

Will US-NATO Unleash A New War in Libya?

By Vladislav Gulevich

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In 2011 the aviation of France and Great Britain bombed Libya. Muammar Gaddafi, the leader of the country, was brutally murdered. Now Europe is considering plans to intervene in Libya again. On May 13, the Guardian published an article devoted to a European plan for a military campaign to smash the migrant smuggling networks operating out of Libya. The scenario envisages the use of ground forces.

The 19-page strategy paper for the mission, obtained by the Guardian, focuses on an air and naval campaign in the Mediterranean and in Libyan territorial waters. But it adds that ground operations in Libya may also be needed to destroy the smugglers' vessels and assets, such as fuel dumps. Federica Mogherini, the EU's chief foreign and security policy coordinator, reiterated that position on May 13.

«We are not planning in any possible way a military intervention in Libya,» she said. According to her, establishing control over the territorial waters of Libya is enough to destroy the smugglers' infrastructure. But the assurances that there will be no boots on the ground sound unconvincing. It's clear that the West is serious about what it plans to do. For instance, Great Britain is going to send amphibious transport dock HMS Bulwark, the flagship of Royal Navy, to fight small smuggler's boats. Air and naval forces are to bear the brunt of the mission. The operations conducted ashore by special operations forces teams are not excluded, no matter the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy says otherwise. Media outlets started to examine the public opinion.

The plan obtained by the Guardian says ground operations in Libya may be needed. EU governments have still to discuss and decide on the planning document. A joint session of EU foreign and defence ministers is to decide on the mission on May 18, followed the next day by a meeting of defence chiefs from European Union countries. The military package would then need to be given a green light by heads of government at an EU summit slated for June. Ten European Union members have already expressed their approval, including Great Britain, France, Spain and Italy. According to Ibrahim Dabbashi, Libya's United Nations ambassador, his government has been left out of the urgent international discussion of the migrant crisis. This is the legacy of colonial past. Europeans still view Libya as a colony.

Federica Mogherini has already visited New York to discuss prospects for a UN Security Council resolution allowing the use of force against the smugglers. The Guardian reports that the UK has prepared a draft document on behalf of the EU «that is believed to call for the 'use of all means to destroy the business model of the traffickers'. Mogherini sounded optimistic about adoption of UN Security Council resolution allowing the use of force against the smugglers, but also made plain that if that proved impossible, the EU would still mount a military mission in the Mediterranean outside of Libyan territorial waters and airspace.

A question pops up. Creating obstacles on the way of flows of unfortunate people leaving Libya for Europe – is it the only goal pursued by the planned military operation in the Mediterranean Sea? The Libya's shoreline is some 1,100 miles (1,800 km) in length. A large naval force is needed to control it. The chances for destroying the smugglers' infrastructure are slim. Too many people are involved in this business. After the overthrow and murder of Muammar Gaddafi Libya has plunged into the quagmire of chaos. It has joined the list of most unstable countries in the world which are primarily located in

Africa. The political turmoil inside the country is kind of free for all – different groups are fighting each other. One government rules the country in Tripoli. Another government functions in Tobruk. There are other «governments» spread around the country. Under the conditions, Libya cannot be called a state in the full meaning of the word.

Under Gaddafi Libya boasted high living standards. From point of view of people's wealth it was a leader in the Arab world. Today the country has spiraled towards total disorder. There is no whatsoever control on the part of government. Large chunks of national territory have fallen under the control of the Islamic State and other extremist groups. Libya is an oil rich country but the production is low with numerous criminal gangs thwarting the process. Cyrenaica, the oil rich eastern coastal region of Libya, demands autonomy. The country is falling to pieces. The Libya we once knew is no more.

Flows of refugees from Arab and Black Africa transit through Libya on the way to Europe. There is little Europe could do under the circumstances but use military force to stop the flows. Brussels has made all of the European Union members to partner up on policies such as EU immigration. Poland is situated far from Africa but it has to host 1200 refugees. Latvia is to provide shelter to 220 fugitives, Estonia is to host 326 of them. 207 evacuees are to be taken care of by Lithuania. But this policy does not offer a solution to the problem.

In 2015 Libya expects 135 thousand people to be born on its soil, but the population of the country will not increase due to the fact that about the same number of people leave the country. Libya is a transit country for refugees from Algeria, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan, Senegal, Ghana and Eritrea going to Europe. The sources in Rome say a surge of immigrants will flood Europe soon. As many as 5,000 migrants a week could arrive in Italy by sea from North African ports in the next

five months unless something is done about it, according to an interior ministry projection. The figures, published on April 23 by the Rome newspaper Il Messaggero and confirmed by a ministry source, estimated that as many as 200,000 could arrive by the end of this year.

There should harbor no illusions. One can hardly imagine the West admit responsibility for dire results of the policy aimed at «democratization» of Libya.