



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 10, 2012

Despite Violence, UN & Obama Hail Libya Election

Despite violence that left at least several dead, numerous gun battles, allegations of voter fraud, dozens of polling places unable to operate, mass protests, militias running wild, and whole regions still in chaos, Western governments and the United Nations — [largely responsible for the recent “regime change”](#) that killed dictator Moammar Gadhafi and thousands of innocent civilians — celebrated political elections in Libya on Saturday, July 7 as a success. Meanwhile, multiple armed factions are still threatening to unleash full-blown civil war amid ongoing battles all across the chaos-stricken nation.



Less than half of the estimated 3.5 million Libyans eligible to vote actually turned out for the elections, despite reports that some 80 percent had registered. But that was just a minor hiccup compared to everything else. The day before elections began, for example, gunmen [described](#) by the Western-backed regime as “enemies of the revolution” shot down a helicopter over Eastern Libya carrying voting materials. At least one election commission worker was killed.

The previous day, armed militants seeking to have the elections cancelled attacked voting officers and shut down several oil refineries in Eastern Libya. Apparently they were upset about the the new government’s distribution of power between various regions in Libya. In reality, however, much of the coercive power in Libya remains divided up between the rival militias and warlords who continue to dominate vast swaths of the nation.

Allegations of fraud started emerging even before the election, with France24 [reporting](#) irregularities that observers said could easily be exploited. Other analysts were even more blunt in their assessment: “Democracy wasn’t on the ballot. It never is with America in charge,” [wrote](#) columnist Stephen Lendman, who said the elections were actually a “sham” run by foreign powers.

All the while, assorted Libyan factions were torturing prisoners and threatening to unleash even more violence if their concerns were not addressed — some wanted more federalism, others wanted more representation in Parliament, and still others wanted greater autonomy from Tripoli. Those divisions could easily explode at any time.

“There is no doubt there could be a civil war between us in the east and the west,” [noted](#) High Military Council of Cyrenaica chief Hamed Elhasy, one of countless militia commanders operating throughout Libya. “The country will be in a state of paralysis because no one in the government is listening to us.”

Even as it stands now, human rights groups say the situation in Libya is dire to the extreme. “Without immediate action to stop abuses and lawlessness, there is a very real danger Libya could end up reproducing and entrenching the same patterns of violations we have seen over the past four decades,” said Middle East and North Africa deputy director Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui of Amnesty International.



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[New reports](#) by Amnesty International and others indicate that the real situation in Libya is far removed from the rosy picture painted by Western governments. Torture, illegal detention, looting, and other violence are still widespread.

During the voting on Saturday, at least two people were reported killed at elections centers. Others died in protests. Meanwhile, international “elections monitors” were not even able to visit the south of Libya — which covers the vast majority of the nation’s territory — due to ongoing unrest and violent clashes. According to reports, hundreds of people have died in the desert region amid factional wars between black Africans and Arabs in recent months.

Much of the horror, however, has been largely ignored or downplayed by the new Libyan regime, Western powers that support it, and the establishment press. “A difficulty for foreign governments and media alike is that, having rejoiced in the overthrow of Gaddafi last year, they do not want bad news to besmirch their victory,” [noted](#) author Patrick Cockburn in a recent piece about the elections.

As *The New American* has [reported](#) for over a year, despite Western platitudes and celebrations, Libya has suffered immensely since the UN-and-NATO-backed “revolution” began. A whole town of largely black residents, for example, was [wiped off the map as part of what some analysts referred to as “ethnic cleansing”](#) or even “genocide.” Just last month, the Failed States Index [observed](#) that Libya’s decline was the most severe year-on-year worsening in the history of the index.

Despite the chaos, violence, and overall lack of information, however, governments around the world — especially those that participated in the bloody regime-change operation — celebrated the elections. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, for example, praised what he called the “peaceful, democratic spirit” of the vote, apparently without attempting to be facetious. The UN, of course, purported to authorize the “no-fly zone” that was then used to enforce the revolution.

President Obama, who unconstitutionally ordered [U.S. troops to provide air cover, arms, and training to NATO-backed rebels, including known al-Qaeda leaders](#), applauded the election as well, saying that the U.S. government was “proud” of its role in “supporting” the Libyan revolution. “On behalf of the American people, I extend my congratulations to the people of Libya for another milestone on their extraordinary transition to democracy,” he said. The administration promised to continue showering the new rulers with American taxpayers’ money, too.

U.K. Foreign Minister William Hague also patted his government on the back over Libya’s elections. “I congratulate the Libyan authorities for their rapid preparations, supported by the United Nations support mission in Libya, to organize these elections in such a short space of time,” he said. Unlike many others praising themselves, however, Hague did acknowledge the violence and chaos. “We strongly condemn such attempts, but this should not detract from what is already a remarkable achievement,” he concluded.

The European Union, not wanting to be left out of the celebrations and accompanying press coverage, praised the election, too — despite the widespread chaos. “These incidents do not put into question the national integrity of the elections as a whole,” [claimed](#) the EU “Assessment” Team’s Alexander Lambsdorff at a news conference.

Even the communist dictatorship ruling over mainland China hailed the vote in Libya as an “important step” in its “transition” — especially bizarre considering its status as the single largest tyranny on Earth. “We hope Libya can achieve long-term stability, prosperity and development at an early date,” [said](#) “Foreign Ministry” spokesman Liu Weimin, noting that the autocratic Chinese regime would seek



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to “boost relations” between itself and Libya’s new ruling entities.

Ironically, analysts and Western leaders also hailed the presumed victory of the National Forces Alliance’s Mahmoud Jibril. He openly supports imposing Sharia law on Libya as the primary source of legislation, yet for reasons that remain unclear, his success was applauded as a sign that the nation was rejecting the more hardline big-government Islamism of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood in favor of so-called “liberals” — big-government-supporting Islamists who are slightly less Islamist.

Despite his own objections to the labels, Jibril, who served as the Gadhafi regime’s National Planning Council chief before taking a top post in the NATO-backed revolutionary regime, has been consistently mischaracterized as “secular” and “liberal.” Apparently Western analysts were yearning for some positive news after elections in neighboring Egypt and Tunisia, where voters overwhelmingly supported Islamist political parties after the fall of their own dictators. Jibril promised to seek an alliance with everyone.

In elections coverage, most analysts and media outlets tried to minimize the uglier side — especially as it relates to the war in Libya, which left unknown numbers of civilians dead and the nation’s infrastructure in ruins. Some commentators, however, were more honest about the realities on the ground. “The election is providing one thing only: legitimacy,” American-Libyan Council President Fadel Lamien [told](#) CNN after returning from a trip to Libya. “Everything else, all the problems, all the challenges, will still be there the morning after.” Of course, they might even get worse — a scenario that is not out of the question despite Western “democracy” celebrations.

How Libya emerges from the chaos remains to be seen. The elections are supposed to lead to a functioning, legitimate government, as well as a new constitution to govern the nation. Whether all of the simmering divisions can be overcome without violence and further bloodshed, however, is still not clear. And more than a few groups, at least, have already [said](#) they would not recognize the election.

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Photo of Libyan voters display ID cards during elections July 7: AP Images



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