

# *Pope Francis Criticizes West for Imposing Own Model on Mideast*

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Vatican City, May 18 (RHC)-- Pope Francis has criticized attempts by Western countries to impose their own brand of democracy on countries with different social and political textures, such as Iraq.

The Pope said: "Faced with current... terrorism, we should question the way a model of democracy that was too Western was exported to countries where there was a strong power, as in Iraq, or Libya, where there was a tribal structure." And Pope Francis added: "We cannot advance without taking these cultures into account."

The head of the Vatican also tacitly referred to the chaos and violence that has erupted in Libya after the ouster and killing of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi by an American-led coalition in September 2011. Libya now has two administrations, one which is recognized by world powers resides in the city of Tobruk and the other rules areas from the capital Tripoli. A unity government formed from members of the two rival administrations has had difficulty taking over.

Pope Francis has on occasions blasted "cultural colonialism," accusing Western powers of seeking to impose their values on developing countries in return for financial aid.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Pope also said Europe should better integrate refugees and asylum seekers, condemning the "ghettoizing" of refugees as a wrong and misguided step in the fight against terrorism.

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