



MEMORANDUM N° 59/2011

12/04/2011

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ONE) – TRUE RESULTS OF ALLEGED EGYPTIAN ‘REVOLUTION’ TO BE SEEN AFTER ELECTIONS

Egypt's politics have been transformed since Hosni Mubarak was toppled on Feb. 11 but the prospect of elections may put remnants of his ruling party and an established Islamist group in the driving seat for now. Torn between the desire for stability and a full purge of the system which could extend turmoil that has cost the economy billions of dollars, many Egyptians have opted for the former. That was what a referendum held on March 19 suggested when 77 percent of the voters backed constitutional amendments drawn up by a committee appointed by Egypt's ruling military council. More radical reformers, including youth groups who led the uprising that erupted on Jan. 25, wanted a 'No' vote and an entirely new constitution. For them, the revolution is still incomplete. But the mere fact Egyptians took part in a vote in which the result was not a foregone conclusion before polling stations opened is testimony to Egypt's transformation from the 30 years of Mubarak's rigged voting, police repression and corruption. "There is no doubt there have been major developments like changes in the constitution, a new law for political parties, freedom of expression has been granted but still more needs to be done," said political scientist Mustapha al-Sayyid. "The outcome of the revolution will appear after elections. We will see if the people behind the revolution succeeded in reaching power to do what they want, or if it is remnants of the former regime, or if Islamists take power," said Sayyid. Youth groups and other protest movements which had drawn millions of Egyptians onto the streets, often using the Web and social media to mobilise, now have little time before a parliamentary election set for September to turn themselves into more formal political parties. The Muslim Brotherhood, with a broad base despite decades of repression under Mubarak, is best placed to capitalise. Remnants of Mubarak's old party network of notables in rural areas, local council officers and business executives are also well placed. Seeking to assuage fears, the Brotherhood has said it will not seek a parliament majority this time or run for president. "So far, the revolution is definitely incomplete. It has only accomplished 10 percent of its demands," Sayyid Abu El Ela from the January 25 Youth Revolutionaries told Reuters. **EGYPT'S ROLE MODEL** "Now the people have retreated and their will has switched to a revolution of reform, not of change. But the youth will continue to push for change," he said. How Egypt navigates the transition will have a wider impact. Tunisia's revolt may have preceded the Egyptian protests and Libya may be grabbing headlines for the violence wrought, but developments in the Arab world's most populous country will reverberate more profoundly across the Middle East. "What happens in Egypt is extremely important for the region. If there is stability in Egypt, then it rubs off on others. It is like a role model," said Kamran Bokhari, regional director for Stratfor. The army has shown little interest in staying in government, even though all Egypt's presidents since the monarchy was overthrown in 1952 were officers. The army has pushed for swift elections. But even when the officers return to barracks, the military is expected to loom in the background. Bokhari said it could take a behind-the-scenes political role as Turkey's army did for decades or as Pakistan's military still does. "The revolution that people talk about is a very incomplete one. They removed the president and transferred power to the armed forces," said one Western diplomat. But the political changes are nonetheless dramatic. Mubarak and his family are under house arrest in the resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, the ruling National Democratic Party is in tatters, the feared State Security agency has been scrapped and the cabinet contains no one unacceptable to the revolutionaries. Several former ministers and other top party or government officials are in detention and others are being probed over their business dealings. New parties of many colours are taking shape, including one that will represent the Brotherhood. Constitutional amendments approved in the referendum may not go as far as radicals wanted, but still reshape the landscape. The amendments restrict the president to two four-year terms, make it easier for independents to run for the presidency and restore judicial supervision of votes, a guarantee against rigging practised by the NDP and police in 2005 and 2010. **ECONOMIC CHALLENGES** Radicals still see more to be done. An emergency law, introduced after Mubarak's predecessor was assassinated by Islamists in 1981, has still not been lifted. The army promised it would go before elections but has not been more precise. Also raising concern is a law restricting strikes by increasingly assertive Egyptian workers. The government says it is to stop a wave of protests over low wages that have crippled the economy. Activists see it as an attack on new found freedoms. Getting the economy back on track is one of the biggest challenges for whoever rules. Egypt's young population wants both more political openness and new economic opportunities, instead of the wealth divisions that grew wider under Mubarak. The new Manpower Minister Ahmed El Borai outlined the scale of challenge in meeting that demand. He put unemployment at 19 percent; roughly double the figure Mubarak's cabinet declared. Economic disruptions since January will cut economic growth to 3.5 to 4 percent of national output in the year to June, from earlier estimates of 5.8 to 6 percent. Analysts say Egypt needs at least 6 percent simply to create enough work for new job entrants. Tourism, which usually generates over \$10 billion a year, is only just starting to recover from January's mass exodus. Foreign investors, who had

poured in billions of dollars, are now keeping their distance until Egypt's political future becomes clearer. Many factories operated at well below capacity in February because of curfews and insecurity. If they are to maintain their drive for a deeper political overhaul, new groups, mainly liberals and those opposed to the Brotherhood's Islamist agenda, need time to organise and mobilise supporters after decades in the wilderness. Mubarak cracked down hard on liberal challengers, partly so that he could portray the Brotherhood as the only alternative to his own autocracy, a choice that helped secure him the support of the West who have proved fearful of Islamists in power. **'LIBERALS' HAVE LITTLE IMPACT OUTSIDE CITIES** Analysis of the referendum results show that the 'No' votes were concentrated in urban areas with relatively high literacy, suggesting that the arguments of the young revolutionaries did not have much impact in rural areas where illiteracy is widespread and people take less interest in public affairs. Liberals were quick to blame their relatively poor showing on scare stories spread by conservatives, along the lines that voting 'No' would lead to prolonged chaos. Many 'Yes' voters in the referendum said they were guided, not by Islamists or other political forces, but by a desire to see a quick return to civilian government and more emphasis on law and order and on stimulation of the economy. Mohamed Mustafa, who voted 'Yes' in Cairo's suburb of Maadi, said the calls from more radical reformers for writing a new constitution would take too much time. "So we should leave that till later. We need the country to move ahead now," he added. Mahmoud Salem, a liberal who blogged against Mubarak for years under the pseudonym Sandmonkey, said the protest movement had lost touch with ordinary people's aspirations. "You care about the revolution and the arrest of NDP figures and getting the country on the right track. They care about economic security, the return of stability and normalcy the fastest way possible," he wrote. (Reuters)

TWO) – THE EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY CORPS

Public consultations on the creation of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Corps are drawing to a close – the interested citizens, public authorities and non-governmental organisations have three more weeks to contribute their ideas and proposals for the future service, which is one of the most exciting innovations of the Treaty of Lisbon. The consultations continue online until May 3rd, with the goal to explore the options and settle on the best way to match the potential of this initiative with the needs, and plug it into the European volunteering sphere in the most practical and value-adding way.

The creation of the voluntary corps, which will be launched with a pilot phase this year, has been entrusted upon Kristalina Georgieva, the EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response. Commenting on the ongoing public consultation, the Commissioner said: "Volunteering is on the rise across the European Union. The majority of our citizens have also expressed resounding support for humanitarian aid. We want to match these two trends and create an exciting platform through which Europeans can express their solidarity with people in need, and pitch in with their time and effort to making a real change in the world". Commissioner Georgieva expressed her gratitude to all who have already engaged in the consultations, and invited more interested parties to use the remaining time to join the effort for making the future voluntary corps a successful and meaningful project.

The outcome of the consultations will serve as a building block in the Corps's construction, for which a legislative proposal will be presented in 2012. The EU is committed to setting-up the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps in order to empower Europeans to contribute practically to the EU's humanitarian work.

The online consultation is part of a wider preparatory phase that started in 2010 with the review of existing voluntary schemes, bilateral and public consultations with stakeholders and the adoption of a Communication by the European Commission.

Link to the European Voluntary Corps's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/themes/voluntary_humanitarian_en.htm

THREE) – ITALY SLAMS EU "INERTIA" OVER TUNISIAN MIGRANTS

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini on Wednesday criticised the European Union's "inertia," in failing to oblige other member states to assist Italy in dealing with the arrival of thousands of would-be immigrants

from Tunisia. "At this time Europe is completely inert," Frattini said, in an interview with television news channel Sky TG24. "It's not about promising very limited funds (to help Italy deal with the migrants)," Frattini said. Instead, what was needed, according to Frattini, was for "a plan to distribute among member-states," responsibilities for accommodating a "sudden massive influx of refugees" as Italy was currently experiencing. He said such a plan was specified in an existing EU norm. Since most of the Tunisians who have arrived in Italy were "economic migrants," the EU should also assist Italy with their repatriation, Frattini said. He was speaking just hours before Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was scheduled to visit the tiny island of Lampedusa, where tensions have been growing between the Tunisian migrants and the local population. More than 4,000 migrants are currently on the 20 square kilometre island – outnumbering by around 1,000 Lampedusa's local population. Several Italian ships were expected later Wednesday to evacuate most of the Tunisians to reception centres in Sicily and other parts of Italy. An estimated 18,000 mostly Tunisian migrants have arrived on the Italian island of Lampedusa since January, when an uprising in Tunisia toppled former president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali. **LACK OF FRENCH SOLIDARITY** (AFP) – Frattini a accusé mercredi la France d' »absence de solidarité », car elle renvoie systématiquement les Tunisiens qui tentent d'entrer sur son territoire depuis la ville frontalière de Vintimille. « C'est l'un des aspects graves de l'absence de solidarité de la part de la France et d'absence totale de l'Europe, mais il ne revient pas à l'France d'ouvrir un contentieux avec la France », a déclaré le ministre sur RAI2, interrogé sur les immigrés tunisiens présents à Vintimille, dernière ville italienne avant la frontière française. Quelque 100 à 200 Tunisiens arrivent tous les jours à Vintimille d'où ils tentent d'entrer en France mais sont immédiatement refoulés vers l'France. La plupart ont connu le même parcours : fuite de la Tunisie à bord d'embarcations sommaires, arrivée dans le sud de l'France, le plus souvent sur l'île de Lampedusa, un petit confetti de terre face aux côtés tunisiennes. Puis évacuation vers des centres d'accueil sur la péninsule. De là, ils prennent des trains pour Vintimille dans l'espoir d'entrer en France où nombre d'entre-eux ont de la famille. L'France accuse régulièrement l'Union européenne de l'avoir abandonnée dans sa lutte contre l'immigration clandestine. Depuis février environ 20.000 immigrés sont arrivés en France, essentiellement des Tunisiens. (Dpa)

FOUR) – ITALY MUST DEAL ALONE WITH ECONOMIC MIGRANTS, SAYS EU COMMISSION

L'France doit prendre en charge les immigrés économiques qui débarquent sur son territoire, a affirmé mercredi un porte-parole de la Commission européenne alors que Rome ne cesse de réclamer plus de solidarité à ses partenaires européens. « Les personnes qui arrivent en France en provenance de Tunisie sont, en grande partie, des migrants économiques, des personnes prises en charge par les autorités italiennes et, dans ce cas précis, ce sont les autorités italiennes qui sont responsables » de leur prise en charge, a dit un porte-parole de la Commission au cours d'un point de presse. Interrogé pour savoir si d'autres Etats de l'UE pourraient prendre en charge une partie du fardeau supporté par l'France, le porte-parole, qui n'est pas le porte-parole habituel de la commissaire chargée de ce dossier, Cecilia Malmström, a répondu que des fonds européens étaient disponibles. « Il y a de l'argent disponible », a-t-il dit sans se prononcer sur la possibilité que d'autres Etats accueillent sur leur sol des migrants ayant débarqué en France. (AFP)

FIVE) – BERLUSCOLI PROMISES TO CLEAR LAMPEDUSA OF IMMIGRANTS WITHIN 60 HOURS

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi promised to clear thousands of illegal Tunisian migrants from Lampedusa by the weekend after an outcry over a humanitarian crisis on the tiny southern island. Berlusconi, who visited Lampedusa on Wednesday, said the work of moving around 6,000 migrants living in makeshift tent encampments to other centres in Italy had already begun on six ships with a combined capacity for 10,000 passengers. "From this moment on, within 48-60 hours, Lampedusa will be inhabited solely by Lampedusans," Berlusconi told a meeting of the island's residents, who have seen 19,000 Tunisians arrive since popular unrest toppled their president in January. As migrants have been moved on from Lampedusa, problems have sprung up at camps elsewhere in Italy and the government has struggled to come up with a longer-term response. **BACK TO AFRICA** Berlusconi's coalition allies in the Northern League have demanded that migrants be sent back to Tunisia immediately but the premier himself took a somewhat more cautious line. "We will be able to take some of them back where they left from. It won't be easy but it would be a strong signal that it's not worth taking the risk and then being sent back home." A much smaller number of migrants, mainly Eritreans, have arrived from Libya, to Tunisia's east, where Muammar Gaddafi's forces have been battling rebels for six weeks and coming under Western air strikes

meant to protect civilians in the conflict. “The whole island will be restored to its normal condition.” Berlusconi, one of Italy’s richest men, said he had bought a house on the island himself, adding: “I will become Lampedusan.” (Reuters)

SIX) – EMIGRATION IS AFRICAN’S BEST CHANCE, SAYS WORLD BANK

L’émigration doit devenir une chance à saisir pour l’Afrique au lieu d’handicaper son développement, a affirmé mercredi la [Banque mondiale](#) dans une étude publiée avec la Banque africaine de développement. Dans cette étude intitulée « Démultiplier l’impact des migrations pour l’Afrique : envois de fonds, renforcement des compétences et investissements », l’institution présente le départ des habitants non pas comme une fuite des cerveaux, mais comme une ressource cruciale. « Les migrations internationales ont un potentiel immense pour améliorer le développement et le bien-être social dans les pays d’origine », ont écrit les auteurs. « Les gouvernements peuvent jouer un rôle important pour récolter les avantages de ces migrations en renforçant les liens avec les diasporas, en accroissant la concurrence dans les marchés des envois de fonds, en concevant la politique d’éducation compte tenu des défis de l’émigration de travailleurs hautement qualifiés, et en donnant des informations et une protection aux travailleurs émigrés », a expliqué la Banque mondiale. « Pour les pays du continent, les envois effectués par leurs expatriés aboutissent à un surcroît d’investissements en matière de santé, d’éducation et de logement, et leurs diasporas sont également sources de capitaux, d’échanges commerciaux ou de savoir, et de transferts de technologies », a estimé la Banque mondiale. Ces conclusions se basent sur une analyse des contributions économiques des 30 millions d’Africains qui officiellement vivent à l’étranger (y compris dans un autre pays du continent), chiffre qui paraît très sous-estimé aux auteurs. Selon la Banque mondiale, les envois de fonds d’émigrés africains vers leur famille au pays ont approché 40 milliards de dollars en 2010, soit 2,6% du produit intérieur brut du continent, et quatre fois plus qu’en 1990. (See full text of report [Leveraging Migration for Africa: Remittances, Skills, and Investments](#)) (AFP)

SEVEN) – ARMING LIBYAN REBELS WOULD ALSO BE ILLEGAL UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

It was a good day’s work for Libya’s rebels. Not only did their unofficial “foreign minister” Mahmoud Jibril hold talks with his British, French, US and German counterparts Tuesday in London, the rebels’ repeated appeals for weapons to fight Moamer Gaddafi’s regime appeared to be gaining traction. Since Gaddafi’s troops resumed their march eastwards this week, threatening to reverse the gains made by the rebels since the intervention began, coalition members have begun talking of the possibility of bolstering the rebels’ arsenal. “I’m not ruling it out, but I’m also not ruling it in,” US President Barack Obama said in an interview aired on NBC News Tuesday. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe was more forthcoming, saying his country was “ready to discuss military aid to the rebels” with coalition members. British Prime Minister David Cameron told parliament Wednesday that he also would not “rule out” providing weaponry. He added that the UN resolution seemed to be open to interpretation that “all necessary measures” were permitted to protect civilians –despite the resolution also imposing an arms embargo on all Libyan territory. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, secretary general of NATO, which took over the implementation of the no-fly zone and airstrikes Wednesday, said the task was not about arming people but protecting them. Italy, too, was sceptical, with foreign ministry spokesman Maurizio Massari saying in a radio interview Wednesday that such an “extreme” measure “could certainly divide the international community.” If even there were consensus on arming the rebels, there are several obstacles to implementing such a move. Firstly, Libya has been under a arms embargo since February 26. **ANOTHER UN RESOLUTION TO LIFT ARMS EMBARGO?** US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the US considered that UN resolution 1973 of March 17 authorizing the intervention to protect civilians “amended or overrode the absolute prohibition on arms to anyone in Libya, so that there could be a legitimate transfer of arms if a country should choose to do that.” France took a different view, with Juppe, saying that arming the opposition “is not part of the UN resolution”. While a new UN resolution could decide to partially lift the embargo, there are other issues to consider. In pleading their cause, the rebels says their rifles, rockets and anti-aircraft guns mounted on the back of pick-ups are no match for Gaddafi’s tanks and artillery. Heavier weapons such as anti-tank rockets would help level the playing field, they argue. But analysts point out that without training, the weapons would be lost on the rebels, many of whom had never held a gun before the uprising began. Training, however, would require sending foreign soldiers to Libya. **WEST GETS BOGGED DOWN IN LIBYA** “We would be entering a very different context,” Didier Billion, Middle East specialist at the

Institute of International and Strategic Relations (IRIS) in Paris told the Germany press agency dpa. “The only advantage that (sending arms) presents would be to allow the rebels take control (of the uprising),” Billion said. But the proposal also presents several risks, including the arms ending up in the regime’s hands if Gaddafi wins the day. “We’re starting to get bogged down,” Karim Emile Bitar, a North Africa expert at the IRIS warned. According to Bitar, the coalition risked losing the support of the Arab world. “People were enthusiastic about the Egyptian and Tunisian uprisings because they were spontaneous uprisings,” he said. « This is a completely different scenario. » (Dpa)

EIGHT) – RUSSIA WARNS WESTERN COALITION AGAINST ARMING LIBYAN REBELS

La Russie estime qu’aucun pays n’a le droit d’armer les rebelles en Libye, en vertu du mandat approuvé par le Conseil de sécurité de l’ONU, a déclaré mercredi le ministre russe des Affaires étrangères, Sergueï Lavrov. « Le ministre français des Affaires étrangères a dit que la France était prête à discuter avec ses partenaires de la coalition de la fourniture d’armes à l’opposition libyenne », a déclaré M. Lavrov pendant une conférence de presse à Moscou avec son homologue autrichien, Michael Spindelegger. « Immédiatement après, le secrétaire général de l’Otan, (Anders) Fogh Rasmussen, a déclaré que l’opération en Libye avait été préparée pour protéger la population et non (dans le but) de l’armer – et là-dessus nous sommes totalement d’accord avec le secrétaire général de l’Otan », a-t-il ajouté. Le chef de la diplomatie française, Alain Juppé, a déclaré mardi, à l’occasion d’une conférence à Londres sur l’avenir de la Libye, que la France était prête à discuter avec ses alliés d’une aide militaire aux rebelles libyens, tout en soulignant que ce n’était pas prévu par les récentes résolutions de l’ONU sur ce pays. La Russie n’a pas usé de son droit de veto, s’abstenant au moment du vote de la résolution 1973 du Conseil de sécurité de l’ONU qui a autorisé le recours à la force en Libye pour protéger la population civile. Moscou a cependant critiqué le soutien militaire apporté de fait, selon M. Lavrov, par la coalition occidentale aux insurgés libyens, y voyant une « ingérence » dans les affaires intérieures de la Libye. Par ailleurs, la Russie considère qu’il est temps que le dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi démissionne et permette au peuple libyen de décider de l’avenir du pays, a réaffirmé mercredi M. Lavrov « Il ne fait aucun doute que le temps des réformes est venu. Il est clair que ce sera un régime différent, mais il faut que les Libyens décident eux-mêmes de cela, sans ingérence », a souligné M. Lavrov. (AFP)

NINE) – CHINA PRESIDENT WARNS OF ILLEGALITY OF LIBYA WAR

Les frappes aériennes en Libye pourraient violer l’esprit de la résolution de l’ONU, a averti mercredi le président chinois Hu Jintao en recevant son homologue français Nicolas Sarkozy, dont le pays a été en pointe dans la décision de lancer ces attaques, a annoncé la télévision. « Le but de la résolution est d’arrêter les violences et de protéger les civils », a dit le chef de l’Etat chinois cité par la chaîne CCTV. Mais « si les actions militaires apportent le désastre aux civils innocents et aggravent la crise humanitaire, cela pourrait violer l’esprit originel de la résolution du Conseil de sécurité ». « Le dialogue et les autres moyens pacifiques sont les seules solutions aux problèmes », a ajouté M. Hu, cité par ailleurs par l’agence Chine nouvelle, alors qu’il recevait Nicolas Sarkozy, à la veille d’un séminaire du G20, que la France préside, à Nankin (est). La France, a répondu Nicolas Sarkozy, lui aussi cité par l’agence officielle, espère aussi résoudre la crise libyenne par des moyens politiques et diplomatiques. Le vote de la résolution 1973 à l’ONU le 17 mars a ouvert la voie, deux jours plus tard, aux frappes contre le régime du colonel Mouammar Kadhafi, confronté à une rébellion sans précédent, par une coalition menée par les Etats-Unis, la France et la France. La Chine n’avait pas utilisé son droit de veto de membre permanent du Conseil de sécurité de l’ONU, se contentant de s’abstenir. Le président Hu est le premier haut responsable chinois à s’exprimer officiellement sur les frappes en Libye, déjà critiquées à plusieurs reprises par le ministère chinois des Affaires étrangères. La presse officielle chinoise s’était déchaînée la semaine dernière contre les frappes aériennes motivées, selon elle, par la soif de pétrole et de domination des pays occidentaux. Elle avait en particulier fustigé la France, le Quotidien du peuple n’hésitant pas à estimer qu’une réussite en Libye permettrait à Nicolas Sarkozy de reconquérir son opinion avant la présidentielle de 2012. (AFP)

TEN) – ANTI-LIBYA COALITION ALREADY HAS SPECIAL FORCES ON THE GROUND, SAYS EXPERT

Démentie par les pays de la coalition internationale, la présence, avérée selon les spécialistes, d'agents de renseignement et de membres des forces spéciales occidentales auprès des insurgés libyens, est l'une des clés du conflit. Officiellement, la coalition n'a pas d'hommes sur le terrain en Libye. Mais dès fin février, les médias anglais faisaient état de l'intervention des hommes des SAS – les forces spéciales de l'armée britannique – pour exfiltrer des centaines d'employés de grandes compagnies pétrolières isolés dans le désert. Depuis, la coalition dément toute implication d'agents occidentaux auprès des insurgés. A la Direction générale de la sécurité extérieure (DGSE), les services de renseignement français, on s'en tient à la formule rituelle : « Sur nos opérations réelles ou supposées, nous ne faisons pas de commentaire ». Pour les spécialistes du renseignement en revanche, la présence d'éléments au sol dans ce type de conflit est « une constante de l'histoire militaire ». « Vu le caractère sulfureux de cette intervention, les critiques qui fusent du monde arabe, c'est très compliqué de faire un déploiement de forces dites conventionnelles », souligne Pascal Le Pautremat, spécialiste du monde arabe et collaborateur de la revue « Défense » de l'Institut des hautes études de la défense nationale (IHEDN). « Il est plus judicieux de faire intervenir de petites équipes, très discrètes, qui apportent leur savoir-faire opérationnel, en matière d'instruction, d'encadrement, d'orientation purement tactique », poursuit-il. Des équipes de « cinq à douze personnes », équipées de moyens de transmission high-tech, dont le rôle serait de « cibler des objectifs » pour permettre aux avions de la coalition d'ajuster leurs frappes. Des agents infiltrés qui opéreraient de nuit pour déterminer le potentiel en hommes, en blindés, des forces du colonel Kadhafi, pour encadrer et conseiller les insurgés ou leur apprendre à manier des armes anti-char. Une présence au sol d'autant plus nécessaire que la coalition veut éviter à tout prix de provoquer des pertes civiles, ce qui suppose un maximum de précision dans les frappes aériennes. « Plus il y a d'hommes sur le terrain, moins il y a de risque de se tromper, puisque l'on a des informations de source humaine », note Pascal Le Pautremat. Et aucun incident grave impliquant des civils n'a été officiellement rapporté par la coalition depuis le début des frappes en Libye. Alors que les « bavures » lors de frappes de l'Otan en Irak ou en Afghanistan ont souvent été liées au manque d'informateurs au sol, d'informations à courte distance de l'objectif. Alors, aucun élément sur le terrain, selon la version officielle ? Où Benghazi nid d'espions ? « Dans ce type de situation, il est envisageable que tout service de renseignement digne de ce nom soit positionné à Benghazi pour voir ce qui s'y passe », confie un spécialiste du renseignement sous couvert d'anonymat. Des agents et militaires des pays de la coalition – France, France ou Etats-Unis -, mais aussi des Allemands, des Russes ou des Israéliens, qui disposent de services performants, note-t-il. « De toutes façons, souligne Pascal Le Pautremat, il y a des éléments pré-positionnés depuis des années dans la région, l'Afrique de l'ouest et l'Afrique centrale, la zone du Maghreb élargie, où a notamment lieu la lutte contre Aqmi (Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique) ». (AFP)

ELEVEN) – CONFUSION ABOUT LIBYA 'CONTACT GROUP'

La première réunion du « groupe de contact » sur la Libye s'est déroulée à Paris, a eu lieu à Londres ou sera organisée à Doha, en fonction des présentations discordantes de divers pays membres qui n'ont pas accordé leurs violons sur le sujet. La réunion internationale de mardi à Londres avait été annoncée comme étant la première du groupe, destinée à confier à ses membres – une vingtaine aujourd'hui selon Paris – le « pilotage » stratégique de l'action en Libye, sous le couvert de résolutions de l'ONU et avec l'Otan comme bras armé. Dans la déclaration finale publiée à l'issue de la réunion, la France, pays hôte, indique toutefois que « la première » réunion du « groupe de contact » se déroulera prochainement au Qatar. Le chef de la diplomatie française, Alain Juppé, précisant pendant une conférence de presse que la suivante aurait lieu en France. Dans le même temps, le ministère français des Affaires étrangères soulignait au cours d'un point de presse à Paris que « la première » réunion du « groupe de contact » avait en fait été le sommet qui avait été organisé à la présidence française le 19 mars, jour des premières frappes contre les forces libyennes. La conférence de Londres était « la deuxième » réunion du « groupe de contact », a indiqué le porte-parole du Quai d'Orsay, Bernard Valero. **IT'S THE QUAD, STUPID !** Pendant ce même point de presse, le ministère français a évoqué pour la première fois officiellement « le Quad ». Angela Merkel « a participé (lundi) à la conférence téléphonique du Quad » avec les présidents français, américain et le Premier ministre britannique, a déclaré le ministère, en réponse à une question. Ce « Quad » (Etats-Unis, France, France, France) est une entité officieuse dont tout le monde parle dans les chancelleries sans le mettre trop en avant, de crainte que les pays qui n'en sont pas membres ne le dénoncent comme étant un directoire chargé des affaires du monde. Selon des diplomates, le « Quad » se réunit régulièrement, par vidéoconférences le plus souvent, au niveau des chefs d'Etat, ministres des Affaires étrangères ou de la Défense, chefs d'état-major des Armées,

etc. Ses sujets principaux de discussion portent sur les affaires stratégiques, mais rien n'empêche ses membres d'aborder tous les sujets qu'ils veulent. (AFP)

TWELVE) – UGANDA WOULD CONSIDER GADDAFI ASYLUM

Uganda said on Wednesday it would consider an application for asylum from Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, as it would for anyone seeking refuge in the east African country. "Those are rumours. I have just been in a cabinet meeting with all the ministers and yes we discussed Libya but there was nothing on asylum that we discussed," Henry Okello Oryem, junior Minister for Foreign Affairs, told Reuters. "However, if Gaddafi does apply for asylum in Uganda, we'll consider his application like we do for all those who seek refuge in Uganda," he said. (Reuters)

THIRTEEN) – UK EXPELS FIVE LIBYAN DIPLOMATS

Britain has expelled five Libyan diplomats to protest at the Libyan government's actions and because they could pose a threat to national security, Foreign Secretary William Hague said on Wednesday. "To underline our grave concern at the regime's behaviour, I can announce ... that we have today taken steps to expel five diplomats at the Libyan embassy in London, including the military attaché," Hague told parliament. "The government also judged that were those individuals to remain in Britain they could pose a threat to our security," he said. He also said a British diplomatic mission, headed by a senior diplomat, visited the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi on Monday and Tuesday to meet opposition groups, including Mustafa Abdel Jalil, head of the rebel Libyan National Council. (Reuters)

FOURTEEN) – LIBYA THREATENS TO SUE FIRMS OVER REBEL OIL DEALS

Libya's government warned on Wednesday it would sue any international company which concluded energy deals with the rebels who control some of the country's oil infrastructure, the state news agency reported. "The National Oil Corporation ... is the entity authorised by law to deal with external parties. Because of the strategic importance of these goods – oil and gas – at the global level, no country can leave their management to armed gangs," said a government communiqué carried by the Jana news agency. "The Libyan state will sue any party that seals deal regarding Libyan oil with parties other than the National Oil Corporation," it said. (Reuters)

FIFTEEN) – LONDON CONFERENCE SHOWS CRACKS IN ANTI-LIBYA COALITION

An international conference tried to present a united front to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi on Tuesday, but the coalition remained divided over its aims in Libya and the legality of supplying arms to the rebels. –At the London meeting, foreign ministers from more than 40 nations and leaders of the United Nations, Arab League, European Union and NATO heaped pressure on Gaddafi to quit and pledging to continue military action against his forces until he complies with a U.N. resolution to protect civilians. –The meeting set up a contact group to provide political leadership to the coalition, a few days after an agreement was reached for NATO to take charge of all military operations. –It backed an offer by Qatar to sell oil produced in rebel-held parts of Libya to pay for humanitarian needs. Secretary Of State Hillary Clinton said the U.S. view was that the latest U.N. Security Council resolution overrode the absolute prohibition of arms to anyone in Libya, "so that there could be legitimate transfer of arms if a country were to choose to do that." But she said the United States had made no decision to supply arms, causing frustration among the outgunned rebels. –British Foreign Secretary William Hague said arming the insurgents had not come up at the meeting but that giving people aid to defend themselves "in particular circumstances" was consistent with the U.N. resolution. –French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said giving weapons to the insurgents was not part of the U.N. mandate, although Paris was ready to discuss it with coalition partners. NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen appeared to rule out the alliance arming the rebels, telling Sky News: "We are there to protect people, not to arm people." –The participation of the Arab League and a number of Arab countries gave weight to the argument that Libyan

intervention has broad backing and is not simply a Western-backed campaign. –But cracks persist within the international coalition, with Turkey worried that military strikes on Gaddafi forces could cause civilian casualties. –Russia, which did not take part in the London conference, says the coalition has gone beyond what was authorised by the United Nations by striking at Gaddafi’s tanks and artillery. –The African Union shunned the talks due to disputes between member states, although the coalition had been eager to get the AU on board, Juppe said. –There remains little clarity over what the international coalition hopes to achieve and no clear plan to force Gaddafi from office, which the poorly trained and disorganised rebels are unlikely to achieve on their own. –The United States and Britain deny they are seeking regime change in Libya but make clear they think Gaddafi’s time is up. Several European countries suggested that exile could be a way out for the veteran leader, though others want him to stand trial before the International Criminal Court. – Developments on the ground in Libya have shown the limitations of air power as Gaddafi’s better armed and cohesive forces reversed the westward charge of the rebels. –The failure to knock out Gaddafi’s heavy weapons firepower quickly could put pressure on the coalition to take more interventionist steps to help the rebels, such as supplying them with weapons. But it is divided about the wisdom and legality of doing so and such a move could drag Western powers further into a Libyan civil war –a fate they are desperate to avoid after their messy experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. –Susan Rice, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, said on Tuesday the Obama administration had not ruled out arming the rebels as an option for trying to end Gaddafi’s 41-year rule. –Mahmoud Shammam, a spokesman for the rebels, told reporters in London that if the rebels had more weapons “we would finish Gaddafi in a few days”. –The London conference raised the profile of the interim National Council that has emerged as Libya’s best-known opposition group. A council leader, Mahmoud Jibril, spoke on the sidelines with British Prime Minister David Cameron and Clinton. –Keen to attract more outside assistance, the council released a manifesto holding out the prospect of a “modern, free and united state” if Gaddafi could be ousted. – The council’s declaration could go some way to calming concerns in the West about what kind of government the coalition may help to install in place of Gaddafi – after NATO’s top operations commander said intelligence on the rebels had shown “flickers” of al Qaeda or Hezbollah presence. (Reuters)

SIXTEEN) – ARAB, AFRICAN ABSENCES SHOW ANTI-LIBYA COALITION AS A PURELY WESTERN OUTFIT

Les pays arabes sont apparus en retrait mardi à la conférence de Londres, que Français et Britanniques souhaitaient à l’origine la plus large et la plus consensuelle possible. L’annonce dans le communiqué final que le Qatar, seul pays arabe avec les Emirats arabes unis à participer aux opérations en Libye, allait accueillir la prochaine réunion du « groupe de contact » est venue opportunément tempérer cette impression en fin de journée. Concernés au premier chef par l’avenir de ce pays, la plupart des Etats arabes, comme l’Algérie et l’Egypte qui vient de renverser Hosni Moubarak, n’étaient pas représentés à la réunion de création du « groupe de contact » sur la Libye, à laquelle ont assisté une quarantaine de pays et d’organisations. Le chef de la Ligue arabe, Amr Moussa, avait décliné l’invitation, se faisant représenter par un simple ambassadeur, un profil bas expliqué par un diplomate égyptien par la prise en charge des opérations militaires par l’Otan et par les inconnues pesant sur la suite des évènements en Libye. Le soutien de la Ligue arabe aux Occidentaux avait pourtant constitué le déclencheur de l’adoption de la résolution 1973 du Conseil de sécurité de l’ONU. Alors que les puissances occidentales – Etats-Unis, France, France – étaient représentées par leur ministre des Affaires étrangères, les Etats arabes présents l’étaient par un ambassadeur, à l’exception notable des Emirats arabes unis et du Qatar, qui a fait un geste de bonne volonté remarqué en acceptant d’être le pays hôte de la prochaine rencontre. Seuls sept pays arabes, sur les 24 membres de la Ligue arabe, étaient représentés. L’Union africaine était, elle, absente, alors que le président de la Commission de l’UA, Jean Ping, était donné présent lundi encore. Autre absent notable, le peuple libyen. Le Conseil national de transition (CNT), opposé au régime du colonel Kadhafi, n’a pas pu assister à la réunion, malgré les pressions de la France. (AFP)

SEVENTEEN) – FRANCE READY TO ARM LIBYAN REBELS

France said it was ready to discuss arming Libyan rebels with its coalition partners, although this was not part of the United Nations mandate, its foreign minister said on Tuesday. Speaking after a meeting in London of foreign ministers and international organisations to discuss post-Gaddafi Libya, Alain Juppe said a new

political contact group had been created comprising 20 countries and organisations and would meet next in Qatar, then Italy. "I remind you it is not part of the U.N. resolution, which France sticks too, but we are ready to discuss it (arming) with our partners," Juppe told reporters. On whether Gaddafi should go into exile, Juppe said there was no future for the Libyan leader in his country, but that it was up to the Libyan people to decide his fate. (Reuters)

EIGHTEEN) - **GADDAFI NAMES FORMER PRESIDENT OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS NEW ENVOY**

Le régime libyen du colonel Mouammar Kadhafi a désigné un proche du président nicaraguayen Daniel Ortega pour le représenter à l'ONU, après la défection de son ambassadeur en raison du soulèvement en Libye, a annoncé mardi la porte-parole de la présidence à Managua. [Miguel D'Escoto](#), diplomate et conseiller du président Ortega pour les affaires internationales, "est autorisé" à parler au nom de la Libye aux Nations Unies, a déclaré Rosario Murillo, épouse et porte-parole du président sandiniste, qui affiche un soutien militant au colonel libyen. Selon elle, la Libye de Mouammar Kadhafi a pris cette décision, convaincue que les Etats-Unis n'accorderaient pas de visa à son nouvel ambassadeur désigné aux Nations Unies, Ali Triki, un ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères. Le siège de la Libye est vacant depuis la défection de Mohammed Shalgham, qui a dénoncé le colonel Kadhafi depuis la répression de l'insurrection dans son pays. Selon Rosario Murillo, une lettre des autorités libyennes en place au secrétaire général de l'ONU, M. Ban Ki-moon, habilite Miguel d'Escoto, actuellement à New York, à y représenter les intérêts libyens. Miguel d'Escoto a pour instruction du président Ortega d'"accepter cette nomination" pour aider la Libye à défendre son droit à résoudre ses problèmes intérieurs sans ingérence étrangère, a ajouté Mme Murillo. Selon Managua, Ali Triki s'est vu refuser son visa pour aller occuper le siège de la Libye à New York. Un porte-parole du département d'Etat américain avait déclaré vendredi dernier n'avoir "aucune information" sur ce visa, précisant que les relations avec l'ambassade libyenne aux Etats-Unis étaient "suspendues". (AFP)

NINETEEN) - **CONGO SIGNS FUNDING DEAL WITH CHINESE BANK**

The Democratic Republic of Congo has signed an agreement with the China Development Bank aimed at funding growth in the country, the government said late on Monday. The parties did not disclose the amount agreed in the deal. China has already established a major presence in mineral-rich Congo, and signed a \$6 billion minerals-for-infrastructure deal with country the in 2008, backed China's Exim Bank. "Prime Minister Adolphe Muzito has expressed his satisfaction at the signing of a framework agreement for a win-win co-operation between China and the DRC," a statement from the prime minister's office said. The agreement with China Development Bank would cover a number of sectors including mining, oil, road building and agriculture, the statement said. No information about the size of the financing package or the length of time it will last was made available and no one from either side was immediately available for comment. Congo's 2008 deal with China was reduced from \$9 billion in 2009 after the IMF raised concerns that it could plunge the country deeper into debt. It was also criticised earlier this month by campaign group Global Witness, which said that it risked being undermined due to a lack of transparency and poorly defined terms. (Reuters)

Fernando Matos Rosa

Brussels

