

**PUBLIC**

**ANNEX 8.21**

**Cour  
Pénale  
Internationale**

**International  
Criminal  
Court**



Le Bureau du Procureur

The Office of the Prosecutor

ICC Restricted

## Translation of Evidence

### Original Document

ERN Range	LBY-OTP-0005-0025 to LBY-OTP-0005-0037
Source Language(s)	Arabic
Number of Pages	13

### Translation

ERN Range Translated	LBY-OTP-0005-0025 to LBY-OTP-0005-0037
Target Language(s)	English
Number of Pages	13

ICC Restricted

LBY-OTP-0007-0827

### Chapter 3

#### The Revolutionary Law Charter

Qadhafi exercised government and legislative authority in the country after 1 September 1969 based on what he called 'Revolutionary Law' but he made no attempt to explain this term in any charter or declaration that might clarify its meaning, concept or definitions.

This idea remained in force and was part of every step that Qadhafi made, such as the Declaration of Revolutionary Law in April 1973, the Declaration of The Establishment of the Authority of the People in March 1977, the Declaration of Separating the Legislature from the Revolution in 1979 and the Declaration of The Reformist Relaxations in March 1988.

Qadhafi contented himself on these occasions by referring to Revolutionary Law occasionally and in a special but still vague manner. Accordingly, on 10 April 1976, after announcing the discovery of an attempted military coup in August 1975, in which he gave a speech about the conspirators, who included certain members of the Revolutionary Command Council, he said<sup>1</sup>:

'The Revolution can bring forth the sun in the middle of the night. They (i.e., the conspirators) have no destiny beyond their final elimination. The law now is Revolutionary Law. Whoever now adopts Revolutionary law will still be able to work but those who do not will not and will be eliminated'.

This remained the case until the end of 1989 or, more precisely, 7 October of that year, when Qadhafi gave a speech in which he renounced any responsibility for ruling Libya and accused the Libyan people of being responsible for the current corruption in the Jamahiriya State and called for a revolution against it<sup>2</sup>:

'I say now that what is needed after twenty years is a revolution by the people against themselves. As for myself, it is absolutely inconceivable under any circumstances that I would accept to rule this country at any time. It is the people who hold the legislative authority in their hands, even though they are responsible for this corruption. For twenty years, it has been my concern that the people should rule instead of Mu'ammār Qadhafi and instead of the Revolutionary Command Council. I believe that the corruption is your doing and that you, the people, are all corrupt. My concern is that the people should rule because I have no desire to rule. Where the people rule, they have to assume responsibility for all that they do. As a result, you would not burden me with the responsibility ...

<sup>1</sup> National Record, Vol 7 1975-1976, p 714.

<sup>2</sup> National Record, Vol 21 1989-90, pp 196-209, 242. Qadhafi kept making this personal appeal until March 2007, as we shall see in the next chapter.

... of ruling Libya for even one day. The first years were the years in which the Revolution was consolidated. Now that legislative authority is in your hands, you are in charge of it. I do not want to rule and I didn't rule in the past. We ... we do not rule but, if we were the ruler, the country would now be a paradise. I told you we used to rule; we had self-confidence and we ruled dictatorially because we founded the Revolution. We butchered many people so that many generations might live happy lives. Today, however, I am not at all happy with your behaviour outside of the Congresses and Committees, just as I was unhappy about the royalist government that used to rule and which I rebelled against. Today, who will rebel against the people? The people must rebel against themselves!

The features of the revolution that Qadhafi asked the Libyan people to lead against themselves were in no way different from the paragraphs of the 'Revolutionary Programme' that were referred to exhaustively in the speech itself and then repeated in the speech that he gave to the People's Congresses on 19 January 1990 during their second ordinary round for 1989/90<sup>3</sup>.

Similarly, for the first time, at the end of his abovementioned speech to the People's Congresses, Qadhafi asked that they look into the subject of exceptional revolutionary powers for himself and those who remained of the Revolutionary Command Council, which he formulated in the following expressions<sup>4</sup>:

'The point that appears strange and the one that I would like to close this speech with ... my colleagues and I (the members of the Revolutionary Command Council) found ourselves at odds over the Revolutionary Committees in that, although these were made up of private individuals, there remained the possibility that some member of a Revolutionary Committee might become a Secretary on a People's Committee.'

'Anyone who has a trade and a professional association is entitled to take up their rights and take on their obligations. A People's Congress exercises oversight and authority whilst the People's Committee answers to it. As for us, we have no special powers even though you have burdened us with serious responsibilities. Starting from this round of Congresses, this is no longer acceptable and you must start to discuss this from tomorrow, Saturday. The people must be fully in charge. My colleagues and I were just men in the street who led a revolution and snatched power from the Americans, the British, the Italians, the police state and the monarchy through the use of our souls and our energy. We destroyed them all and gave legislative authority to the people. Our aim was for the people to be free but we didn't want to rule them. We came to give them legislative authority and let them rule themselves. Subsequently they asked us to walk amongst them. No-one confronted us or talked about anything. If that situation surprises you and you want us to approach some foreign country and say that we wish to adopt its nationality tomorrow, then tomorrow I will walk into the Arab Maghreb Union summit conference, even without special powers, ...

<sup>3</sup> National Record Vol 21 1989/90 pp 427 - 454

<sup>4</sup> *ibid* pp 450 - 454

... and I will say to the people in the Union, when the role of leadership for Libya comes round, don't look at me; I won't be president of the leadership council because I shall never be the president of my country. You'll have to split the presidency four ways rather than five.'

'As for us, we implore you not to have a relationship with us in any matter and not to burden us with any responsibility.'

'What I mean is that the people must rebel against themselves and take charge of things. You must leave us alone to go our own way, with no relationship between us. I tell you, we cannot and will not ask you to leave us in charge, as we believe that you are the ones who should be in charge. Oh, Mu'ammar, you say, we think of you as the President of the Republic and responsible for everything. So, in order to convince you that I am not in charge, let us take the nationality of some other country in order to show you the truth; that there is no relationship between me and your interests. We go about at the world's bidding and we come here and we end up like me, just another citizen. If all this doesn't satisfy you, then tomorrow you can give us special constitutional powers. When should we become involved and when not? Are we in charge or not? Are we protected or not?'

'If all these things don't surprise you, then say so and define those special powers. From now on, things won't seem so simple and, sometimes, we shall have to do things that cannot be avoided. Without special powers, maybe somebody will come along and protest against these things, but don't blame us. Sometimes, I can do nothing for you because I have no special powers. You will say, Why don't you do such and such? I will tell you, Comrades, it is you that have the legislative authority, not me. You will reply, no, shame on you for not doing this, and then claim that neglect and corruption are worsening amongst us. What can I do, though, if it is the people who are in power? Even if they were to grant us special powers, when could we take action and to what end? Are we in charge or not? Will we be criticised or not? After all, we have the right to choose; we can accept or refuse. I can go to Yemen or Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt or Malta, and farewell to you all! My colleagues are in the same position. With the Authority of the People, there's no turning back. The Congresses and the Committees are everywhere. No-one can stand in for the people; representation is just humbug. He who represents a political party is a traitor; he betrays the cause of the people and he betrays the cause of democracy. All this is a black shame on the world. Society must be based on cooperation and not on rules, finance or profiteering. This was what the Revolution was about. Now you own the special powers of the Revolution, and this is something special derived from the Revolution and the Revolution Act because those who led the Revolution also had special powers and so on and so forth. Where necessary, they behaved as revolutionaries first and then analysed and understood their actions afterwards.'

Because Qadhafi was not completely clear about what he wanted in the preceding paragraphs, taken from his speech of 19 January 1990, discussions could not take place at the People's Congresses ...

... in the way that Qadhafi wanted. It was therefore necessary for him to make his interests known on 27 January 1990 in the Hay Abu-Salim Congress discussions, in which he spoke as follows<sup>5</sup>:

'By following of the developing discussions in the People's Congresses, I fear that the matter proposed has not been properly understood. As a result, the Congress' Decree has been drawn up incorrectly because it was based on a false premise. I shall now explain some of the points that I should have mentioned at the beginning of this round of People's Congresses but, after following the Congress discussions, I am compelled to interfere once more in order to clear up certain points.'

Then he came to the point, saying:

'On this subject of the special powers that might, as it happens, have been misunderstood, Revolutionary Law is not something that anyone can give or take away. When I led the Revolution at the head of the Free Officers' Movement, we took over the legislative authority in the morning and we sat in the same chair in which the Emirs and the judges of the fallen era had sat. We started to issue revolutionary decrees for the good of the people. From then on, legislative authority was naturally taken over by the revolutionaries on the morning of the first day. We then handed it over to you in 1977 and there is no debate today over the Authority of the People. Let nobody fool themselves and say that legislative authority may be for the people but that the special powers, all the special powers, are for such and such a person or the leadership. I mean, would we give authority to the people and then just take it from them ... no! The people must be in charge and many people are dying every day in order to achieve the same legislative authority that you now have.'

'We took over legislative authority with the Revolution and the special powers too were taken over with the Revolution. We gave you that legislative authority and we gave you special powers so that you could rule yourselves. That was our aim, that the people should rule themselves, and there is no turning back. There can be no regrets and no consultation, even if we wanted them. No-one can take the authority from us except by force. We were victorious over those people whom we judged before by force and we took over the legislative authority. Up to now, the Revolution is still present and will continue to be so. With us, the special powers reside with the revolutionaries. This was our choice, that the Authority of the People would be an historic development internationally, based on a system of cooperation and the Authority of the People. What is appearing now in the form of a multiplicity of parties is the final step towards the Jamahiriya State.

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<sup>5</sup> National Record Vol 21 1989/90, pp 457, 465-470

Qadhafi then continued with his explanation:

'My intention was to confirm the enactment of Revolutionary Law because someone came up to me and asked, 'Authority for the People is all very well but you in the leadership; what will you be doing? If someone wrongs the people, we would bring him before the Courts and the Court might say, He's in the right, why have you brought him here? If we behaved incorrectly, the Courts would say, Why did you do that? You are not the authorised legislative authority; the Authority is the People. Anything you do might cause someone to bring an action against you and win. So, how should we behave? In the name of the Revolutionary Law that we exercise. Now, when I visit a country or attend a summit conference, I do this in the name of Revolutionary Law and not because someone authorises me, because my status is that of the individuals who preceded me and who created these special powers.'

'Revolutionary Law is what led to the setting up of Authority of the People. Legislative authority had been separated from its previous owners by the Revolution and then consolidated by the people. If we didn't have Revolutionary Law, how would we have set up the Authority of the People or changed the king, the ministers, the emirs, the governors and the constitution; how did we outwit the British, Americans and Italians and restore the people's property, or outwit the stockbrokers fleeing overseas working with American intelligence service and plotting against you and butchering you as you escaped back to here. These are the people from whom we recovered your stolen rights and returned them to you, together with the land that was divided between such and such. This is our land on which our fathers died and died valiantly in its defence. It is rich with their blood but then some profiteering feudalism came along and wrote that it was to be partitioned for somebody who had stolen the people's wealth and become rich, so the people left the land. We returned the wealth to the people and we returned the land to its owners just as we returned legislative authority to the people and put the enemies of the people to flight.'

'This is Revolutionary Law. It enabled us to set up the Authority of the People, adopt economic and socialist measures and [bring] social justice to the people, all paid for with oil. Revolutionary Law is still in force. In its name we are greeted with respect when we visit some country or represent Libya at a summit conference or at the [Arab] Maghreb Union. Some people may ask me, Are you a president or a king? I answer that I am the supreme leader of the Revolution and it was I who did all these things. Sometimes, I delegate political tasks to my colleagues. How do I justify my conduct? By Revolutionary Law.

'But Revolutionary Law does not grant special powers or legislative authority to just anyone. I couldn't accept that. Revolutionary Law is not my Cause and it's not your yours; it is a right won by the rule of the Revolution'.

In the same speech, Qadhafi added:

'The entity behind Revolutionary Law is the leadership of the revolution, i.e., the leadership of the people's masses, either directly or by means of revolutionary or other vanguard activities. For us in the revolutionary leadership, Revolutionary Law means that we lead the masses directly or by means of revolutionary or leadership activities. What this means is that either I can lead the workers directly or ask the workers' Union to tell the workers to do such and such in peace and war. Or we can lead the students or ask the secretaries of the People's Student Congresses to tell the Students' Congresses to do such and such. Or we can lead the farmers directly or address the Farmers' Congress and ask it to tell the farmers to do such and such. Or we can lead the armed forces' tradesmen and professionals directly or by means of their officers. This is revolutionary leadership, i.e., commanding the masses to do such and such. This is the outcome of Revolutionary Law: it can only give or take by force. My intention is that we, the Libyan people, should know for sure that Revolutionary Law means leadership of the people's masses either directly or by means of revolutionary or leadership activities. It doesn't mean that we shall give anybody special powers, for these things are your concern and nothing to do with me. As for my other colleagues, you are as free as they are. With them, you can ask 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud or al-Khuwaylidi to be in charge of the People's Committee, or you can ask Abu-Bakr or Mustafa to take charge of anything or any Congress. You are free. This means that you don't have to depend on them; depend upon yourselves. Be aware that mistakes happen but that nothing is impossible, whatever your doubts or however you deal with them, just deal with things any way and the Congresses [will recover?] after things have been formalised.'

Qadhafi then summarised by saying:

So, nothing [can] grant special powers to anyone or sponsor anyone. Nobody can grant me special powers at any time. I'm talking about Revolutionary Law. When I said, 'we accept', I meant that I agree to exercise Revolutionary Law or that we would leave Libya for good and farewell to you. Keep your revolution, your law and your authority; I will exercise my law or not. I'm not responsible to anyone. The person who led the revolution cannot be nominated. As to who should grant special powers, it's up to you if they are granted or not. The recipient is then responsible and accountable to those who appointed them. As for whoever made the thing originally, i.e., Revolutionary Law, it came as no surprise us when we took it over, and as it was no surprise, we kept it. It was a matter of conscience. They owned the Cause and you didn't ask them to lead the revolution, they did it themselves. So, they are responsible to themselves and their conscience. If you told them tomorrow to lead a revolution in some way, how would you do it in any way? As for the one who did it, the one who made the sacrifices and who bears the responsibility, their own responsibility is to their own conscience and they are not responsible to anyone else.'



'Revolutionary Law is a matter for conscience because it is fundamental to the work of the revolution. God is the Creator, 'He created heaven and earth'; who will hold Him to account<sup>6</sup>? Violent storms, end of the world, all that Judgement Day stuff, who would question it? No-one, because no-one has been asked to do so. They would say, God forbid. Be happy, create life in this form and don't be haphazard! Don't say this to God the Almighty, the original Creator. He says to something, Be! and it becomes whatever He wants. The Compassionate, the Merciful, Creator of heaven and earth. Likewise, we who led the revolution are only responsible to our consciences.'

At the beginning of February 1990, the newspaper '*al-Mawqif al-'Arabi*'<sup>7</sup> wrote that the Local People's Congresses and the Professional Congresses had cabled Col. Qadhafi, 'telling him of their taking charge of the Authority of the People and preparing to defend it in the face of any attempt aimed at its destruction and confirming their dedication to the success of the revolutionary principles that he had drawn up'. Similarly, the same telegrams confirmed 'their trust in the Leader's ability to overcome anything that might try to obstruct the revolutionary programme and that he was the spirit of the revolution, the creator of Authority of the People and their guide for its confirmation and taking root.' In the same issue, the newspaper said that the Unified Free Officers' movement had issued an announcement saying that the Leader would remain the Secretary, the guru and the guide for the Libyan people. The paper added that the announcement 'called for the Local People's Congresses to grant all special powers to the Leader of the First of September Revolution in order for him to direct revolutionary progress.'

Faced with all this 'courage' and 'clarity' from Qadhafi on what he wanted the People's Congresses to decree concerning the 'special revolutionary powers' and Revolutionary Law, it came as no surprise that, on 9 March 1990, at the end of its assembly that lasted from the second to the ninth of that month, the General People's Congress issued what they called 'The Revolutionary Law Charter'<sup>8</sup>. Its first paragraph reads:

'The directions issued by the Leader of the Revolution shall be compulsorily complied with.'

Likewise, in another paragraph, it confirmed:

'Revolutionary Law (as laid down by the Leader of the Revolution) is based upon the formal Revolution Act and is therefore prioritised (there is no alternative) unless [annulled] or withdrawn.'

<sup>6</sup> There is no hiding the adoration and non-belief in this expression...

<sup>7</sup> A Nasserite newspaper published in Cairo, No. 407, year ten, 29 Jan – 4 Feb 1990

<sup>8</sup> See Annex 33. The Charter was published in No. 3247 in the London newspaper '*al-'Arab*' on 12 March 1990 and No. 424 of year ten for the magazine '*al-Mawqif al-'Arabi*' for 19 – 25 March 1990.

In another paragraph, it says:

'Revolutionary Law is not a gift. It is the outcome of the Glorious 1st of September Revolution and the Law of the Leader of the Revolution is the outcome of his existence as the Leader of the Glorious Revolution.'

There is no hiding that this Charter, with all its biased clauses, torpedoes all that remained of the regime's claims concerning 'the Authority of the People' and Qadhafi's 'Reformation' directives that he had alluded to ever since March 1988. This was confirmed in a more obvious way by certain other steps taken by the regime that were taken at the same time as this Charter was issued, of which the most significant were:

1. The creation, by the General People's Congress at the end of the same round, of what was called 'The Revolutionary Programme' that Qadhafi described as 'difficult and needing personal sacrifices' and which was nothing but a collection of Qadhafi's ideas that he had earlier expressed to the People's Congresses but which had not been accepted (such as education by correspondence, ending primary education, ending working for cash and exchanging it for a barter system, etc).
2. Qadhafi's issue of instructions for reforming and rebuilding the People's Congresses and Committees and for encouraging the Revolutionary Committees to take over all the senior posts in these organisations and take over their running.
3. The reformation of the [Cabinet] (the Supreme People's Committee) in September 1990, which enabled the Revolutionary Committees to take over the sensitive posts there occupied by senior revolutionary elements, the President of the Supreme People's Committee (Abu-Zayd Darudah), the Secretary for Professional Formation and Training (Ma'tuq Muhammad Ma'tuq), the Secretary for Communications and Transport ('Izz-al-Din Muhammad al-Hanshiri), the Secretary for Overseas Communications and International Cooperation (Ibrahim al-Bishari) and the Secretary for the Media and Culture ('Ali Milad Abu-Jaziyah).
4. The reorganisation of the Libyan Armed Forces as part of 'the dissolution of the Libyan Army' with the release of all the military elements whose absolute loyalty was doubted by [the regime]. This followed on from the new information arriving after the military defeats suffered by its forces in Chad from the end of 1986 / beginning of 1987 and continuing up to September of the current year.

As was to be expected, the period that followed the issue of the 'Law Charter' saw the implementation of more widespread human rights violations in Libya. This was either in the form of Qadhafi's continued encouragement of the abandonment of these rights<sup>9</sup> or in the form of the actual practices of the Revolutionary Committees and the state security services.

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<sup>9</sup> See the National record, Vols 11 and 12 1989/90 and 1990/91.

In a speech that Qadhafi gave on 14 June 1990 to the members of the Judicial Sector, he said, in his exact words:

'The so-called Islamic direction is a political thing as much as a religious exchange exercise. By political direction, I mean the germs and illnesses that we must fight without mercy and never let them spread in society because when we discover somebody afflicted by illness, such as a stomach ache, they must not be left alone. Rather they should be taken to the doctor who will order them to be isolated far from anyone else.'

In Qadhafi's speech of 19 July 1990, during his meeting with the brave men, women and supporters of the 1st September [Revolution], he said:

'This Islam is an worthless cure. You come across one of your number and he gives the call, not for the cause, not for the comrades. You cut off his head and curse him in the street as if you were dealing with a lizard, a fox or a scorpion. They are poison, they are the devil, they are atheists!'

'If one of you was suffering from cancer. Remission, no informing, no comrades. That's that. Nothing else to do but the final slaughter, just like a mad cow. Did you hear about the mad cows in Britain? You didn't hear about the mad cows in Britain? Millions of cows had to be put down just because they were mad. Some cow is shaking but there is nothing else wrong with it; the cow is mad: just kill it. One of the comrades is in remission in the room; just end his life. Kill him because he has started to shake again and may infect the others. He has a stomach ache; to whom is the illness going to spread to? Between the healthy and the weak? Between the weak and the ... yeah, [right]!'

On 6 August 1990, Qadhafi spoke in a closed session during his meeting with graduates of teaching colleges and political science schools, who were in fact connected with friends of the Islamic direction in Libya (those who were arrested throughout 1989 and 1990), and said:

'This mentality is one that you must establish the value of. Deal with it as you would deal with a cockroach or a fly. If there is some Flit [fly killer], spray it and kill it at once. Attack this stupid mentality! It is an example of what exists here today and one that must be [questioned] and stamped out. We do not have the time for it and the cure doesn't work. We must deal with it by purification, regarding it as a serious disease.'

'Listen. This mentality needs ... it's like something rotten; there is no damp and there is no wound dressing. If the palm frond falls down it must be lost. The leaves are carried away by the wind. If it is rotten, the wind shakes the tree that then falls down and the leaves are lost. The good God knows that we waste our time in the mosque when not in school or in class like this ... like an apple. It is a sickness no-one talks about. My one concern is that someone with stomach illness ...

... is like a cow afflicted by madness. The cows that you heard about in Britain. They put down a million cows because they were suffering from mad cow [disease]. The cattle were worthless in terms of milk or meat. Even shut in the house, he fears its evil because her poison will spread from the windows that are part of the house and the door that is part of the barn. He will inform the surrounding district that they may die of it. For this they slaughter millions of cows. This cow is suffering from mad cow disease. When we meet someone afflicted with atheism; kill them.'

In Qadhafi's last speech on 16 September 1990 during his meeting with the General Secretaries of the unions and professional associations for the municipalities, he said, in his very words:

'In this society, we always repeat that those who work for a political party and especially those who profit from religion and who are involved in atheism will be wiped out because it is a forbidden disease. They shall be denied the Authority of the People. If in doubt, cut their heads off. We forbid it. My concern in terms of my responsibility towards the Libyans is to inform every family, every wife, every father, every mother, every sister, every brother, everyone, to inform everyone about this illness. God be victorious, it is just as if we had discovered someone suffering from a serious illness, such as AIDS.'

Amongst the shouts from the crowd came cries of, 'purify them with blood, Leader', 'carry on and don't worry, Leader' and 'no respect for the traitors, Leader'. Qadhafi continued his speech, saying:

'There's no doubt here. Right, I shall declare it. We shall declare our [innocence] and we shall create the Authority of the People. We don't have time for those who sabotage of the Authority of the People and we don't have time for worthless cures, deception, demagoguery or forgery. People [fall?] when we talk with them and put their fingers in their ears and bury their heads in their clothes. They insist and puff themselves up. They bring a tape of the lecture. They say please, let me, sit down, speak (not finished) ... OK, they aren't like that. Bring the sword; cut their heads off in sixty sacrifices. Right. There's no doubt at all. I say to them and their families and their relatives ... their crimes affect everyone around them. We shall deny them the Authority of the People. We shall deny it to any peaceful religious party, any unrecognised party, any communist party and any party from anywhere else.'

'To those who say, Don't say these things and don't repeat them, I shall repeat them and we shall not stop repeating them because we know the destiny of the fallen people. It is annihilation. So we say to them, He who warns is excused. There's no soft option. One thing is sure, I mean it will happen, but I refuse now to give them a chance. We are telling these people and their families so that they can't say, By God, you attacked and killed somebody? Why did you arrest someone? Those people killed themselves and arrested themselves ...'

'So, The Authority of the People in Libya is not up for discussion and anyone who tries to do so will be annihilated. After this explanation, permit us to return and talk more on this subject, provided the people understand. The job starts with you. Next time you meet an atheist, kill them.'

In the speech that Qadhafi gave at the thirteenth convention of the Revolutionary Committees Movement on 26 October 1990, he said:

'When, however, legislative authority starts, it will be the people's. There is no way that legislative authority can be attacked or taken by surprise because the legislature [derives] from the people, all except the enemies of the people who plot against the Authority of the People and who must be annihilated without further discussion. When legislative authority is taken up by the masses, anyone who opposes the masses must be crushed under the feet of the people, without judgement, without trial. They are just rubbish. There will be no discussions with those who oppose the authority of the masses. Don't listen to the empty harvest. The rights of the people are laws and trials. The enemies of the people will be crushed under the heels of the people without trial. Don't put them on trial. There will be no trials. Thousands of people will march over anyone who opposes the Authority of the People, trampling them underfoot. The masses will never take them to Court. The masses attack, they do not try people. When someone opposes them, why stop the tide temporarily and sit and talk about it, saying, why do you oppose me? Where are you going and what is your name? Attack them, assault them and [leave] them dead by the side of the road. The force of the masses annihilates anything that stops in its way. Enemies of the people are to be annihilated without trial when the sacred people come to power.'

Qadhafi repeated this during his speech at the closed session of the Jamahiriya Revolutionary Students' Congress on 27 January 1991, at which he said;

'When the people rule themselves, who shall oppose them? Who will oppose them? If someone is alone in sixty misfortunes, they're an idiot. Like when we meet any Libyan who opposes the Authority of the People in Libya; they're mad. Those who oppose the Libyan people, those who oppose the People's Congresses and Committees. These people have no idea, no culture, no brains at all. They are [morons]. So anyone who opposes the Authority of the People, and how many times must I repeat this, annihilate them without trial. Kill them without trial both at home and abroad.'

In another speech that Qadhafi gave, on 27 April 1991, in the first opening session of the permanent board of Arab lawyers in the '*Sina' al-Muhaydali*' lecture hall of the Arab medical university in Benghazi, he said:

'Since there is a mass-rule regime in Libya and the legislative authority lies with the people, if there are folk who the Libyan people wish to try, they must be tried and we shall end their freedom or end their lives.'

'This used to happen but there were protests against it. There may be people who want to rule the Libyan people. Maybe some party wants to rule the Libyan people. No way! The Libyan people rule themselves. Anyone who opposes me in this, just get out of the way. What do you call this? Repression? Dictatorship? When the people rule, any opposition to the people must be annihilated!'

These are just snatches<sup>10</sup> of what Qadhafi has said since issuing the Revolutionary Law Charter. The most significant element of these statements is not just their content in terms of its disdain for the Libyan people's lives and freedom and its violation of their human rights. It's not just their existence, coming from a person who claimed to be – before the whole world, a few months before, the liberator of the Libyan people, if not of all humankind, in the name of freedom for the people and their wellbeing wherever it was found. He would strive to abolish the death penalty in his country and he asked to be considered for membership of Amnesty International. He publicised the Great Green Charter for Human Rights in the Age of the Masses that was to replace the International Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations. [Perhaps] the most important thing about these statements and announcements is that they were issued in the light of The Revolutionary Law Charter that was compiled from 'all the directions issued by Qadhafi as Leader of the Revolution compelling their implementation by all the organisations, establishments and services of the Jamahiriya state' that Qadhafi had compiled. His speeches now had the power of law, if not more power than any law.

So it comes as no surprise in the light of these speeches and declarations that Qadhafi's Revolutionary Committees and security services started to pursue those citizens they suspected of opposition to the regime, arresting them arbitrarily, torturing and killing them. This is what the organisations concerned with human rights indicated in their special reports between 1989 and 1991<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See what Qadhafi said to the 13th assembly of the Revolutionary Committees' movement on 26 October 1990 and in his speech on 27 January 1991 at the closed session of the second Revolutionary Students' assembly and in his speech of 7 April 1991.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the Amnesty International report of 26 June 1991 entitled 'Libya: Amnesty International's prisoner concerns in the light of recent legal reforms' [En: 31 May 91]. See also the Arab Association for Human Rights special report for 1989-1991, Issue No. 37 of the magazine '*al-Inqadh*' concerning human rights in Libya – September 1991 and the report issued by the Libyan National Salvation Front in 1999 on human rights violations in Libya between 1969 and 1997.

No-one can doubt that the Revolutionary Law Charter and its included texts, which show disdain for the desire of the Libyan people for their rights, and which derive from Qadhafi's speeches and provocative declarations and from the exercise of naked and barbaric repression by the regime's services and its Revolutionary Committees, have all been compiled from the claims that Qadhafi issued after March 1988 concerning the 'reforms' affecting Libyan human rights. At the head of these ['reforms'] was the issue of the Great Green Charter on Human Rights in the Age of the Masses that was seen as pure folly and contemptible rubbish by all those who took these claims at face value<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> It was apparent that nobody who took part in the discussions organised by the magazine "*Arajin*" on 6 October 2006 concerning 'Libya from Revolutionary Law to Constitutional Law' mentioned the Revolutionary Law Charter in any way at any time. We are sure that nobody was unaware of this Charter and that it was an absurdity on the road to any return of constitutional law or even any simple call for such a return.