



**U.S. Senate Committee
on Foreign Relations**
Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Ranking Member
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Hearing on Libya Policy
Opening Statement - As prepared for delivery
Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
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Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening this hearing. And let me commend our witnesses for their work in securing Libya's renunciation of its WMD arsenal.

The agreement with Libya could represent an important model for the way in which we confront a new threat to our security: the combination of "rogue states", weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

I have been calling for a new compact with our allies to deal with these dangers. Just as our allies need to add sticks to their carrots, we need to add carrots to our sticks.

This agreement demonstrates that when it comes to changing the behavior of rogue regimes, we must apply pressure but also make clear the benefits of cooperation.

Three previous Administrations kept the pressure on Libya and kept the international community on board with sanctions. They forced Tripoli to recognize that to end its economic and political isolation, it had to end its denial of responsibility for the horror of Pan Am 103... end its support for terrorism... and end its quest for weapons of mass destruction.

The Bush Administration kept the pressure on.

But – and this is crucial – it also showed a willingness to engage with Libya and to make clear what Tripoli stood to gain if it gave up its reckless ways. And it joined Britain on a diplomatic track that has begun the process of bringing Libya back into the community of nations.

To be sure, there is a long, long way to go.

The Libyan Prime Minister's recent comments denying responsibility for Pan Am 103 underscore the need for strict verification of Libya's commitments. Those comments were quickly and fully retracted – as they had to be.

But even as we move forward, Americans will never forget the past and the suffering of hundreds of mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers caused by an inhuman act of terror.

And there is also a long, long way to go before Libya as a country and Libyans as a people meet their full potential.

Getting out of the terrorism business and giving up weapons of mass destruction are crucial steps forward... but only first steps.

To survive and ultimately thrive in the 21st century, Libya must embrace the principles of liberal democracy: secular education, representative government, a transparent economy, a free press, a strong civil society.

For now, Libya appears to have made a strategic break with its past. That's good for Libya, its neighbors and indeed for the security of people around the world.

That strategic break – and our pragmatic response -- also offers a roadmap for dealing with other problem states like North Korea, Iran and Syria.

We must continue to make clear all that they stand to lose by seeking WMD, supporting terror, and spreading instability. But we must also overcome our bizarre fear of spelling out in detail what they can gain if they change their ways.

This Administration seems to have flipped on its head the old adage “Sticks and stones may brake my bones but words can never hurt me.”

Our experience with Libya shows that, as Winston Churchill once said, “Jaw, Jaw” can often accomplish more than “war, war.”

I know that our witnesses may be somewhat constrained in what they can say because we are not in closed session. Nonetheless, I look forward to them updating us on the progress made to date.

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