The paper notes that Libya under Moumar Gadaffi has been read by different analysts from several divergent viewpoints, depending largely on location and orientation of the commentator. Libya has been painted in several circumstances as a rogue nation that supports terrorists and insurrections. This is largely the perception of the West, principally the United States which has, for some decades, considered the fight against Gadaffi a major agenda of the State Department.

Initially, as the paper posits, this western viewpoint or perception has infested African states of the sub-Saharan region. For instance, in Nigeria in the 1980s, Libya was considered a dangerous pan-Africanist state which was strategizing to expand its territories beyond Niger and Chad republics south-wards into Nigeria. Working in league with the US and France, reminiscent of the Casablanca bloc programme, the Nigerian government went to every length to discredit Gadaffi and Libya using the politics of OAU to press home her point. Gadaffi was accused of sponsoring Islamic fundamentalism and the creation of a Pan-Islamic federation.

Even in more recent times, as the paper reveals, considerations of Libya’s Pan-Africanist utterances are held suspect, largely within the sub-Saharan. For instance, the build up of the 1999 OAU summit in Sytre, Libya, was a clear manifestation of the division within the ranks of African leaders. The vision of a single federation of African states, inspired by Gadaffi in Sytre was not shared by many African states although they were careful of criticizing it. However, drawing on emotive images of western exploitation and underdevelopment, Gadaffi has consistently garnered support for instituting an African Union which will serve the interest of the black race. As previously, the Libyan initiatives were interpreted as a ploy by Gadaffi to break out of the prolonged diplomatic isolation brought about by poor relations with the West and some Arab states. Some others united that Libya ‘forays’ in Sudan, CAR, and assistance to Zimbabwe are strategies to neutralize Nigeria and South African influence in the Sub-Saharan region. Critical analysts, as the paper notes, contend that the African conditions in which conservative leaders bottled within the confines of their state boundaries resist innovative, progressive ideas are not new. In the ‘50s, by the Second Conference of Independent African states, attended by 13 countries, it was clear that participants expressed deep seated ideological differences regarding the form African Unity was to take. The most fundamental and contemptuous development which widened the emerging rift among African states was the Congo crisis and the rise of compelling alliances. Consequently, in the OAU, several groups of states sharing similar values on a wide range of issues interacted with one another along the line of classical multi-polar balance of power type of international system. It was also like the post-Napoleonic concert in Europe in some respect as it worked for the preservation of existing political system and border in Africa. The paper concludes that North Africa’s dynamic foreign policy and the linkage with the Sub-Saharan region has a long history. Tripoli has played critical role in the Trans-Saharan trade and the rive of new diplomacy with the states of western Sudan. Colonel Nasser of Egypt fired the most progressive shot and Gadaffi is taking up the cue. It is contended that African leaders should see the merit of progressive programmes in forging African unity than being perpetual lackeys to pursue and preserve western agenda which work against the emancipation of the continent.