

anniversary of the revolution. In terms of how offensive it is, a respondent in Kufra stated that, “At the beginning of the 2011 revolution, the term was considered inflammatory. But now it is [merely] discriminatory. ...” A participant in Benghazi said that the use of this word against someone will still result in violence, though from the broader conversations it appears that it is used less often and is not as severe a term as many of the others discussed in this lexicon. Though it is likely that this was more so the case in the past, one discussant stated that, “A lot of people get physically attacked, kidnapped, killed and have their properties taken because they are accused of being ‘azlam.’ That is, the money they have is not theirs and they benefited from the previous regime.” (This is linked to a law related to housing created by Gaddafi in the 1970s and ‘80s. He purportedly aimed to disperse the wealth of the rich to the rest of society, but this resulted in wealth mostly going to his supporters, which was therefore viewed as not belonging to them.) Negative perceptions of Gaddafi’s former supporters led to the political isolation law that was passed in 2013 barring any former senior member of Gaddafi’s regime from serving in the new government.

Similar to many other terms, “azlam” is considered more offensive in some regions as opposed to others. For instance, in LNA-controlled areas, the general perception has reportedly shifted from associating “azlam” with corruption to associating it with general loyalty to Gaddafi. But in other areas, such as Misrata, those targeted by the phrase may risk having their safety, freedom, or properties taken away.

Non-offensive alternative terms: Supporters/men of the former regime