

The comments made on February 26th 2010 by Mr. Philip J. Crowley, spokesperson for US State Department, on the statements made by H.E. Muammar Al-Gathafi, the Leader of the Revolution, are truly regrettable. The manner in which he spoke reveals his lack of understanding of the actual content of the said statements. The leader's statement was, in fact, a condemnation of the Swiss provocative and racist referendum, directed against Islam, which resulted in the prevention of building minarets of mosques. It was also an unequivocal condemnation of terrorism and the acts committed by Al-Qaeda, and other similar terrorist organizations.

Switzerland's irresponsible behavior marked by xenophobia and Islamophobia has been reflected in the mistreatment of Libyan diplomats and the unjustifiable manipulation of the Schengen convention for political purposes, evidenced by the Swiss request that the Schengen visa be denied to more than 180 high ranking Libyan officials.

The statement by the US official involves his country in a diplomatic issue, which is essentially a dispute between Libya and Switzerland. Although the United States should have no connection with this issue, the US official spoke as if he was a Swiss official.

It is truly regrettable that this statement comes at a time in which the Libyan-American relations witness a progressive improvement thanks to the Libyan continued efforts exerted to mend bridges between the two states. The statement could have negative repercussions for the political and economic relations between the two countries unless the United States clarifies the said statement, offers an apology for it, and holds the official who made it accountable.

If the United States persists in its support for the Swiss position, which contravenes the Schengen convention, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya will adopt similar measures towards American citizens in order to safeguard its sovereignty and the dignity of its citizens.

New York, 4 March 2010