

Africa in Libya's Foreign Policy: History, Ideology and Realism

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Dr. Youssef M, Sawani

Africa has been a focal point for Libya's foreign policy orientations, This was as true either before or after the revolution of 1969. However, the African orientation of Libya underwent considerable developments. These were the result of The interaction of domestic, regional and international factors. It is important to note that for the last ten years or so it appeared more logical to link domestic environment to external behaviour and vice versa. Libya suffered a great deal from the sanctions imposed by the US-dominated Security Council. The Lockerbie issue further revealed how vulnerable Libya may be.

Bearing the strong American pressure Libya had to adjust to survive. The emphasis has now become on political security The ideological and identity –related premises behind its foreign policy underwent a major process of adaptation, which moved to the fore. Libya attempted to rehabilitate itself on the world stage. This may help explain the behaviour of Libya and the many directions its foreign policy took during the last decade

However, and despite the presence of the political will Libyas own internal realities and structures were not qualified to lend a proper hand of support.

Libya's African policy is part and parcel of this process. Despite the strong rhetoric Libya's African policy is a realist approach and is very closely related to this process. Therefore, this paper seeks an examination of this policy. It is assumed that African orientation is a result of the interaction of these factors and not merely a question of identity or rediscovering it While this approach assigns a proper weight to the role of the historical links between Libya and Africa, particularly across the Sahara, it is significant to consider the present policy in different terms.

Dr. Youssef Mohamed Sawani
Department of Political Science,
Al-Fateh University, Tripoli
Libya
Te/Fax++21821 3403586
Mobile -H-21B 91 2137026

E-mail sawani_youssef@yahoo.co,uh