



SOUTHERN AFRICAN VEXILLOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
FLAG SPECIFICATION SHEET

Libya
National flag

HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM CONTD.

The distance between the tips of the crescent shall equal that between the uppermost and lowermost point of the star measured along a perpendicular forming the hoistward sides of these two points. The perpendicular shall form a tangent to the outside circumference of the crescent at a point equidistant from the top and bottom of the flag. ... The crescent is symbolic of the beginning of the lunar month according to the Muslim calendar. It brings back to our minds the story of the Hijra (migration) of our prophet Mohammed from his home in order to spread Islam and teach the principles of right and virtue. The Star represents our smiling hope, the beauty of aim and object and the light of our belief in God, in our country, its dignity and honour which illuminate our way and puts an end to darkness. Every particle of soil in our dear country is soaked with the blood of innocent martyrs, every stone relates the story of continued struggle. They all stand as witness to the great sacrifices and the dear price paid for the sake of liberating our country".

On 01 September 1969, a small group of military officers led by the 27 year old army officer Muammar Gaddafi staged a *coup d'état* against King Idris, launching the Libyan Revolution and the flag of Libya was replaced with a simple red, white and black horizontal tricolour (see SV - LY - 01.3 - 1). This was in turn replaced in 1977 with a plain green flag (see SV - LY - 01.5 - 1) which was used until the uprising in 2011 which resulted in the formation of the National Transitional Council (NTC).

The flag used between 1951 to 1969 has now been revived as Libya's *de facto* national flag by soldiers and supporters of the NTC following the popular uprising which erupted in 2011 and culminated in the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime.

At the time of writing, the National Transitional Council is still attempting to consolidate its control over some parts of the country which remain in control of pro-Gaddafi loyalists. Although the NTC has been recognised by some countries as being the new government of Libya, it has not yet received such recognition from the African Union.

Source: *'Flags of the World'* by EMC Barraclough and W Crampton (1964)