



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

**Fact Sheet**

**Office of the Spokesman**

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## Current State of U.S.-Libya Bilateral Relationship

- The U.S. has full diplomatic relations with Libya and opened its Embassy in Tripoli in May 2006. Libya established its People's Bureau (embassy) in Washington the same month. In July 2007 the President nominated career diplomat Gene A. Cretz as U.S. Ambassador to Libya.
- The U.S. seeks normalized relations and expanded cooperation with Libya in multiple areas, including: education and culture, science and technology, commerce, security, and human rights and good governance.
- The U.S. and Libya have a common interest in promoting international peace and security. Both support a stable, secure, and prosperous Maghreb and believe that greater economic and political integration will help achieve these goals. Libya is a leader on the African continent and through the African Union Contact Group is working to mediate the conflicts in Chad and Sudan.
- Libya is a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and began its 2008-2009 term in January. It is the first time it has served on the Council since 1977. It has voted in favor of UNSCR 1803, which enacted additional sanctions against Iran, and is working with the international community to ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program.
- The U.S. expects each Council member to fulfill its obligations to support the principles of the UN Charter, contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council, and uphold its role in promoting human rights and international peace and security.
- The U.S. and Libya soon intend to sign a Protocol on Cultural and Educational Cooperation, which will help further nurture educational and cultural ties by promoting mutual understanding through the exchange of individuals and information. Since 2005, nearly 100 Libyans have participated in a variety of U.S. government-sponsored academic, cultural, and professional exchange programs. Over 1000 Libyan students are currently studying at higher-education institutions in the United States.
- A partnership with the University of Michigan – Dearborn is providing for the update and enhancement of business education and the introduction of distance learning at Garyounis University. A primary school-based classroom reading program designed to develop critical thinking skills is expected to be launched in the coming months.
- The U.S. has worked with the Global Heritage Foundation and Oberlin College to help conserve the ancient Greek city of Cyrene to preserve the national heritage of Libya.
- On April 4, the U.S. and Libya brought into force the Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement signed on January 3. Under the agreement, we are now engaged at the governmental and nongovernmental level, including academic and private sector scientific engagement in such fields as alternative energies, sustainable green building designs, upper atmospheric research, health care, archaeology, water, nuclear security, seismology, standards and metrology, science education, business applications, and technology innovation.
- The U.S. and Libya intend to sign a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in the near future, providing a structure for mutual efforts to enhance bilateral trade and investment relations. Oil and gas investments remain strong, and commerce and trade are expanding and diversifying outside the hydrocarbon sector. In 2007, U.S. imports of Libyan goods rose almost 40%, while U.S. exports to Libya grew by nearly 17%. American small and medium enterprises are increasingly interested in the Libyan market.
- Libya is a vital partner in the fight against terrorism and actively helps stem the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq. In cooperation with its Maghreb neighbors, Libya is active in efforts to combat the growing terrorist threat in North Africa. Promoting Libyan military-American military relations is an important component in effective cooperation in these areas and the U.S. is currently negotiating a Military Memorandum of Understanding with Libya.
- The issue of human rights and good governance is universal and is a core component of U.S. diplomatic discourse with any country, including Libya. These issues are raised consistently at all levels of the Libyan government, and the United States continues to express its concern for the continued detention of political prisoners, including Fathi El-Jahmi. The Libyan government and Libyan society are beginning a general discourse on human rights and political and social reform. The U.S. looks forward to further cooperation with the Libyan government and Libyan society on these critical issues.

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