

Lockerbie bomber and the “deal in the desert”



■ **Jan 2001:** **Abdel Baset Ali Mohamed Al Megrahi**, former Libyan intelligence agent, is convicted of mass murder of

270 people and sentenced to life – with minimum of 27 years – for 1988 bombing of **Pan Am flight 103** over Lockerbie, Scotland

■ **Aug 2002:** UK foreign office minister **Mike O'Brien** meets Libyan leader **Muammar Gaddafi** in first official British contact since 1984

■ **Dec 2003:** Libya agrees to destroy its weapons of mass destruction

■ **Mar 2004:** U.S. lifts sanctions. Prime Minister **Tony Blair** visits Libya

■ **May 2007:** Tony Blair signs Memorandum of Understanding with Libya for prisoner transfer agreement. **London does not inform Scottish government of “deal in the desert”.** On same day BP signs oil exploration and production deal with Libya worth more than \$900 million

■ **Oct 2008:** Secret meeting between British, Scottish and Libyan officials over transfer of Megrahi to Libya

■ **Nov 17:** Britain and Libya sign prisoner transfer treaty. Draft treaty must be ratified by parliament

■ **Mar 2009:** Westminster Joint Committee on Human Rights accuses Justice Secretary **Jack Straw** of rushing treaty through parliament despite concerns over human rights

■ **Apr:** Treaty ratified into law

■ **May:** Libya applies for Megrahi to be returned to Libya – process expected to take about three months

■ **Jul:** Gaddafi asks Prime Minister **Gordon Brown** for help with Megrahi's transfer during G8 summit

■ **Early August:** Business Secretary **Lord Mandelson** meets with Colonel Gaddafi's son, **Seif al-Islam Gaddafi**, while on holiday in Corfu

■ **Aug 18:** Megrahi, now terminally ill with cancer, formally withdraws appeal, opening way for his release on compassionate grounds