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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Muslim Brotherhood goes public with Libya summit (Reuters)

BENGHAZI, Libya Nov 17 (Reuters) - The Muslim Brotherhood held its first public conference on Libyan soil on Thursday after being banned for decades, and used the platform to set a moderate tone, calling for a broad national reconstruction effort.

As Libya emerges from a bloody civil war, many observers believe the next elections could pit religious political groups against secular parties, with better-organised Islamists such as the Brotherhood having a tactical advantage.

Speaking nine months to the day after the start of the uprising against Muammar Gaddafi that eventually ended his 42-year rule, Libyan Muslim Brotherhood leader Suleiman Abdelkader praised the rebellion and called on Libya's factions to unite.

"Rebuilding Libya is not a task for one group or one party but for everyone, based on their ability," Abdelkader told the meeting of about 700 people at a wedding hall in Benghazi, the eastern city where the revolt against Gaddafi began.

His remarks appeared to be an expression of support for the idea of a technocratic interim government, which Abdurrahim El-Keib, the prime minister designate, is trying to assemble by a Tuesday deadline.

Abdelkader would not, however, be drawn on whether the Brotherhood wanted one of its members to be part of the interim cabinet, which is due to organise elections in June to a constituent assembly.

"Maybe some (members) will join based on their qualifications and ability. But for this time period we will not join as a party," he told Reuters after his speech.

The slickly organised event was heavy in revolutionary references, with the stage draped in the new national colours and speeches given by guest speakers from Tunisian moderate Islamist party Ennahda and Syria's banned Muslim Brotherhood.

There was also a general mood of celebration for a movement that was founded in 1949 but which organisers said had not held a public meeting in Libya until now.

"I feel great. It's freedom. It's like a dream for us," said Abdallah Dahmani, a 65 year-old university lecturer in chemistry. Many delegates, like Dahmani, were intellectuals with advanced degrees and spoke fluent English.

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