 7 November 2011, accessed 8 April 2012, http:response.suncor.com/libya-operations/; "Update of Libya in Suncor's Q2 report," Suncor Response, last modified 2 August 2011, accessed 8 April 2012, http:response.suncor.com/libya-operations/
[98] "Suncor Visit to Tripoli with Minister Baird," Suncor Response, last modified 11 October 2011, accessed 8 April 2012, http:response.suncor.com/libya-operations/.
[99] Phillippe Lagassé, "Libya and Canada's Political Influence: A Different Perspective," Centre for International Policy Studies Blog (October 28, 2011), accessed 25 March 2012, http://cips.uottawa.ca/libya-and-canadas-political-influence-a-different-perspective/.

## 3.5 The Canadian contribution in Libya

Throughout its mission in Libya, NATO sought to maintain a high operational tempo against legitimate targets until three goals had been achieved: all attacks and threats of attacks against civilians had ended; the Gadhafi regime had withdrawn all military and paramilitary forces to their bases; and full humanitarian access was granted to the Libyan people. These three objectives informed all military action taken by NATO in Libya and served as the benchmarks by which the success of the overall mission was measured.[100]

While conducting these military operations, NATO continually acknowledged that there must also eventually be a political solution in Libya to ensure the continued protection of the population against violence.[101] It firmly insisted that these political goals – including possible regime change – were not the job of the military and thus were not a part of the NATO mandate; NATO's stated military objectives certainly did not include mention of Gadhafi's removal from power as a condition of success. However, analysis of NATO statements and press releases issued by the alliance over the course of operations in Libya indicate that regime change became a fully implied, if not actually articulated, element of the NATO mission. This implication is borne out by the provision of military support to the rebels.

Canada initially sent CF-18s (supported by CP-140 Aurora reconnaissance aircraft, HMCS Charlottetown, and two tankers)  to enforce a no-fly zone, preventing the transport of arms and munitions into Libya and protecting the country's civilian population from its aggressive leader. However, the mission quickly changed as demonstrated by the outline of NATO statements and actions above. Retired Major-General Lewis Mackenzie noted in late March 2011that "mission creep has already happened," referring to the French military's widening of its attacks beyond the UN's formal confines.[102] While regime change presents complexities both within the international community and for domestic politics, the feasibility of an intervention that transforms institutions and relationships to the degree required for humanitarian concerns without also effecting political change is dubious.

Canada's deployment of CF-18s and supporting infrastructure demonstrated the importance of air power to expeditionary action, and further has the benefit of being low-risk with regards to Canadian casualties. The deployment of the Royal Canadian Navy had the same benefits, and highlighted the role of a blue water navy on the eve of a new ship building contract announcement. So soon after the end of Canada's fighting mission in Afghanistan, Canadians were wary of any more battle fatalities. Following years of difficult deployments, the Army was also experiencing organizational fatigue, and a mission not requiring "boots on the ground" was ideal for Canada.[103] While the decision to send the RCAF and RCN was congruent with the capabilities of the CF, the broad support of the Canadian public, and the political needs of the

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[100] Statement on Libya following the working lunch of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs with non-NATO contributors to Operation Unified Protector, Press Release (2011) 045, 14 April 2011.

[101] Press briefings on Libya: 28 March 2011, 8 April 2011, 14 April 2011, 29 April 2011, 3 May 2011, 10 June 2011, 17 June 2011, 7 July 2011, 26 July 2011.

[102] Allemang and Leblanc, "As politicians hit hustings," http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/as-politicians-hit-the-hustings-who-holds-the-reins-on-our-cf-18s/article1955970/?service=mobile.

[103] DND, Canada First Defence Strategy, "Rebuilding the Canadian Forces," Government of Canada, 2008, accessed 24 March 2012, http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/pri/first-premier/June18_0910_CFDS_ english_low-res.pdf.

government of the day, these factors do not explain why Canada committed only seven jets and a single frigate.

This issue is especially pertinent in light of Canada's leadership role during Libya. Seven jets and a frigate have been referred to as purely symbolic contributions to the mission. When evaluated in the appropriate context, however, the Canadian contribution is proportionate to that of the other allies and for the leadership role. Canadian jets flew 446 missions over Libya, ten percent of the NATO total.[104] This was despite the fact that Canada contributed only 4.5 percent of personnel and 3.5 percent of aircraft to the mission. [105] In this particular instance the asset commitments Canada was able to make were meaningful contributions to the mission. This does not mean that these contributions will always suffice for future NATO action. Canada must continue to contribute proportionate capabilities to missions if they wish to retain an influential voice at the table.

Canada must consider its allies' ability to remain at the table as well. *Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR* may have revealed serious shortcomings within the NATO alliance. Several allies within the organization refused to participate in the Libya intervention, while those who did choose to contribute relied heavily on the US for key intelligence and logistics support. The Americans were responsible for destroying anti-aircraft defences, often resupplying the Europeans with weapons, and providing eighty percent of aerial refueling. Only eight of the twenty-eight member states in NATO even took part in bombing missions: France, Britain, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and the US.[106] While Canada's relationship with the US is of primary importance, NATO remains one of the possible counterbalances to American unilateralism, and Canadian involvement in NATO can correct for otherwise overwhelming American influence.

This lack of NATO enthusiasm, or support, for the Libya intervention suggests a waning interest in, or more recently the inability to spend money on, the military and defence in Europe. Since the end of the Cold War, defence spending by European NATO countries has fallen by almost twenty per cent. In the early 1990s, defence expenditures in European countries represented almost thirty-four percent of NATO's total, with the US and Canada covering the remaining sixty-six percent. Since then, the share of NATO's security burden shouldered by European countries has fallen to just twenty-one percent.[107] While the Libya mission demonstrated that European states are currently still able to play a central role in complex military operations, its ability to maintain this capacity in the years ahead is questionable. Given the rising debt levels in Europe, the trend towards continually reducing defence expenditure, as well as the increasing

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[104] John Ibbitson and Daniel Leblanc, "Canada turns commitment into clout in Libya," Globe and Mail, 21 October 2011, accessed 3 April 2012, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/canada-turns-commitment-into-clout-in-libya/article2210169/.

[105] http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2011/05/22/Libya_Coalition_Sorties1200.jpg; http://www.acus.org/natosource/national-composition-nato-strike-sorties-libya

[106] Doug Bandow, "NATO and Libya, its time to retire a fading alliance," Forbes (2 January 2012), accessed 18 April 2012, http://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2012/01/02/nato-an-libya-its-time-to-retire-fading-alliance/.

[107] NATO Secretary General Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO after Libya, the Atlantic Alliance in Austere Times," Reprinted by permission of Foreign Affairs (July/August 2011), 29 June 2011, accessed 18 April 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_75836.htm.

levels of defence spending by other emerging powers, even NATO Secretary General Fogh Rasmussen questions whether NATO will be able to maintain its operational edge in five or ten years.[108] Canada must consider how this potential future might impact its strategic focus on multilateral expeditionary action alongside powerful allies.

[108] Ibid.

# 4 Strategic Lessons Learned: *Operation MOBILE*

Canada's participation in the international intervention in Libya is now complete, but it is unlikely to take long before Canada is asked once again by NATO, the UN, or a 'coalition of the willing' to commit its armed forces to similar action overseas. Before that time, it is imperative that Canada evaluates its experience in Libya from a strategic perspective, with respect both to the planned role in the intervention and to its execution, to determine where such commitments fit within overall Canadian defence strategy and how Canada should approach similar situations in the future.

The following, in no particular order of importance, represent the strategic lessons Canada should learn from its intervention in Libya, and which should be taken into consideration before the next time the nation considers a major military commitment.

**Lesson #1: Canada must articulate national interests as motivating factors in mission participation.**
In future interventions, the Canadian government must be honest regarding the various strategic interests it holds in specific operations. Politicians and the public alike are more likely to lose support for a mission if they believe that the government is acting with ulterior motives, or without fully disclosing their rationale to the public. Protection of human life is always a laudable justification for action, but a country will not act solely for the purpose of acting. In the Libyan case, Canada's humanitarian interventionist tendencies or moral character were upheld, business interests were protected, a need for military investment was reinforced, and status among allies was maintained. With all these varied interests in Libya, Canada had every reason to participate and take a leadership role.

**Lesson #2: Canada must make proportional commitments to international operations.**
If Canada is to take a leadership role in future interventions, it must provide proportionate means to that position of authority to truly benefit from the international prestige of such a role. In the event that the military capacity to carry a larger share of the burden is simply lacking, increased participation and commitment of resources in other avenues is crucial. Examples include financial and development aid, training of local police and military forces to assist countries in becoming stable and secure as rapidly as possible, and advising on post-conflict reintegration.

While Canada was able to make a meaningful contribution in Libya, this was in part due to the serendipity of having no other major international obligations consuming resources at the time. Canada had begun to withdraw its combat forces in Afghanistan and its CF-18s were preparing for an exercise in Iceland when the Libya mission was undertaken, so were easily diverted to North Africa.[109] Canada must recognize that to maintain this kind of success and asset capability in the future, it must plan for it, rather than relying on fortuity.

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[109] "Iceland air support sent to Libya, Canada rearranges cover," IceNews (4 April 2011), accessed 12 June 2012, http://www.icenews.is/index.php/2011/04/04/iceland-air-support-sent-to-libya-canada-rearranges-cover/.
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**Lesson #3: Canada must develop contingency plans for shifting mission priorities.**
When the CF are deployed to accomplish a task, their goals and mandate should be clearly elucidated in the public sphere and particularly within government and the military. No matter how well these goals are set, and the appropriate means are specified, the reality of any operation will lead to revisions with respect not only to what is possible but also to what is desirable. A component of flexibility should be established prior to the mission, and reevaluated during the mission, to ensure both that the CF aren't rendered less useful by too stringent a tasking, and that the parameters of CF participation do not sway unacceptably outside the boundaries of the initial commitment.

**Lesson #4: Canada must consider preventative elements of the R2P while also ensuring that its intervention results in a net benefit to the affected region.**
A true commitment to the R2P requires a substantial investment and willingness to use other tools of statecraft involving not only public negotiations and diplomacy, but also mediation, the negotiation of zones of agreement with all parties involved, and second tier or covert diplomacy. The architects of the R2P saw military force as the last resort and least desirable tool. Paying close attention to early signs that unrest is about to escalate to a crisis, and using these tools can, in the best circumstances, make formal military intervention unnecessary while providing a more comprehensive picture of the parties involved and their agendas should intervention still be required.

Second, a true humanitarian intervention cannot simply create a momentary pause in human rights violations, but must contribute to the circumstances that will lead to a stable government that will protect its population. It is not the role of NATO, Canada, or other intervening parties to determine the composition or character of successor governments. Equally, withdrawing from an intervention while leaving behind chaos or a nascent government likely to repeat the crimes of the previous rulers is not consistent with the spirit of humanitarianism. As it is likely to lead to the need for a subsequent intervention, it is also impractical.

**Lesson #5: Canada must maintain an expeditionary capability, beyond just "boots on the ground."**
Canada is unlikely to face a physical threat to its territory in the foreseeable future. Thus, expeditionary action to protect Canadian interests and to contribute to international security will continue to be a necessary component of any Canadian defence strategy. Past deployments to the Balkans and to various regions of Africa have proven that Canada is a valuable coalition member from a ground operations perspective. The mission in Libya is a reminder that missions can, and increasingly will, involve other methods of insertion or intervention besides "boots on the ground." Being air and sea capable will become increasingly important as missions with goals of short-term intervention are planned, with the intention of lowering the risk of Canadian casualties. These capabilities must also be fully interoperable with other NATO militaries.

**Lesson #6: Canada must contribute to maintaining the viability of NATO.**
There was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm among NATO members to participate in the Libya intervention. The mission itself indicated that decreasing defence expenditure within European nations might hinder their military prowess, and thus the military capacity of NATO, in the future. Canada continues to share common goals, values, and interests with NATO member states, something that cannot necessarily be said of many other emerging powers. For instance,

none of Brazil, China, India, or Russia put their militaries or resources at the disposal of the coalition that emerged to intervene in Libya. Thus, Canada must encourage the maintenance of the NATO alliance by urging Europe to spend more on defence, and maintaining proportionate spending itself. As hard power continues to prove relevant to restoring and maintaining peace, NATO must spend the time and money necessary in order to maintain a wide spectrum of military capabilities.

Equally true, however, is the fact that soft power will also continue to prove relevant. NATO is a *military* alliance in both structure and purpose, without any non-military avenues of international engagement, such as formal developmental or economic tools. Given the trend toward supporting human security, and increasing economic interdependence, Canada should introduce and support a plan for the expansion of NATO's mandate beyond strictly military action, possibly by involving NATO in stability and development dimensions after the active military phase of an intervention. This could provide a tangible way to continue the viability of the alliance in the changing international environment. In addition an expansion of this nature supports greater Canadian involvement in NATO given our propensity and success with these types of actions.

**Lesson #7: Canada must strive to maintain positive relations with the United States in future international interventions.**

From a Canadian perspective, one very successful aspect of the Libya intervention was the development of positive communication and cooperation in terms of resource sharing with the United States. Given the importance of American support to Canada's overall defence strategy, and to the growth of Canadian industry and trade, maintenance of this relationship structure for use in future joint expeditionary action is in Canada's best interests. This relationship could be further cemented, and future joint interventions facilitated, by preparing more explicitly for international coalition deployments, through exercises and simulations, as well as establishing roles and commitments for countries involved. The formal infrastructure for successful cooperation with the US, in the shape of NORAD and the PJDB, should remain a priority.

**Lesson #8: Canada must develop a strategic voice.**

Canada has made one major grand strategic decision since the end of the Second World War: to align with the West within the international system. Since that time, it has chosen to follow the strategic lead of others, contributing to international missions instigated by other states and continually relinquishing strategic control of its military forces once volunteered for expeditionary action. The mission in Libya was no exception. If Canada hopes to ever have a strategic voice within international affairs it must pursue a leadership role within our alliances, which should be explicitly discussed at the national level prior to presentation at the coalition table. Canada's strategic vision rests primarily upon membership in multilateral relationships with other states. But in order to ensure not only our own security but also international stability and collective security, Canada should develop a distinct national agenda to guide the development of the Canadian Forces and to define parameters within which the CF will be deployed alongside our allies.

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In March 2011 Canada formed *Operation MOBILE* in response to the humanitarian crisis in Libya. This operation became part of the US led *Operation ODYSSEY DAWN* and later joined the international coalition Operation *UNIFIED PROTECTOR* in response to UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973. Publicly framed as a humanitarian mission, and described as the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, the mission served as an opportunity for Canada to demonstrate its value and relevance as an ally and coalition member. This paper explores the strategic lessons of the Libya intervention for Canada.

This paper first provides an overview of Canadian foreign and defence policy in the post-Second World War era. Next, it discusses Canadian strategy and Canada's specific strategic interests in the Middle East. This provides the framework for the analysis of domestic and international considerations which influenced Canada's role in the intervention and the scope of its commitment in Libya. The paper concludes with eight strategic lessons that Canada and the CF should learn from Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR.

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