

The International Role in Libya's Transition Emily O'Brien and Richard Gowan New York University Center on International Cooperation

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Following the death of Muammar Gaddafi in October 2011, the situation in Libya fell largely out of the headlines, with the majority of reports focused on the fragile security environment there. Meanwhile, international attention has been fixed on the crisis in Syria. One reason that Libya receded from international attention was that the UN did not put a large-scale post-conflict presence in place there... (...)

This report picks up where the last left off, and tracks international efforts to stabilize the country and begin the process of reintegrating it into the international community, ending with the Security Council's decision to renew UNSMIL's mandate for a year in March 2012. (...)

The sharp disagreements between international actors that characterized the Libyan war have been largely absent in the post-conflict period. Mechanisms like the "Friends of Libya" forum have proved to be effective umbrella organizations to coordinate multilateral assistance. (...)

There have been both disturbing and positive moments, and Libya's future remains uncertain. In going back to the first six months after the fall of Gaddafi, however, this paper aims to offer an objective assessment of international engagement in the immediate post-conflict phase — a phase in which many important decisions about Libya's future were made, and the UN and its partners aimed to define a role in the country's complex politics that differed markedly from "standard" post-war interventions. (...)

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