

Libya's Political Instability and Migration Crisis in Europe

¹Andza, Saa-Aondo Moses and ²Dera, Harris Tordue

¹Department of Political Science, Benue State University, Makurdi
talk2andza@yahoo.com

²Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
harrisdera@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper examines the political instability in Libya and its impact on migration crisis in Europe. The paper reveals that there exists political instability in Libya as its Political Stability Index Score has grown weaker from -1.29 ranking 171st in 2011 to -2.33, ranking 190th in 2017 as against 0.83 that ranked her 41st in 2009. The paper also establishes that there are about 1, 700 militia groups in Libya which are vying for the control of power which has led to the collapse of governance structure in the country. The paper equally finds that smuggling gangs have exploited, and are still exploiting, to the maximum the political instability in Libya to flood Europe with migrants. The paper also reveals that as a result of the political instability in Libya, 764, 403 migrants had arrived Italy and a recorded 17, 516 deaths at Sea between 2011 and 2018 as against 130, 921 between 2003 and 2010 that left Libyan shores for Europe. The study, therefore concludes that the political instability in Libya is culpable for the migration crisis in Europe and it is not likely to end soon unless the political instability in Libya is addressed.

Key words: Crisis, Europe, Instability, Libya, Migration and Political

Introduction

International migration has played a key role in the rise and fall of empires, states, and coalitions of states as the world moves through the major political and economic stages of mercantilism, colonialism, industrialization, post-industrialization, and globalization. Globalization, as the world's latest political and economic stage, is the word used to describe the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures, and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investment, people and information (Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2019). As stated elsewhere, this presupposes that the parochialism of the nation-state is giving way to the global village. Paradoxically, as Bailey (2015) observes with dismay, never before have borders been so heavily policed; walls keeping prospective citizens out so high; camps for detaining the transient so large. Yet, in spite of all these barriers to entry and hazards to navigate, the number of migrants, globally, continues to ascend. This may not be unrelated to the recognition of freedom of movement, mobility rights, or the right to travel as human right concepts which predate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which however, reaffirms in its Article 13 the right of people to move from one point to another as it proclaims that "everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state" and most importantly, as it relates to our discussion, "everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." The afore mentioned declaration and other international human rights instruments or treaties and documents have given protection to migrants thus legitimizing and reinforcing movements across nations' boundaries though with some provisions and conditions (which are often violated) in spite of barriers to entry and hazards to navigate.

According to UN, DESA (2017) the world counted 258 million international migrants in 2017 which represented 3.4 percent of the global population which is an indication that the number of international migrants is growing faster than the global population. In the global North, almost 12 of every 100 inhabitants are international migrants, compared to only two of every 100 inhabitants in the global South. During the period from 2000 to 2017, the total number of international migrants increased from 173 to 258 million persons, an increase of 85 million which represents 59 percent. Half of this increase took place in the countries of the developed regions (the global North), which Europe is a part. Europe hosted the second largest number of international migrants of 78 million coming only after Asia's 80 million which is a difference of only 2 million representing 2.5 percent. The UN, DESA, (2017) indicates that six of every ten international migrants born in Europe fell from 29 to 24 percent, while the proportions originating from Africa and the Latin America and the Caribbean remain stable at 14 and 15 percent respectively. Between 2000 and 2017 however, Spain reported the largest relative increase in the number of international migrants of 260 percent, which shows that the percentages originating from Africa would not have only been maintained but would have further dropped if Libya, the hub of irregular migrants from Africa, was politically stable to control her borders and tackle the migrants' smuggling networks within its shores which is sequel to the prevailing political instability in the country.

Political instability is the propensity for unconstitutional regime or government change and or incidence of political upheaval or violence in a society such as assassinations, violent demonstrations, unsteadiness in government policies and so forth (Gale, 2008). Gale's conceptualization of political instability absolutely captures the situation in Libya which has led to loss of many lives with many sustaining various degrees of injuries and immense damage done to property. Since 2011 when the Gaddafi's 42-year regime was brought to an end in Libya, the Africa's largest proven crude oil reserve with 48.4 billion barrels (BP Statistical Review of World Energy, 2018) has remained in a cycle of offensives and counter offensives between militias loyal to rival political groups. These have made peace not only elusive, but have made Libya to be extremely fragile, divided and prone to centrifugal developments. Between 2011 and 2016, the International Organization for Migration Displacement Tracking Matrix (2018) identified and located 303, 608 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 60, 778 displaced households in Libya. Frykberg (2019) avers that Human Rights Solidarity (HRS) documented 3, 719 fatalities, the injured and kidnapped in clashes across Libya in the year 2018 alone. According to the BBC News May 25, 2017, there were estimated 1, 700 armed groups in Libya in the face of two rival parliaments and three governments which led to a weak governance structure necessitating the smuggling groups to exploit this to the maximum leading to the flood of migrants to Europe hence the migration crisis in Europe.

This paper therefore explores the impact of the political instability in Libya on the migration crisis in Europe for the purpose of proffering solutions to the phenomena. For an organized analysis, the paper is ordered into five (5) sections beginning with introduction as section one (1), followed by clarification of concepts which is section two (2). Section three (3) examines Gaddafi's overthrow and political instability in Libya. Section four (4) dwells on the impact of Libya's political instability on migration crisis in Europe and section five (5) is the conclusion.

Clarification of Concepts

Migration

The International Organization for Migration (2011) defines migration as the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It further explains that it is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification. It is in the light of this that the IOM (2011) also conceives a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of stay is.

Basically, migration is the movement by people often over long distances from one place to another and in this context across national boundaries with the intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily, in a new location. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, migration is the permanent change of residence by an individual or group; it excludes such movements as nomadism, commuting, and tourism, all of which are transitory in nature.

Political Instability

Slanders (1981, p. 3) contends that "political instability is the extent to which the occurrence or non-occurrence of changes in and changes to the government, regime or community deviates from the previous system specific 'normal' pattern." The centrality of the executive arm of government to these changes must have informed Alesina, Ozler, Roubini and Swagel (1996) to conceive political instability as the propensity of a change in the executive power, either by constitutional or unconstitutional means.

Morrison and Stevenson, as cited in Jong-A-Pin (2008, p. 1) define political instability as "a condition in political systems in which the institutionalized patterns of authority breaks down and the expected compliance to political authorities is replaced by political violence." In summary, political instability is, broadly speaking, defined in terms of changes in, or changes to, the political system which may take many forms and its indices include, but not limited to, coups d'états, political assassinations, kidnappings, major and minor changes in government and mass violent and non-violent demonstrations and civil wars.

Crisis

Crisis, according to Collins Dictionary, is a situation in which something or someone is affected by one or more very serious problem or a crucial stage or turning point in the course of something, especially in a sequence of events. Crisis also means a sudden deterioration of a chronic situation. Migration crisis in Europe, therefore, is conceived to mean the situation in which Europe has witnessed an unprecedented inflow of migrants albeit irregularly in its territories surpassing the 100, 000 threshold allowed per year which has caused anger among the people in Europe that too many foreigners are entering their countries and taking up their jobs as well as having pressure on their infrastructural facilities.

Gaddafi's Overthrow and Political Instability in Libya

Maleki (2011) traces the cause of the Libyan political instability to the reports of the Economist Intelligence Unit about the state of democracy in 167 countries which began in 2006 that measures the demand and supply of democracy semiannually. This presents seemingly reliable indicators to convince especially the people of the Arab world who some political analysts and many people in the world believe that the hitherto undemocratic regimes in the region were supported by their people and that there were no reliable indicators to convince them otherwise.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, on February 15, 2011, inspired by revolts in other Arab countries, especially Tunisia and Egypt, anti-government rallies were held in Benghazi, Libya, by protesters angered by the arrest of human rights lawyer, Fethi Tarbel, which subsequently spread to other cities, leading to escalating clashes between security forces and anti-Gaddafi rebels. These protests led to the revolution that ousted Gaddafi's 42 year reign and since then, protests have been an integral part of the political instability in that country with the people embarking on it at the slightest opportunity that presents itself.

This presupposes that the spark of protest by the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi on 17 December, 2010 in Tunisia (BBC News January 5, 2011) that spread to Benghazi in Libya among other places in the Arab world beginning on Tuesday 15 February, 2011 and the underlying demand in the demonstrations has been defined as changing the undemocratic system irrespective of the adduced reasons of unemployment, food inflation, corruption and poor living conditions among others (Business Anti-Corruption Portal, 2014). This thus explains the use of *ash-sha'b yurid isqat an-niz am* (the people want to bring down the regime) as the major slogan of the demonstrators in the Arab world (Abulot, 2011). Of course, as it was expected, the Benghazi protest escalated into a rebellion that spread across Libya with the forces opposing Gaddafi establishing an interim governing body, the National Transitional Council. Gaddafi's 42-year regime was eventually toppled by rebel forces on August 23, 2011, after he was captured and killed in Sirte on October 20, 2011 (Barker, 2011). The fall of the Gaddafi's regime has preceded a chain of events that have culminated into the hopelessly more than quadruple fragmented competing forces that have dominated the political landscape backed by military campaigns in the once stable strategically positioned Libya vis-à-vis Europe.

Coup d'état as an index of political instability has been attempted three times since the fall of the Gaddafi regime with the first been on October 10, 2013, when a group of members of the General National Congress attempted to take control of the country from Libyan Prime Minister, Ali Zeidan, by kidnapping him, though he was released several hours later after a pro-government militia stormed the site where he was being held (BBC News October 11, 2013). The year 2014 recorded two coup d'état attempts in February and May by forces loyal to Maj. Gen. Khalifa Belqasim Hafter, the commander of Libyan Ground Forces (Abdul-Wahab, 2014).

Between 2011 and 2018, there were major changes in government in Libya. After the overthrow of Gaddafi in 2011, the National Transition Council which took the reins of power handed it over to the General National Congress in August, 2012, after being hesitant to do so, which led to clashes between former rebel forces in Benghazi (BBC News September 3, 2018). The General National Congress which was supposed to hand over power to the House of Representatives in 2014 refused to disband, which was greeted by protests in February, 2014, but

without any effect as the General National Congress still operated in Tripoli while the House of Representatives operated in Toruk. In June, 2014, Prime Minister Maiteg resigned after the Supreme Court ruled his appointment illegal. In January, 2016, the UN announced a new Tunisian based interim government but neither Toruk nor Tripoli parliaments agreed to recognize its authority. Consequently, Libya became subjected to four governments as follows: (1) Government of National Accord which is headed by Fayez al-Sarra (2) Libyan National Army, headed by Khalifa Hafter (3) House of Representatives, headed by Aguila Saleh Issa and (4) the Council of State headed by Khalid al-Mishri (BBC News May 29, 2018).

The struggle for the control of power in Libya has not gone without assassinations and kidnappings as indices of political instability. Though there are no comprehensive official figures, the Human Rights Watch (2013) indicates that it had investigated and documented killings of 51 victims of apparent political assassinations and added that though the actual number was probably higher. The documented cases do not include the number of officers and members of the security forces assassinated during the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi, and it is limited to Eastern Libya since the toppling of Gaddafi. Gall (2014) avers that more than 100 prominent figures, senior security officials, judges and political activists were assassinated in the last two years and added that the wave of killings decimated local leadership and paralyzed the government and security forces. According to Daw, El-Bouzedi and Zau (2015), between February 2011 and February 2012, a total of 21, 470 (0.5%) persons were killed, 19, 700 (0.47%) injured and 435, 000 (10.33%) displaced.

Impact of Libya's Political Instability on Migration crisis in Europe

The flood of migrants to Europe in recent years is, no doubt, not unconnected with the political instability in Libya which is geo-strategically positioned vis-à-vis Europe. The political instability in Libya which is sequel to the fall of the Gaddafi's regime has had serious security impact on the people of Libya. The escalated activities of about 1,700 militia groups that are vying for the control of power have made the security situation in the country precarious. Wehrey (2017) also attest to this when he avers that "the main driver of insecurity in Libya is the collapse of the already fragile institutions and social pacts after the 2011 revolution and more importantly, the inequitable distribution of economic resources." This, Wehrey further notes, has rippled across the country, out to Libya's northern neighbours like Tunisia and to the shores of southern Europe.

The impact of the precarious security situation in Libya on migration crisis in Europe is that it has led to the collapse of governance structures and smuggling groups in Libya have exploited this to the maximum to flood Europe with migrants. As the BBC News July 7, 2018 has noted, unlike Turkey which has stemmed the flow of migrants by agreeing to take back Syrians who reach the Greek islands in exchange for huge financial package, Libya's weak internationally recognized government has rejected a European Union proposal to set up "reception centers" for African migrants while European states consider their asylum applications. Though Libyan Deputy Prime Minister, Ahmed Maiteeq, explains that the rejection of the proposal is because of its inconsistency with Libyan laws, there is no gain saying that the breakdown of law and order in Libya, where a host of rival militias are largely making huge amounts of money from the migrant trade, would not have allowed the proposal to succeed even if it was accepted. A similar proposal had achieved huge successes in Libya when the security situation in the country was very robust under Gaddafi. Gaddafi had signed a "friendship" agreement with then-Italian Prime Minister,

Silvio Berlusconi, in August, 2008, in a deal which saw his regime tightening border controls including border joint maritime patrols in exchange for Italy pledging \$5bn in compensation for colonial-era crimes (BBC News July 7, 2018). The deal, according to Human Rights Watch, as cited in Bredeloup and Pliez, (2011, p.12), “led to a sharp decline in the number of people trying to reach Europe by boat from 37, 000 in 2008 to 3, 200 in the first seven months after joint patrols started in 2009” without any corresponding detention and maltreatment of thousands of migrants on Libyan’s shores.

The same feat can hardly be achieved in today’s Libya, at least at present where Pike (2019) holds that as at 2015, the whole Libyan coastguard had two ageing 25-meter tug boats and a few small fast boats to contend with the many smugglers and traffickers in Libya’s over 1, 100 miles coastline with just a 1, 000 men in the coastguard with a ratio of spread of 0.90 soldier per mile. Pike (2019) further states that the coastguards were badly paid and not very well organized. A soldier with the coastguard can expect less than 1,000 Libyan dinars at the end of the month. This is less than €500 while the smugglers earn an average profit of €25, 000 a week in a country where the average monthly wage is just €400 (Kemp, 2017). This explains why it is difficult to curb the tide of smuggling migrants to Europe from Libya.

The political instability in Libya has also aggravated food shortage which has led many to the business of smuggling and trafficking of migrants to Europe as a means of livelihoods. Due to the harsh natural environment, agricultural production is very limited in Libya, and even before the pre-revolution years, 80 percent of the population food requirements were imported and this was made possible because Libya was one of the world’s most prolific oil producing nations that maintained large trade surpluses (World Food Programme, 2018). As such, the cost of food at household level was offset to some extent by a welfare state that offered free education and health care. As the WFP (2018) notes, the country, however, has a trade deficit and is engrossed in political instability

The economy of Libya depends primarily upon revenues from the petroleum sector which, according to Annual Statistical Bulletin, as cited in Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), (2019), represents over 95 percent of export earnings and 60 percent of GDP. These oil revenues and small populations (6.470 million, OPEC, 2019) have given Libya one of the highest nominal per capita GDP (US\$ 9, 986.274 Billion in 2017, IMF, 2018) in Africa. This however has not translated into improved living conditions of Libyans as poverty is permeated in Libya as it has a total poverty headcount ratio of 27.90 percent (Human Development Report, 2018). Though oil production in 2017 reached a five-year high, driving GDP growth, with daily average production rising to 879,000 barrels per day, that however, have remained below the average pre-revolution highs of 1.6 million barrels per day.

The political instability in Libya has also not allowed for the creation of jobs and as such the prevalence of unemployment in the country was at the rate of 17.70 percent in the year 2017 (Trading Economics, 2019). The Libyan dinar has lost much of its value since 2014 and the resulting gap between official and black market exchange rates has spurred the growth of a shadow economy coupled with scarcity of food items which led to increase in prices thereby shooting up inflation to 27.988 percent ranking 6th in the whole world in 2017 (IMF, 2018).

The impact of the foregoing developments on the Libyan people is that the political instability has impoverished the people and the drive to survive has pushed many of them to engage into smuggling and trafficking of migrants to Europe. Libya being strategically and geopolitically located vis-à-vis Europe and which has long been a hub of migrants to Europe by boat via the central Mediterranean Sea route, though hitherto controlled by the Gaddafi's regime, has had the wall separating the migrants collapsed by the persistent political instability which began in 2011. This thus laid bare Libya's shores and coastal borders for thousands of young Africans who have ever been desirous to satisfy their insatiable quest for adventure and or fleeing from conflicts to embark on the arduous journey to Europe which has resulted in the migration crisis in Europe.

The European Commission (2017) and IOM (2018) have indicated that between 2011 and 2018, there were 764, 403 irregular migrants Sea arrivals in Italy, while over the same period, there were 17, 516 deaths at Sea caused by real shipwrecks, purposeful disabling of ships in order to solicit rescue, as well as lack of assistance. As graphically presented in table 2 and figure 2 below, European countries that have coastal borders at the Mediterranean Sea, especially Italy, started recording above 100, 000 thresholds of migrants in Europe per year when the Libyan political instability began in 2011. The years before 2011 never saw such numbers of migrants arrive Europe as it is the case in the post-Gaddafi era. The BBC News July 7, 2018 indicates that 130, 921 people left Libyan shores between 2003 and 2010, an average of 18, 703 a year. This is more than five times less the average distribution of the figures from 2011 to 2018. Though other reasons could be advanced for these minimal migrants arrivals in Europe, it was the period when the Political Stability Index Score of Libya was relatively strong. As shown in table 1 and figure 1 below, the Political Stability Index Score of Libya was 0.12, 0.36, 0.45, 0.36, 0.75, 0.81, 0.83 and 0.03 with an average score points of -0.03 for 2003 and -0.05 for 2005 to 2008 and -0.06 for 2009 and 2010 with a corresponding rank of 98th, 77th, 72nd, 81st, 52nd, 47th, 41st and 98th in the years 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively.

Table 1: Libya’s Political Stability Index 2003-2017

YEAR	INDEX SCORE	RANK	AVERAGE SCORE POINT
2003	0.12	98	-0.03
2004	0.36	77	-0.05
2005	0.45	72	-0.05
2006	0.36	81	-0.05
2007	0.75	52	-0.05
2008	0.81	47	-0.05
2009	0.83	41	-0.06
2010	0.03	98	-0.06
2011	-1.29	171	-0.06
2012	-1.59	181	-0.06
2013	-1.84	186	-0.05
2014	-2.35	187	-0.05
2015	-2.20	189	-0.05
2016	-2.28	188	-0.05
2017	-2.33	190	-0.05

Source: The Global Political Economy (2019) as compiled by the authors

It is instructive to note that Libya had also initiated harsh migration policies and created internment camps for hundreds of migrants waiting to be expelled after 130 sub-Saharan migrants died during anti-African riots in Tripoli and Zawiya in the year 2000, which also helped stem the tide of migrants Sea crossings (Bredeloup & Pliez, 2011). This led to a number of subsequent departures, whether voluntary or not, allegedly amounted to many thousands of people who went back to Niger, Chad, Sudan, Nigeria and Ghana. Though Libya’s image on the international scene was st
 ll subsist with sub-Saharan migrants living in the country, it began the first step towards tougher control measures for migrants living in the then politically stable Libya.

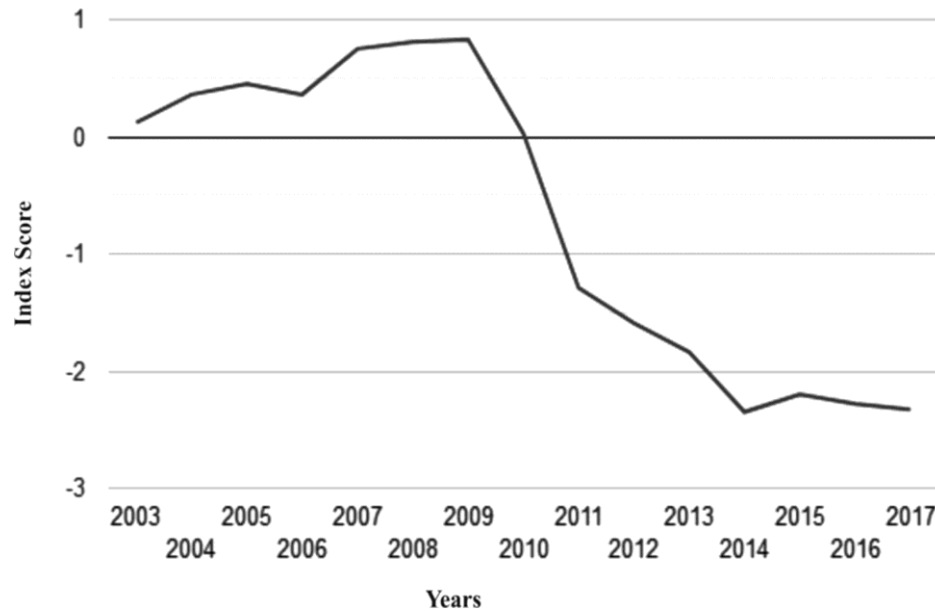


Figure 1: Libya’s Political Stability Index Score 2003-2017

Source: The Global Political Economy (2019) as compiled by the authors

This development, coupled with other subsequent policies, especially the August, 2008, “friendship” agreement between Libya’s Gaddafi and Italy’s Berlusconi, crashed down the number of people trying to reach Europe by boat from 37, 000 in 2008 to 3, 200 in the first seven months after joint patrols started in 2009 (Bredeloup & Pliez, 2011). This agreement checked the numbers of migrants’ Sea arrivals in Europe via the central Mediterranean route where Libya is the hub of migrant Sea crossing during the period before the political instability began in 2011.

Table 1 and figure 2 indicate a breakdown and trend of migrants Sea arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea since 2003 which shows that, there were 62,692 migrants arrivals in Italy and 1, 822 deaths at Sea in the year 2011. Libya’s Political Stability Index Score in 2011 was -1.29 which ranked her 171st country in the world. Thus, no reason can better explain the rise in migrants Sea arrivals in Europe more than the political instability that first began as violent protest inspired by revolts in other Arab countries, especially neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia, leading to escalating clashes between security forces and anti-Gaddafi rebels which culminated into the ouster, capture and murder of Gaddafi on October 20, 2011(El Gamal and Gaynor, 2011).

The year 2012 recorded a decrease in the number of irregular migrants’ arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea as there were 13, 267 arrivals and 283 deaths at Sea representing a drop of 78.83 percent and 84.46 percent respectively. The Political Stability Index Score of Libya in that year was -1.59 occupying 181 position in the world. Though the political stability index was weak, the decrease is explained in the context of the handover of power to the General National Congress, which was elected in July 2012, indicating a re-establishment of governance structure in Libya.

In 2013, the Political Stability Index Score of Libya grew weaker to -1.84 thereby occupying 186th position in the world. As a result, the figures rose to 42, 925, representing 223.54 percent for migrants’ arrivals in Italy and 644, representing 127.56 percent for deaths at Sea in the year 2013. The murder of the then US ambassador and three other Americans when Islamist militants, including Ansar al-Sharia, stormed the consulate in Benghazi in September, 2012, and the blockade of petroleum facilities and oil export terminals by militias probably heightened the political instability in the country in the year 2013 (CNN News September 13, 2012; BBC News September 3, 2018).

The year 2014 saw Libya’s Political Stability Index Score further grew weaker to -2.35, ranking her 187th in the world and as a result, the figures also soared further to 170, 100, representing 296.27 percent increase in the number of migrants’ arrivals in Italy and 3, 161, representing 390.83 percent deaths at Sea. The weak Political Stability Index Score with a corresponding swell in migrants Sea arrivals and deaths at Sea in 2014 was not unconnected with the chain of events that culminated into what is today referred to as the second Libyan civil war. The major events that characterized the year 2014 in Libya which led to the weak Political Stability Index with attendant soar in migrants Sea arrivals and deaths at Sea in Europe were the eruption of protests in response to the General National Congress refusal to disband after its mandate expired, which was followed by the renegade of general Khalifa Haftar by the Libyan National Army and launching of military assault, including airstrikes against militant Islamist groups in Benghazi and, as well, trying to seize parliament building (CNN News May 20, 2014). As if that was not enough turmoil, fighting broke out between forces loyal to the then outgoing GNC and the new parliament which was earlier elected. The continued fighting deteriorated the security

situation and precipitated the pulling out of all UN staff, shutting down of all embassies and evacuation of diplomats and most foreigners in Libya.

Total: 2 Migrants arrivals in Italy by Sea and deaths in the Mediterranean 2003 - 2018

Year	Arrivals	Dead/Missing at Sea
2003 – 2010	130, 921	-
2011	62, 692	1, 822
2012	13, 267	283
2013	42, 925	644
2014	170, 100	3, 161
2015	153, 842	2, 869
2016	181, 436	4, 579
2017	118, 019	2, 852
2018	23, 122	1, 306
Total	896, 324	17, 516

Source: European Commission (2017) & IOM (2018) as compiled by the authors

In 2015, the Political Stability Index Score of Libya grew weaker to -2.20 occupying 189th position in the world. In spite of this, there was a slight decrease in the number of migrants' arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea as there were 153, 842 representing 9.55 percent drop for the former and 2, 869, representing 9.23 percent for the later. The drop in the number of migrants Sea arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea may not be unrelated with the partial ceasefire declared by the Libyan army and Tripoli-based militia alliance after intense talks in Geneva (BBC News September 3, 2018). However, the year 2016 recorded an all time high as available data on migrants' Sea arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea as there were 181, 436, representing 17.93 percent increase while deaths at Sea were 4, 579, representing 59.60 percent increase. The Political Stability Index Score of the country in that year was -2.28 with a ranking of 188, which indicated that the increase was in response to the weak political stability. The weak political stability with its attendant unprecedented flood of migrants Sea arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea in 2016 was not unconnected with the refusal to recognize the authority of the UN announced Tunisia-based interim government for Libya by the Tobruk and Tripoli parliaments, the heightened Islamic State group attacks on Ras Lanuf oil terminal and threats to move on to Brega and Tobruk (Al-Warfalli, 2016; Aljazeera News January 4, 2016). The engagement of the Libyan National Army of General Khalifa Haftar in seizing key oil export terminals in the east as well as Pro-government forces ouster of Islamic State militants from the coastal town of Sirte, which they had seized 18 months previously (BBC News June 23, 2016) all deteriorated the already politically unstable Libya, thus leading to the flooding of migrants to Europe.



Figure 2: Trends of Migrants Arrival in Italy by Sea in the Mediterranean (2003-2018)
Source: European Commission (2017) & IOM (2018) as compiled by the authors

The Political Stability Index Score of Libya in the year 2017 grew further weaker with a score of -2.33 which ranked the country 190th in the world. However, the figures fell to 118, 019 for migrants' Sea arrivals representing 34.95 percent dwindle and 2, 852 deaths at Sea representing 37.71 percent drop. Though the EU's Trust Fund for Africa was created in 2015 which saw nearly €4 billion spent across 26 countries along the migration route to Europe, the deal with Libyan coastguard was signed in February, 2017, which the European Union poured, and is still pouring, tens of millions of Euros into the Libyan coastguard in a bid to prevent those crossing the Mediterranean ending up in Europe. This, thus, explains the decline of the figures in 2017.

Though the Political Stability Index Score of the country is not available for 2018, the indices have not changed, and so it is believed that when released, it will not be anything stronger than the preceding year. That notwithstanding, an all time and sharp decline in the number of irregular migrants arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea since the political instability in Libya began eight years ago was so far recorded in 2018, 23,122 migrants arrivals were recorded, representing 80.40 percent drop, while there were 1, 306 recorded deaths at the Sea, representing 54.20 percent plummet in the year 2018.

As it were in 2017, the sharp fall in migrants Sea arrivals in Italy and deaths at Sea in 2018 is attributed to factors external to Libya, chief among which are the sustained support to the Libyan coastguard by EU's Trust Fund for Africa and individual European countries which began in 2017. The Libyan coastguard received training from various European countries in addition to supply of equipment which included diving suits, ambulances, communication equipment, night vision gear, submarines, and ships to assist in reconnaissance effort (The Independent April 26, 2017). The Libyan coastguards were also assisted with broadcaster ARD reporting vessels equipped with machineguns alongside 130 boats of varying sizes and capacities (Libyan Express May 16, 2019). Ross Kemp's documentary released in late 2017 titled "Libya's Migrants' Hell" which exposed

and drew the world's attention to the modern day slavery and humanitarian crisis of migrants crossing the central Mediterranean Sea also played a significant role in scaling down the number of migrants Sea arrivals in Europe in 2018. Though the data indicate that there has been significant drop in migrants arrivals in Italy from Libya beginning in 2017 and especially in 2018, a total of 764, 403 people crossed to Italy via the central Mediterranean between 2011 and 2018, an average of 109, 200.43 a year over the seven year period surpassing the 100, 000 threshold allowed for in the whole of Europe in a year. This is against the 130, 921 people (BBC News July 7, 2018) that left the Libyan shore between 2003 and 2010, an average of 18, 703 a year over the same seven-year period.

Conclusion

It is palpable from the foregoing analysis that there is actually political instability in Libya which was triggered in 2011, though the yearly reports of the Economist Intelligence Unit about the state of democracy in countries of the world dates the phenomenon back to 2006. Before the political instability in Libya, the country had, to a large extent, secured its borders and entered into agreements with some European countries that stemmed the tide of irregular migration to Europe via the central Mediterranean Sea. From 2011 to date, Libya's Political Stability Index Score grew weaker from 0.83 ranking 41st in the world in 2009 to -2.33 ranking 190th in the world in 2017 thus collapsing the walls that hitherto held back migrants from crossing the central Mediterranean Sea to Europe, especially Italy.

The major take home point of this paper is that the political instability in Libya is culpable for the migration crisis in Europe. Of course, the migration crisis in Europe is not likely to end soon if the political instability in Libya is not addressed given the undeniable fact that Libya is the core country of departure of migrants smuggled along the central Mediterranean route. The fall in the figures in the past two years which is sequel to the signed deal between the EU and Libya's coastguard which saw the later received trainings and equipment among others cannot be said to be the end of the crisis as a result of the sudden deterioration of a chronic situation which does not mean the end of irregular migration via the central Mediterranean and its causes, nor of the circumstances that made migratory pressures raging. It is just a desperate and more of a palliative measure to a desperate situation of migrants' crisis in Europe which has rather created another crisis as thousands of migrants rescued by the Libyan coastguards are held in detention centers where conditions have been described by the United Nations as inhuman and squalid.

References

- Abdul-Wahab, A. (2014). General Hafter announces coup; politicians react with scorn, older his arrest – Available at www.libyaherald.com/2014/02/19/general-hafter-announces-coup-politicians-react-with-scorn-order-his-arrest/#axzz2tIQINLHq
- Abulot, U. (2011). What is the Arab Third Estate? – Available at <https://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/832628>
- Alesina, A. et al, (1996). Political and Economic Growth, *Journal of Economic Growth* 1 (1) 155-194

- Aljazeera News January 4, 2016- Available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/01/isil-attack-libyan-oil-terminal-reported>
- Al-Warfalli, A. (2016). Libya's recognized parliament reject U.N.-backed unity Government – Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libyan-security-politics-idUSKCN0V31Q0>
- Bailey, T. (2015). The Impact of Migration on sender Countries- Available at <https://www.worldfinance.com/infrastructure-investment/government-policy/the-impact-of-migration-on-sender-countries>
- Barker, A. (2011). Time running out for Cornered Gaddafi – Available at <https://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2011-02-24/time-runing-out-forcornered-gaddafi/1955842?pfmredir=sm>
- BBC News January 5, 2011 - Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-12120228>
- BBC News October 11, 2013 – Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24496357>
- BBC News June 23, 2016 – Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36604131>
- BBC News May 25, 2017 – Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24472322>
- BBC News May 29, 2018 – Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44289516>
- BBC News July 7, 2018 - Available at <https://www.google.com/ampls/www.bbc/news/amp/world-africa-44709974>
- BBC News September 3, 2018 – Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13755445>
- BP Statistical Review of World Energy, (2018) – Available at <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2018-full-report.pdf>
- Bredeloup, S. and Pliez, O. (2011). The Libyan Migration Corridor – Available at <https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/16213/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011%20-%202003.pdf?sequence=1>
- Business Anti-Corruption Portal, (2014), A Snap short of Corruption in Tunisia – Available at <https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/tunia/>
- CNN News September 13, 2012 – Available at <https://edition.cnn.com/2012/09/12/world/africa/libya-attack-jihadists/index.html?no-st=9999999999>

CNN News May 20, 2014 Available at - <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/20/world/africa/libya-violence/?no-st=9999999999>

Collins Dictionary – Available at <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/crisis>

Daw, M.A., El-Bouzedi, A. and Zau, A.A. (2015). Libyan Armed Conflict 2011: Mortality, injury and population displacement, *African Journal of Emergency Medicine* 5(3) pp. 101-107

El Gamal, R. and Gaynor, T. (2011). Gaddafi killed as Libya's revolt claims hometown – Available at <https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idFJOE79J09020111020>

Encyclopedia Britannica – Available at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/human-migration>

Encyclopedia Britannica - Available at <https://www.britannica.com/event/Libya-Revolt-of-2011>

European Commission (2017), Irregular Migration via the Central Mediterranean: From Emergency Responses to Systemic Solutions - Available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/irregular-migration-central-mediterranean_en

Frykberg, M. (2019). Thousands killed, injured or kidnapped in 2018 Libyan Violence – Available at <https://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/thousands-killed-injured-or-kidnapped-in-2018-libyan-violence-19274507>

Gale, T. (2008). Political Instability, Indices Of – available at <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/political-instability-indices>

Gall, C. (2014). Political Killings still plaguing post-Qaddafi Libya – Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/world/africa/political-killings-still-plaguing-post-qaddafi-libya.html>

Human Development Report (2018), Statistical Update Briefing note for Countries on the 2018 Statistical Updates: Libya – Available at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/LBY.pdf

Human Right Watch (2013), Libya: Wave of Political Assassinations – Available at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/08/08/libya-wave-political-assassinations>

IMF, (2018), Report for selected Countries and Subjects – Available at https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2018/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=74&pr.y=13&sy=1980&ey=2023&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=672&s=NGDP_RPCH,PPPGDP,PPPPC,PCPIPCH,GGXONLB_NGDP&grp=0&a=

IOM, (2011) Glossary on Migration, International Migration Law Series No. 25, 2011 – Available at <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

IOM (2018), Total Arrivals by Sea and Deaths in the Mediterranean 2017-2018 - Available at https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/pictures/medup_14_12_18-table1.jpg

IOM, Displacement Tracking Matrix (2018), Internal Displacement in Libya 2016 in View – Available at <https://displacement.iom.int/system/tdf/reports/internal%20Displacement%20in%20Libya%202016%20in%20Review%20-%20DTM%20Libya.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=1572>

Jong-A-Pin, R. (2008). Essays on Political Instability: Measurement, causes and consequences, Enschede: Printers/pskamp B.V, Enschede, The Netherlands.

Kemp, R. (2017). Libya's Migrant Hell/Documentary – Available at <https://documentayheaven.com/ross-kemp-libyas-migrant-hell/>

Libyan Express May 16, 2017 – Available at <https://www.libyanexpress.com/italy-hands-over-four-patrol-boats-to-libyan-navy/>

Maleki, A. (2011). Uprising in the Region and ignored indicators – <http://www.payvand.com/news/11feb/1080.html>

OPEC, (2019), Libya Facts and Figures – Available at https://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/about_us/166.htm

Peterson Institute for International Economics (2019) What is Globalization? - Available at <https://piie.com/microsites/globalization/what-is-globalization.html>

Pike, J. (2019). Libyan Coast Guard – Available at <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/libya/coastguard.htm#15530887274102>

Slanders, D. (1981). Patterns of Political Instability, the Macmillan press Ltd, London, United Kingdom

The Independent April 26, 2017 – Available at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-migrants-libya-government-ships-coastguard-request-eu-list-mediterranean-machine-guns-a7704171.html>

Trading Economics, (2019), Libya Unemployment Rate – Available at <https://tradingeconomics.com/libya/unemployment-rate>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 Revision (United Nations database,

POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017) – Available at
https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/esimates2/docs/MigrationStockDocumentation_2017.pdf

Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 - Available at
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf

Wehrey, F. (2017). Insecurity and Governance challenges in Southern Libya – Available at
<https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/30/insecurity-and-governance-challenges-in-southern-libya-pub-68451>

World Food Programme, (2018). Libya – Available at <https://www1wfp.org/countries/libya>