



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION KEY DOCUMENTS

LIBYA

4 APRIL 2007

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1. Preface

- i This Country of Origin Information (COI) Key Documents has been produced by Research, Development and Statistics (RDS), Home Office, for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. It provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The COI Key Documents includes information available up to 28 March 2007.
- ii The COI Key Documents is an indexed list of key reports, papers and articles produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources. It does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy.
- iii For Home Office users, the COI Key Documents provides direct electronic access to each source referred to in the document, via a link on the source numbers in the index and list of sources. For the benefit of external users, the relevant web link has also been included, together with the date that the link was accessed.
- iv As noted above, the documents identified concentrate mainly on human rights issues. By way of introduction, brief background information on Libya is also provided. Please note, this background material is not intended to provide a summary of the material contained in the key documents listed.
- v This COI Key Documents and the documents listed are publicly disclosable.
- vi Any comments regarding this COI Key Documents or suggestions for additional documents are very welcome and should be submitted to the Home Office as below.

Country of Origin Information Service

Home Office
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Website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/country_reports.html

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fact that such a review has been undertaken, nor any comments made, should be taken to imply endorsement of the material. Some of the material examined by the Panel relates to countries designated or proposed for designation for the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Panel's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself.

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2. Background information on Libya

Full Country Name: The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Area: 1.76m sq km

Population: 5.41m

Capital City: Tripoli

People: 97% Berber and Arab

Languages: Arabic. English and Italian understood in major cities [2] [30]

Religion(s): 97% Sunni Muslim

Currency: Dinar

Major Political Parties: None

Government: Jamahiriya

Head of State: Colonel Muammar Al Qadhafi, 'Leader of the Revolution
(de facto Head of State)'

Prime Minister: Dr Al-Baghdadi Ali al-Mahmudi

Foreign Minister: Abdul Rahman Shalgam

(Information extracted from the FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

GEOGRAPHY

"Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa. It lies on the north coast of Africa, on the Mediterranean Sea, and is bordered by Tunisia, Algeria, Niger, Chad, Sudan and Egypt. It is a low-lying country, much of which is desert. There are mountainous regions in the South and North West and North East." (FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

RECENT HISTORY

"Muammar Al Qadhafi came to power in a coup on 1 September 1969 which toppled the monarchy of King Idris. The ideological basis of Qadhafi's regime is his own political philosophy, the Third Universal Theory, set out in his Green Book. Drawing heavily on Islam, socialism and Bedouin tradition, the Third Universal Theory calls for a system of direct rule by the people through a series of committees. It is intended as an alternative to capitalism and communism, and is applicable to all countries. In March 1979 Qadhafi renounced virtually all his positions in government and thereafter became known by the title 'Leader of the Revolution and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces'. He is known locally as the 'Brother Leader'. There have been at least six failed coup plots during Qadhafi's period in power." (FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

"On 21 December 1988, Pan Am Flight 103 was blown up over Lockerbie in Scotland. All 259 passengers and crew were killed, as were 11 residents of Lockerbie. Two thirds of the victims were American and 44 were British. In November 1991 the Lord Advocate and the US Acting Attorney General issued warrants for the arrest of two Libyans, Al-Megrahi and Fhimah. They were accused of placing a bomb on board the aircraft in Malta, and charged with murder. UN sanctions were imposed in March 1992, after Libya failed to respond satisfactorily to Security Council resolution 731." (FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

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RECENT EVENTS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

"Tripoli formally took responsibility for the [Lockerbie] incident in 2003. The move, part of a deal to compensate families of the 270 victims, heralded the lifting of UN sanctions. Months later, Libya renounced weapons of mass destruction, paving the way for a further blossoming of relations with the West." (BBC Country Profile, 24 January 2007) [28a] "One of Col Gaddafi's sons, Sayf al-Islam Gaddafi, is said to be behind the drive to break Libya's isolation. He has denied reports that he is being groomed to succeed his father." (BBC Country Profile, 24 January 2007) [28a]

In December 2006, "At the end of a retrial, a court finds five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor guilty of deliberately infecting Libyan children with HIV. All six are sentenced to death." (BBC Timeline, 24 January 2007) [28a] "Palestinian doctor Ashraf Ahmad Jum'a Al-Hajjouj and Bulgarian nurses Valya Georgieva Chervenashka, Snezhana Ivanova Dimitrova, Nasya Stoycheva Nenova, Valentina Manolova Siropulo and Kristiana Venelinova Valcheva have been in detention since 1999. They were first sentenced to death by firing squad in May 2004 after being convicted of deliberately infecting 426 children with HIV in al-Fateh Children's Hospital, Benghazi. The death sentences were overturned on 25 December 2005 by the Supreme Court, which ordered the health professionals to be retried after noting 'irregularities' in their arrest and interrogation." (AI Public Statement, 30 January 2007) [11b]

ECONOMY

"Libya is a major oil producer, with the oil sector contributing practically all export earnings and over one-quarter of GDP. Libya has begun a process of economic reform. Efforts are being made to modernise the economy as part of a broader campaign to reintegrate with the international community. Initial steps include applying for WTO membership, cautiously reducing subsidies, and announcing plans for privatisation. The non-oil manufacturing and construction sectors, which account for about 20% of GDP, have expanded from processing mostly agricultural products to include the production of petrochemicals, iron, steel, and aluminium. Libya imports about 75% of its food." (FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

"US sanctions on Libya were eased in April 2004 although prohibitions still apply to exports of equipment that might be used for lethal military purposes." (FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

GDP: \$46.3bn (2006)

Real GDP Growth: 8.1% (2006)

Inflation: 3.1% (2006)

Major Industries: Oil and gas, petrochemicals

Major trading partners: Italy, France, Germany, Turkey, Spain and the UK.

(Original Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, January 2007)

(Information extracted from the FCO Country Profile, January 2007) [2]

Exchange rate: British £1 = 2.59 Libyan Dinar, US \$1 = 1.34 Libyan Dinar, as of 9 March 2007. (Oanda.com FXConverter, 9 March 2007) [29a-29b]

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HUMAN RIGHTS

"Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi continued his bid in 2005 to change Libya's long-standing international image as a rogue state. Although he succeeded to a large degree in ending his country's diplomatic isolation, the changes have as yet meant little in terms of political rights or civil liberties for the population." (FH Freedom in the World 2006) "Human rights conditions in Libya improved somewhat in 2006 as the country continued its slow international reintegration, but serious violations remain. The government still restricts freedom of expression, and bans political parties and independent organizations. It continues to imprison individuals for criticizing Libya's political system, the government, or its leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi. Due process violations and torture remain concerns, as do disappearances unresolved from past years." (HRW World Report 2007) [12]

"The conviction of 85 members of the banned Libyan Islamic Group – also known as the Muslim Brothers (MB) – who had been sentenced to death or long prison terms in 2002 after an unfair trial was overturned by the Supreme Court [in 2005]. Their retrial before a newly established ad hoc court was ongoing at the end of the year. Five prisoners of conscience who had been held since 1998 were released but many other political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, were believed to be held and several new arrests were reported." (AI Annual Report 2006) [11a] "The government's human rights record remained poor [in 2006]. Citizens did not have the right to change their government. Reported torture, arbitrary arrest, and incommunicado detention remained problems. The government restricted civil liberties and freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association. The government did not fully protect the rights of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees." (USSD Report on Human Rights Practices 2006) [6b]

"There was still no clarity regarding the fate of suspected government opponents who 'disappeared' in previous years. Freedom of expression and association remained severely restricted and one journalist was killed in circumstances suggesting official complicity. At least six people, all foreign nationals, were executed. The rights of asylum-seekers and refugees were abused." (AI Annual Report 2006) [11a] "Other problems included poor prison conditions; impunity for government officials; lengthy political detention; denial of fair public trial; infringement of privacy rights; restrictions of freedom of religion; corruption and lack of transparency; societal discrimination against women, ethnic minorities, and foreign workers; trafficking in persons; and restriction of labor rights." (USSD Report on Human Rights Practices 2006) [6b]

"The People's Court, before which many political suspects had received grossly unfair trials, was formally abolished in January [2005]." (AI Annual Report 2006) [11a] "In 2006, the government continued its long-standing review of many Libyan laws, including proposals for a new penal code and code of criminal procedure. Under the new penal code, the secretary of justice told Human Rights Watch in 2005, the death penalty would remain only for the 'most dangerous crimes' and for 'terrorism.' At this writing, however, the government had presented neither the draft penal code nor the code of criminal procedure to Libya's main legislative body, the General People's Congress." (HRW World Report 2007) [12] "On March 2 [2006], the government released 132 political prisoners, including 86 members of the Muslim Brotherhood held since 1988 and journalist Abd Al-Raziq Al-Mansuri." (USSD Report on Human Rights Practices 2006) [6b]

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3. Index to key source documents

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	[1]	Europa World Online, Location, Climate, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital (accessed on 8 March 2007) http://www.europaworld.com/pub/ (<i>Subscription</i>)
	[2]	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Country Profile: Libya, last reviewed January 2007 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019149793547
	[3]	United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World fact book: Libya, last updated 8 February 2007 https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ly.html
	[6a]	United States Department of State (USSD) Background Note: Libya, August 2006 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5425.htm
	[6b]	USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrpt/2006/78858.htm
	[28a]	British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Country Profile: Libya, updated 24 January 2007 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/819291.stm
MAP	[4]	United Nations Cartographic Section (UNCS): Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, June 2004 http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/libya.pdf
HISTORY	[1]	Europa World Online, Recent History (accessed on 8 March 2007) http://www.europaworld.com/pub/ (<i>Subscription</i>)
	[2]	FCO Country Profile: Libya, last reviewed January 2007 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019149793547
	[3]	CIA World fact book: Libya, last updated 8 February 2007 https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ly.html
	[6a]	USSD Background Note: Libya, August 2006 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5425.htm
	[6b]	USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrpt/2006/78858.htm
	[13a]	Freedom House (FH) Freedom in the World 2006: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2006&country=7002
	[28a]	BBC Country Profile: Libya, updated 24 January 2007 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/819291.stm

HISTORY CONT...	[28b]	BBC Timeline: Libya, updated 24 January 2007 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/1398437.stm
POLITICS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS	[1]	Europa World Online, Government and Politics (accessed on 8 March 2007) http://www.europaworld.com/pub/ (<i>Subscription</i>)
	[2]	FCO Country Profile: Libya, last reviewed January 2007 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019149793547
	[5a]	Constitutional Proclamation, 1969 via: http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ly00000.html
	[5b]	Declaration on the Establishment of the Authority of the People, 1977 via: http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ly01000.html
	[6a]	USSD Background Note: Libya, August 2006 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5425.htm
	[6b]	USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/q/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78858.htm
	[7]	Jane's Information Group (Jane's) Country Profile: Libya, last updated 2 February 2007 http://sentinel.janes.com/docs/sentinel/NAFRS_country.jsp?Prod_Name=NAFRS&Sent_Country=Libya& (<i>Subscription</i>)
	[8a]	United Nations Development Programme – Human Development Report (UNDP-HDR) 2006: Libya Fact sheet http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/countries/country_factsheets/cty_fs_LBY.html
	[8b]	United Nations Development Programme – Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (UNDP-POGAR): Libya in Brief, undated. http://www.pogar.org/countries/country.asp?cid=10
	[9a]	Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Information on the Mutamar Al Sha'ab Al Aam (General People's Congress) http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2185.htm
	[11a]	Amnesty International (AI) Annual Report 2006 http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/lby-summary-eng
	[12]	Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2007: Libya http://hrw.org/englishwr2k7/docs/2007/01/11/libya14712.htm
	[13a]	FH Freedom in the World 2006: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2006&country=7002
	[13c]	FH Countries at the Crossroads 2005: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=140&edition=2&ccrpage=8&ccrcountry=90

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HUMAN RIGHTS - GENERAL:	<p>[2] FCO Country Profile: Libya, last reviewed January 2007 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019149793547</p> <p>[5a] Constitutional Proclamation, 1969 via: http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ly00000_.html</p> <p>[5b] Declaration on the Establishment of the Authority of the People, 1977 via: http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ly01000_.html</p> <p>[6b] USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/q/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78858.htm</p> <p>[7] Jane's Country Profile: Libya, last updated 2 February 2007 http://sentinel.janes.com/docs/sentinel/NAFRS_country.jsp?Prod_Name=NAFRS&Sent_Country=Libya& (Subscription)</p> <p>[11a] AI Annual Report 2006 http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/ly-by-summary-eng</p> <p>[12] HRW World Report 2007: Libya http://hrw.org/englishwr2k7/docs/2007/01/11/libya14712.htm</p> <p>[13a] FH Freedom in the World 2006: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2006&country=7002</p> <p>[13c] FH Countries at the Crossroads 2005: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=140&edition=2&ccrpage=8&ccrcountry=90</p> <p>[13d] FH Worst of the Worst 2006: Libya http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/WoW/2006/Libya2006.pdf</p> <p>[17] International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Annual Report 2005 http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/6PPE4L/\$FILE/icrc_ar_05_tunis.pdf?OpenElement</p>

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HUMAN RIGHTS – SPECIFIC ISSUES:		
(IN ADDITION TO GENERAL REPORTS ABOVE, INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IS PROVIDED IN THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW)		
ARREST AND DETENTION – LEGAL RIGHTS	[5a]	Constitution, 1969 via: http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/ly00000_.html
	[5e]	Law no. 20 of 1991 Endorsement of freedom via: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDLEGAL&id=3dda542d4
	[6b]	USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78858.htm
CHILDREN	[1]	Europa World Online, Education (accessed on 8 March 2007) http://www.europaworld.com/pub/ (<i>Subscription</i>)
	[6b]	USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Libya, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78858.htm
	[6g]	USSD Trafficking in Persons Report, 5 June 2006 http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65989.htm
	[18]	Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSC) Global Report 2004: Libya http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=947
	[19]	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) At a glance: Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, accessed on 22 February 2007 http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/laj.html
	[26]	UN Economic and Social Council: Consideration of reports submitted by states' parties under articles 16 and 17 of the covenant – a Libyan Arab Jamahiriya – Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/LYB/CO/2), 25 January 2006. Via http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDCOI&id=441544654
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	[27]	US Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Citizenship Laws of the World, March 2001 http://www.opm.gov/extra/investigate/IS-01.pdf

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	[21]	Transparency International (TI) Corruption Index 2006 http://www.transparency.org/content/download/10852/93140/version/1/file/CPI%202006%20regional%20highlights%20Middle%20East.pdf
DEATH PENALTY	[11b]	AI – Libya: Six foreign medics should be released (MDE 19/002/2007), 30 January 2007 http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMD190022007?open&of=ENG-LBY
	[11c]	AI – Abolitionist and Retentionist countries, last updated 12 December 2006 http://web.amnesty.org/pages/deathpenalty-countries-eng
	[11d]	AI – Death Penalties and Executions in 2005 http://web.amnesty.org/pages/deathpenalty-sentences-eng
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	[20]	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Unions' Rights 2006 http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991223877&Language=EN
	[26]	UN Economic and Social Council: Consideration of reports submitted by states' parties under articles 16 and 17 of the covenant – a Libyan Arab Jamahiriya – Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/LYB/CO/2), 25 January 2006. Via http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDCOI&id=441544654
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	[23]	European Parliament: Resolution by the European Parliament on Lampedusa, April 2005 via: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.html?tbl=RSDLEGAL&id=42bc1e134
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	[12]	HRW World Report 2007: Libya http://hrw.org/englishwr2k7/docs/2007/01/11/libya14712.htm
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