

Former Al Jazeera Reporter on Libyan Coverage

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- March 21, 2012

Former Al Jazeera Reporter on Libyan Coverage

Ali Hashem: In Libya we came to realize we were serving a political agenda putting our journalism aside

[Watch full multipart Al Jazeera Journalist Explains Resignation over Syria and Bahrain Coverage](#)

• Bio

Ali Hashem is a television journalist who recently resigned from his post as a war reporter for Al Jazeera. While working for Al Jazeera, he covered the revolution in Libya, Lebanese politics, and tension related to the Syrian uprising on the Syrian Lebanese borders. He also worked for the BBC and led the production team at Manar TV.

• Transcript

PAUL JAY, SENIOR EDITOR, TRNN: Welcome to The Real News Network. I'm Paul Jay.

In early March, Ali Hashem, reporter for the Arabic Al Jazeera channel, resigned in protest over Al Jazeera's coverage of Syria, and also expressed concerns over their coverage of Bahrain. And in part one of our interview, he told the story of the resignation and what some of his concerns were. And he joins us again to continue our discussion. Thanks again for joining us, Ali.

ALI HASHEM, FMR. AL JAZEERA REPORTER (RESIGNED): You're welcome.

- JAY: So just to remind everybody, Ali joins us from Beirut, and he was a reporter for Arabic Al Jazeera. Before that he worked with BBC and Manar TV. So, Ali, let's pick up our discussion. We had been—we were just beginning to talk about Libya. How do you assess Al Jazeera's coverage of Libya, the Libyan conflict?

HASHEM: Actually, I was one of the main reporters in the Libyan conflict. We started the coverage from the beginning of the revolution in Libya, and we were, you know, witnessing the turning points in this revolution, how it was—you know, how it turned into—you know, how it was militarized and how the NATO started striking the Gaddafi posts.

- And so, regarding Al Jazeera's coverage, you know, it was supportive of the revolutionists and, you know, certainly anti-Gaddafi. But at that time it wasn't—things were kind of being experienced one by one. It was a first-time experience at that time. We were, you know, just going into cities along with the rebels, we go into the city along with the rebels, and then it's kind we go live on air, and it was kind of—all the concentration was on Libya.
- Regarding the coverage, I mean, the journalistic coverage, taking, for example, to the two points of views, actually, that might have been maybe not the same as Al Jazeera used to do before, when it was giving all the, you know, factions and each and every party in any conflict, it was giving them the right amount of time. It was clear that Al Jazeera was adopting the rebels' stance. It was going strongly behind them so that they, you know, prevail at the end.
- Then the Qatari—or here the Qatari agenda was clear. Actually, going day after day, it was clear that the Qataris were really taking it as a personal issue with Gaddafi and they want him to fall, whatever. Certainly this was welcomed by everyone over there, and even outside, because, you know, Gaddafi wasn't that kind of loved leader for his people, and neither for the countries around him. And at the same time, there were no really strong allies of al-Gaddafi to, you know, defend him in front—or, you know, facing the Qatari media machine or the Americans or the French, you know, the international coalition that was really—that was formed to face the Gaddafi regime.
- JAY: How soon after the very first protest that broke out in Benghazi, how soon after that were you there?

HASHEM: I was in Libya by 8 March. That was, like, 20 days. My colleagues were there by 1 March. That was, like, 13 days. So we tried our best to be there as soon as possible.

- And we were moving from one—as I told you, we were moving from city to city with the rebels. You know, we were—they were discovering some cities with us. You know, they were just, as they say, liberating these cities, and we were along with them, going from each place to another. We entered from Egypt, and we had our own machines with us, SMG's, you know, those live stream boxes, whatever. So they were all with us, and we were trying our best, you know, in each city or each place we go to to have live coverages from there and make people talk what they had, because those people were there for, like, 42 years, you know, being muted, if it's [crosstalk]
- JAY: Now, some people, a lot of people have compared the Syria situation to the Libya situation in a few ways, but that in Libya, that one take on this issue is that it began either with peaceful protests that were very early on militarized, again, to some extent, by outside forces—some people think it was the French or the Americans' involvement, or some people are suggesting even further, that the whole thing begins in Benghazi as kinds of an external conspiracy of sorts. What did you make of that?

HASHEM: Let me be clear. My own point of view in this regard, regarding even the Syrian, the Libyan, all the revolutions that took place in the Arab world, they're not set up, you know, they're not staged revolutions. Those revolutions were because—there are reasons for such revolutions. In each country there is a reason. There is a tyrant, there is a dictatorship, there are, you know, regimes that are really very old. And that's why people are revolting. It's not because those people are really being pushed by outside to revolute.

- But, you know, people—you know, whenever you have enemies, then you should take in consideration that your enemy is going to make use of any revolution against you. So you are not going to expect that enemies of Gaddafi or al-Assad will stay, you know, calm when they're seeing their enemy falling down or, you know, at least someone who is standing for him. They—that is for sure they're going to support them.

Now, for example, the Occupy Wall Street movement that was going on in the States. But let's say there's someone—any country that really wants to annoy the United States. Wouldn't they go and support those people against the regime of the United States? It's just normal.

- JAY: Well, actually, we do see that, because Russia Today is very, very supportive of Occupy Wall Street.

HASHEM: So that's why. You know, that's normal. It's—you know, I'll just say that everyone has the right to do whatever he wants. It's not—I can't say that this can't do that.

But, you know, those revolutions started peacefully. Those people started, you know, went into the streets because they were really oppressed for 40 years or 42 years or 30 years or 35—it depends on which country. You know, you're talking about an Arab world and the pro-American regimes that were really backed by the Americans, American administration. And most of those regimes were dictators. And still you have dictatorships. You have kingdoms like the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is really doing a lot of oppression for the people. The same for Bahrain. And these regimes are really backed by the United States to the bones.

- JAY: Well, let's just—let's go back to the beginning days of the Libyan conflict. Do you think, in terms of how quickly the protests became militarized—. I mean, obviously the threats of Gaddafi are the underlying issue, but did it get militarized more quickly than it might have because of external factors?
- HASHEM: Actually, in Libya, the beginning of the revolution and the real start of the revolution is when the rebels, or, let's say, the activists, at that time, occupied the barracks in Benghazi, and they went inside and took all the weapons. And then it started. Then everyone had weapons and everyone was kind of, you know, fighting from that time.
- So—and then it was clear that every—the French were really pushing into the militarization of the revolution. Then you have the United Nations Security Council resolution. So it was kind of—there was—the international community had a consensus over militarization of the revolution in Libya. And, you know, there was no one saying no. No one was—except for the Russians, maybe, and then they just stopped saying anything after some time. Even the Turks were having stances that were objecting all kinds of militarization. They were calling for a political accord to be reached and negotiations, whatever. And that was really—for those and in Benghazi, that was really provocative for them, and they refused several times to receive Turkish aids and Turkish, even, people who were coming to negotiate with the National Council over there for those political negotiations with Gaddafi. I mean, so they were trying to be different.
- So this was—in Libya it was quick and everyone was doing whatever. But you should take in consideration that Libya is a country different from Syria, as Egypt is different from Tunis.
- JAY: The criticism of Al Jazeera really got serious over Libya, and it was particularly when you started to—you know, fairly early on—and a lot of people predicted this right from the beginning, that after the UN resolution and Benghazi, it very quickly turned into, really, agenda of regime change, and Qatar was clearly, you know, one of the leading voices calling for regime change. How did that affect Al Jazeera's coverage?

HASHEM: For sure. You know. But at the end we were dealt with by the rebels over there as heroes, you know, because we were Al Jazeera that is really owned by Qatar, Qatar, which is taking those stances that are really kind of supportive of the NATO strikes and supportive of the rebels, giving arms to the rebels. So that was really clear that we were doing media warfare.

- As for me, I was trying my best, and that was clear on air—that may—gave me a lot of problems with people on the ground, that I was trying my best to be unbiased and giving the picture as it is. But the problem is, you know, in general the channel was taking this route or this path. And I wouldn't lie and say I wasn't happy with that. That was okay. You know, everyone was kind of *Gaddafi should fall*, and that was normal for anyone. Actually, I wrote that in the newspaper, that, you know, we felt like it's okay that Gaddafi should fell.

But after that, everyone started, you know, thinking: and so—and after that, what is going to happen? Now that journalism is laid aside, what are we going to do now? Is it—it's kind of politicization of media, and now we are working for political agendas, rather than working for journalistic—or for, you know, a media outlet.

JAY: Alright. In the next segment of our interview, we'll talk more about the conflicts in the Middle East, and particularly about Bahrain. Please join us for the next segment of our interview with Ali Hashem.

End

DISCLAIMER: Please note that transcripts for The Real News Network are typed from a recording of the program. TRNN cannot guarantee their complete accuracy.

[BBC News - Libya rally on Cyrenaica autonomy plan ends in violence](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17411134)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17411134>

- 16 March 2012
- Libya rally on Cyrenaica autonomy plan ends in violence
- Clashes at a rally calling for a semi-autonomous territory to be created in eastern Libya have left one person dead in the city of Benghazi, reports say.

Witnesses said a crowd demanding a semi-autonomous region of Cyrenaica was attacked by armed men.

The plan calls for a regional parliament with control over the police but stops short of dividing Libya.

- It has provoked fierce criticism from many who fear it will lead to the disintegration of the country.

Friday's violence came as hundreds of people marched to Freedom Square, Benghazi, where Ahmed Zubair al-Senussi - head of the regional council seeking a split - made a speech.

Witnesses said men armed with rifles and knives then charged into the crowd.

One protester, Bashar al-Denali, said those in the rally panicked and fled the square which was then occupied by the armed men.

Hospital officials said one person had been killed and at least five others injured, some seriously.

- Benghazi militia fighters - who have been responsible for security in the city since the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi last year - chased the attackers away and restored order, witnesses said.

Last Friday, demonstrators flooded the streets of Tripoli and Benghazi to protest against federalism.

After independence in 1951, Libya's three regions - Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and Fezzan - enjoyed federal power until the country became a unitary state in 1963.

- Cyrenaica in the east contains two-thirds of the country's oil reserves.

The people of Cyrenaica, known as Barqa in Arabic, felt marginalised and neglected under Col Gaddafi, who focused development on the west, correspondents say.

Benghazi was the seat of the uprising that eventually toppled the former dictator, in August last year.

[World News: Libyan protesters supporting self-rule attacked in Benghazi - thestar.com](http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/1147857--libyan-protesters-supporting-self-rule-attacked-in-benghazi)

<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/1147857--libyan-protesters-supporting-self-rule-attacked-in-benghazi>

- Libyan protesters supporting self-rule attacked in Benghazi
- Published On Fri Mar 16 2012
- Rami Al-Shaheibi Associated Press

- TRIPOLI, LIBYA—Thousands of Libyan protesters rallying Friday in an eastern city to press for an autonomous region were attacked by men wielding rifles and knives, witnesses said. One person was killed.

One of the protesters, Bashar al-Denali, said armed assailants charged into the crowd in Benghazi and opened fire. Protesters panicked and fled the square which was then occupied by the armed men, he said.

Another protester, Omar al-Mesmari, said assailants attacked an office of a local Libyan television station, Libya Al-Ahrar, to prevent it from covering and broadcasting the demonstration.

- Benghazi militia fighters, who are responsible for security in the city, deployed forces and chased the attackers, witnesses said.

An official at the hospital in Benghazi, Youssef al-Sayati, said one person was killed and six others injured, two critically.

- The demonstrators were showing their support for a declaration by tribal leaders and militia commanders in the oil-rich eastern Barqa state to create an autonomous region. Barqa makes up almost half of Libya.

Supporters say the step is necessary to end the marginalization their region suffered for decades under Moammar Gadhafi's rule. Gadhafi was toppled in October at the hands of citizens-turned-fighters after an eight-month uprising.

- The former dictator focused development and largesse on the western part of the country, allowing infrastructure to decline in the east, an area that was a constant source of opposition to his regime.

But the move to create an autonomous region has created a strong backlash among opponents who fear it will eventually lead to the disintegration of the country.

Protesters in the rally denounced what they called attempts by those in western Libya to control the eastern part of the country.

[NATO'S Craven Coverup of Its Libyan Bombing » Counterpunch: Tells the Facts, Names the Names](http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/03/15/natos-craven-coverup-of-it-libyan-bombing/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=natos-craven-coverup-of-it-libyan-bombing)

http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/03/15/natos-craven-coverup-of-it-libyan-bombing/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=natos-craven-coverup-of-it-libyan-bombing

- March 15, 2012
- Investigations Around Libya

NATO'S Craven Coverup of Its Libyan Bombing

by VIJAY PRASHAD

- Ten days into the uprising in Benghazi, Libya, the United Nations' Human Rights Council established the International Commission of Inquiry on Libya. The purpose of the Commission was to "investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law in Libya." The broad agenda was to establish the facts of the violations and crimes and to take such actions as to hold the identified perpetrators accountable. On June 15, the Commission presented its first report to the Council. This report was provisional, since the conflict was still ongoing and access to the country was minimal. The June report was no more conclusive than the work of the human rights non-governmental organizations (such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch). In some instances, the work of investigators for these NGOs (such as Donatella Rovera of Amnesty) was of higher quality than that of the Commission.

Due to the uncompleted war and then the unsettled security state in the country in its aftermath, the Commission did not return to the field till October 2011, and did not begin any real investigation before December 2011. On March 2, 2012, the Commission finally produced a two hundred-page document that was presented to the Human Rights Council in Geneva. Little fanfare greeted this report's publication, and the HRC's deliberation on it was equally restrained.

- Nonetheless, the report is fairly revelatory, making two important points: first, that all sides on the ground committed war crimes with no mention at all of a potential genocide conducted by the Qaddafi forces; second, that there remains a distinct lack of clarity regarding potential NATO war crimes. Not enough can be made of these two points. They strongly infer that the rush to a NATO "humanitarian intervention" might have been made on exaggerated evidence, and that NATO's own military intervention might have been less than "humanitarian" in its effects.

It is precisely because of a lack of accountability by NATO that there is hesitancy in the United Nations Security Council for a strong resolution on Syria. "Because of the Libyan experience," the Indian Ambassador to the UN Hardeep Singh Puri told me in February, "other members of the Security Council, such as China and Russia, will not hesitate in

exercising a veto if a resolution – and this is a big if – contains actions under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which permits the use of force and punitive and coercive measures.”

- *Crimes Against Humanity.*

The Libyan uprising began on February 15, 2011. By February 22, the UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay claimed that two hundred and fifty people had been killed in Libya, “although the actual numbers are difficult to verify.” Nonetheless, Pillay pointed to “widespread and systematic attacks against the civilian population” which “may amount to crimes against humanity.” Pillay channeled the Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN from Libya, Ibrahim Dabbashi, who had defected to the rebellion and claimed, “Qaddafi had started the genocide against the Libyan people.” Very soon world leaders used the two concepts interchangeably, “genocide” and “crimes against humanity.” These concepts created a mood that Qaddafi’s forces were either already indiscriminately killing vast numbers of people, or that they were poised for a massacre of Rwanda proportions.

Courageous work by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch last year, then much later the 2012 report from the UN belies this judgment, (as does my forthcoming book [Arab Spring, Libyan Winter](#), AK Press), which goes through the day-by-day record and show two things: that both sides used excessive violence and that the rebels seemed to have the upper hand for much of the conflict, with Qaddafi’s forces able to recapture cities, but unable to hold them.

The UN report is much more focused on the question of crimes committed on the ground. This is the kind of forensic evidence in the report:

- (1) In the military base and detention camp of Al Qalaa. “Witnesses, together with the local prosecutor, uncovered the bodies of 43 men and boys, blindfolded and with their hands tied behind their backs.” Qaddafi forces had shot them.



Going over many of these kinds of incidents, and of indiscriminate firing of heavy artillery into cities, the UN Report notes that these amount to a war crime or a crime against humanity.

- (2) “Over a dozen Qadhafi soldiers were reportedly shot in the back of the head by *thumar* [rebel fighters] around 22-23 February 2011 in a village between Al Bayda and Darnah. This is corroborated by mobile phone footage.” After an exhaustive listing of the many such incidents, and of the use of heavy artillery against cities notably Sirte, the UN report suggests the preponderance of evidence of the war crime of murder or crimes against humanity.
- There is *no* mention of genocide in the Report, and none of any organized civilian massacre. This is significant because UN Resolution 1973, which authorized the NATO war, was premised on the “the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the civilian population” which “may amount to crimes against humanity.” There was no mention in Resolution 1973 of the disproportionate violence of the *thumar* against the pro-Qaddafi population (already reported by *al-jazeera* by February 19), a fact that might have given pause to the UN as it allowed NATO to enter the conflict on the rebels’ behalf. NATO’s partisan bombardment allowed the rebels to seize the country faster than they might have had in a more protracted war, but it also allowed them carte blanche to continue with their own crimes against humanity.
- With NATO backing, it was clear that no one was going to either properly investigate the rebel behavior, and no-one was going to allow for a criminal prosecution of those crimes against humanity. Violence of this kind by one’s allies is never to be investigated as the Allies found out after World War 2 when there was no assessment of the criminal firebombing of, for example, Dresden. No wonder that the UN Report notes that the Commissioners are “deeply concerned that no independent investigation or prosecution appear to have been instigated into killings committed by *thumar*.” None is likely. There are now over eight thousand pro-Qaddafi fighters in Libyan prisons. They have no charges framed against them. Many have been tortured, and several have died (including Halah al-Misrati, the Qaddafi era newscaster).
- The section of the UN report on the town of Tawergha is most startling. The thirty thousand residents of the town were removed by the Misratan *thumar*. The general sentiment among the Misratan *thumar* was that the Tawerghans were given preferential treatment by the Qaddafi regime, a claim disputed by the Tawerghans. The road between Misrata and Tawergha was lined with slogans such as “the brigade for purging slaves, black skin,” indicating the racist cleansing of the town. The section on Tawergha takes up twenty pages of the report. It is chilling reading. Tawerghans told the Commission “that during ‘interrogations’ they were beaten, had hot wax poured in their ears and were told to confess to committing rape in Misrata. The Commission was told that one man had diesel poured on to his back which was then set alight; the same man was held in shackles for 12 days.” This goes on and on. The death count is unclear. The refugees are badly treated as they go to Benghazi and Tripoli.
- To the Commission, the attacks against Tawerghans during the war “constitute a war crime” and those that have taken place since “violate international human rights law” and a “crime against humanity.” Because of the “current difficulties faced by the Libyan Government,” the Commission concludes, it is unlikely that the government will be able to bring justice for the Tawerghans and to undermine the “culture of impunity that characterizes the attacks.”

- *NATO's Crimes.*

For the past several months, the Russians have asked for a proper investigation through the UN Security Council of the NATO bombardment of Libya. "There is great reluctance to undertake it," the Indian Ambassador to the UN told me. When the NATO states in the Security Council wanted to clamor for war in February-March 2011, they held discussions about Libya in an open session. After Resolution 1973 and since the war ended, the NATO states have only allowed discussion about Libya in a closed session. When Navi Pillay came to talk about the UN Report, her remarks were not for the public.

- Indeed, when it became clear to NATO that the UN Commission wished to investigate NATO's role in the Libyan war, Brussels balked. On February 15, 2012, NATO's Legal Adviser Peter Olson wrote a strong letter to the Chair of the Commission. NATO accepted that the Qaddafi regime "committed serious violations of international law," which led to the Security Council Resolution 1973. What was not acceptable was any mention of NATO's "violations" during the conflict,

"We would be concerned, however, if 'NATO incidents' were included in the Commission's report as on a par with those which the Commission may ultimately conclude did violate law or constitute crimes. We note in this regard that the Commission's mandate is to discuss 'the facts and circumstance of....violations [of law] and...crimes perpetrated.' We would accordingly request that, in the event the Commission elects to include a discussion of NATO actions in Libya, its report clearly state that NATO did not deliberately target civilians and did not commit war crimes in Libya."

- To its credit, the Commission *did* discuss the NATO "incidents." However, there were some factual problems. The Commission claimed that NATO flew 17,939 armed sorties in Libya. NATO says that it flew "24,200 sorties, including over 9,000 strike sorties." What the gap between the two numbers might tell us is not explored in the report or in the press discussion subsequently. The Commission points out that NATO did strike several civilian areas (such as Majer, Bani Walid, Sirte, Surman, Souq al-Juma) as well as areas that NATO claims were "command and control nodes." The Commission found no "evidence of such activity" in these "nodes." NATO contested both the civilian deaths and the Commission's doubts about these "nodes." Because NATO would not fully cooperate with the Commission, the investigation was "unable to determine, for lack of sufficient information, whether these strikes were based on incorrect or outdated intelligence and, therefore, whether they were consistent with NATO's objective to take all necessary precautions to avoid civilian casualties entirely."
- Three days after the report was released in the Human Rights Council, NATO's chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen denied its anodyne conclusions regarding NATO. And then, for added effect, Rasmussen said that he was pleased with the report's finding that NATO "had conducted a highly precise campaign with a demonstrable determination to avoid civilian casualties." There is no such clear finding. The report is far more circumspect, worrying about the lack of information to make any clear statement about NATO's bombing runs. NATO had conducted its own inquiry, but did not turn over its report or raw data to the UN Commission.
- On March 12, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon went to the UN Security Council and stated that he was "deeply concerned" about human rights abuses in Libya, including the more than eight thousand prisoners held in jails with no judicial process (including Saif al-Islam Qaddafi, who should have been transferred to the Hague by NATO's logic). Few dispute this part of the report. The tension in the Security Council is over the section on NATO. On March 9, Maria Khodinskaya-Golenishcheva of the Russian Mission to the UN in Geneva noted that the UN report omitted to explore the civilian deaths caused by NATO. "In our view," she said, "during the NATO campaign many violations of the standard of international law and human rights were committed, including the most important right, the right to life." On March 12, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused NATO of "massive bombings" in Libya. It was in response to Lavrov's comment that Ban's spokesperson Martin Nesirky pointed out that Ban accepts "the report's overall finding that NATO did not deliberately target civilians in Libya."

NATO is loath to permit a full investigation. It believes that it has the upper hand, with Libya showing how the UN will now use NATO as its military arm (or else how the NATO states will be able to use the UN for its exercise of power). In the Security Council, NATO's Rasmussen notes, "Brazil, China, India and Russia consciously stepped aside to allow the UN Security Council to act" and they "did not put their military might at the disposal of the coalition that emerged." NATO has no challenger. This is why the Russians and the Chinese are unwilling to allow any UN resolution that hints at military intervention. They fear the Pandora's box opened by Resolution 1973.

- **Vijay Prashad's** new book, [Arab Spring, Libyan Winter](#) (AK Press) will be out in late March. On March 25, he will be speaking at the plenary panel of the United National Anti-War Coalition National Conference in Stamford, CT, alongside Bill McKibben, Richard Wolff and Nada Khader on "Global Economic Meltdown, Warming and War."

[Thousands rally in Libya against autonomy for east | Reuters](#)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/09/libya-east-autonomy-idUSL5E8E9AWK20120309>

- Thousands rally in Libya against autonomy for east
- Fri Mar 9, 2012
- * Big demonstrations in capital and eastern city of Benghazi
- * Protesters say autonomy for east could split Libya
- * Protests a reaction to self-declared government in east
- By [Christian Lowe](#)
- TRIPOLI, March 9 (Reuters) - Thousands of people protested in Libya's two biggest cities on Friday in a show of opposition to moves from some in the oil-producing east to declare autonomy from central rule.

A group of civic leaders in the eastern city of Benghazi this week said they would run their own affairs, defying the government in Tripoli which is already struggling to assert its authority after Muammar Gaddafi was ousted last year.

At Friday prayers in Benghazi and Tripoli, clerics warned the autonomy plan could lead to the break up of Libya, and later crowds packed into squares in both cities to express their opposition to the idea.

- "We want to be one country," said 18-year-old Taha, one of about 5,000 people taking part in the demonstration in Tripoli's Martyr's Square. "This is what we fought for ... We are going to stand as one man and say no to federalism."

In Benghazi's Tahrir square, between 3,000 and 4,000 people joined in the protest against the autonomy plan, which aims to recreate Libya's 1950s constitution when the country was divided into three semi-autonomous provinces.

The protests were some of the biggest in Libya in several months.

- Earlier, a cleric addressing about 1,000 worshippers praying on mats laid out in Benghazi's Tahrir square, called on people to resist the push for autonomy.

"We should keep Libya as one country, one family," said the cleric. "Federalism will take Libya backwards because it will split the country."

- PROVINCIAL RULE

Civic leaders in Benghazi on Tuesday declared the creation of a "Provincial Council" to run the affairs of Cyrenaica, the historic province which runs from the border with Egypt in the east to half way across Libya's Mediterranean coast.

The province is home to Libya's biggest oil fields, and the new council, if it can assert real power, could cause complications for international oil firms. They might have to re-negotiate their contracts with the new provincial entity, as well as with Tripoli.

- Cyrenaica flourished in the 1950s when it enjoyed the patronage of Libya's royal family. But after Gaddafi came to power in a 1969 coup the province fell into decay and was denied its share of the country's oil wealth.

After the rebellion which forced out Gaddafi, many in the east expected an immediate injection of money and development. They have been frustrated at the slow pace of change coming from the interim government in Tripoli.

Yet even in the east, there is no consensus in favour of the plan for autonomy.

- "We are against the idea of a federal system and we will protect Libyan unity with our lives," said Hakim Abdulrahman Hamad, head of the city council in the eastern city of Tobruk.

"We support freedom for the Libyan people but not to split the country up," he told Reuters. "The choice about the type of government should be taken by parliament, through democratic means." (Additional reporting by Ali Shuaib in Tripoli and Ahmad Noman in Benghazi, Libya; Editing by [Robin Pomeroy](#))

[Semi-autonomous region declared in oil-rich eastern Libya](http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/06/198900.html)

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/06/198900.html>

• Semi-autonomous region declared in oil-rich eastern Libya

Tuesday, 06 March 2012



Several thousand people marched to Benghazi's courthouse on Monday night to express their opposition. The protesters chanted: "Libya is united!" and "Do not break up Libya!" (Reuters)

- By Al Arabiya With Agencies
- Tribal leaders and militia commanders declare semi-autonomous region in the oil-rich eastern Libya, posing a new challenge to the country's fragile cohesion after the overthrow of Muammar Qaddafi.

Thousands of people attended the inaugural "Congress of the People of Cyrenaica" near the eastern city of Benghazi where they set out a proposal for Libya to be transformed into a federal state, one of the organizers said.

"We would like in Cyrenaica to take care of housing, education and other things and would delegate national security, defense ... to the central government," said Mohammed Buisier, a Libyan-American who is helping organize the congress.

"We believe in one Libya," he told Reuters by telephone from Benghazi, cradle of the revolution against Qaddafi last year.

"People in Cyrenaica have for 40 years suffered from negligence ... If we keep this negligence towards the east, I cannot guarantee that Libya will be united in 25 years-time."

Any moves for greater autonomy for eastern Libya could unsettle the central government, and foreign oil firms, because the bulk of Libya's oil reserves are in Cyrenaica and its biggest state oil company is based in Benghazi.

- It was not clear how many in eastern Libya support the initiative.
- Several thousand people marched to Benghazi's courthouse on Monday night to express their opposition. The protesters chanted: "Libya is united!" and "Do not break up Libya!"
- Abdullah Bin Idriss, a member of the local council in the town of Jalu, eastern Libya, said he was opposed to the idea. He said some of the pipelines that pump crude to the east's oil terminals flow through his district. If Benghazi declares autonomy, he told Reuters, "We will turn off their oil."
- For about 10 years after it became an independent state in 1951, Libya was run along federal lines, with power devolved to Cyrenaica, the southern province of Fezzan, and Tripolitania in the west of the country.

Libya centralized its government in the last years of the rule of King Idris, and Qaddafi accelerated the process when he came to power in a military coup in 1969.

Since Qaddafi's 42-year rule ended, calls for federal rule have become more vocal. They have been fuelled by long-standing complaints in the east that it has not been given a fair share of Libya's wealth, and by the weakness of the central government which took over after Qaddafi's overthrow.

- Mohammed al-Harizi, a spokesman for the National Transitional Council (NTC), Libya's interim leadership, said people were free to lobby for regional autonomy.

But he said: "This is not the vision of the NTC ... and I am sure that the Libyan people, as a whole, do not support this idea."

The organizer of the Cyrenaica congress said there were no plans to unilaterally declare autonomy from the rest of Libya. He said delegates would be "putting on the table" their proposal, and would use peaceful means to press their case.

- The idea of more autonomy could tap into discontent in Benghazi about the shortcomings of the NTC. Some people accuse it of being too slow to restore public services and of a lack of transparency in how it spends revenues from oil exports.

NTC chief Mustafa Abdel Jalil, who is himself from the east, in January had to seek refuge from bottle-throwing protesters who stormed the council's Benghazi offices.

Buisier said the first steps would be to create a 300-member "High Council for Cyrenaica" and to lobby for Cyrenaica to be given more representation in an election, scheduled for June, to choose a new national assembly.

- Asked if the province would take unilateral action if the central government blocked its plan for a federal state, he said: "I do not want to visit this. We will see."

The revolt against Qaddafi's rule began in Benghazi on Feb. 17 last year, when government troops fired on residents protesting against poverty, official neglect and repression. Until the revolt reached Tripoli, Benghazi was the headquarters of the anti-Qaddafi rebellion.

The proposal to give Cyrenaica autonomy is viewed with unease by many people in Tripoli, who believe it risks leading to the break-up of Libya.

"Unity is a red line and it is not up for discussion," said Abbas al-Gadi, deputy head of the Libyan National Party, which will compete in the June election.

The Libyan Civil War: Critical Views: Seven Frenchmen Escape Benghazi

<http://libyancivilwar.blogspot.com/2011/05/seven-frenchmen-escape-benghazi.html?showComment=1307399888970#c3477821485647276971>

• Saturday, May 28, 2011

Seven Frenchmen Escape Benghazi

May 28 2011

• Super Pumas Reach Malta

February 21 - after six days of protests bleeding into open conflict, Benghazi had fallen to the rebels, anchoring all of eastern Libya under their control. 400 miles to the northwest, on the tiny island nation of Malta, [two Libyan Air Force Mirage fighter jets famously landed](#) with a tale of being ordered to bomb the protester/jihadists. This crucial claim started the talk of a no-fly zone, which eventually led to the current international bombardment, mostly by the US, UK, and France.

The same day, just hours earlier, two helicopters had also fled Libya to make an emergency landing on Malta. The *Tripoli Post* [reported](#):

On the same day police also questioned seven passengers who landed in Malta from Libya on board two French-registered helicopters, with Malta government sources saying the helicopters had left Libya without authorisation by the Libyan aviation authorities and that only one of the seven passengers - who say they are French citizens - had a passport.

Pakistani paper *Dawn* [reported](#) similarly:

Two French-registered Super Puma civilian helicopters also landed on the Mediterranean island around the same time, carrying seven passengers who said they were French working on oil rigs near Benghazi.

The helicopters were given permission to land in Malta but had not been given clearance to leave Libya, indicating they had escaped, the sources said.

- [Agence France Press](#) describes the helicopter passengers as:

... seven people who said they were French nationals working on oil rigs near Benghazi, although only one had a passport, the sources said.

[...]

All those who have landed are being held at the airport in Malta until their identities are confirmed.

One presumes they've long since been released, but it seems that happened more quietly than how they first came into Malta's protection. One can only wonder what they found out, if anything, about these seven mysterious Frenchmen in that interim?

- One of the helicopters is apparently shown in [this video](#) of the defecting aircraft filmed in the still of the night. The other is the same, as seen in a few photos, like the one [here](#). The markings say Heli-Union, and despite the ambiguity of its name, it is apparently a French company ([website in French](#), and English secondarily). They do specialize, among a few other things, in "air transport by helicopter on behalf of oil and gas companies." That's consistent with airlifting out offshore oil workers, as one presumes they would be (Libya's oil is mostly off-shore or well inland, under the desert, so "near Benghazi" on the coast suggests they weren't down in the desert, like [these oil workers](#) who fled a Canadian-run station attacked by rebels on the 21st, and ran deeper into the desert.)

• What French Can Mean

It's entirely possible for off-shore oil workers to lose or leave behind their passports. However, their lack of proper ID might also, possibly, suggest a more clandestine type of work back in just-conquered Benghazi. And they were from, of

all nations, France.

It was in Paris where the European end of arranging the protests and takeover was allegedly based. As Italian blogger Franco Bechis [reported in March](#), based on leaked documents, an Air Force defector in Benghazi named Gehani was contacted by the French secret service DGSE. This happened on November 18 2010, Bechis reports, on the tip of [Nouri al-Mesmari](#), Libya's former protocol chief.

Mr. Al-Mesmari had, in his turn, fled into the arms of the French imperialists in October. He apparently made contacts with the DGSE during his brief house arrest following on embezzlement charges from Tripoli. He was of course released, and allowed to meet people in Paris - like three of the top leaders from the February 17 protest movement.

Collectively, this suggests **a pre-planned design to fuse a military defection (indirect coup) with a gauze of peaceful protest**, a project somehow favored or facilitated by Paris. And France sure was gung-ho to support the rebellion for full takeover, weren't they?

- Despite their intense support afterwards, no outside powers were officially aware of or involved in the initial uprising itself. Any planning was limited in nature and purely Libyan, we're to presume. And it seems as if their turn to violence was just a spontaneous reaction to unexpectedly fierce government repression and - obviously - an unwillingness to just say "ow! Okay, okay, sorry, I didn't know you'd get so mad!"

That last, to me, is a clue that somehow the "protesters" suspected that someone powerful (aside from God) had their back. And of all the nations *now* backing the rebels with what's been called "like God's own Air Force," France has the covert people best-placed to be involved - hypothetically - in the war's initial phase.

In this context, it's worth asking who were these seven guys on the Super Pumas, and what were they doing in Libya in those days right before the no-fly discussion started.

They could be oil workers as they say. Even down to the Heli-Unon choppers, that cover - if it's cover - makes perfect sense. A well-designed cover will, of course.

Alternately ... maybe it's just a cover. They're too small and a bit too foreign to be any public fighting force. But they might have advised, or ran some narrow tactical missions at night. They might have been on stand-by only for such things, or nothing more than observers for Paris, to get their own clearer view of how the natives were handling things.

- **An Escort Mission?**
The civilian helicopters trying to escape from a government they were helping overthrow might help explain the fighter jets that landed just after they landed safely on Malta.

These French-built Mirages would seem, by the orders they claimed to have defied, to have taken off under Libyan government command. But considering the alleged Gehani-DGSE link, it seems possible the colonels flying those birds were rebel-aligned well before "receiving" the order to bomb protesters. They might have been commissioned by the French-Rebel conduit, as escort duty on the first leg of the choppers' illegal (and slower) flight. I would suspect they all set out together from rebel-held Benghazi, despite the implication the defectors scrambled from Tripoli, or within an area of government control.

Any such protection might help explain the armaments, in case anyone tried to enforce the law that says, I would guess, that mysterious Frenchmen cannot leave a war zone without letting the government find out who they are and what they just did. And it would be a nicely efficient double-mission - cover the whole unauthorized escape of rebel helpers with their stolen defector jets, then land with with the mental seeds of the rebels' NATO air support - a false claim of a planned massacre, with the missiles in place to prove they'd been armed for it.

It also works towards giving the game up. What are the odds the colonels would happen to fly off with this order and snap to the north on winds of conscience, just as these unauthorized clandestine Frenchmen were leaving?

- **Why February 21?**
It seems reasonable here to presume that foreigners like the oil workers they claim to be would usually work in an area during peace and stability time, leave as soon as things get crazy, and then come back when it's stable again. Now, it's true the Libyan civil war did move swiftly, but still, it's noteworthy how these guys did about **the opposite** of the usual.

The first protests were on Feb 15th, in Benghazi and a few other towns, with violence increasing each day and in other cities through the 17th - the pre-announced "day of rage," which doesn't bode well for any hopes for less of the same. In these first few days, order still prevailed, and it would be a good time to get out. 18th, ugly ... 19th, worse

Only on the 20th did things really get topsy-turvy. It seems al-Baidah at least had already come under rebel control, and in Benghazi, The Katiba barracks, a major army base, was [blown open by a suicide bomber](#), and the spoils were quickly sent out to other cities right away. Labraq airport 100 miles east was finally taken with this boost, on the 21st. By then all of the eastern region of Cyrenaica, and even a nice buffer into the Sirte basin, was rebel-held, and armed with solely Libya stocks, untraceable to Paris.

The protest could now safely become a civil war and Gaddafi could be forced out for acting like he's fighting a civil war against "civilians" who now can do whatever they want - because they started it, briefly, as a "peaceful, homegrown protest." Their unseen work to this end complete, any French plotters might flee as described above, if possible with the disinfo defectors in their Mirages providing armed escort.

[Libya cracks down on protesters after violent clashes in Benghazi | World news | The Guardian](#)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/16/libya-clashes-benghazi>

- Libya cracks down on protesters after violent clashes in Benghazi
- Reports of 38 injured in rioting after water cannon and teargas were used against estimated 6,000 people in Libya's second city
- [Ian Black](#), Middle East editor
 - [The Guardian](#), Thursday 17 February 2011
- Hundreds of anti-government protesters clashed with police and government supporters in [Libya's](#) second city

yesterday as unrest spread across the Arab world.

- Reports from the city of Benghazi said 38 people were injured in rioting after a human rights lawyer was arrested on Tuesday. Film footage captured screams and the sounds of gunfire as crowds scattered. Water cannon and teargas were used against an estimated 6,000 people. Some protesters armed with stones and petrol bombs had set fire to vehicles and fought with police in the city's Shajara Square.
- Opposition supporters accused the authorities of deliberately provoking trouble to spoil plans for a nationwide "day of rage" that had been called for .

"Last night was a bad night," a Benghazi resident told Reuters yesterday. "There were about 500 or 600 people involved. They went to the revolutionary committee [local government headquarters] in Sabri district, and they tried to go to the central revolutionary committee ... They threw stones."

- The semi-independent newspaper Quryna said 10 security personnel were injured in a [protest](#) begun by relatives of prisoners killed in a 1996 massacre who were demanding the release of their lawyer, Fathi Tarbel.

Libya al-Yawm also reported the arrests of journalists in Derna and al-Beida and the detention of writer Idris al-Mismari.

- Al-Jazeera reported that at least two people were killed in clashes between Libyan security forces and demonstrators in the town of Bayda, east of Benghazi. The deaths come as hundreds of protesters reportedly torched police outposts in Bayda, while chanting: "People want the end of the regime."
- Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were all briefly blocked as were al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya. State TV showed crowds of pro-government supporters shouting slogans in Tripoli's Green Square and in Sirte and Sebha.
- But a video clip posted on YouTube showed a crowd of people outside what looked like a government building chanting: "Corruption is the enemy of God."
- The EU urged Libya to allow "free expression" and listen to protesters. Alistair Burt, a Foreign Office minister, urged Libya "to respect the right of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, and on all sides to exercise restraint and refrain from violence".
- Sporadic trouble has been reported from Benghazi in recent weeks, and the latest outbreak was linked to anger over the massacre of over 1,000 prisoners at Abu Salim in 1996 – a bloody landmark in [Muammar Gaddafi's](#) 42-year rule. But like previous unrest, it has so far remained local and has not coalesced into opposition at the national level.

"This could snowball into something big," said Ashour Shamis, a veteran Libyan opposition activist. "There are grievances all over the country. But this looks like a spoiler by the government."

- Libya's experience of the "Arab spring" could be different from that of its north African neighbours for several reasons. Its enormous oil and gas reserves and small population (6.5 million) mean it is relatively wealthy – four times as rich as Egypt – and can afford to buy off dissent.

It is also far less free than either of its neighbours, with a pervasive secret police and little in the way of a free media or independent institutions.

[Libya protests: 140 'massacred' as Gaddafi sends in snipers to crush dissent - Telegraph](#)

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8335934/Libya-protests-140-massacred-as-Gaddafi-sends-in-snipers-to-crush-dissent.html?om_rid=C0wQ1R&om_mid=_BNYSSWB8ZCChbY

• **Libya protests: 140 'massacred' as Gaddafi sends in snipers to crush dissent**

Women and children leapt from bridges to their deaths as they tried to escape a ruthless crackdown by Libyan forces loyal to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

- By [Nick Meo](#), Cairo

7:50AM GMT 20 Feb 2011

- Snipers shot protesters, artillery and helicopter gunships were used against crowds of demonstrators, and thugs armed with hammers and swords attacked families in their homes as the [Libyan](#) regime sought to crush the uprising.
- "Dozens were killed ... We are in the midst of a massacre here," a witness told Reuters. The man said he helped take victims to hospital in Benghazi.
- Libyan Muslim leaders told security forces to stop killing civilians, responding to a spiralling death toll from unrest which threatens veteran leader Muammar Gaddafi's authority.
- Mourners leaving a funeral for protesters in the eastern city of Benghazi came under fire, killing at least 15 people and wounding many more. A hospital official said one of those who died was apparently struck on the head by an anti-aircraft missile, and many had been shot in the head and chest.
- The hospital was overwhelmed and people were streaming to the facility to donate blood. "Many of the dead and the injured are relatives of doctors here," he said. "They are crying and I keep telling them to please stand up and help us."
- Saturday's new deaths are in addition to the 84 people believed to have been killed by Friday night, in the brutal government response, with fears that the eventual toll will prove much higher.

The five-day uprising in eastern Libya has been the greatest challenge to the 42-year rule of Col Gaddafi, the world's longest-serving ruler. With internet and phone lines to the outside world disrupted, it was unclear whether the revolt inspired by the revolutions in neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt was spreading from the impoverished east of Libya to the capital Tripoli, or whether it was being successfully extinguished.

- It was centred on Benghazi, 600 miles east of the capital, where a human rights activist lawyer was arrested on Tuesday. Chanting crowds, tens of thousands strong, filled the streets and police reportedly fled or joined the protesters, as unrest spread to surrounding towns. Fighting also broke out in the cities of Al-Bayda, Ajdabiya, Zawiya, and Darnah, with witnesses reporting piles of dead. Hospitals made frantic appeals for blood to treat wards full of wounded people.
- Libyan special forces launched a dawn attack on Saturday against hundreds of protesters, including lawyers and judges, camped in front of the courthouse in Benghazi. "They fired tear gas on protesters in tents and cleared the areas after many fled carrying the dead and the injured," one protester said by phone from the city.
- Video clips on the internet showed jubilant crowds at the start of the protest smashing down concrete statues of their ruler's Little Green Book, containing his sayings, and fighting running street battles with security forces. There were smaller protests in Tripoli, a stronghold of the Gaddafi family whose population received a much better share of Libya's oil wealth.
- Colonel Gaddafi himself was shown on state-run television driving in a motorcade through Tripoli, surrounded by cheering supporters pumping their fists in the air and chanting slogans of support.

The pro-government *Al-Watania* newspaper praised Colonel Gaddafi, who came to power in a bloodless coup in 1969, and insisted the people were uniting with the government against "traitors of the West". Foreign media were exaggerating the scale of the violence, it said.

- Reports from Benghazi gave a very different picture of the crisis, describing how the city's residents battled brutal security forces sent from the capital. One man, who gave his name only as Mohammed, told the BBC: "The army are joining the people, the people are going out of their homes and fighting street by street and they are winning."
- A Benghazi cleric, Abellah al-Warfali, said he had a list of 16 people who had been killed, most with bullet wounds to the head and chest. "I saw with my own eyes a tank crushing two people in a car," he said. "They didn't do any harm to anyone."
- Demonstrators claimed the regime had unleashed French-speaking African mercenaries against them, recruited from nearby countries such as Chad to help prop up the regime. Shaky videos filmed secretly from inside buildings and posted on YouTube showed the soldiers on the streets of Benghazi. Several were reportedly caught by the crowd and lynched.
- William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, urged Libya to stop using force against protesters. "I condemn the violence in Libya, including reports of the use of heavy weapons fire and a unit of snipers against demonstrators," Mr Hague said in a statement. "This is clearly unacceptable and horrifying."

Heba Morayef of Human Rights Watch, which estimated the death toll at 84, said: "What is astonishing is the bravery of Libyans, who are running a great risk of disappearance and torture."

- Facebook, which was used by protesters in Egypt and Tunisia to coordinate their successful uprisings, was blocked. So was the website of Al-Jazeera, the international television network which is based in the Middle East.

Foreign journalists were refused entry. Demonstrators using Twitter warned each other that regime spies were carefully monitoring the internet, and mobile phone users were sent threatening messages from the government, warning them to remain patriotic and not to join the protests. One such message read: "We congratulate those who understand that interfering with national unity threatens the future of generations."

- Omar, a 24-year-old civil servant in Benghazi, who asked for his surname to be withheld, said: "Gaddafi is reacting to the protests with utter ruthlessness. Tanks are on the streets, and there are running battles between armed killers and protesters. Some of the soldiers have been so disgusted by what is going on that they have swapped sides."
- A British-based Libyan, Ahmed, who asked for the rest of his name to be withheld, said demonstrators had been attacked by Colonel Gaddafi's African mercenaries. "It started peacefully because the people want their country back after 42 years," he told *The Sunday Telegraph*. He was able to telephone friends and contacts in Libya, although they were barred from making international calls out of the country.
- "They don't have any weapons so it is difficult for the people in Benghazi to defend themselves," he said. "But the army were so horrified when these mercenaries started attacking protesters that they have joined the people to defend them. It is chaotic in the hospitals. Medical supplies and everything else has been blocked and they are making appeals in the streets for people to come forward and give blood."
- A Libyan journalist said of the African mercenaries: "The soldiers are vicious killers. People are so terrified of them that they've been doing everything possible to get away."
-

"Women and children were seen jumping off Giuliana Bridge in Benghazi to escape. Many of them were killed by the impact of hitting the water, while others were drowned."

Fatih, 26, another Benghazi resident, said: "A lot of the thugs he's

employing are not Arabic speakers. They're armed to the teeth and only use live ammunition. They don't ask questions – they just shoot. Buildings and cars have been set on fire here, and the situation is getting worse. The dead and injured are everywhere.

"The mercenaries shoot from helicopters and from the top of roofs. They don't care who they kill."

Libya is one of the biggest oil and gas exporters in the world, with companies like BP moving in to exploit its reserves following the rebuilding of its relationship with the west.

However, the unemployment rate is 30 per cent, housing is in short supply, and there is no political opposition and a pervasive police state. Much of Tripoli's population live in gigantic, soulless tower blocks.

Poverty is much worse in the east. Benghazi's tribes have always been suspicious of Colonel Gaddafi and the regime starves the region of investment.

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http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8335934/Libya-protests-140-massacred-as-Gaddafi-sends-in-snipers-to-crush-dissent.html

Telegraph
In Libya News



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[Saif Gaddafi's first moments in captivity](#)



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[Relaxed Saif Gaddafi tells of 'infidel' attack](#)



[Saif Gaddafi: 'We will never ever surrender'](#)



[Pictures of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi following his capture](#)



['Gaddafi funeral footage' aired](#)

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[Report: Helicopters fire on Libya protesters – This Just In - CNN.com Blogs](#)

<http://news.blogs.cnn.com/2011/02/19/report-helicopters-fire-on-libya-protesters>

- Report: Helicopters fire on Libya protesters
- February 19th, 2011
- Helicopters fired at demonstrators and sounds of gunfire rang out Saturday in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi, a doctor who witnessed the incident told CNN.

The doctor said dozens of injured people are being hospitalized, most suffering from gunshot wounds. CNN is not identifying the doctor security reasons.

"The situation is critical right now. The city is effectively under siege," the doctor said.

[Death toll mounts as Libyan security forces target protesters | Amnesty International](#)

<http://amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/death-toll-mounts-libyan-security-forces-target-protesters-2011-02-18>

- 18 February 2011
- Death toll mounts as Libyan security forces target protesters
- Amnesty International has accused the Libyan authorities of recklessly shooting at anti-government protesters after the organization learned that at least 46 people had been shot dead by security forces in the last 72 hours.

Sources at al-Jala hospital in Benghazi today told Amnesty International that patients' most common injuries were bullet wounds to the head, chest and neck.

"This alarming rise in the death toll, and the reported nature of the victims' injuries, strongly suggests that security forces are permitted use lethal force against unarmed protesters calling for political change," said Malcolm Smart, Amnesty International's director for the Middle East and North Africa

"The Libyan authorities must immediately, rein in their security forces. Those responsible for unlawful killings and excessive force – both the direct perpetrators and those who gave the orders – must be identified and brought to justice."

- Sources at al-Jala hospital have reported 28 fatalities from yesterday's protests in Benghazi with more than 110 people injured, and at least three further deaths in today's protests.

At least 15 people are reported to have been killed yesterday during "Day of Rage" protests in the city of Al Bayda, 100 km east of Benghazi.

[Libya Protests: Benghazi 'Liberated' By Soldiers As They Defect From Gaddafi's Forces | World News | Sky News](#)

<http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/15937134>

- UK, Sunday February 20, 2011
- Libyan Protests Spread To Capital Tripoli
- Sunday February 20, 2011

Alex Rossi, in Cairo, and Kat Higgins

- **Anti-government protests are taking place in Libya's capital Tripoli for the first time since the uprising against leader Colonel Gaddafi began.**

Eyewitnesses in the centre of the city have reported hearing gunshots and seeing burning vehicles as thousands of pro and anti-regime demonstrators clash.

The North African country has seen days of unrest as protesters, spurred on by the revolutions in neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia, call for Gaddafi to step down after 40 years.

Much of the violence has so far centred on the second city of Benghazi in the northeast of Libya where at least 200 people are believed to have been killed.

Speaking on Libyan TV on Sunday night Colonel Gaddafi's son Saif al-Islam Gaddafi admitted that some people have died in the violence and that the poorly trained and equipped army has "made some mistakes".

But he said reports that 250 people have been killed is an "unimaginable exaggeration".

- He added that wealthy businessmen and tradesmen had hired Arab and African expats to cause the violence.
- Earlier, members of a Libyan army unit told Benghazi residents they have defected and "liberated" the city from pro-Gaddafi forces.

Speaking from the city, a local man named Benali, told Sky News that members of the Libya's armed forces have defected and that anti-regime protesters are now in control of the city.

Habib al-Obaidi, who heads the intensive care unit at the main Al-Jalae hospital, appeared to confirm the reports, saying the "Thunderbolt" squad arrived at the hospital with soldiers who had been injured in clashes with Gaddafi's men.

- "They are now saying that they have overpowered the Praetorian Guard and that they have joined the people's revolt," said Mr al-Obaidi.

The doctor also confirmed the hospital had received the bodies of at least 50 people killed in clashes on Sunday afternoon.

Most had died of bullet wounds and another 100 others were admitted with serious injuries.

The news of further deaths comes as Libya's representative to the Arab League tendered his resignation in protest to "oppression against protesters".

- The extent of the chaos and violence in Libya has been difficult to ascertain as foreign journalists are banned from the country.

Furthermore, telecommunications have been interrupted and the internet cut off.

The FCO has advised against all but non-essential travel to Libya and is helping British nationals to leave the country.

The United States has said it is "gravely concerned" by "credible reports" that hundreds of people had been injured or killed in a government crackdown, including reports that troops have fired machine guns at crowds.

- There was also widespread speculation within Libya that the regime had hired African mercenaries to suppress any anti-government action.

One doctor in Benghazi was quoted as saying his hospital has counted at least 200 dead since the unrest began.

- Separately, a hospital worker in the city named Abdullah told Sky News: "(On Saturday) we had a heavy attack - gunshots by the army forces, especially at night.

"People were protesting... the forces just attacked to make them leave."

- A video posted on the internet on Saturday night apparently shows protesters in Benghazi being fired on - but it is unclear whether those shooting are Libyan troops.
- A resident of the city, Mary, also told Sky News there had been a fierce confrontation between protesters and the military on Saturday evening.

"There was artillery fire back at young boys who were protesting in front of a big military compound where Colonel Gaddafi usually lives when he's here," she said.

- "The boys are trying to take this from the army but I don't think they'll have any chance because of the heavy artillery they're using against them."
- It followed reports that said snipers opened fire on a crowd of mourners during the day who had gathered to bury those killed in earlier protests.

Resident Mary said there was another demonstration in front of Benghazi's courthouse on Sunday.

- "There was 50 bodies taken for burial from the courthouse and I heard they were travelling to the funeral procession and there was very heavy gunfire," she said.

"I don't know if they were firing at them (the mourners), but it seemed like it."

- Separate reports backed her comments, indicating Libyan forces had again opened fire on mourners on Sunday.

Britain's Foreign Secretary William Hague has condemned the violence unleashed by Colonel Gaddafi.

He told Sky's Murnaghan programme: "It is such a closed society to the international media, nevertheless the world is watching

- "The United Kingdom condemns what the Libyan government has been doing and how they have responded to these protests.

"What Colonel Gaddafi should be doing is respecting basic human rights and there is no sign of that in the dreadful response, the horrifying response, of the Libyan authorities to these protests."

He later phoned Colonel Gaddafi's son Saif to express his "grave concern" about the deteriorating situation in Libya.

- In London on Sunday, demonstrators also gathered outside the Libyan embassy, with some telling Sky News they had lost loved ones in the Benghazi violence.
- Elsewhere, the EU presidency said it has been warned by Libya to stop "encouraging" the protests - otherwise Tripoli will "suspend co-operation" in the fight against illegal immigration.
- Libya is divided down sectarian lines - Colonel Gaddafi draws his main support from the western regions.

In the east there is an opposing tribe to that of the Libyan leader and there have been unrest in Benghazi before.

Over the past two years there has been very violent protests in the city.

- Meanwhile, the state-run Jana news agency said authorities had arrested dozens of Arab nationals who were members of a "foreign network trained to damage Libya's stability, the safety of its citizens and national unity".

The group included Tunisian, Egyptian, Sudanese, Palestinian, Syrian and Turkish citizens.

However international observers considered the claim as a way to divert dissatisfaction with Colonel Gaddafi's regime.

[Libya: Arrests, Assaults in Advance of Planned Protests | Human Rights Watch](http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/02/16/libya-arrests-assaults-advance-planned-protests)

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/02/16/libya-arrests-assaults-advance-planned-protests>

- [Libya: Arrests, Assaults in Advance of Planned Protests](#)

Halt Attacks on Peaceful Demonstrators and Free Those Arrested

February 16, 2011

- (New York) - Libyan Internal Security forces have arrested at least 14 people as protests began in connection with peaceful demonstrations planned for February 17, 2011, Human Rights Watch said today. The Libyan authorities should immediately free all activists, writers, and protesters detained solely for their role in preparing for the February 17 protest and allow Libyans the right to protest peacefully, Human Rights Watch said.
- On the evening of February 15, authorities used teargas and batons, as well as attackers in street clothes, to disperse protesters in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, injuring 14 people, the online daily Quryna reported. Sources in Libya told Human Rights Watch that one person was killed in the ensuing violence.
- "With people from Tunisia and Egypt to Bahrain and Iran asserting their right to protest, the Libyan government is responding in exactly the wrong way," said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "Colonel Muammar Gaddafi should learn from his former neighbors that stability has to include respect for peaceful protest."

In the wake of the widespread protests in Tunisia and Egypt, Libyan websites posted calls for a "Day of Anger" on February 17, the anniversary of a 2006 peaceful demonstration in which security forces killed at least 12 protesters.

- Sources in Libya who wished not to be named for security reasons told Human Rights Watch that the February 15 demonstration started after authorities arrested two key members of the families of victims of the 1996 Abu Salim prison massacre. The group has organized regular public protests over the past two years calling for an independent investigation into the prison killings and the prosecution of those responsible.

At around 3:30 p.m., five Internal Security officers went to the house of the committee spokesman and lawyer, Fathi Terbil, arresting him and confiscating his laptop. He said they later arrested another prominent spokesman for the group, Farag Sharany, and detained both at Internal Security headquarters in Benghazi.

- By 9 p.m., dozens of other family members had gathered outside the Internal Security office to call for their release. They were soon joined by several hundred others, including writers and activists. At around 11 p.m., Internal Security forces arrested Mohamed al-Sareet, a journalist who writes for the independent website Jeel Libya. Idris al-Mismari, a writer and former political prisoner, told Al Jazeera that plainclothes security officers dispersed protesters "using tear gas, batons, and hot water."
- One protester told Human Rights Watch: "This is the same scenario as Egypt, they are sending in the *baltagiyya* (thugs) to beat us." Internal Security officers eventually released Terbil and Sharany at around 1 a.m. on February 16, but al-Sareet remains detained.

The arrests continued on February 16. At 5 a.m., al-Mismari was doing a live telephone interview with Al Jazeera when the line suddenly went dead. Witnesses told Human Rights Watch that security forces arrested al-Mismari then.

- At around 7 a.m., Internal Security agents arrested Mohamed al-Sahim at his home. Al-Sahim, who regularly writes for independent Libyan websites such as Al Manara, had attended the protest the night before and posted video footage on his Facebook profile. The video quickly spread online. Agents also went to the home of two brothers, Salem and Abu Bakr al-Elwani, and arrested them. They were also among the families of the Abu Salim victims who had participated in the protest the night before. Later in the day, in Misrata, Internal Security arrested brothers Habib and Mohamed al-Amin, whose brother Hassan runs the opposition website Libya Al Mostakbal out of London.
- Sources in Libya told Human Rights Watch that on February 16, Internal Security officers also arrested four other former political prisoners - the brothers Farag, Al-Mahdi, Sadek, and Ali Hmeid in Tripoli. Authorities had detained them in February 2007 when they, along with 10 others, published an online call for a peaceful protest on February 17 that year. Internal Security officers [arrested all 14 men](#) the day before and "disappeared" them for several months before finally bringing them before the Tripoli State Security Court.
- On June 10, 2008, the court sentenced the men to between 6 and 25 years in prison. They were released over the following months after the Gaddafi Foundation, headed by Saif al-Islam al-Gaddafi the son of the Libyan leader, intervened. Jamal al-Haji was the last to be [released](#) and was subsequently, arbitrarily arrested on two further occasions, most recently on February 1 after calling for the February 17 demonstration.
- "February 17 is a date that resonates in Libya because it has come to symbolize peaceful protest in the face of police brutality," Stork said. "This time Libyan authorities should protect - not violate - the right to peaceful protest."

- **List of those arrested so far:**

1. Jamal al-Haji [arrested Feb. 1]
2. Farag Hmeid
3. Ali Hmeid
4. Al Mahdi Hmeid
5. Al Sadek Hmeid
6. Mohamed El Sareet
7. Habib al-Amin
8. Mohamed al-Amin
9. Idriss al Mismari
10. Mohamed al-Sahim
11. Abu Bakr al-Elwani
12. Salem al-Elwani
13. Fathi Terbil [released]
14. Farag Sharany [released]

[Fourteen hurt in Libya clashes](http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/fourteen-hurt-in-libya-clashes-20110216-1aw85.html)

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/fourteen-hurt-in-libya-clashes-20110216-1aw85.html>

• Fourteen hurt in Libya clashes

February 16, 2011

• AFP

Fourteen people were injured in clashes in the city of Benghazi, a Libyan newspaper said on Wednesday, as the country braced for a "Day of Anger" following the revolts in neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia.

- The paper, Quryna, said 14 people were injured in the clashes between security forces and demonstrators in the eastern city of Benghazi late on Tuesday, in what it branded the work of "saboteurs" among the protesters.
- Security forces intervened to halt a confrontation between supporters of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, who has been in power for more than 40 years, and the demonstrators, it said.

Advertisement: Story continues below

The veteran leader is facing rare internet calls for protests on Thursday by activists buoyed by the ouster of veteran strongmen on its eastern and western borders, in Egypt and Tunisia.

One of the Facebook groups calling for a "Day of Anger" in Libya and anti-regime protest that had 4,400 members on Monday more than doubled in number to 9,600 by Wednesday morning after the Benghazi unrest.

- Three demonstrators and 10 members of the security forces were injured, a hospital director said, quoted in Quryna, which is close to Gaddafi's son, Seif al-Islam, without identifying the other casualty.

None of the injuries was serious, it said.

The protest was started by families of prisoners killed in a 1996 shooting in Tripoli's Abu Salim prison demanding the release of their lawyer, Fethi Tarbel, the paper said.

- A website, Libya Al-Youm, said earlier that the unrest prompted a show of strength by supporters of Gaddafi in a number of cities.

Police had used force to disperse the crowd gathered outside a police post in Benghazi, it said, while the BBC quoted witnesses as saying stones were thrown at police who responded with tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets.

Tarbel, who had been arrested for unknown reasons, was freed under pressure from the families, according to Quryna.

- But the crowd of protesters grew and they began chanting anti-regime slogans such as "The people will end the corruption" and "The blood of the martyrs will not be in vain", before police moved in to disperse them.

Soon afterwards, state television showed hundreds of demonstrators in the streets of Benghazi as well as Tripoli, Syrte and Sebha in support for Gaddafi, who seized power in a 1969 coup which ousted a Western-backed monarchy.

- It broadcast footage of pro-regime demonstrators on foot and in cars, waving Libyan flags and portraits of Gaddafi. They chanted slogans against the Arab news channel Al-Jazeera, accused by the regime of having incited revolts.

Thursday's protest has been called to commemorate the deaths of 14 protesters in 2006 in an Islamist rally in Benghazi.

- Like protest movements elsewhere in the Middle East, dissidents have been using the internet in a bid to rally support in a country where the media are tightly controlled by the state.

Under the banner "The February 17 Intifada (Uprising): A Day of Strikes in Libya," one Facebook group has called for a popular uprising.

Another group of nearly 8,000 members called for Libyans to take to the streets for a "Day of Anger against corruption

and nepotism".

A total of 69 people were also wounded in the 2006 protest in which the consulate of former colonial power Italy was targeted by demonstrators angry at cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

BBC News - Libya protests: Second city Benghazi hit by violence

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12477275>

- 16 February 2011
- Libya protests: Second city Benghazi hit by violence
- Hundreds of anti-government protesters have clashed with police and government supporters in Libya's second city, in the latest display of unrest in the Arab world.

Dozens of people are said to have been hurt in the clashes in Benghazi.

- The overnight unrest followed the arrest of an outspoken government critic, who was reportedly freed later.
- State TV showed demonstrations in several cities said to be in support of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.
- The unrest comes a day before planned anti-government demonstrations on Thursday, dubbed a "Day of Anger", which are being organised via internet social networks.

Pro-democracy protests have recently swept through several Arab nations, with the presidents of Tunisia and Egypt forced to resign amid growing unrest.

But Wednesday's demonstrations were the first display of defiance in Libya, where dissent is rarely tolerated.

- Jail massacre

Witnesses say that at one stage up to 2,000 people were involved in the overnight protests in Benghazi, which saw a march on government offices in the city.

- The protesters are said to have thrown stones and petrol bombs, and set vehicles alight. Witnesses said police used rubber bullets and water cannon to disperse them.
- The protests reportedly began after the arrest of Fathi Terbil, who represents relatives of more than 1,000 prisoners allegedly massacred by security forces in Tripoli's Abu Salim jail in 1996. He was later said to have been freed.
- One witness, who did not want to be named, told the BBC: "A couple of people in the crowd started chanting anti-government slogans and the crowd took that on."

"But then there were clashes with pro-government supporters and then after a bit the pro-government supporters dispersed and then the security services arrived and they dispersed the crowds with hot-water cannons."

- Footage purporting to show the unrest, with protesters fleeing gunfire and a man being shot, was later posted on the internet and used by the BBC and other news organisations. However, subsequent inquiries suggested this was footage originally uploaded more than a year ago.
- Violence also flared in at least two other places, the Associated Press news agency reported.
- In Zentan, south of Tripoli, hundreds of people are said to have marched through the streets before setting up tents in the city centre. A police station and security forces premises were reportedly set on fire.
- And in Beyida, east of Benghazi, police stations were also set alight by protesters, AP reported.
- In a speech broadcast on Wednesday evening, Colonel Gaddafi made no mention of the unrest but said the "revolutionaries" would prevail.

"Down with the enemies, down with them everywhere; down with the puppets everywhere, the puppets are falling, the autumn leaves are falling!" Mr Gaddafi said.

"The puppets of the USA, the puppets of Zionism are falling."

- In a statement issued after the Benghazi clashes, a senior Libyan official warned that the authorities "will not allow a group of people to move around at night and play with the security of Libya".

It added: "The clashes last night were between small groups of people - up to 150. Some outsiders infiltrated that group. They were trying to corrupt the local legal process which has long been in place."

"We will not permit that at all, and we call on Libyans to voice their issues through existing channels, even if it is to call for the downfall of the government," said the official, who was not identified.

- More than 100 members of a banned Islamist militant group were freed from Abu Salim on Wednesday. It is not clear if

the Benghazi clashes and the release of the inmates were connected.

The European Union, meanwhile, has urged Libya to allow "free expression".

"We also call for calm and for all violence to be avoided," said a spokeswoman for EU foreign policy chief Baroness Ashton.

- 'Police state'

Colonel Gaddafi is the Arab world's longest-serving leader, having ruled oil-rich Libya since a coup in 1969.

He has always insisted that the country is run by a series of peoples' committees, though most outside observers believe it is a police state with him firmly in control, the BBC's Jon Leyne reports.

- The Middle East has recently seen a wave of protests fuelled by discontent over unemployment, rising living costs, corruption and autocratic leaderships.

This began with the overthrow of Tunisia's leader, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, in January. Last week, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt resigned.

In recent days there have also been anti-government demonstrations in Yemen, Bahrain, and Iran.

[Pro-Democracy Activists Turn Attention to Gadhafi - WSJ.com](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703515504576142100991025190.html)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703515504576142100991025190.html>

- - MIDDLE EAST NEWS
 - FEBRUARY 14, 2011

Activists Turn Focus to Gadhafi

- In the wake of the resignation of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, online activists are threatening to test one of the Arab world's most repressive regimes: Col. Moammar Gadhafi's Libya.
- Expatriate activists and an amorphous group of bloggers and social-network users—it isn't clear how many of them are in Libya—are calling for protests across the oil-rich North African nation on Thursday. They are hoping to draw momentum from the revolts in Egypt and Tunisia and to commemorate two of the grislier events in Col. Gadhafi's nearly 42-year reign.
- On Feb. 17, 1987, nine young Libyans were publicly executed after being convicted of plotting to kill Libyan and foreign officials. The executions—some by hanging, some by firing squad—were repeatedly aired on state TV.
- On the same day in 2006, Libyan security forces fired on demonstrators outside the Italian consulate in Benghazi, killing more than 10. Protesters had gathered after an Italian minister was seen on TV in a T-shirt emblazoned with a caricature of the Prophet Mohammed.
- Libya suffers some of the same ills as its North African neighbors, Tunisia, Egypt and Algeria, which also has seen large-scale protests erupt in recent weeks. Col. Gadhafi has ruled for decades with an iron fist, tolerating little political opposition. Unemployment is high and the population is growing fast. Food and other prices soared in 2008, retreated amid the global economic crisis, but are heading higher again.
- Amid the regional turmoil, Libya has taken some measures to ease rising prices, reducing duties on some food staples in mid-January. On Sunday, the government-affiliated Tripoli Post reported Libyan authorities released 12 political prisoners late last week, a move interpreted as an attempt to quell political opposition.
- Government officials in Tripoli say Libya is insulated from the regional unrest. "We are not suffering from a similar system to Egypt and other Arab states," said Abdulmajeed Eldursi, a government spokesman. He credits what Col. Gadhafi has called Libya's "direct democracy," a loosely defined and frequently changing policy of decentralized, grass-roots governance.

In practice, Col. Gadhafi holds all levers of state power, frequently shuffling and dismissing government ministers.

- Libya's small population of about 6.5 million and its massive oil wealth give it more room to manage economic woes. Economic output, estimated by the International Monetary Fund at just under \$13,000 per capita, is more than four times Egypt. In recent years, Col. Gadhafi has ordered increased economic liberalization. A few years ago, he created a sovereign wealth fund that has bought up large shares of some of the world's best-known corporations, including banking, energy and media interests.
- Theodore Karasik, director of research and development at the Dubai-based Institute for Near East & Gulf Military Analysis, said Libya's population, concentrated in just a handful of urban areas, makes it easier to control. Libya also is benefiting from higher global oil prices, and a rural population that has been largely left to its own devices.

"Libya is a different model to Egypt and Tunisia," he said.

- Still, there are signs of worry in Tripoli. Col. Gadhafi chastised protesters in Tunisia when they ousted their long-time leader last month, imploring them to bring back their exiled president. He also lashed out at Wikileaks, accusing foreign

powers of using leaked American diplomatic cables to sow instability.

- Libya has been dealing recently with its own Wikileaks fallout. Earlier this month, Libya's top oil official denied allegations contained in a U.S. cable released by the group that said he was under pressure to provide \$1.2 billion in cash or oil to one of Col. Gadhafi's sons.

"Any wise man has to take certain precautions, this will be the situation in every country in the Middle East, and even in America," said Shokri Ghanem, a former prime minister and the top Libyan oil official mentioned in the Wikileaks cables.

- Chip Cummins

[Libya Intifada on 17 th Feb / Day of Anger in Libya](http://abna.ir/data.asp?lang=3&id=225929)

<http://abna.ir/data.asp?lang=3&id=225929>

- Date: 2011/02/13
- Libya Intifada on 17 th Feb
- According to sources, on February 17, the alleged massive protest will be launched.
- (Ahlul Bayt News Agency) - After the fall of 30-year regime of Hosni Mubarak, there have been that Libya will be doing a similar protest.

The current prime minister has been in the position for almost 40 years.

Similarly, the Egypt former president held the position for 30 years. Now, some people from Arab countries are speculating that Libyan will follow Egyptians, who just followed the Tunisians.

According to sources, on February 17, the alleged massive protest will be launched.

Al-Jazeera said that the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi held these days, a series of meetings with a high ranking officers.

Gaddafi, on last Sunday met with seven media and journalists from the city of Benghazi, and the meeting was attended by three of the top security leaders in Libya.

[Gaddafi: Revolt aims to take control of Libyan oil | Al Bawaba](http://www.albawaba.com/main-headlines/gaddafi-revolt-aims-take-control-libyan-oil)

<http://www.albawaba.com/main-headlines/gaddafi-revolt-aims-take-control-libyan-oil>

- Gaddafi: Revolt aims to take control of Libyan oil
- Published March 2nd, 2011
- 14 days after the start of the popular protests in Libya, leader Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, on Wednesday appeared on TV and said he does not have the powers of the leader, stressing that the "Libyan people is the ruler."

Gaddafi spoke during his participation in the annual celebration of the 34th anniversary of the so-called the "declaration of the people's power". Gaddafi stressed "there is no regime or president or government or authority," adding, "We put our fingers in the eyes of those who question the authority of the people."

He added: "I want to remind the world that we turned from Republic to Jamahiriya, i.e. the country is ruled by the masses." According to him, the Libyan people exercise authority over the people's congresses.

- Gaddafi claimed that the protests, which are taking place in Libya, began following the infiltration of al Qaeda cells into the country. They attacked security brigades and seized their weapons. He said that detainees released from Guantanamo moved to Benghazi an Zawiya. He said that the killing of the militants is possible but "we did not order to kill them even now," after they took control of Derna, Benghazi and other cities.
- Gaddafi called on the United Nations to dispatch a fact-finding commission to Libya, adding that there is a conspiracy to control the petroleum of Libya and Libyan territory.

[Libya and Algeria Suspend Soccer Matches in Hopes of Stopping Anti-Government Protests](http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8077271-libya-and-algeria-suspend-soccer-matches-in-hopes-of-stopping-antigovernment-protests)

<http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8077271-libya-and-algeria-suspend-soccer-matches-in-hopes-of-stopping-antigovernment-protests>

• Libya and Algeria Suspend Soccer Matches in Hopes of Stopping Anti-Government Protests

[Algiers](#) : [Algeria](#) | Feb 02, 2011

- With Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen fighting their own battles, the governments of Libya and Algeria are stamping down before the protesting starts. Libya and Algeria have indefinitely extended their suspension of all soccer matches with anti-government demonstrations. Such events were planned for February 12th in Algiers and February 17th in Benghazi and Tripoli.

The intention of cancelling the sporting events, is to halt an arena for a crowd to form and demonstrate against the government. It is thought by some, that soccer fans played a key role in the protests in Egypt. Whether soccer fans fueled fire in Egypt cannot be confirmed, it has raised the awareness and fears of Algerian and Libyan Leaders in their own countries.


Morocco is scheduled to play a friendly game against Libya, it is unknown if this game will be cancelled or rescheduled. Thus far, Morocco has not been privy to the mass protests that have consumed the Middle East and North Africa. If play is allowed to continue in this venue – it will be scheduled for February 9th in Marrakech.

- Opponents of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir have called for "mass protests in Khartoum on February 3, the eve of the opening of the second African Cup of Nations for Home-Based Players." Libya's matches were cancelled prompted by demonstrations against corruption in public housing, weakened economy, and the decadent lifestyle of the family of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.


Three Libyans have taken to a hunger strike in Tobruk, to protest unemployment and lack of decent housing in the country. Libyans are looking to Facebook and Twitter to mobilize in advance of demonstrations planned for February 17th. The new event is being promoted on Facebook as "day of anger."


Libya: News and Views : February 2011 فبراير

<http://www.libya-watanona.com/news/n2011/feb/0211nwsc.htm>


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** ZAWIYAH, Libya -- The Libyan rebels challenging Moammar Gadhafi demonstrated their increasing military coordination and firepower Sunday, as defecting officers in the east took steps to establish a unified command while their followers in this rebel-held city, just outside his stronghold in the capital, displayed an array of tanks, Kalashnikovs and anti-aircraft guns. In a further sign of their strength, the rebels also began making plans to tap revenue from the vast Libyan oil resources now under their control -- estimated by some oil company officials to be about 80 percent of the country's total. In recognition of the insurrection's growing power, Italy's foreign minister suspended a nonaggression treaty with Libya on the ground that the Libyan state "no longer exists," while Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the United States was reaching out to the rebels to "offer any kind of assistance."

[M&C]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Feb. 28 (Bloomberg) -- The U.S. said it will assist Libyan rebels trying to force Muammar Qaddafi from power, as pro- democracy protests that have swept the Middle East spread to Oman and reignited in Tunisia. "We've been reaching out to many different Libyans who are attempting to organize in the east and, as the revolution moves westward, there as well," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said en route to Geneva for talks on Libya. President Barack Obama's administration will provide "any kind of assistance" to those seeking to end Qaddafi's 41-year dictatorship, she said. The disclosure of contacts with Qaddafi's opponents signaled an intensified U.S. effort to prod him from power following military defections that have left much of the east coast in the hands of


the rebels. [Businessweek]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Libyan rebels pressed the regime of Col. Moammar Gadhafi Sunday, taking control of a key city near the capital of Tripoli, declaring a provisional government and allowing oil shipments to resume from territory under their control. An oil tanker was expected to depart the port of Tobruk in the northeast corner of Libya sometime Sunday night carrying 700,000 barrels of oil, said Hassan Bulifa, a member of the management committee of Arabian Gulf Oil Co., Libya's largest oil producer and the only oil company based in the country's opposition-controlled eastern territory. Moammar Gadhafi's grip on Libya seems to be weakening, as anti-government forces take control of Zawiyah - a city just 50km west of the capital Tripoli. Video courtesy of Reuters. The management committee has assumed control of day-to-day operations at the company after its chairman, Abdulwanis Saad, resigned during the


uprising against Col. Gadhafi. Mr. Bulifa said he believed the tanker would be bound for China. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** ON THE first floor of a modest hotel here in Libya's third largest city, the man who yesterday announced he would lead an interim government in the country's rebel-held east is holding court. Dozens of well-wishers file in and out, shaking Mustafa Abdel Jalil's hand and praising his decision to resign as justice minister earlier this month following a brutal crackdown on anti-regime protests that has so far claimed more than 1,000 lives in fighting across Libya. A diminutive man with a neatly trimmed beard and a bruise-like mark - called a zabibah - on his forehead from regular prayer, Abdel Jalil wears the traditional burgundy-coloured wool hat which is known as a shanna


in Libya. [Irish Times]  [More](#)

-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Galyna Kolotnytska, one of four Ukrainian nurses said to dote on the dictator and by all accounts his favourite, returned to her native Ukraine in the early hours of Sunday morning on a plane that evacuated 122 Ukrainians. Her daughter Tatyana, who lives just outside the Ukrainian capital Kiev, had previously said she was expecting her mother in the near future after talking to her on the phone last Friday. "She spoke in a calm voice, asked us not to worry, and said she would be home soon," the daughter, a student, told a local newspaper. A leaked US diplomatic cable last November described the 38-year-old divorced nurse, as a "voluptuous blonde" who travelled



with Col Gaddafi everywhere. [Telegraph]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Libya retains 9.5 tonnes of deadly mustard gas but no longer has weapons to deliver it, a watchdog agency has said, amid international concern that embattled leader Muammar Gaddafi might resort to its use. Michael Luhan, spokesman for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), told Reuters the chemicals were under the army's control but were stored in a remote location far from the capital Tripoli, Gaddafi's main bastion. "As far as we have been able to verify, and we have no information that indicates anything to the contrary, Libya destroyed the entire stockpile of its chemical weapons munitions - a cache of several thousand aerial bombs that are designed for chemicals - in early 2004, seven years ago," he said by telephone from the OPCW's base


in The Hague. [Aljazeera]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan says he considers Moammar Gadhafi a friend and doesn't plan to distance himself from the Libyan leader. Farrakhan didn't talk specifics Sunday about the deadly uprisings in Libya, but the 77-year-old said no leader has been loved by 100 percent of his people. Farrakhan also says if Gadhafi is persecuted for crimes against humanity, the same should apply to former President George W. Bush for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Farrakhan made his remarks while speaking to thousands of followers in suburban Chicago during Saviours' Day. The annual convention celebrates the founding of the Nation of Islam, whose


mission includes black nationalism. [Seattle Times]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Abdel Baset al-Megrahi may have been sick, but it was blackmail that got him out of prison, according to a new report. The Lockerbie bomber who was given a "get out of jail free" card under the guise he was at death's door has remained alive and well more than a year after dire predictions suggested he would be dead within months. His early release, called a "humanitarian" gesture but Scottish authorities in 2009 because he suffers pancreatic cancer, was really the result of the terrorist's threats to Libyan leader Moammar Khadafy, London's Sunday Times reports. Libya's former justice minister Mustapha Abdeljalil said in an interview to the newspaper that al-Megrahi threatened to get "revenge" on Khadafy, and would "spill the beans" on the dictator's role in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988. [New York Daily Times]  [More](#)



-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** African mercenaries hired by the Gaddafi regime to kill Libyan protesters would be immune from prosecution for war crimes due to a clause in this weekend's UN resolution that was demanded by the United States. The UN Security Council agreed on Saturday evening to freeze international assets belonging to the Gaddafis and their key aides, to ban them from travelling and to block all arms sales to Tripoli. It also called for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the killings of demonstrators. This inquiry could lead to senior Libyan ministers and officials being indicted to stand trial for crimes against humanity at The Hague and being given lengthy prison sentences. But it has been widely alleged that many of the attacks were in fact carried out by foreign mercenaries hired by Colonel Gaddafi. And the US insisted that the UN resolution was worded so that no one from an outside country that is not a member of the ICC could be prosecuted for their actions in Libya. [Telegraph]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** ZAWIYA, Libya (AP) — Cities under the control of rebels in eastern Libya have announced the formation of council to govern their affairs. The move appears to shoot down an earlier bid by leader Moammar Gadhafi's former justice minister to form his own provisional government. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is echoing President Barack Obama's demand for Gadhafi to step down. CAIRO (AP) — Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah continues to take steps aimed at pre-empting the kind of anti-government protests spreading through other Arab nations. Today he ordered government workers on temporary contracts be given permanent jobs.



But a group of more than 100 Saudi academics and activists are urging him to enact sweeping reforms. [AP]  [More](#)



-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** For a self-professed (and self-deluded) man of the people, Moammar Gadhafi has, over more than four decades of thievery and oppression, amassed an obscene amount of money. He may claim parenthood of the "Third Way" between Marxism and capitalism but his multiple bank accounts fall resoundingly in favor of a tyrannical corruption of the later. It is hard to imagine the iron grip Gadhafi exerted over his oil-rich country lasting as long as it did without the possession of billions of petrodollars. He and his family managed to buy off anyone who didn't like the way they behaved, both at home and abroad, as his people fell further and further into

destitution. [Daily Star]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi and his family are estimated worth in several billion dollars, according to UK Guardian report. Despite the instant grasp of information that internet may provide, the Gaddafi family are smart enough to hide their wealth into secret bank accounts in Dubai and South-East Asia. Colonel Gaddafi has been the leader of Libya since a coup in 1969 and the longest serving ruler in Libya history. Gaddafi is married to Sofija Farkaš from Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, who is his second wife. Gaddafi has eight biological children, seven of them sons. They are Muhammad al-Gaddafi, Saif al-Islam Muammar Al-Gaddafi, Saadi Gaddafi, Mutassim Gaddafi, Saif Al Arab, Khamis, Ayesha al-Gaddafi, Hanna and Milad. Gaddafi's nepotism. Muhammad, the oldest son, dominated telecommunications, another son, Muatassim, was National Security Adviser, Hannibal was influential in maritime shipping specialized in oil exports, Khamis commanded a top military unit, while daughter Aisha ran a quasi-governmental organization. [Tehran Times]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** In an interview that often was at bizarre odds with reports of the turmoil in his country, Seif al-Islam el-Gadhafi minimized on Sunday the number of Libyans who have joined the uprising against his father, Moammar Gadhafi, and the extent of the fighting, saying, "There's a big gap between reality and the media reports." "In Tripoli, we have here half of the population of Libya," the younger Gadhafi told Christiane Amanpour on ABC's "This Week." "That's more than 2 million, 2.5 million people living in the city. Do you think because of 10,000 or 5,000 people, even if you have the demands against my father or whatever, it means that the whole Libyan population is against Mr. Gadhafi?" [Politics Daily]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Libyan Dictator Muammar Gaddafi has officially lost control of Libya according to many credible news outlets. Gaddafi is still hanging onto Tripoli though. Protestors openly defied his regime yesterday in his last stronghold according to The Australian. Gaddafi has ordered his troops to shoot at protestors, which has led to worldwide condemnation. President Obama has asked that he resign immediately and "leave now." Bloomberg asserts that Muammar Qaddafi (Gaddafi) "came under increased pressure as the United Nations Security Council voted unanimously to freeze his assets and protestors controlling the east of the country said they were naming a provisional government." Gaddafi sounded like a mad man late last week when he went on a bizarre rant and blamed the Libyan unrest on Osama Bin Laden's goons, who were drugging Libyan people with hallucinogenic drugs. [Philly 2 Philly]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** As the people's revolutions sweep across the Middle East from Morocco to Bahrain, a number of analysts including the author have started wondering about the new political and economic order of that region, after the dust has settled down. For further discussion, the Middle Eastern region undergoing the turbulences can be divided into two parts: the Maghreb region comprising of countries of North Africa like Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt and these are countries in the proximity to the European Union. The second part comprises of countries in the Arabian Peninsula like Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Yemen and the Gulf States including the Emirates, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait. Quite surprisingly Iran and Iraq are out of these revolts as those countries have specific problems of their own. [Lusaka Times]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** London: Britain has shutdown its embassy in Libyan capital Tripoli, temporarily discontinuing diplomatic activities in the troubled north African country, the foreign ministry said. The embassy's employees were on board the last of several chartered planes, which flew 53 British citizens and 47 other foreigners to London. Turkey will in the meantime represent Britain's interests in Libya. Only one British consul has stayed behind



and is working closely with the Turkish embassy in Tripoli, the ministry said. Meanwhile, British military planes evacuated 150 Britons to safety from a desert area south of the city of Benghazi, Defence Minister Liam Fox confirmed.



The Hercules aircrafts landed in Malta. [Ibnlive]  [More](#)

-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** At THE Benghazi military airbase that once belonged to Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi, air force pilots now wipe their feet on his portrait as they enter. The base is well and truly in the hands of the anti-Gaddafi rebels. In the few days since they gained control of the city, the movement has organised itself into system of powerful committees to which even the military forces defer. "The army is not able to act well with no command system," says professor Idris el-Sharif, chairman of the committee dealing with the military. Lines of battered, but functioning, anti-aircraft guns stand ready at the airbase. On the airfield sits a Mil Mi-24 Hind; a Russian attack helicopter. Along its sides are loaded rockets and machine guns. [Scotsman]  [More](#)


 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Moammar Gadhafi sounded a resonant warning, exhorting his dwindling supporters toward civil war. "At the appropriate time, we will open the arms depots so all Libyans and tribes will be armed," he shouted into a handheld microphone at dusk Friday, "so that Libya turns red with fire!" That is indeed the fear of those watching the carnage in Libya, not least because Gadhafi spent the past 40 years hollowing out every single institution that might challenge his authority. Unlike neighboring Egypt and Tunisia, Libya lacks the steadying hand of a strong military to buttress a collapsing government. It has no parliament, no trade unions, no political parties, no civil society, no nongovernmental agencies. Libya's only strong ministry is the state oil company. The fact that some experts think the next government might be built atop the Oil Ministry underscores the paucity of options. [Stateman]

 [More](#)



-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** The mother of 5 stood among a crowd of roughly 200 people Sunday afternoon on the corner of Westheimer and Post Oak, demonstrating for her country's freedom. She clutched Libya's pre-Ghaddafi flag as tears streamed down her face. "Free Libya now," she yelled. "Freedom of expression. Down with oppression." Camilla, who asked that her last name be withheld to protect relatives in Libya, came to Houston with her husband to visit family in mid-January, leaving their five children aged 9 to 17 in Tripoli, which remains under Gadhafi's iron-fist rule. At the time, they had no idea they would be leaving their kids in a war zone. Limited family contact As the U.S. and governments worldwide evacuate their nationals from Libya, Camilla and her husband are praying to go back. [Chron]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** ELEANOR HALL: One Libyan national who defied the trend by crossing the border from Egypt back into Libya says international sanctions are welcome but that people are telling him they want a direct approach. Abdul is leading a medical convoy into Libya and he spoke to us about that a few days ago. He said people in Benghazi want the US administration to follow the former US president Ronald Reagan's approach and bomb Colonel Gaddafi's compound. Abdul - who still doesn't feel safe to reveal his full name - spoke to me again this morning. Abdul, when we spoke to you last week, you were still trying to get into Libya with your convey of aid. Where are you now? ABDUL: That's right. I am now in Benghazi. The convey has arrived and distributed to the hospitals here. [ABC]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Victims of the IRA could lose out on billions in compensation from the Gaddafi regime as a result of the Libyan crisis. The Sunday Telegraph has claimed that the imminent collapse of the Colonel Gaddafi reign in Libya has seriously hampered a secret €12 billion deal with the British government. According to the Telegraph, the UK government was in advanced discussions on a package for the victims of IRA bombs built with Libyan supplied explosives. The Telegraph reports: "The victim's initiative would have included payouts for families of those killed and injured who are bringing the claim, as well as a huge cultural and social investment focusing on reconciliation projects, many in Northern Ireland." [Irish Central]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** In a distinct echo of the tactics they pursued to encourage US intervention in the Balkans and Iraq, a familiar clutch of neo-conservatives appealed Friday for the United States and NATO to "immediately" prepare military action to help bring down the regime of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and end the violence that is believed to have killed well over a thousand people in the past week. The appeal, which came in the form of a letter signed by 40 policy analysts, including more than a dozen former senior officials who served under President George W. Bush, was organised and released by the Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI), a two-year-old neo-conservative group that is widely seen as the successor to the more-famous - or infamous - Project for the New



American Century (PNAC). [Aljazeera]  [More](#)



-  **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** Feb 27 (Reuters) - Opponents of Muammar Gaddafi in eastern Libya said on Sunday they had formed a National Libyan Council, saying it was not an interim government but described it as the face of the revolution. A spokesman for the new council said he saw no room for any negotiation with Gaddafi's government. Opponents of Gaddafi, speaking in a news conference after a meeting to discuss forming a council that would support the movement to oust the Libyan leader, described an interim government announced by the former justice minister was his own "personal view". [Reuters]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 28 February, 2011:** France has broken off its diplomatic relations with Libya to protest Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi regime's violent crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. The French Foreign Ministry announced Saturday that its embassy personnel in the Libyan capital of Tripoli have been evacuated, DPA reported. In reaction to the Libyan government's brutal response to pro-democracy mass rallies, Botswana and Peru have also terminated ties with the North African country. The UN Security Council (UNSC) on Saturday imposed sanctions on Gaddafi and members of his inner circle and referred Gaddafi to the International Criminal Court. The 68-year-old Gaddafi, nine members of his family, and six other members of his clique will now face international travel bans. [Press TV]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** The UN Security Council has unanimously adopted an arms embargo against Libya, a travel and assets ban on Moamer Gaddafi's regime and ordered a crimes against humanity investigation into the bloodshed. The council made a new demand for an immediate end to attacks on civilians by Mr Gaddafi's loyalists which it said had been incited "from the highest level of the Libyan government." The UN says more than 1,000 people have been killed in the unrest. The travel ban and assets will target the 68-year-old Libyan leader, seven of his sons and daughter Aisha, other family members and top defence and intelligence officials accused of playing a role in the



bloodshed. [New York Times]  [More](#)


 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Paying \$200 for a government-sponsored taxi ride to the Tunisian border sounded like a bad deal. But Tunisian laborer Amr Soltan had no idea just how bad until he and his friends were driven instead to a prison, locked up for five days, robbed of their cellphones by police and beaten by guards. "It's a miracle that I am alive," he said after arriving in his own country as one of the thousands who have been brutalized by Libyan security forces during the uprising against Moammar Kadafi's 41-year rule. "They accused us of being traitors because our people revolted against dictators." [Los Angeles Times]  [More](#)

-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** More than 150 workers were dramatically rescued from the Libyan desert as two RAF Hercules aircraft – backed by the SAS – pulled off a high-risk evacuation of British and other citizens. As world leaders united to demand that Muammar Gaddafi face the full consequences of what Barack Obama called the "brutalisation" of his people, the defence secretary, Liam Fox, confirmed that the rescue had been a success, so far. It is believed that units of British special forces secured runways south of Benghazi to allow the Hercules aircraft to land safely. A statement from the Foreign Office said that the rescued workers had been met by consular officials and Red Cross staff when they landed in the Maltese capital, Valletta. [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. Security Council moved as a powerful bloc Saturday to try to halt Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's deadly crackdown on protesters, slapping sanctions on him, his five children and 10 top associates. Voting 15-0 after daylong discussions interrupted with breaks to consult with capitals back home, the council imposed an arms embargo and urged U.N. member countries to freeze the assets of Gadhafi, his four sons and his daughter. The council also backed a travel ban on the Gadhafi family and close associates, including leaders of the revolutionary committees accused of much of the violence against opponents. Council members additionally agreed to refer the Gadhafi regime's deadly crackdown on people protesting his rule to a permanent war crimes tribunal for an investigation of possible crimes against humanity. [Chron]  [More](#)


-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Reporting from Umm Saad, Libya — Suleiman Zjailil is a modern-day town crier. He spends his days driving his battered car back and forth across the border with Egypt, smuggling out grainy cellphone videos so the world can see the news from his quarantined land. Zjailil, an engineer in the Libyan coastal city of Tobruk, is determined to deliver visual proof of President Moammar Kadafi's bloody tactics against a mounting populist rebellion. Armed only with thumb drives and CDs, he downloads videos taken by Libyans and makes the 95-mile trip from Tobruk to Egypt. "I don't even know how to fire a gun, but I have the most powerful weapon of all: the media," Zjailil said Friday as he rested with a glass of hot sweet tea after another punishing trip. [Lo Angeles Times]  [More](#)


 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Anti-government forces in Libya have decided to form an interim government in preparation for the eventual ouster of the country's strongman Muammar Gadhafi. The interim government is lead by the former justice secretary of Libya who resigned a few days ago in protest of the mass killing of the people who are helpless and unarmed. Justice Minister Mustafa Mohamed Abud Al Jeleil who resigned Monday for what he termed as the "use of excessive force against protesters" by forces loyal to Gadhafi, is being groomed as head of the interim government. Reuters/Yahoo news reports, "The formation of the interim government followed a meeting in Benghazi of "interim local leaderships in the eastern region," he said. [Digital Journal]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** About 100 people rallied near CNN's downtown Atlanta headquarters Saturday to draw attention to violent efforts to put down the popular uprising in Libya. Libya's strongman, Moammar Gadhafi, is accused of ordering brutal retaliations in the civil war, using mercenaries, military aircraft and anti-aircraft guns. Some foreign diplomats have said at least 1,000 people have been killed in the uprising. In Atlanta, Libyan-Americans and others waved the red, green and black Libyan flag and chanted "Down, down, with Gadhafi. Support human rights." Drivers in passing cars honked their horns. "I'm here because this is not a struggle for Libya. It's a struggle for everybody," said Sameh Abdelaziz, who came to the United States from Egypt in 1988. "It's very brave, people facing these airplanes and these guns." [Atlanta Journal]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** ROME—Italy has suspended a treaty that forbids it from participating in any military action against the regime of Col. Moammar Gadhafi, according to Italy's defense minister, making it easier for Rome to participate in any potential peace-keeping mission to the North African country. "The treaty is de-facto no longer operational," Defense Minister Ignazio La Russa said in a phone interview on Saturday. Mr. La Russa said Italy no longer considered the treaty enforceable, because the popular uprising in Libya had weakened Col. Moammar Gadhafi's regime to the point that it could no longer uphold its end of the accord. "A treaty is in force if a counterpart exists," Mr. La Russa said, adding: "That doesn't seem to be the situation in Libya at the moment." [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** In case there were any remaining question that Seif al-Islam Qaddafi, the scion of Libya's fast-fading leader, is not exactly the brightest star in the galaxy, he dispelled those doubts today by appearing on the Al-Arabiya satellite channel to declare that "everything is normal" in Tripoli even as news outlets reported on growing signs that the Qaddafi family is losing its grip on Libya. Earlier this week, Seif had invited foreign journalists to the Libyan capital so they could see for themselves just how wonderfully the Qaddafis were handling what he downplayed as the work of foreign-backed, pill-popping Al Qaeda terrorists bent on Libya's destruction. But correspondents for both Al Arabiya and the New York Times, two news outlets that took up his invitation, managed to break away for their minders and report that all was not, in fact, under control. [Foreign Policy]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** After 42 years of Gaddafi's brutal dictatorship, no one seemed to be in control of anything, yet somehow in Tobruk everyday life continues. Last month Faisal Hassan was an insignificant labourer, eking out a meagre living in Colonel Gaddafi's Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and resigned like everyone else to the colonel's crushing control of everyday life. Today, a revolutionary armed with a Kalashnikov assault rifle, he is in charge of an ammunition dump on the outskirts of Tobruk, ready to defend it with his last breath if Colonel Gaddafi launches an attack. "We expect him to send warplanes to bomb us and we are ready!" he said, pointing his gun at the sky to show how he would shoot at the colonel's jets. By the chaotic standards of "Free Libya", as the anti-Gaddafi forces call the massive expanse of their nation that is now out of the dictator's control, Mr


Hassan's little unit was relatively well organised. [Telegraph]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Unrest continues to spread across the Middle East and North Africa, toppling governments in Egypt and Tunisia. Still, those countries have maintained stability and security after the fall of their respective leaders. But, Libya's post-revolutionary landscape might be very different if Moammar Gadhafi follows the same forced exit of his counterparts in Tunis and Cairo. Mr. Gadhafi has ruled Libya since 1969, which, by any standard, is pretty impressive staying power. But such longevity raises the inevitable question: what happens when such a ruler is toppled? In countries like Egypt and Tunisia, where popular street power led to the ouster of rulers there, the military stepped in afterward to keep things stable and secure. However, Kamran Bokhari, director of Middle East and South Asia for the private intelligence firm Stratfor, says Mr. Gadhafi kept the military weak out of fear that it might challenge him. [VOA]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** February 26, 2011 (CHICAGO) (WLS) -- People marched and chanted Saturday for Libya's government to fall and for peace and democracy in the country. The protest against violence by Libyan authorities took place near Michigan and Congress. Some people stood on pictures of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. Protestors accuse him of heading a regime of oppression and fear. Others in the crowd waved Libyan flags. Protest leaders urged the U.S. to strongly condemn attacks on demonstrators in Libya. [ABC]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Yasmeen Esaklul had run out of breath Friday afternoon after chanting continuously into a large microphone at a traffic corner in the Galleria area. The University of Houston student had helped organize support for uprising in her father's native country of Libya and to condemn the deadly response by Col. Moammar Gadhafi. About 250 people joined the protest. "I want Americans to realize what's going on," said 19-year-old Esaklul. "My objective is to point out that Gadhafi is a horrible dictator that is murdering people without a second thought." Esaklul and her family visited Libya last summer. Her mother, Vickie Esaklul, said that things were generally peaceful at the time. "Things were available in the stores," said the 54-year-old woman, who also attended the protest at Westheimer and Post Oak. "It was pretty much prospering, but I think that was Gadhafi recognizing that he had to give his people some freedom or he would end up like some other Arab leaders, and lose his hold on the people." [Chron]  [More](#)


 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** In January of 2009, accused ponzi scheme financier Allen Stanford and his girlfriend, Andrea Stoelker, boarded one of Stanford's private jets for an exotic yet fateful trip. First stop: Tripoli, Libya. The global financial crisis was at its worst, and Stanford, like nearly every other banker in the world, was trying hard to keep his empire afloat. Libya, which had only recently won fully normalized relations with the U.S., would throw Stanford a major lifeline, according to court filings: The Libyan government's sovereign wealth fund invested some \$500 million with Stanford, who left Libya the next day along with Stoelker and an unidentified third person, bound for Zurich, Switzerland. [CNBC]  [More](#)


-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** ROME — Italian central bank governor Mario Draghi, a favourite to succeed Jean-Claude Trichet as head of the European Central Bank, on Saturday warned that the crisis in Libya could slow growth in Italy. "The dramatic events we are witnessing may undermine investment in the oil industry in the area and raise energy prices, with repercussions for world growth," Draghi said at an economic conference in Verona in northern Italy. "For the Italian economy... a 20 percent rise in oil prices would shave half a percentage point off growth over three years," he said in a speech distributed by organisers. World oil prices have risen sharply in recent days amid persistent worries that escalating unrest in the region might choke supply. [AFP]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** On February 21, 2011, Peru surprised the international community by formally suspending its diplomatic ties with Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, insisting that they would not be restored until the violence against the civilian population was halted. While other Latin American nations responded in various ways to Gaddafi's flagrant and erratic behavior, Peru is the lone hemispheric nation that has officially cut off relations with Libya. Peruvian President Alan García declared diplomatic links "suspended" as a means of protesting the unprecedented violence that Gaddafi has unleashed on his own people. Furthermore, García posted on his official website that his intentions were to speak with UN Security Council officials in order to create an internationally-mandated air exclusion zone over Libya. This would prevent the use of Libyan warplanes to carry out raids against the civilian population. [Scoop]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** LONDON — From exile in London, Muhammad al-Senussi, the heir apparent in Libya's overthrown monarchy, hails the "heroes" of the uprising and urges the international community to oust Moammar Kadhafi. In more than two decades in the British capital, the successor of the deposed King Idriss has found his proclamations falling on deaf ears. But with an uprising tearing through Libya and Kadhafi's authority shaken to its core, he hopes his voice will be heard. "My message to the international community is to put pressure on Kadhafi and ask him to stop killing his own people immediately. And ask him to leave, himself and his children and all the regime. This guy has to leave," he told AFP in an interview Friday. For al-Senussi, a 48-year-old with the neat appearance of a besuited businessman who styles himself the "exiled prince", Kadhafi is his bete noire. [AFP]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 27 February, 2011:** Benghazi, Libya--"Your beginning was in Benghazi and you will be finished in Benghazi." The walls of Libya's second largest city are covered in graffiti that may be prophetic. It was in Benghazi 42 years ago that Colonel Muammar Qadhafi started the military coup which brought him to power. In the same city last week his security brigades were defeated by anti-regime protestors in bloody battles that could prove fatal for one of the longest-serving rulers in the world. Signs of the people's victory are boldly emblazoned across Benghazi. Spray-painted slogans celebrate liberation and urge citizens to oust the regime and safeguard their streets. Hated symbols of the dictator's ruthless authority--police stations, interior ministry buildings and the city's main security compound--have been badly damaged by fires. [Almasry Alyoum]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Washington: The United States closed its embassy in Tripoli on Friday and imposed unilateral sanctions against Libya, including the freezing of billions in government assets, as the Obama administration made its most aggressive move against Col. Muammar el-Gaddafi since his security forces opened fire on protesters. Just minutes after a charter flight left Tripoli carrying the last Americans who wanted to leave Libya, officials markedly toughened the administration's words and actions against Colonel Gaddafi, announcing that high-ranking Libyan officials who supported or participated in his violent crackdown would also see their assets frozen and



might, along with Colonel Gaddafi, be subject to war crimes prosecution. [NDTV]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** WASHINGTON — The Obama administration froze assets of the Libyan government, leader Moammar Gadhafi and four of his children Friday, just hours after it closed the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli and evacuated its remaining staff. U.S. officials said announcements of the steps were withheld until Americans wishing to leave the country had departed as they feared Gadhafi might retaliate amid worsening violence in the North African country. The measures announced Friday ended days of cautious U.S. condemnation of Gadhafi that had been driven by concerns for the safety of U.S. citizens in Libya. They struck directly at his family, which is believed to have amassed great wealth over his four decades in power. [Chron]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Protesters demanding Muammar Gaddafi's ousting came under a hail of bullets when pro-regime militiamen opened fire to stop the first significant anti-government marches in days in the Libyan capital. The Libyan leader, speaking from the ramparts of a historic Tripoli fort, told supporters to prepare to defend the nation. Witnesses reported multiple deaths from gunmen on rooftops and in the streets shooting at crowds with automatic weapons and even an anti-aircraft gun. "It was really like we are dogs," one man who was marching from Tripoli's eastern Tajoura district said. He added that many people were shot in the head, with seven people within 10 yards of him cut down in the first wave. Also, troops loyal to Mr Gaddafi attacked a major air base east of Tripoli that had fallen into rebel hands. [UK Press]  [More](#)

 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** (Ras Ijdair, Tunisia) - Libyan security forces and pro-government groups in the western city of Zawiyah have violently attacked anti-government protesters and Egyptian migrant workers, Human Rights Watch said today. Hundreds of Egyptian migrants crossed the border into Tunisia on February 25, 2011, joining thousands of other migrants who had been stranded there for three days awaiting assistance, Human Rights Watch said. "West of Tripoli in Zawiyah city, government security forces firing on demonstrators are causing bloodshed and chaos," said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "Pro-Gaddafi thugs have terrorized Egyptian migrant workers, causing hundreds to flee to Tunisia." [HRW]  [More](#)


-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** OTTAWA - While politicians here scramble to evacuate Canadians from Libya, some are wondering what role, if any, the international community should play in helping Libyans throw off the yoke of a megalomaniacal dictator. Reports suggest up to 2,000 Libyan protesters have been killed in the past few days, some reportedly bombed by their own air force. But Defence Minister Peter MacKay told a group of defence experts Friday not to expect Canadian troops -- or even United Nations peacekeepers -- to intervene in Libya anytime soon. When asked about the UN's Responsibility to Protect resolution, which allows for quick action by the Security Council to intervene militarily in cases where innocent civilians are being brutalized, MacKay said the resolution is a "very important concept," but it isn't applied evenly. [Toronto Sun]  [More](#)

 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** On Jan. 19, 2007, my wife, Rosemary, and I spent several hours with Col. Moammar Gadhafi in his tent in the Libyan desert, sipping tea and discussing sociology and political theory. It was a strange encounter at the time, and after the horrific events of the past week in Libya, it seems stranger still. Several months earlier a former student of mine, working for an international consulting firm that was advising the Libyan government on economic and political reform, had called to see whether I might be interested in traveling to Libya to discuss my research on civil society and democracy, particularly "Making Democracy Work," my book on why democracy functions well in northern Italy but not in the country's south. My hosts were willing to pay my standard consulting fee, and to be honest, I was curious. Col. Gadhafi fancied himself an intellectual, I was told, and considered his own "Green Book" an original contribution to political philosophy. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)

-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** MEXICO CITY—Most of the world's leaders have condemned Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi for unleashing a brutal repression that has killed hundreds of his fellow countrymen. But he is still being supported by Latin America's most autocratic leftist leaders, with whom he has longstanding ties. Cuba's retired dictator Fidel Castro said this week it was too early to criticize Libya's government and warned of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization invasion of Libya he claimed was being orchestrated by U.S. "imperialism." Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, the former Sandinista revolutionary, has been telephoning Mr. Gadhafi to express his solidarity against Libyan rebels. The normally voluble Hugo Chávez, a longtime friend of Mr. Gadhafi, has been quiet on the Libyan situation—even as neighboring leaders like Peru's president condemned Mr. Gadhafi's actions. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)

 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** After a day when Moamar Gadhafi pledged to "crush any enemy" and seemed to untether from reality after protesters were shot at, the White House is fearing he has become so unstable that he may "burn down the house with him," an official said. In another troubling speech today, the Libyan dictator said that he would "open up the arsenals" and that "life without dignity has no value." "A lot of his speeches over the last years have been increasingly surreal," said Dirk Vandewalle, an associate professor at Dartmouth College. "This is very much a man who has a kind of apocalyptic vision of how politics takes place." [ABC]  [More](#)





-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** The son of Libya's strongman Muammar Gadhafi has denied reports that his father will destroy oil supply facilities in Libya in the wake of violent confrontation between government security forces and anti-government protesters. Saif al-Islam Gadhafi told CNN-Turk on Friday, "We will never demolish the sources of oil. They belong to the people," Saif said in an interview translated from English into Turkish on the CNN-Turk website. He said the Gaddafi family had no intention of fleeing Libya, and the government was in control of the west, south and centre of the country. "We have plans A, B and C. Plan A is to live and die in Libya. Plan B is to live and die in Libya. Plan C is to live and die in Libya," Saif said. [Digital Journal]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** The U.S. Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, or Fincen, warned banks on Thursday to watch out for the "increased movement of assets" from Libya as the uprising there takes hold. In a bulletin, the agency said U.S. financial institutions needed "to take reasonable risk-based steps with respect to the potential increased movement of assets that may be related to the situation in Libya." Fincen said financial institutions should closely screen for private banking accounts held by or for senior foreign political figures and to scrutinize transactions that could represent "misappropriated or diverted state assets, proceeds of bribery or other illegal








payments." [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)


-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** As violent protests continue across Libya, activists in Washington took a stand against the country's leader, Moammar Gadhafi. Libyan anti-government activists, including many women, chanted Friday for a free Libya as they raised the country's flag of independence at the residence of the Libyan ambassador to the U.S., who has resigned. The red, black and green flag with a crescent moon and star, a sign of Islam, was displayed by activists in place of the green flag that has marked the four-decade long rule of Gadhafi. Ali Aujali, who resigned as Gadhafi's ambassador to the U.S. earlier this week, made a brief appearance in front of his home to pledge his support for a liberated Libya. [VOA]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Regarding the situation of civil war faced by Libya, Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez wrote on his Twitter account @chavezcandanga: "Nicolás (Chávez's foreign affairs minister), teach another lesson to the (Venezuelan) extreme right-wing/pitiyanquis! Long live Libya and its independence! Qaddafi faces a civil war!" The Venezuelan president wrote this as his Foreign Affairs Minister Nicolás Maduro was giving a speech at the National Assembly (Venezuela's Parliament). "In Libya, the first steps towards secession and division have been taken," pointed out Maduro, who also warned that "the first steps towards a process of civil war have been taken to get oil out of this OPEC nation." [Black Star]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Libya's ambassador to the United Nations appealed to the Security Council today to "save" his nation from the violence unleashed on protesters by leader Muammar Qaddafi and to impose sanctions on the regime. "Please UN, save Libya," Ambassador Mohammed Shalgham said at a meeting of the Security Council. "I tell my brother Qaddafi, leave the Libyans alone." Shalgham, a former Libyan foreign minister, was embraced by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, U.S. Deputy Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo and other diplomats following his speech. He hugged Libya's Deputy Ambassador Ibrahim Dabbashi, who denounced the regime earlier in the week and was crying as Shalgham's speech ended. After the speech, Britain and France circulated a draft resolution that would freeze the assets and ban foreign travel of Qaddafi, his seven sons, his daughter, two cousins and 11 other government officials. [Bloomberg]  [More](#)
-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** In an apparent bid to mitigate swelling anti-government protests that have resulted in the Libyan regime losing control over large swaths of land to demonstrators in recent days, Libyan state TV announced on Friday that the government will give Libyan families \$400 each. The broadcast, aired as demonstrators were reported to be gearing up for massive protests to try to oust embattled Libyan leader Moammar Kaddafi from power, also said that the government pledged to increase salaries for state employees by as much as 150%. Media reports say it's the first time the Kaddafi regime has offered incentives to Libyans in an attempt to keep their loyalty, and suggested that the government is making use of its large oil earnings to try to retain public support. [Los Angeles Times]  [More](#)

 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Libya's government, clinging to power after a popular revolt, has ordered massive cash handouts include wage increases, food subsidies and allowances, state television reported on Friday. It said each family will receive 500 Libyan dinars (\$400) to help cover increased food costs, and that wages for some categories of public sector workers would increase by 150 percent, the television station said. The announcement came after a former Libyan minister told Al Jazeera he feared Libyan Leader Muammar Gadhafi may resort to using biological and chemical weapons as a last resort amid the country's escalating and violent unrest. [Haartz]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** BENGHAZI, Libya, Feb 25 (Reuters) - Rebels in eastern Libya said on Friday they now controlled most of the oil fields east of the town of Ras Lanuf, and said they would honour oil deals as long as they were in the interest of the people. [ID:nLDE71M1AF] The eastern Libyan town of Brega and its oil terminal are under rebel control, and soldiers who have defected are helping the rebels to secure the port, Reuters witnesses said on Friday. "This area is controlled by the people," said Mabrook Maghraby, a lawyer from Benghazi who is now involved with the local committees defending Brega. If oil contracts were unfair or based on corruption, however, the interim leadership of Libya's second city Benghazi said they reserved the right to renegotiate them. Many of Libya's key oil producing areas and terminals are located in the east of the OPEC member state, large chunks of which have fallen to rebels seeking to oust veteran leader Muammar Gaddafi. [Reuters]  [More](#)
-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Abdurrahman Shalgam, an ally of Gaddafi since the pair were teenage radicals in the late 1950s, compared the leader's actions to those of Pol Pot and Hitler and backed the protesters in Tripoli. In an emotional speech to the UN Security Council in New York, Mr Shalgam, who had previously remained loyal, said: "Muammar Gaddafi is telling the Libyans 'either I rule you or I kill you'." He told the 15 members of the council, who are considering an Anglo-French plan for sanctions against the Gaddafi regime: "We need a courageous resolution from you". Outside the chamber, he gave another speech in which he pleaded for the outside world to do something "within hours, not days" to stop the bloodshed in the country. [Telegraph]  [More](#)
-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Feb. 25 (Bloomberg) -- Libyan Prince Muhammad bin Sayyid Hassan as-Senussi said that the country's tribes are united against Muammar Qaddafi, who ousted Senussi's great-uncle in a 1969 coup, and that there is no risk of civil war. "The Libyan people and the tribes have proven they are united," and talk of civil war has been "created by the regime to spread fear," as-Senussi said in a telephone interview from London today. He said massacres are being carried out by pro-Qaddafi forces. Qaddafi bolstered defenses in the capital, Tripoli, today after rebels seized much of the rest of the country. Security forces opened fire in Tripoli to prevent a demonstration after Friday prayers by Qaddafi's opponents, Al Jazeera television said. The death toll since the uprising began last week has reached several hundred and foreign governments are seeking to evacuate their citizens. [Businessweek]  [More](#)
-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Despite Qaddafi's claim that al Qaida is behind the protests in Libya, the jihadi organization has had little to do with the revolutions spreading throughout the Arab world, and they don't like being excluded from the spotlight. In fact, Der Spiegel opines, the unrest has put al-Qaida in a tricky position: while they've called for the overthrow of secular leaders, many of the revolutions—like the one in Egypt—occurred "because the regime was only outwardly democratic," not because it was too democratic. So al-Qaida leaders are scrambling to put the right spin on things. Top al-Qaida officials publicly praised Egyptians for ousting their "godless" president, and in a statement yesterday, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb described the unrest in Libya as "jihad," characterizing Qaddafi as an "enemy of God." (In a moment of candor, Libyan jihadist Attiyah Allah granted, "it is true the revolution is not



entirely what we had envisioned.") What the protests have demonstrated most clearly, Der Spiegel writes, is that jihadists just don't have the power to mobilize the people. "It isn't al-Qaida that has proven to be a vanguard, but the secular, Internet-savvy youth of the Arab world." [Slate]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** PARIS — Libya's ambassadors to France and to the U.N. cultural and education organization resigned Friday, condemning police violence against protesters and joining a wave of others abandoning Moammar Gadhafi's regime. Protesters camped out in the Libyan Embassy in Paris overnight and replaced the flag with that of Libya's old monarchy. Libya's ambassador to France, Mohamed Salaheddine Zarem, and the ambassador to UNESCO, Abdulsalam El Qallali, emerged from the Libyan Embassy on Friday afternoon to speak to the crowd of protesters. "We condemn the repression taking place in Libya and the extreme violence carried out by militia security forces against peaceful protesters who only demand freedom and dignity," El Qallali said. [CP]  [More](#)


 **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** (Ahlul Bayt News Agency) - Libya's deputy ambassador to the UN says thousands of people have been killed during protests, as unconfirmed reports have come in claiming the regime has used poison gas on demonstrators. Ibrahim Dabbashi, who has turned against the Gaddafi regime, said the death toll is expected to rise as Muammar Gaddafi continues his bloody crackdown against the opposition. "There are already thousands of people who have been killed, we expect more. They are gathering all the bodies and they are taking them to the desert or somewhere. No one knows where are the bodies of the victims," AFP quoted Dabbashi as saying. His comments came ahead of a UN Security Council meeting on the crisis in Libya. Dabbashi said the "psychologically unstable" Gaddafi has the choice between being killed or committing suicide. "He might seek to send some of his family members abroad but I believe he prefers to die in Libya because of his narcissistic character, he wants to act like a hero." [Abna]  [More](#)


-  **Saturday, 26 February, 2011:** Feb. 26 (Bloomberg) -- Libya's ambassador to the United Nations compared leader Muammar Qaddafi to Adolf Hitler in appealing to the Security Council yesterday to "save" his nation from violence being unleashed on protesters and impose sanctions on the regime. "Please United Nations, save Libya," Ambassador Mohammed Shalgham said at a meeting of the Security Council. "I tell my brother Qaddafi, leave the Libyans alone." Shalgham, a former Libyan foreign minister, was embraced by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, U.S. Deputy Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo and other diplomats following his speech. He hugged Libya's Deputy Ambassador Ibrahim Dabbashi, who denounced the regime earlier in the week and was crying as Shalgham's speech ended. After the speech, Britain and France circulated a draft resolution that would freeze the assets and ban foreign travel of Qaddafi, his seven sons, his daughter, two cousins and 11 other government officials. [Businessweek]  [More](#)
-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** BEYIDA, Libya -- Rebels holding Libya's third- and fourth-largest cities Thursday repulsed tank-backed assaults by Moammar Gadhafi's forces as the embattled dictator struggled to reclaim areas outside the capital and fresh high-level defections further fractured his regime, residents and news reports said. President Barack Obama and other Western leaders worked to firm up responses to halt a crackdown that is widely feared to have killed more than 1,000 people over the nine-day revolt. The U.S. and its NATO allies were actively considering the imposition of a no-fly zone over Libya to stop regime airstrikes on civilians. In his latest diatribe over state-run television Thursday, Gadhafi claimed that al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden had instigated the rebellion, and admitted that his forces were losing control of Zawiyah, 30 miles west of Tripoli. [Miami Herald]  [More](#)
-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Critics howled with derision at the UN Security Council's response to the bloodshed in Libya this week. An emergency session produced no action, not even a legally binding resolution: only the Council's weakest form of expression, a press statement. Here at the UN, however, Western diplomats were flush with the triumph of finally getting the Council to address at least one of the revolts in the Middle East. One called it the "strongest statement in years". 'Protecting peace' That difference reflects the enormous gap in perception between the public and the diploma [BBC]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** On walls across Libya's second-largest city are the same scrawled graffiti: Game Over. Days after protesters took control of Benghazi after fierce attacks by Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi's militia and alleged mercenaries left many dead and injured, demonstrations continued at the courthouse where they began a week ago. People called for Kadafi's resignation and expressed support for anti-government efforts in the capital, Tripoli, and other cities. "From the first day, from the 17th, there was no more fear. We fought fear; the revolution's youth taught us courage," said Abdulmutalib Bashir, 51. "We are a people who won't surrender; either victory or death." [Los Angeles Times]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** OTTAWA — While it's not a major United Nations player with particularly strong economic ties to Libya, Canada has a role to play in the debate over sanctions against the North African country, experts say. While many countries, as well as the United Nations, have chimed in with suggestions on how the world might apply pressure on Col. Moammar Gadhafi, who turned the air force against his own people in the wake of massive antigovernment protests, Canada has remained mum on the issue. The government has maintained its priority is to get Canadians out of Tripoli. On the subject of sanctions, Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon's office said only that Ottawa was "examining our options." [Vancouver Sun]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Prime Minister David Cameron and US President Barack Obama on Thursday promised to "coordinate on possible multilateral measures on Libya," Mr Cameron's office said in a statement. "The prime minister spoke to President Obama this evening," Mr Cameron's Downing Street office confirmed. They "agreed to coordinate on possible multilateral measures on Libya, including at the UN Human Rights Council on Monday." The leaders also "agreed to work together closely on the swift evacuation of nationals," during Thursday's phone call. Mr Cameron also stressed "the importance of seizing this moment of opportunity for change in the region," according to the Downing Street spokesman. [Telegraph]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** SNC-Lavalin has confirmed it has a contract to build a detention centre in Libya, a country currently gripped by violence as pro-democracy protesters clash with hardline government forces. The Montreal-based engineering giant has said the facility will be the "first to be built according to international human rights standards." "We think this is an important step forward for this country and an opportunity for us as a company to share values that we think are essential to all citizens of the world," Leslie Quinton, the company's vice-president of global communications said in an email Thursday. Quinton denied reports that SNC-Lavalin was concealing the


project. "It is one of the thousands of projects we work on yearly, not all of which are announced by press release." [CBC]  [More](#)


 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** As nongovernmental organizations from all regions of the world working in the field of human rights, we call upon the United Nations General Assembly to immediately suspend the rights of membership of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). The General Assembly contemplated the possibility that suspension of a member's rights in the Human Rights Council might be necessary in the event of serious deterioration in the human rights situation that state. Resolution 60/251, which created the Council, provides, in operative paragraph 8, that "the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, may suspend the rights of membership in the Council of a member of the Council that commits gross and systematic violations of human rights." [HRW]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** When Omar Shibli Mahmoudi exchanged sweet nothings on the Muslim dating site Mawada, it wasn't for love but for liberty. To avoid detection by Libyan secret police, who monitor Facebook and Twitter, Mahmoudi, the leader of the Ekhtalef ("Difference") Movement, used what's considered the Match.com of the Middle East to send coded love letters to rally the revolution. It was "for the freedom, not for the marriage," he told ABC News. The Libyan businessman turned opposition leader said he was never politically active before, but as he watched revolutions topple governments in neighboring countries, he knew he needed to act. [ABC]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen says the alliance has no plans to intervene in the unrest in Libya. Speaking in Ukraine Thursday, Rasmussen said NATO has received no request for such an intervention, and stressed that any action NATO does take should be based on a United Nations mandate. Rasmussen said the situation in Libya does not threaten NATO or any NATO allies, but he added it could cause a refugee crisis. Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi is facing international pressure over his government's violent crackdown against protesters. [VOA]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** It took a little too long, but Barack Obama finally spoke about Libya yesterday. Now, what should the US do? The temptation is to demand intervention to stop the violence. But at what exact point are we within our rights to do so? By what mechanism? And what's the potential blowback? Fareed Zakaria had an interesting column in the Wash Post today, not about Libya per se, but about what's happening in the region, and he (once a champion of GWB's democracy promotion) had good things to say about the Obama administration's somewhat aloof approach to events so far: Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama deserve some credit for what has happened. [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** TOBRUK, Libya -- Before going live for the first time since this eastern Libyan city broke free from Moammar Gadhafi's rule last week, staff members of the local radio station took a moment to calm their nerves. They agreed to speak in sober and reassuring tones, but Anwar Sherif, the station's main announcer, couldn't contain himself once he took the microphone to deliver the city's first free broadcast in 42 years. "There was a fear barrier broken that day. I sounded sentimental, even hysterical," Sherif, 36, recalled Thursday. "We let loose all the words we could never say. I said, 'Down with the tyrant!' and then all the other suppressed words came spilling out."


[Miami Herald]  [More](#)


 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** President Barack Obama announced Wednesday that his national security team is working on ways to respond to Libya's bloody crisis. Meanwhile, an impatient punditry has undertaken its own discussion of options. "What has been strikingly lacking in the Obama administration's response," William Kristol writes, "is a sense of the [Miami Herald]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Anti-government uprisings have spread from an initial revolution in Tunisia to countries across the region, including Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen. Could the revolutionary fervor be migrating outside of the Arab world as well? In Cameroon, activists used the recent Mideast turmoil to rally protestors this week against President Paul Biya, who was ruled the African nation with total authority for the last 28 years. Opposition groups charge that he has rigged elections to keep himself in power and human rights groups, including Amnesty International, accuse authorities of stifling political dissent with extreme violence. [TPM]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** With the world watching, Muammar Gadhafi's conspiracy theories about what's causing the chaos in his country are becoming more outlandish. Gadhafi says that al-Qaeda is responsible for the uprising in Libya, according to a report in Al Jazeera. "It's obvious now that this issue is run by al-Qaeda. No one above the age of 20 would actually take part in these events. They are taking advantage of the young age of these people [to commit violent acts] because they are not legally liable," Gadhafi said in a speech on Libyan state television. As he's lost grip on much of eastern Libya, Gadhafi has become more vocal (though his speeches include more rambling than any clear messages) and appears on state television more often. [Forbes]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** WASHINGTON — The US military has been "fully involved" in high-level talks on Washington's response to the crisis in Libya and is assessing options to be presented to the White House, a senior US official said Thursday. "We have a wide range of tools -- financial, sanctions, multilateral actions -- and we are considering all of them," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley told reporters. "The military is fully involved in these discussions and doing its own thinking about options that can be presented to the president" and commander-in-chief Barack Obama. Crowley said a multitude of US agencies and departments have been meeting "constantly on this since last week when the events began to unfold in Libya (and) the military has been a full participant in these discussions." [AFP]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Muammar Gaddafi doesn't think much of reporters. He has made passes at women interviewers, he called them dogs recently. And now, Libya has said, foreign journalists illegally present in Libya will be treated as al Qaeda collaborators. Libyan officials told US diplomats that journalists from CNN, BBC Arabic and Al Arabiya would be allowed to report on the current situation. But those that are already in, illegally, are in trouble. "These same senior officials also said that some reporters had entered the country illegally and that the Libyan government now considered these reporters al Qaeda collaborators," the US department of state said on



Thursday. "Be advised, entering Libya to report on the events unfolding there is additionally hazardous with the government labelling unauthorised media as terrorist collaborators and claiming they will be arrested if caught," the state department said in a statement. [Hindustan Times]  [More](#)

-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Feb 24 (Reuters) - Oil production in Libya is expected to shut down completely and could be lost for a prolonged period of time, Bank of America Merrill Lynch said on Thursday. "We expect Libyan production to be shut down completely and we might lose sweet crudes from Libya for a prolonged period of time," Bank of America Merrill Lynch analyst Sabine Schels told Reuters. Schels said that the world faced the prospect of real supply shock in which the loss of 1.6 million barrels per day of sweet oil could potentially trigger a steep rise in prices and force a sharp reduction in demand to balance the system. [Reuters]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** (Reuters) - Libya's secretive sovereign wealth fund has \$32 billion in cash with several U.S. banks each managing up to \$500 million, and it has primary investments in London, a confidential diplomatic cable shows. The cable, obtained by WikiLeaks and revealing the details of a January meeting between the head of the Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) and the U.S. ambassador in Tripoli, comes as the United States and European governments explored the possibility of freezing assets belonging to the Libyan government. LIA, the umbrella body for Libya's sovereign funds managing oil windfall revenues, is estimated to manage assets of around \$70 billion with stakes in European bluechips such as Italian bank UniCredit and British publishing group Pearson. [Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Inside Libya – A Photographer reports: After days of media blackout and unconfirmed reports of a bloody, but successful, uprising against Col. Moammar Gadhafi in Libya, David Degner's photographs provide a view of the aftermath of fighting in Baida, eastern Libya. In Baida, as in many cities in Libya's east, flags flew from the era before Gadhafi Wednesday. The days-long fight for Baida began in the first days of anti-Gadhafi protests last week. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Both the Palestinian Authority and the Hamas government have called on neighboring Arab countries to intervene to prevent Gaddafi from carrying out "massacres" against Palestinians in Libya. The number of Palestinians living in Libya is not known. But various Palestinian sources have estimated their number at several thousand. The PA on Thursday welcomed Israel's decision to allow 300 Palestinians who fled Libya recently to return to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. "President Mahmoud Abbas appreciates this step and considers it a move in the right direction," a senior PA official in Ramallah said. The PA was "deeply concerned" about the fate of thousands of Palestinians who are still in Libya, the official said. [Jerusalem Post]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** Libya is the latest nation to experience the violent civil unrest that has swept North Africa since December. But in August, things were much different. In fact, the country was making steps to rectify its long-sullied international image. One of these steps was devising a youth conference, to be held in Tripoli. We wanted to get inside the country for a long time, so when Vice founder Shane Smith learned of the event, he submitted his credentials and was invited to take part in the festivities. [CNN]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 25 February, 2011:** WASHINGTON — The United States Thursday stepped up the drive for sanctions and other measures against Libya, consulting Britain, France and Italy on how to "immediately" respond to Moammar Gadhafi's crackdown. Washington also called on the UN Human Rights Council to dump Libya and nervously awaited the weather-delayed sailing of a chartered ferry set to carry 285 Americans and other foreigners from violence-wracked Tripoli to Malta. The Obama administration had been accused of reacting too slowly to the onslaught of violence against civilian demonstrators in Libya, but sought Thursday to frame an international response to the Libyan leader's purge. President Barack Obama called British Prime Minister David Cameron, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, to seek urgent ways to ensure "appropriate accountability" for the Libyan government. [AFP]  [More](#)

-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** SHAHHAT, Libya — Opponents of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi held a former state radio station in this town on Wednesday, which they had renamed Free Libya and clearly intended to keep. Stationed in front of the gate were burly guards with enormous machine guns and ammunition belts slung over their shoulders. Not far away, other armed men guarded an airport, and throughout the rebellious eastern half of this country, the protesters set up checkpoints and flew the old Libyan flag. But at the radio station, Hamdi Zaidy, a former Libyan ambassador to Nigeria who has joined the antigovernment protesters, asked that any conversations about the state of the country be conducted outside of the building. [New York Times]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** BAIDA, LIBYA - Moammar Gaddafi tightened his grip on Libya's capital, Tripoli, on Wednesday, flooding the streets with militiamen and loyalist troops, as rebels consolidated their control of key eastern cities and continued advancing west across the coastal strip, where most of the country's population is clustered. By Wednesday evening, Libya appeared dangerously fractured, with Gaddafi's regime intent on fighting but its authority beyond Tripoli in doubt. In the capital, witnesses said regime loyalists roamed the streets, shooting opponents from SUVs. The opposition has called for a large protest Friday. Oil prices hit \$100 a barrel because of the turmoil in the North African oil exporter, a peak not reached since 2008. In Washington and other capitals, attention turned to the possible responses, including economic sanctions or imposition of a no-flight zone over Libya to prevent the use of aircraft against civilians. [Washington Post]  [More](#)

-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Barack Obama has warned the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi that he faces the prospect of international sanctions over violence against demonstrators, and condemned Gaddafi's actions as outrageous and unacceptable. Obama is sending secretary of state Hillary Clinton to Europe to discuss what actions can be taken to stop the violence, and to take part in a meeting of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The US president took care to maintain balance in his pronouncements over the uprisings in Egypt. By contrast, this statement was unequivocal in its criticism of Gaddafi's actions. Obama promised that the Libyan leader would be held accountable. "The suffering and bloodshed is outrageous and it is unacceptable. So are threats and orders to shoot peaceful protesters and further punish the people of Libya. These actions violate international norms and every standard of common decency. This violence must stop," Obama said. [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** BAIDA, Libya—A day after the last forces loyal to besieged Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi in the country's east were defeated, this coastal town's elders met to begin rebuilding. Masouda al-Alamy, a distinguished professor of animal science at the city's Omar Mukhtar University, called the meeting to order on Wednesday, her voice cracking with emotion. "Today, we meet and can speak freely for the first time," she said. "For the first time we feel we are free." Around 200 locals, including tribal sheikhs, university professors and prominent businessmen, met in a town meeting hall with green plush seats. It was built in the time of the monarchy to house the Libyan parliament, but more recently it was the meeting place for the town's Revolutionary Peoples' Committee, the closest thing Libyans have had to representative government under Mr. Gadhafi. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** (CNN) -- The Swedish tabloid Expressen reported Wednesday that Libya's former justice minister has accused Moammar Gadhafi of ordering the 1988 bombing of a jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people. "I have evidence that Gadhafi ordered the Lockerbie," Mustafa Abdul Jalil is reported to have told the newspaper, though the article cited no specifics. The tabloid said the interview lasted about 40 minutes and was carried out Wednesday by Expressen reporter Kassem Hamade in Libya "in the local parliament in a major city." In the December 21, 1988, incident, Pan Am Flight 103 exploded in the air carrying 259 people. Everyone aboard and 11 people on the ground were killed. An investigation concluded that a bomb had been placed on the plane. [CNN]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** HONG KONG (MarketWatch) — China will attempt to rescue more than 30,000 nationals from Libya in the wake of the violent struggle that has gripped the North African nation, Hong Kong newspaper South China Morning Post reported Thursday. A spokesman for the Chinese embassy in Tripoli reportedly said Chinese nationals, mostly construction workers, as well as other staff working for companies with operations in Libya, had been attacked as protests erupted there in the struggle against Col. Moammar Gadhafi's regime. At least 15 people were seriously injured and were taken to a hospital, the report said. The newspaper also published a picture of the first batch of 83 Chinese workers to be rescued arriving in Egypt from Libya by bus. [Market Watch]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** "It's an excellent signal that the council was able to react in real time to a situation," US Ambassador says as violence spreads through country. For the first time in its five-year history, the UN Human Rights Council has called for a special session on Friday to slam one of its own members – Libya. "It's an excellent signal that the council was able to react in real time to a situation," US Ambassador Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe said. In a strong stance against the violence that has engulfed Libya in the last eight days, at least 53 UN states signed their name to the call, including 31 nations who are not among the 47 members of the Human Rights Council. [Jerusalem Post]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were mixed Thursday as surging oil prices, violence in Libya and a weak finish on Wall Street kept markets on edge. Japan's Nikkei 225 stock average lost 0.7 percent to 10,506.16. A strong yen pressured exporters, whose repatriated profits from abroad decline in value as the yen appreciates. Honda Motor Co. fell 0.9 percent, and Sony Corp. was down 1.1 percent. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 shed 0.5 percent to 4,823.30. Benchmarks in Singapore and New Zealand also declined. Meanwhile, other markets managed to post modest gains. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 0.4 percent to 22,997.26, and the Shanghai Composite index added 0.4 percent to 2,874.76. Shares in South Korea and Taiwan also rose. [AP]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI: Snipers from Libya's government forces fired on mourners attending a funeral for slain protesters Saturday, killing at least 15 people as demonstrations calling for the ouster of President Moammar Gadhafi continued for the fifth straight day. Snipers targeted the thousands of people who were attending a mass funeral in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city and the site of violent protests. The mourners had gathered to honour the 35 protesters who were shot by government forces on Friday. Dozens of mourners were also injured, with many of the victims suffering from gunshot wounds to the head and chest. "Many of the dead and the injured are relatives of doctors here," an official at the local hospital told The Associated Press. "They are crying and I keep telling them to please stand up and help us." [The News]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** U.S. military and intelligence officials are closely watching Libya's stockpiles of mustard gas and their precursor chemicals as the North African country descends further into civil war. Proliferation analysts generally assess that Libya has close to 14 tons of mustard gas that it has not destroyed despite the announcement in 2003 that it would dismantle its weapons of mass destruction program. "Obviously, the security of the Libyan stockpile of chemical weapons is a concern," a U.S. intelligence official told The Washington Times. "You could see a scenario where [Libyan dictator Moammar] Gadhafi takes troops away from these [stockpiles]," a Senate aide monitoring the situation in Libya said. [Washington Times]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** ON THE EGYPT-LIBYA BORDER—Tens of thousands of fearful Egyptians streamed into this lonely desert border post Tuesday, fleeing violence in Libya and carrying whatever they could manage. "Everybody is leaving," said Mohamed Saad, 28, a lean, curly-haired construction worker who had spent roughly 12 hours on the road through northern Libya on an overnight drive from Benghazi, Libya's second largest city. More than 1 million Egyptians live and work in Libya, and tens of thousands have fled the country overland in the past three days — by far the largest component of a mounting exodus of foreign nationals from the country, where dictator Muammar Gadhafi is fighting to hold on to power in the face of huge public resistance. [The Star]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** On Tuesday, the Libyan-Egyptian border was throbbing with traffic. One Egyptian soldier said it was the busiest day he's seen yet; but it had been consistently busy — with thousands crossing — for the past few days. The traffic consists mostly of Egyptian workers, many of whom express outrage over the atrocities of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi that they witnessed as they fled. "This man is a war criminal!" cries one Egyptian who had just crossed back into his country. "They were firing on people from planes." "We left at 5 a.m. this morning, we saw a lot of gunfire; a lot of killing," says another returnee, a construction worker who had arrived in a packed car full of his fellow countrymen from Tobruk, the Libyan city about 100 miles from the border. They had come from all parts of Libyan but car-pooled the final leg back home. "I saw them firing in Benghazi [Libya's second-largest city about 500 miles west of the border]. [Time]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Unrest in Libya continues to wreak havoc on world oil markets, with prices soaring and European nations weighing how to offset disruptions in gas and crude imports from the North African country. As much as a quarter of Libya's oil production is now offline, along with all gas exports, according to reports. Most analysts expect interruptions to increase, especially with Muammar Qaddafi's threat to blow up energy pipelines. While analysts agree that global oil and gas supplies are hardly at risk, as Libya accounts for only 2 percent of world oil output, countries like Italy, France, and Spain relied on Libya in 2010 for as much as 22 percent, 16 percent, and 13 percent of total crude consumption, respectively – a supply not easily replaced on short notice. Europe receives over 85 percent of Libya's crude exports. [Christian Science Monitor]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Everyone has heard of the "Fog of War," where rumor and fact and suspicion all swirl together in a blinding confusion. It seems there is a "Fog of Revolution," too. A case in point is the mystery of which members of the Gaddafi family have fled Libya. Mr. Gaddafi himself had to appear on Libyan TV to show he had not fled to Venezuela. The latest is his daughter Aisha. A Libyan Arab Airlines ATR 42 turbo-prop aircraft with 14 people on board arrived in Maltese airspace Wednesday, but was denied permission to land because it was determined that Aisha was one of the passengers. Al Jazeera reported the crew had to circle for 20 minutes while the diplomatic questions were addressed. The flight crew requested permission to land saying they were low on fuel. ATR 42 twin turboprop short-haul airliner coming in for a landing [Aquapour]  [More](#)


-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Italian authorities have raised concerns about the current crisis in Libya, saying the exodus of Libyan migrants will endanger the safety of the European country. "The immigration situation in Libya, which had been stopped or slowed down in recent years, could resume dramatically if the current situation leads to a collapse of the system," Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini said on Wednesday, Reuters reported. Italy has called on the European Union to establish a "special solidarity fund" to deal with the large influx of Libyan migrants. Frattini also warned that not only Italy but also all Europe should brace for this potential humanitarian disaster. He estimated that about 300,000 Libyans could seek refuge in Italy. Italy is also vulnerable to aftermath of the revolution in Libya since the African country provides about 25 percent of Italy's oil needs and is a major supplier of gas to the European country. [Press TV]  [More](#)


 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Up until now, I have been inclined to give the White House the benefit of the doubt for the Middle East message difficulties that they have been having. But they are stretching that doubt almost to the breaking point. Today's press briefing by White House Spokesman Jay Carney was excruciating. He clearly had nothing to say about Libya and was determined not to say it. I am not expecting the White House spokesman to make policy from the podium, but I did expect the White House to be further ahead of the curve today than they were yesterday or the day before, thus giving Carney more material to work with. I can think of only two plausible explanations for the weak White House response thus far: * Perhaps the Gaddafi regime is blocking the evacuation of U.S. citizens so as to intimidate the White House into making only muted statements -- and this intimidation is working (note to President Obama, this is closer to what real hostage-taking feels like). [Foreign Policy]  [More](#)


-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** New America Media, News Analysis, Yoichi Shimatsu, Posted: Feb 23, 2011 In what country have Americans fought more wars than in any other? The runners-up include the two wars in Iraq, a pair for Germany, Britain, twice in the revolution and 1812, and Cuba, a double-header if the covert Bay of Pigs operation is included. The invasions of Canada don't count since it was still a British colony. These worthy foes fall short by half. The U.S. Marine Corps ditty about the "shores of Tripoli" provides a clue. The answer was given away by Moammar Gadhafi in his defiant comeback speech on Feb. 22, accusing the United States of instigating the current rebellion against his regime. His head wrapped in a saffron turban, he gave a rousing, if rambling, account of surviving dozens of U.S. bombs that blasted his desert encampment, wounding him and killing dozens of his aides in 1986. [New America Media]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Tobruk is a name that history has written in blood. This small port on the Mediterranean coast of Libya was 'liberated' three times during the desert war of Montgomery and Rommel. Each was an epic of resistance and sacrifice. Now, during this convulsion of democracy-hungry revolts which have come to be known as the Arab Spring, Tobruk has been liberated again. Colonel Muammar Gaddafi might still cling on to power in the distant capital, Tripoli. But in the eastern half of Libya his 41-year regime has been cast off. Since last week the streets here have been controlled by civilian militias and soldiers who have mutinied against Gaddafi's often eccentric but always ruthless tyranny. I stood on the peaceful harbour front of Tobruk last night. There was no sound of even distant conflict, only that of local dogs. [Daily Mail]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** TEHRAN: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Wednesday expressed outrage at what he said was "unimaginable" repression in Libya, urging world leaders to listen to their people. "It is unimaginable that someone is killing his citizens, bombarding his citizens," Ahmadinejad said on state television when asked about the situation in Libya. "How can officers be ordered to use bullets from machine guns, tanks and guns against their own citizens?" "This is unacceptable. Let the people speak, be free, decide to express their will. Do not resist the will of the people," the hardliner said as he told world leaders to "listen, hear and talk" to their people. A popular uprising against Moamer Kadhafi's regime in Libya erupted on February 15, after the rulers of neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt were ousted in similar revolts. [Daily Times]  [More](#)



 **Thursday, 24 February, 2011:** Despite vowing to fight to the "last drop" of his blood, pressure mounted on Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi Wednesday, following a double whammy of condemnations from the international community and mass resignations by his senior officials. Gaddafi's government Wednesday set the official death toll of the nine days of riots at 189 civilians and 111 soldiers. However, the International Federation for Human Rights has put the toll at 640. Ahead of a meeting late Wednesday in Brussels, EU officials said the bloc was ready to impose sanctions on Libya, and the union had suspended all arms trade with the African country. The sanctions could include an assets freeze, a visa ban and the legal pursuit of top figures in the Libyan government, an EU diplomatic source told AFP. [Global Times]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** ROME — Governments around the world scrambled Tuesday to evacuate their citizens from an increasingly chaotic Libya, chartering military and civilian planes and, in the case of Britain and Turkey, mobilizing military ships. The British foreign secretary, William Hague, said in a statement that many of the hundreds of



British citizens inside Libya were stuck "in Tripoli airport without immediate flights out of the country, following flight cancellations, closures of airspace and difficulties securing permits from the appropriate authorities." Mr. Hague said that landing clearances were urgently being sought for a charter flight within 48 hours and that the frigate Cumberland had been sent toward Libya from the eastern Mediterranean "in case it is required to play a role in assisting British nationals." [New York Times]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi says anti-government protests will not force him out, and that he expects to die a "martyr" in Libya. Mr. Gadhafi spoke on Libyan state television Tuesday in his first detailed address to the country since the bloody wave of demonstrations began. He urged his supporters to help defend Libya against people he called "gangs" and "terrorists." Clenching a green book that appeared to be a guide to his political philosophy, he threatened the death penalty for anyone who takes up arms against Libya or engages in espionage. Also Tuesday, one of Mr. Gadhafi's closest associates, Interior Minister Abdel Fattah Yunis, announced his defection and support for the "February 17 revolution." [VOA News]  [More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** As Libya spiraled further out of control today, WikiLeaks posted two new cables from the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli detailing the family squabbles of strongman Muammar al-Gaddafi's family. Both are from March 2009, and both are signed by U.S. Ambassador Gene Cretz, the United States' first ambassador in Libya since 1972, who lost his job last month following the release of the infamous "voluptuous blonde" cable (and/or other more serious dispatches) he had signed. The cables date from an eventful period in the life of the Gaddafi family. The previous July, Hannibal al-Gaddafi, the Gaddafi son best known for getting in trouble in Europe on a semi-regular basis, had been arrested in Switzerland for beating his servants at a Geneva hotel. Meanwhile, Saif al-Islam, Muammar's heir-apparent and the best-regarded Gaddafi outside of Libya, was fuming over the growing closeness between his father and his brother Muatassim (above, with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in April 2009), [Foreign Policy]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** President Obama's advisers are keeping him informed on developments in Libya. The president has made no additional remarks on Libya since a written statement last week condemning violence against peaceful protesters, but he continues to monitor the situation closely. As with political upheaval in Egypt and Tunisia, and demonstrations in other countries in the region, administration statements continue to call for an end to violence against peaceful protesters, and stress the importance of respecting universal rights and freedoms. President Obama has received regular updates on Libya, and the situation in other countries, from his National Security Advisor Tom Donilon.  [More](#)


 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** (RTTNews) - Cuba's former leader Fidel Castro has prophesied in his latest write-up that the US may well order NATO to invade Libya, reports said on Tuesday. The octogenarian leader who led the Communist nation for close to half-a-century before illness forced him to step down, said in a column published in state-owned media that the US was far more interested in Libya's vast oil reserves than ensuring lasting peace there. According to Castro, it was too early to pass judgment on what was actually happening in the north African nation. Castro argues in his article titled 'Reflections' that Washington's ultimate aim is to gain overall control of global oil supplies. [RTT News]  [More](#)

-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** As if his 22-second "umbrella" appearance on television wasn't bad enough, the leader of Libya has provided an equally bizarre follow-up, in the form of a nearly two-hour, rambling diatribe against his people, and the world. The international media has felt comfortable in the past labeling Moammar Gadhafi as "crazy," using terms such as madman and megalomaniac; today we are hearing a more serious line of discussion about the colonel: the butcher of Libya comes to mind, as terms like war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide increasingly dominate the coverage. Not only does Gadhafi's regime have blood on its hands, its leader has done the equivalent of waving these bloody hands in the air and declaring that he is far from satisfied with the murders he has committed so far. [Daily Star]  [More](#)


 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** As Libya's leader Muammar al-Qaddafi vowed today to escalate his campaign to crush the popular uprising that threaten his rule, the country's cadre of once loyal foreign envoys began offering up resignations and challenging the strongman's decision to crack down violently on civilians. In the past 24 hours, Libyan diplomats posted in the United States, the United Nations, the Arab League, Australia, Bangladesh, and Indonesia have either stepped down or broken ranks with what one Libyan envoy called the "dictatorship regime." But one prominent Libyan diplomat, Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalgam, Libya's U.N. envoy, stood up for Libya's self-styled Leader and Guide of the Revolution even as he acknowledged his government's role in killing civilians. "I am still with Qaddafi. He is my friend," Shalgam, an old schoolmate of Qaddafi's and member of his inner circle, told reporters. "I am not one of those who would kiss his hands and his feet in the daytime and denounce him at night." [Foreign Policy]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** (NEW YORK) -- As the closing bell tolled Tuesday, the effects of the violence in Libya's streets were evident on Wall Street. The board stock market measure -- the S&P 500 -- was down by more than two percent for the day. Unrest in oil-producing Libya has helped push energy prices higher during the past several days, giving traders concern that increasing costs could cut into corporate profits, and, if the rising prices continue for weeks or months, might knock the American consumer back into a penny-pinching recession mode. Investors moved out of corporate stocks and into traditional safe havens like U.S. Treasuries and gold in an attempt to protect their portfolio values. [WTMA]  [More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** LONDON — The Times newspaper said Wednesday it had footage of severely wounded and dead protesters in a Libyan hospital which proved that heavy weapons were being used to crush the uprising. Shocking footage of corpses with bodies blasted off and patients with almost completely severed torsos provided "incontrovertible evidence" that heavy artillery was used, Martin Fletcher, the newspaper's associate editor said. "It's not entirely clear how these men were killed, it could have been by fighter jets, it could have been by helicopter gunships, it could have been by mortar, it could have been by heavy machine guns," Fletcher said. [AFP]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** (Reuters) - A burgeoning revolt in Libya led to a call from Senator John Kerry, who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for all oil companies to cease operations in the country immediately. Many U.S. oil companies have interests in Libya. The following are details of their exposure, based on

their latest annual reports: CONOCOPHILLIPS: ConocoPhillips, the third-largest U.S. oil company, holds a 16.3 percent interest in Libya's Waha concessions, which encompass nearly 13 million gross acres. Net oil production from Libya averaged 45,000 barrels per day in 2009 -- or 2 percent of worldwide output -- down from 47,000 bpd in

2008. [Reuters]  [More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** UNITED NATIONS, Feb 22, 2011 (IPS) - If besieged Libyan leader Muammar el-Gaddafi survives the widespread revolt in his turmoil-plagued country, will he be the second sitting head of state to be charged or indicted for war crimes? The killings of over 200 civilian protestors in Libya over the last seven days have triggered strong condemnation not only by the United Nations but also by human rights groups and governments worldwide. "I have seen very disturbing and shocking scenes, where Libyan authorities have been firing at demonstrators from warplanes and helicopters," U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters. [Ips News] 



[More](#)

-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** Cairo - The Arab League on Tuesday suspended Libya from its sessions in light of violent crackdowns on anti-government protests, regional news network Al Jazeera reported. The decision came at an emergency meeting held by the Arab League in Cairo to discuss the situation in Libya. Earlier on Tuesday, Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa spoke of 'Arab anger about what is happening to civilians in Libya.' The announcement came after Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi gave a televised speech saying he had no intention of stepping down and that 'any use of force against the authority of the state will be sentenced to death.' [M&C] 



[More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** Britain is to send a Royal Navy frigate to Libyan waters to support efforts to evacuate Britons from the troubled country and has chartered a plane to fly to Tripoli to rescue stranded nationals. William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, said that as the Libyan state was collapsing it was necessary to have a military component to the rescue efforts. Foreign Office diplomats were trying to get permission last night for the chartered plane to land. Mr Hague said British nationals in Libya were facing "significant difficulties" in leaving the country. He said HMS Cumberland would be sent to international waters near Libya to assist and added: "We are making arrangements of a charter plane to travel to Libya in the next 48 hours. We are urgently seeking landing clearances and permissions from the Libyan government." [Telegraph] 



[More](#)

-  **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** HOUSTON (Dow Jones)--Schlumberger Ltd. (SLB) Chief Executive Andrew Gould warned investors Tuesday that civil unrest in Libya and turmoil in neighboring Egypt and Tunisia could weigh on the company's first-quarter earnings. In Libya, where the world's largest oilfield services company derives 1% of its revenue, "our operations are shut down" and "all our efforts are concentrated on trying to repatriate our employees," Gould said during the company's analyst meeting in Boston, according to a transcript of his speech. Schlumberger's activity in Egypt and Tunisia is recommencing, Gould said. Shares of Schlumberger closed down 2.24%, or \$2.13, at \$92.91 Tuesday but were up at \$93 in after-hours trading. [Wall Street Journal] 



[More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** A prominent member of the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood's Guidance Council has called on anti-government protesters to be, in his words, defiant and keep up the pressure on embattled Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, adding there is need to get rid of the "mad dictator." Esam Alarian, spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, told VOA the international community should support the ongoing "revolution" in Libya to bring about what he described as democracy and freedom for all Libyans. "We ask that the Libyan people (should) continue in their revolution to expel this dictator and that (they) should sacrifice and they will have the victory and win. And also, we appeal to all free men in all places in the world to be on the side of, and support, the Libyan people," said Alarian. [VOA News] 



[More](#)

 **Wednesday, 23 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI, Libya, Feb. 22 (UPI) - A cleric called for a fatwa Tuesday against embattled Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, saying fighting his citizens "is not heroism." Sheik Yusuf Qaradawi, head of the International Union for Muslim Scholars, issued a fatwa on live television, urging the Libyan army to kill Gadhafi, the Los Angeles Times reported. [UA Port] 

[More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** SANAA, YEMEN - Libyan warplanes and helicopters fired from the air and loyalist militias fatally shot protesters in the streets as the government of Moammar Gaddafi fought back viciously Monday against demonstrations that appear to be fast eroding the autocrat's four-decade-long hold on power. In Tripoli, the capital, residents reported seeing heavily armed mercenaries hunting down demonstrators as buildings burned, looters ransacked police stations, and fighter jets and helicopter gunships rained ammunition from the skies. Senior Libyan officials and diplomats resigned in outrage over the attacks against civilians, while soldiers fled their units and joined the opposition. Ibrahim Dabbashi, Libya's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, accused Gaddafi of killing his own people and urged the international community to act against the regime. [Washington Post] 



[More](#)



 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** Feb. 22 (Bloomberg) -- Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi said he hadn't fled the country as diplomats resigned and soldiers deserted in protest over a crackdown on anti-government protesters that has left hundreds dead. "I am here in Tripoli and not in Venezuela," the Libyan leader said in comments broadcast on state TV. "Don't believe the dog news agencies," he said, leaning out of his car to speak into a microphone, while holding a white umbrella over his head. Qaddafi's remarks came after his son threatened "rivers of blood" amid an eruption of violence that the International Federation for Human Rights says has killed more than 300 people. As oil prices surged to the highest in more than two years, Libya's deputy ambassador to the United Nations accused his government of "genocide." [Businessweek] 



[More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** Bahrain and Libya's sovereign credit ratings were cut as the two Arab countries struggle to contain anti-government protests. Persian Gulf and North African stocks declined. Bahrain's long-term rating was reduced by one level to A-, the fourth-lowest investment grade, and the short-term rating lowered to A-2 at Standard & Poor's Ratings. Libya's long-term foreign and local currency issuer default ratings were cut to BBB, two notches above non-investment grade, from BBB+ at Fitch Ratings. The MADEX Free Float Index in Morocco tumbled 3 percent, the most in two years, at the 3:30 p.m. close in Casablanca. The Bloomberg GCC 200 Index of Gulf stocks lost 0.4 percent, bringing the seven-day drop to 5.3 percent. [Bloomberg] 



[More](#)



 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** European governments are coming under pressure to explain ears spent courting Libyan leader Col. Moammar Gadhafi—and signing scores of lucrative business contracts with Tripoli—despite the country's oppressive human-rights record. On Monday, top European officials stepped up their condemnation of violence that has claimed hundreds of lives. U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron called Libya's actions "completely appalling and unacceptable." Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi voiced alarm over "the unacceptable use of violence against the civil population," echoing words by the French government which also condemned the regime's "disproportionate and unacceptable use of force." Yet many critics say the hard words against Libya come too late. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)



-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** The federal government is considering evacuating Australians from Libya as the violence there intensifies. Prime Minister Julia Gillard on Tuesday said the estimated 80 Australians believed to be in the North African country should get out. "We are starting to canvass evacuation options should that be necessary," she told reporters in Canberra. Advertisement: Story continues below The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has lifted its Libya travel warning to the highest "Do No Travel" level as deadly clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces rage into a second week. "Australians are advised to avoid all travel to Libya because of the volatile and uncertain security situation," DFAT said. [SMH]  [More](#)



 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** European countries sent planes and ferries to Libya on Monday to evacuate their citizens, and some oil and gas companies pulled their foreign staff out and suspended operations, as anti-government protests spread to Tripoli for the first time. Passengers returning Monday night to Rome aboard an Alitalia aircraft from Tripoli said they had heard gunfire through the night in the Libyan capital, but an eerie silence had blanketed the city as they drove to the airport in the morning. "We had civilians with guns on every corner, so it is not safe at all," said Zoran Siljak, a Serbian working in Libya for a paint company. "Last night, there were shots through the night, there was fighting in the streets." Italy hadn't ordered any evacuations for the estimated 1,500 Italians in Libya, but state-owned Alitalia was sending in larger aircraft on its routes to accommodate increased demand, a spokesman said. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)



-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** The United States has condemned the violence against anti-government protesters in Libya and called on Moammar Gadhafi's government to stop the "unacceptable bloodshed" taking place in the North African nation. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Monday the world is watching events unfold in Libya "with alarm." Her statement came amid reports from the Libyan capital, Tripoli, that helicopters and warplanes were besieging parts of the city and foreign mercenaries had begun to open fire on protesters. Qatar's prime minister told the satellite television channel Al Jazeera the international community must act immediately to end the crackdown. Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabr al-Thani called for an Arab League meeting Tuesday to discuss the crisis in Libya. [VOA]  [More](#)


 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** CAIRO — Deep cracks opened in Moammar Gadhafi's regime Monday, with Libyan government officials at home and abroad resigning, air force pilots defecting and a bloody crackdown on protesters in the capital of Tripoli, where cars and buildings were burned. World leaders voiced outrage at the tactics used against the demonstrators. The mercurial leader appeared on Libyan state television for less than a minute early today to dispel rumors that he had fled. Sitting in a car in front of what appeared to be his residence and holding an umbrella out of the door, he told an interviewer that he had wanted to go to the capital's Green Square to talk to his supporters, but rain stopped him. "I am here to show that I am in Tripoli and not in Venezuela. Don't believe those misleading dog stations," he said, referring to the media reports that he had left the country. [Courier-Journal]  [More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** LOS ANGELES (AFP)--The U.N. Security Council will meet Tuesday to discuss the crisis in Libya, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, noting he had spoken to Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi and urged restraint. Gadhafi violently crushed anti-regime protests raging across his country Monday. Some reports say hundreds have been killed in the oil-rich African nation. [Wall Street Journal]  [More](#)


 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke with longtime Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi on Monday, Reuters reported. Ban had an extensive discussion with Kadafi, condemned the escalating violence in Libya and told him it "must stop immediately," a U.N. spokesman told Reuters. Meanwhile, Libya's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, Ibrahim Dabbashi, condemned Kadafi, saying that his regime has declared war on Libyans and was committing genocide, according to CNN reports. Dabbashi did not step down, saying he was at the U.N. to serve the Libyan people and not the regime. The whereabouts of the head of Libya's U.N. mission was not immediately clear, according to CNN. [LA Times]  [More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** Two high-ranking Libyan air force pilots have who fled to Malta in their aircraft are reported to have told officials they escaped rather than carry out orders to bomb civilians. The officers defected as Libyan diplomats in several countries and international organisations resigned in protest at the regime's violent response to the deepening crisis. They included Muammar Gaddafi's ambassadors to China, India, Indonesia and Poland, as well as Libya's representative to the Arab League and most, if not all, of its mission at the United Nations. Omar Jelban, head of the London People's Bureau, flatly denied an al-Jazeera report he too had quit. Jelban was earlier called to the Foreign Office to hear what William Hague, the foreign secretary, called "our absolute condemnation of the use of lethal force against demonstrators". [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** As my colleague Colin Moynihan reports, on Monday in New York members of Libya's mission to the United Nations denounced Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi for his bloody response to protests and called on him to resign. In an interview with Al Jazeera English, Libya's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, Ibrahim Dabbashi, called the killing of protesters "genocide" and said that he and his colleagues "don't agree with anything the regime is doing; we are in the service of the people." Asked what message he wanted to send to Colonel Qaddafi, Mr. Dabbashi said, "The only thing I tell him on the air now is he has to get out — either he gets out or the Libyan people will kick him out... and I think he knows it, he knows it and I think he is just trying to delay his fate." He added: "I think it is the end of the game... the whole regime is crumbling, and we will soon see the fall of this regime." [The Lede]  [More](#)



-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** The Libyan government has cut off Internet access in the country. The General Post





and Telecommunications Company, Libya's main provider of internet access, has ceased to function. It was shut down in response to the accumulation of citizen protests demanding the ouster of the country's president Muammar Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi, who has been in power since 1969. Their government follows in the footsteps of Egypt, which also cut off internet trying to quell public protests against the regime. Despite the governments efforts, Egyptians who took to the streets for two weeks were able to oust the nation's president Hosni Mubarak, after 30 years in office. Limited access to the Internet makes it difficult to get information from the country. Libya is a country smaller than Egypt, and has fewer service providers, which has apparently made the task of disconnecting everything a little easier. [Wiki



News]  [More](#)



 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** SEOUL, Feb 22 (Reuters) - Major South Korean builders put their construction projects in Libya on hold amid a bloody revolt against authoritarian rule by its leader Muammar Gaddafi, as construction shares in Seoul fell sharply. Last year alone, South Korea won nine contracts worth \$2 billion in Libya, making it one of the biggest foreign players outside of the oil market which produces most of the country's wealth. A total of 24 South Korean builders are working in Libya, hiring 22,000 employees including 1,300 Koreans. A foreign ministry official told Reuters the South Korean government was advising its nationals in Libya to leave as soon as possible if their business was not urgent. [Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** Long one of the Arab world's most perplexing personalities, Moammar Gadhafi has traveled the globe with a tent, warning against foreign intervention while polishing his image at home as the father of the revolution. But the unrest sweeping the tribal nation is a sign that after four decades in power, Gadhafi has lost the support of key clans and loyalists and has steadily relied on repression to stay in power. "Gadhafi's biggest mistake was that he built his whole regime on pure fear," said Omar Amer, a member of the Libyan Youth Movement, a protest group that spreads its message through Facebook. "He totally abandoned civilizing Libya. He neglected education and development projects. He left the majority of his people in the dark ages and built his might on fear through torturing and killing political dissidents in public. [Seattle Times]  [More](#)


 **Tuesday, 22 February, 2011:** As we watch protests and violent crackdowns unfold in Libya, it is important to keep in mind key differences between Egypt and Libya, and that we should not expect an identical course to unfold there. One important distinction is how very difficult it is to get information out of Libya about what is really going on. Few journalists are in the country reporting on the events at the moment. And so we must rely on information from Human Rights Watch and other human rights activist groups, along with what we've heard in radio reports from doctors at various hospitals. To understand what is happening in Libya, we rely on these snippets, as in Libya, but even the social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, has been much less active than it was in Egypt during the height of its protests. [ABC]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** 9.03am: An eyewitness tells Reuters that Tripoli is calm after the protests in the Libyan capital last night. When I spoke to anti-Gaddafi protesters outside the Libyan embassy last week, one told me that the key would be if protests spread to the capital from the east, where anti-Gaddafi sentiment has never been far from the surface. A Tripoli resident, who did not want to be identified, told Reuters the streets of the capital were calm early on Monday morning but that there was no sign of police, which is unusual for the city. He said that late on Sunday night anti-Gaddafi protesters had been replaced by his supporters, who rallied in the centre of the city around Green Square until about 5 a.m. (0400 GMT). [Guardian]  [More](#)
-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** The State Department says the United States is gravely concerned about reports that hundreds of people have been killed or injured during anti-government protests in Libya. State Department spokesman Philip Crowley says the U.S. has raised strong objections with Libyan officials, including Foreign Minister Musa Kusa, about the use of lethal force against demonstrators. Crowley says the U.S. reiterated "the importance of universal rights, including freedom of speech and peaceful assembly." Protests against the longtime rule of Moammar Qaddafi reached the Libyan capital of Tripoli on Sunday, and protesters seized military bases and weapons. Forces loyal to Gadhafi have responded with violence, and medical officials, human rights groups and exiled dissidents say more than 200 have been killed. [Fox News]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** Feb 21 (Reuters) - European Union foreign ministers will condemn the repression of anti-government protests in Libya, according to the draft of a joint statement to be agreed at their meeting later on Monday. "The Council condemns the ongoing repression against peaceful demonstrators in Libya and deplores the violence and the death of civilians," said the draft statement made available to Reuters. "Freedom of expression and the right to assemble peacefully are fundamental rights of every human being which must be respected and protected." [Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** Foreign Affairs Minister Kevin Rudd has called on Australians in Libya to leave the country as violent protests continue on the country's streets. Demonstrators have reportedly taken control of much of the eastern city of Benghazi in violent protests against Moamar Gaddafi, who has led the north African country for 41 years. Hospitals are struggling to cope with the number of casualties, with reports suggesting the number of dead has reached 200. Mr Rudd says almost 100 Australians are registered to be in Libya. [ABC]  [More](#)

 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** SEOUL, Feb. 21 (Yonhap) -- South Korean builders are moving to boost security at their construction sites in Arab countries following protesters' looting of three construction sites in Libya last week, a trade association said Monday. According to the International Contractors Association of Korea (ICAK), a total of 70 South Korean builders have been conducting construction projects in such countries as Libya, Yemen, Iran, Morocco and Bahrain in which pro-democracy demonstrations have been intensifying since late January. Of the builders, 61 have advanced into Libya, where the most violent protests in the five Middle Eastern countries have taken place, the ICAK said. [Yonhap News]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** (Reuters) - BP PLC (BP.L) has suspended preparations for exploratory drilling for oil and gas in western Libya due to growing unrest in the north African country, a spokesman for the British energy giant said on Monday. The company does not produce any oil or gas in Libya but has been readying an onshore rig to start drilling for fuel in the west of the country. "We are looking at evacuating some people from Libya, so those preparations are being suspended but we haven't started drilling and we are years away from any production," the



spokesman said. [Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** New Delhi: Reports suggest that Libya's ambassador to India and a senior Libyan diplomat to China have resigned in protest at their government's violent crackdown on demonstrators calling for the ouster of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. The BBC on its Arabic service website has reported that Ali al-Essawi, the Ambassador to India, has also accused the government of deploying foreign mercenaries against the protesters. There has been no immediate response from the Libyan embassy in New Delhi or the Ministry of External Affairs. [NDTV]  [More](#)


 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** Turkey sent a relief team and foodstuff to the Libyan city of Benghazi Monday to help Turks living there as unrest swept the country, local media reported. A plane, which carried a five-member team sent by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including two doctors and a nurse, and food aid from Turkish relief agency Red Crescent, was scheduled to take off from Istanbul's Ataturk Airport early Monday morning, the semi-official Anatolia news agency said. Turkey has evacuated 581 of its citizens from Libya and additional flights will be sent to bring back some 3,000 Turks, the foreign ministry was cited as saying. [People Daily]  [More](#)

-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, has warned that civil war could hit the country. His comments came in a lengthy TV address to the nation broadcast as anti-government protests spread to the capital Tripoli. He offered significant political reforms, and admitted that the police and army had made "mistakes", but said the death toll was lower than reported. Human Rights Watch says at least 233 people have died since last Thursday. It urged governments to tell Libya to stop the unlawful killing of protesters amid accounts of authorities using live ammunition against them. Earlier reports said Col Gaddafi had fled Libya, prompting crowds to come out on to the streets of Tripoli to celebrate, but his son told state TV viewers that his father remained in Libya "leading the battle". On Sunday evening, witnesses spoke of tear gas and live ammunition being used against protesters by the security forces. [The Nation]  [More](#)


 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** CAIRO, Feb 21 (KUNA) -- The General Union of Egyptian doctors affirmed Monday its coordination with the World Health Organization, other associations and unions to provide humanitarian and medical assistance to the Libyan people during the present political unrest there. The Secretary-General for humanitarian aid commission to the union Abdulqader Hijazi said in a statement that they prepared a medical convoy packed with medicines and other medical equipment for medical assistance. The union coordinated with Egyptian armed forces to insure the arrival of the medical delegation. The convoy to head to Libya in hours from now. The medical delegation accompanying the convoy include surgeons, orthopedics, plastic surgery, brain and nerves as well as anesthesia specialists. [Kuna]  [More](#)


-  **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** A former senior diplomat has said political reform in Libya was "long overdue". Ex-Foreign Office Minister Lord Malloch-Brown, who was previously deputy secretary general of the United Nations, said: "I wish this had happened years ago." Lord Malloch-Brown, who served in the Foreign Office under Gordon Brown for two years, said he was surprised repression and inequality under Colonel Gaddafi's 41-year rule had not sparked a popular uprising earlier. But he added: "The resistance of Gaddafi - the terror state and security state he has established - explains why not. To be an opponent of his has been an almost suicide sentence to put on oneself, so he has survived through terror and suppression of his citizens." [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Monday, 21 February, 2011:** LONDON (AFP) - British energy giant BP was on Monday making preparations to evacuate some of its staff from Libya amid escalating unrest in the country, a spokesman told AFP. "We're just monitoring the situation and making preparations to evacuate some of the families, and some non-essential staff in the next day or two," said the spokesman. The company has about 140 staff in the country, about 40 of whom are expatriates, he said. [AFP]  [More](#)


-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** There are reports at least 15 people have been killed after Libyan security forces opened fire at a funeral, as the regime struggles to suppress an uprising against veteran ruler Muammar Gaddafi. It brings the estimated death toll in the country since the unrest began to almost 100. The brutal crackdown comes as a wave of protests sweep through the Arab world, including Bahrain, Yemen, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia and Kuwait. With foreign journalists banned from entering Libya and internet and mobile phone communications frequently cut, reports on the violence have been sketchy, with some protesters relying on YouTube to publish images of the clashes. [ABC]

 [More](#)


-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI, Feb 20 (Reuters) - Libya forces have killed dozens of protesters in the eastern city of Benghazi in the latest violence to threaten Muammar Gaddafi's authority, with national Muslim leaders appealing for an end to the growing death toll. Before the latest reports of deaths, Human Rights Watch said 84 people had been killed over three days in a fierce security crackdown mounted in response to anti-government protests that seek to emulate uprisings in neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia. Britain's Independent on Sunday said the body count in Benghazi may be as high as 200. "Dozens were killed ... not 15, dozens. We are in the midst of a massacre here," a witness told Al Jazeera television. The man said he helped take the victims to hospital in Benghazi, Libya's second city.



[Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** Libyan authorities have arrested dozens of members of a "network" of Arab nationals allegedly seeking to destabilise the country, as up to 120 people die in clashes. The state controlled Jana news agency said those detained in several cities were members of a "foreign network (and were) trained to damage Libya's stability, the safety of its citizens and national unity." Sources close to the investigation, quoted by the agency, said the group included Tunisian, Egyptian, Sudanese, Palestinian, Syrian and Turkish citizens. However international observers see the claims as being a way to divert dissatisfaction with the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. Exiled Libyan opposition groups estimate the number of deaths in Libya as 120, with up to 1,000 injured in clashes. [SKY]  [More](#)

 **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** The government has revoked 44 licences for the export of arms to Bahrain amid concern over the suppression of anti-government protesters. Eight licences authorising arms sales to Libya were also revoked amid a review of exports to the wider Middle East including Yemen. The licences are thought to cover items



that could be used for repression, such as teargas. The Foreign Office said it had no evidence of British equipment being used in the unrest in Bahrain. Alistair Burt, the minister for the Middle East and north Africa, said that an immediate review of UK export licences was being conducted as a result of the changing situation in Bahrain. "All export licence applications are considered on a case-by-case basis against the consolidated EU and UK export licensing criteria and in the light of prevailing circumstances, paying particular attention to allegations of human rights



abuses," he added. [Guardian]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** Washington (CNN) -- About 200 people demonstrated in front of the White House on Saturday challenging President Obama to help end recent violence in Libya. The group was responding to reports of bloody clashes between protesters and soldiers in the isolated North African nation. Malik Sahad, who helped organize the event outside the White House, said Libyans are now smuggling stories to the outside world via social media, essentially creating their own news coverage in hopes that the international community will step in. "We have people that are risking their lives, who are finding ways to send their messages, their videos, their recaps, their recounts of what's been going on," Sahad said. "They're asking us, 'Where is the media? Where is the rest of the world? We don't have cameramen down here. We don't have Anderson Cooper down here. We don't have people on the ground level to give us support and to show the rest of the world what we've been going through.'" [CNN]  [More](#)

 **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** At least 15 people were killed on Saturday when snipers reportedly opened fire at the crowd of mourners in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi, bringing the overall death toll in six days of protests to 100. A doctor at a Benghazi hospital told Al Jazeera that his hospital received at least 15 dead bodies bearing "bullet injuries from high-velocity rifles." The shooting took place during a funeral procession. "All are very serious injuries, involving the head, the chest and the abdomen. All are civilians aged from 13 to 35, no police or military injuries," he said. "Absolutely a shoot-to-kill policy." Sky News said, however, that the number of deaths might be at about 120. "Exiled Libyan opposition groups claim up to 120 people have been killed in Libya," the channel said. [RIAN]  [More](#)

-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** Embattled Libyan leader Muammar Kadafi has flown in hundreds of mercenaries from sub-Saharan Africa to quash protests threatening his 41-year-old regime, the Al Arabiya network reported Saturday, quoting witnesses to the arriving foreign recruits. Protesters in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city and an anti-Kadafi stronghold, captured some of the imported gunmen, the news agency said. The captured French-speaking mercenaries admitted to having been recruited by Kadafi's son, Khamis, to confront the unrest threatening to topple one of the region's longest-reigning regimes, Al Arabiya reported. The agency said witnesses reported seeing four planes carrying mercenaries land in Benina International Airport near Benghazi. The British-based website jeel.libya.net reported earlier that several planes carrying foreign recruits in Libyan army uniforms landed at a military airport near Tripoli. The crackdown on anti-Kadafi demonstrators has resulted in at least 84 deaths, the New York-based Human Rights Watch reported from sources in the region. [LA Times]  [More](#)


 **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** About 300 sign-waving protesters calling for the ouster of Libyan President Moammar Gadhafi gathered this afternoon at the main entrance to Arden Fair mall along Arden Way in Sacramento. Chanting and waving both American and Libyan flags, the protesters were boisterous but peaceful, only occasionally presenting an obstacle to motorists gingerly turning into the crowded mall parking lot. The group called for an end to Gadhafi's more than 40-year hold on power, and they expressed outrage at what they called Gadhafi's hiring of mercenaries to gun down like-minded protesters in the African nation. On Saturday in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city, regime forces fired on protesters marching in funeral processions for those previously killed, according to news service reports. An unknown number were killed in the latest violence. [Sacramento Bee]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** On 25 February 2004, Tony Blair stood up in the Libyan capital Tripoli and shook hands with an eccentric dictator who until then had been regarded as an international pariah for his involvement in sponsoring terrorism. That man was Muammar Gaddafi, who, Blair announced, had joined Britain in the fight against terror. Asked if he was queasy about meeting Libya's leader, Blair replied: "It was strange, given the history, to come here and do this and, of course, I am conscious of the pain that people have suffered as a result of terrorist actions in the past." What Blair meant, to be explicit, was Libya's involvement in downing a US airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie, and the shooting of a British police constable, WPC Yvonne Fletcher, by a gunman who fired from inside the Libyan embassy in London. [Guardian]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** Libyan protests demanding an end to the four-decade rule of Muammar Qaddafi may end in a "bloodbath" unless the international community intervenes, a leading member of an exiled opposition group said. Libyan special security forces are preparing attacks on Benghazi and other cities in the eastern part of the country that have been taken over by protesters, Mohammed Ali Abdallah, deputy secretary general of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya, said in a telephone interview yesterday. "We are expecting a massacre," Ali Abdallah said. "We are sending an SOS to the international community to step in." Without international efforts to hold back Qaddafi, "there were be a bloodbath in Libya in the next 48 hours." [Bloomberg]  [More](#)



-  **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** The government of Libya, responding to protests in recent days with alarming violence, pays three prominent Washington lobby shops to improve relations with Congress and the White House. Livingston Group, White & Case, and Blank Rome are all on record as representing the regime of Muammar Abu Minyar Al-Qadhafi. Livingston Group also represents Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation, a charity headed by Qadhafi's son. Foreign agent records show that the firms collected more than \$8 million in 2008 and 2009 for lobbying and legal services. The Livingston Group, headed by former Louisiana Congressman Robert Livingston, also represented Mubarak's government in Egypt. [Muckety]  [More](#)



 **Sunday, 20 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI, Feb 20 (Reuters) - Libya forces have killed dozens of protesters in the eastern city of Benghazi in the latest violence to threaten Muammar Gaddafi's authority, with national Muslim leaders appealing for an end to the growing death toll. Before the latest reports of deaths, Human Rights Watch said 84 people had been killed over three days in a fierce security crackdown mounted in response to anti-government protests that seek to emulate uprisings in neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia. Britain's Independent on Sunday said the body count in Benghazi may be as high as 200. "Dozens were killed ... not 15, dozens. We are in the midst of a



massacre here," a witness told Al Jazeera television. The man said he helped take the victims to hospital in Benghazi, Libya's second city. Read more on Newsmax.com: Muslim Leaders Urge End to 'Massacre' in Libya Important: Do You Support Pres. Obama's Re-Election? Vote Here Now! [New Max]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** Cairo/Tripoli - Renewed protests turned violent across Libya on Friday, with opposition activists saying dozens were shot dead during funerals and marches for those killed in anti-government demonstrations earlier this week. The protests against the rule of Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi had spread to the capital Tripoli by late Friday night. Witnesses reported people taking to the streets in a number of western neighbourhoods. Sources from northeastern city of Benghazi told the German Press Agency dpa that 25 protesters were killed there Friday. There was no independent or official confirmation. Residents of Benghazi also reported that police there had been replaced with military troops. [M&C]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** In response to rising anti-government protests in Libya, leaders have started to cut off citizens' access to Facebook and other Internet sites. The folks over at Center Networks pose an interesting question: what happens to all those companies that have no business in Libya but use the .ly suffix in their domain names? Link-shortening service Bit.ly is probably the most prominent one, but there are others like Deck.ly, which shortens links so they can be posted on Tweetdeck, and Embed.ly, which turns links into more interesting embeddable content by putting images and other material around them. [SF Gate]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** LONDON — Britain on Friday warned its nationals against all but essential travel to Bahrain and parts of eastern Libya amid violent anti-government protests in both countries. The Foreign Office advised against all non-essential travel to Bahrain after security forces opened fire on anti-regime demonstrators in the capital Manama, with reports of dozens wounded. "In light of recent developments, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has changed its travel advice to advise against all but essential travel to the Kingdom of Bahrain," said a Foreign Office statement. The decision was taken "in response to reports of live fire in the capital Manama," it said. "The risk of further dem [AFP]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** DUBAI, Feb 18 (Reuters) - The Qatar-based news channel Al Jazeera said on Friday its signal was being jammed on several frequencies and its website had been blocked in Libya. Al Jazeera, whose coverage of the political unrest in the Middle East and North Africa is widely watched in the Arab world, reported the jamming on its website where it offered alternative frequencies on the Arabsat, Nilesat and Hot Bird satellites. Al Jazeera has closely followed events in Libya, Bahrain and Yemen, contacting protesters and government backers by telephone and often using footage of events sent via the Internet. [Reuters]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** AFP - Moamer Kadhafi's regime vowed to crush any challenge to the Libyan strongman after an opposition "day of anger" turned into a bloodbath and two policemen were reported hanged by protesters. According to a toll compiled by AFP from different local sources, at least 41 people have lost their lives since demonstrations first erupted on Tuesday. That toll does not include two policemen who were killed on Friday. Oea newspaper, which is close to Kadhafi's son Seif al-Islam, said they were lynched after being captured in the eastern city of Al-Baida. [France 24]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI, Libya, Feb. 18 (UPI) -- Libya worries unrest in the Middle East will create problems for an Arab summit next month as dozens were reported dead in anti-government protests in Tripoli. Libya, which holds the rotating presidency of the Arab League, suggested postponing next month's Arab League summit in Iraq because of ongoing political turmoil in the Middle East, the official Jana news agency reports. The concerns come as unrest at home claimed the lives of at least 24 protesters demanding Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi step down after four decades in power. [UPI]  [More](#)



-  **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** A leadership congress controlled by Muammar Gaddafi has pledged a change in government administrators, trying to ease demonstrations demanding the longtime leader be ousted. Protesters battled with security forces for control of neighbourhoods in eastern Libya where dozens have reportedly been killed in two days of clashes. Residents in the eastern city of Al-Baida said security reinforcements had been bused in, including what they said were foreign African mercenaries, to put down protesters who burned police stations. But local police, who belong to the same tribe as the residents, were battling alongside protesters against security forces, two witnesses in the city said. A hospital official in Al-Baida said on Friday that the bodies of at least 23 protesters slain over the past 48 hours were at his facility, which was treating about 500 wounded - some in the parking lot for lack of beds. [Sky News]  [More](#)



 **Saturday, 19 February, 2011:** LIBYA: Four prisoners were killed trying to escape a Tripoli prison, while inmates of a Benghazi succeeded in doing so before burning a bank, prosecutor's office and police station, local press said, after protests against Libyan leader Moamer Gadhafi have led to at least 28 deaths in three days. [Vancouver Sun]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** CAIRO/TRIPOLI: Libyan security forces were expecting violent demonstrations Friday, a day after an estimated 45 people were killed in clashes across the country. Online postings by opposition groups called for demonstrations against the country's ruler of 41 years Muammer Gaddafi to start after Friday prayers. Violent clashes erupted between demonstrators and security forces across the country Thursday in what opposition organisers had billed as a "Day of Anger". Videos posted online appeared to show the bodies of several young men in different locations, and hundreds of demonstrators tearing down a monument in honour of Gaddafi's Green Book in the eastern coastal town of Tobruk. [Times of India]  [More](#)

 **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** CAIRO — Libyan security forces killed at least 24 people in a violent crackdown on anti-regime demonstrations during a "Day of Anger" against strongman Moamer Kadhafi, Human Rights Watch said Friday. The New York-based rights group, citing witnesses, said 24 protesters were killed and scores injured during Thursday's assaults on protests in two Libyan cities. "The authorities should cease the use of lethal force unless absolutely necessary to protect lives and open an independent investigation into the lethal shootings," HRW said in a statement. [AFP]  [More](#)

-  **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** LONDON, Feb 17 (Reuters) - BP Plc (BP.L), recovering from last year's Gulf of Mexico oil spill, plans to begin offshore exploration drilling in Libya by the end of June, later than previously expected. Spokesman Robert Wine said on Thursday that BP expected to drill offshore in Libya in the first half of this year and that work on an onshore well would begin sooner. The company had previously planned to begin offshore drilling in 2010. "We postponed it to do extra checks following the oil spill and also the rig we had lined up we decided wasn't suitable, so we've got another rig," he said. "Onshore, we've got a rig in place and they are getting ready, so that should get under way shortly." [Reuters]  [More](#)



 **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** A Korean-run construction site in the Libyan city of Derna has been broken into and taken over by some two-hundred locals. Seoul's foreign affairs and trade ministry said Friday that the intrusion took place at around 12:30 a.m., local time, Thursday, adding that part of the site was set on fire. The ministry said the attack is believed to have been instigated by homeless local residents who are unhappy with the Libyan government's housing policy. The same construction site was attacked and looted by locals last month...causing around 15 billion wonor 13.5 million US dollars in property damage. [Arirang]  [More](#)



-  **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** A Google maps user has posted an interactive map outlining the locations and details associated with protests in Libya. Users select icons on the map to separate reports of protests, police violence and death tolls. "All electricity and gas has been cut off in the city of Zintan (and also Gala). A report that Zintan is surrounded by over 4000 armed soldiers," wrote someone posting a report of violence at 10:20 p.m. local time. "A report of revolutionary guards in the main square of Al Birka in Benghazi shooting anyone in sight," wrote another user about the same time. [LA Times]  [More](#)

 **Friday, 18 February, 2011:** TOLEDO, OH (WTOL) - Mohamed Saleh, a Libyan man who resides in Toledo, is passionate about freedom for the people of his native land. Saleh credits the internet with giving citizens the power to unite in protest against dictators after being isolated from other parts of the world for centuries. However, Saleh says changes in technology have allowed folks to glimpse freedom. As a result, Saleh says many young Libyans are fighting for freedom after what they watched take place in Egypt. Saleh uses his computer and cell phone to keep up-to-date with his friends in Libya. In fact, one man called Saleh Thursday to show a glimpse of what conditions are like in the country. [WTOL]  [More](#)

-  **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** (New York) - Libyan Internal Security forces have arrested at least 14 people as protests began in connection with peaceful demonstrations planned for February 17, 2011, Human Rights Watch said today. The Libyan authorities should immediately free all activists, writers, and protesters detained solely for their role in preparing for the February 17 protest and allow Libyans the right to protest peacefully, Human Rights Watch said. On the evening of February 15, authorities used teargas and batons, as well as attackers in street clothes, to disperse protesters in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, injuring 14 people, the online daily Quryna reported.


Sources in Libya told Human Rights Watch that one person was killed in the ensuing violence. [HRW]  [More](#)


 **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** CAIRO -- The anti-government protest wave unleashed in Tunisia and Egypt swept into Libya, where demonstrators battled security forces in a rare public outpouring of anger at longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi, according to news reports and Internet posts and videos Wednesday. The tumult in Bengazi, Libya's second largest city, came as anti-government protests grew in the Persian Gulf kingdom of Bahrain and in Yemen, where one person was killed in a clash with police in the southern port of Aden. In Egypt, meanwhile, scattered labor unrest flared five days after the ouster of former President Hosni Mubarak. Activists called for major protests Friday to maintain pressure on the ruling military council to enact promised reforms. [Miami Herald]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** Muammar al-Gaddafi is under pressure as the wave of protests occurring across the Middle East is sweeping towards Libya. As one of the longest serving rulers in history, he has held his post as the north African country's leader since 1969. In his first speech since Egyptian protesters made news around the world as Hosni Mubarak resigned, Gaddafi asserted his support for Palestinian refugees. "All Arab states which have relations with Israel are cowardly regimes." He also expressed his disapproval of the Western powers. "The white color has decided to get rid of the green color," Gaddafi also said, referring to the Western powers of the US, Europe and allies as "white" and the Muslim world as "green." [Thirdayge]  [More](#)

 **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** ROME (AP) — Italy's Eni oil and natural gas company has reached a deal to hand over half of its 33 percent stake in Libya's Elephant oilfield to Russia's Gazprom. Eni says the deal worth \$170 million was signed in Rome Wednesday by Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller and Eni CEO Paolo Scaroni, in the presence of Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The deal is still to be approved by Libyan authorities. The two companies also agreed to sign by Feb. 28 a sale agreement for gas production in the Siberian fields of Severenergija. The Italian-Russian partnership includes the launch of South Stream pipeline, which will carry gas from Russia to the European Union. [Bloomberg]  [More](#)



-  **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** A FORMER British ambassador has accused the previous Labour government of "flagrantly contravening" United Nations resolutions over its decision to allow the Lockerbie bomber to apply for release back to Libya. Sir Brian Barder, who served as British High Commissioner to Australia, writes in The Scotsman today that the so-called "deal in the desert" between the then prime minister, Tony Blair, and Libyan leader Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi in 1997 was a clear breach of a UN resolution which stipulated the bomber should see out his sentence in the UK. At the meeting, Mr Blair agreed to a Libyan request to sign a Prisoner Transfer Agreement (PTA) for Libyan prisoners in the UK. At the time, Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi, the only man convicted of the Lockerbie atrocity, was the only Libyan in a UK jail. [Scotsman]  [More](#)

 **Thursday, 17 February, 2011:** Amnesty International is calling on the Libyan government to end its clampdown on peaceful political activists after violence erupted at demonstrations in the city of Benghazi following the arrest of activists ahead of a protest planned for Thursday. Hundreds of people took part in demonstrations on Wednesday following the arrests of Fathi Terbel and Fraj Esharani, both members of the Abu Salim families' organising committee set up by relatives of victims of a prison massacre in 1996, and three other activists. They were leading calls for a major demonstration on 17 February in support of calls for far-reaching political reforms, inspired by similar protests in



Tunisia and Egypt. [Amnesty]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 16 February, 2011:** The four-decade-old regime of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi faces rare internet calls for protests this week by activists buoyed by the ouster of veteran strongmen in neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia. The demonstrations are being called on Thursday to commemorate the deaths of 14 protesters in 2006 in an Islamist rally in Libya's second city of Benghazi. But they are being fuelled by the wave of protests that has swept through the Arab world, rocking regimes that have long seemed unmovable. Like protest movements elsewhere in the region, the dissidents have been using the internet in a bid to rally support in a country where the media are tightly controlled by the state. Advertisement: Story continues below Under the banner "The February 17 Intifada (Uprising): A Day of Strikes in Libya", a Facebook group urging a popular uprising had garnered more than 5000 members by Tuesday. [SMH]  [More](#)

 **Wednesday, 16 February, 2011:** There are reports of protests in the Libyan city of Benghazi. Eyewitnesses told the BBC that the unrest had been triggered by the arrest of a lawyer who is an outspoken critic of the government. The lawyer was later said to have been released, but the demonstrations reportedly continued. Pro-democracy protests have swept through several Arab countries in recent weeks, forcing the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt from power. There is no independent confirmation of the protests in Benghazi, but eyewitnesses say that at one stage some 2,000 people were involved. [BBC]  [More](#)



-  **Wednesday, 16 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI — Libya on Tuesday announced the nomination of Canada's Philippe Kirsch, a former president of the International Criminal Court, to head a tribunal to arbitrate a diplomatic dispute with Switzerland. "The representatives of the Great Jamahiriya and Switzerland, after consulting the (designated) judges of both parties, agreed on the nomination of Canadian expert in international law Philippe Kirsch to preside over the tribunal," a foreign ministry statement said. Relations between Bern and Tripoli were deeply strained after the July 2008 arrest of a son of Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi, Hannibal, in Geneva. Hannibal was later released, but the move sparked a series of reprisals from Tripoli. Two Swiss citizens were blocked from leaving Libyan territory until last year. The tribunal, which will sit in Berlin, will focus on the circumstances of Hannibal's arrest. [AFP]  [More](#)


 **Wednesday, 16 February, 2011:** Russian energy giant Gazprom will join the Elephant oilfield in Libya in an asset-swap deal with Italian energy company Eni on Wednesday, Russian presidential aide Sergei Prikhodko said on Tuesday. Under the deal, Gazprom is to take half of Eni's stake in the deposit or a total of 33% in the project. In exchange, Eni will be allowed to take part in projects to develop northwest Siberian assets owned by the Arctic Gas company. Prikhodko said the document will be signed in Rome during the visit of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The Elephant oilfield, which has recoverable reserves of around 700 million barrels, is located in Murzuq Basin in the southwestern Libyan desert, about 800 km (465 miles) south of Tripoli. The deposit, also known as the El Feel oilfield, was discovered in 1997. [RIAN]  [More](#)


-  **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** CHICAGO -- A Libyan national who was wanted on a rape charge out of Glendale, Colorado is in custody after attempting to fly home, federal authorities said. On Feb. 12, Ali Ahmed Aboodella, 35 departed the United States on a flight bound for Libya, via the United Kingdom. An arrest warrant out of Glendale was issued that same day, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. "CBP quickly alerted the authorities in London of his arrest warrant and, upon landing, Aboodella was denied entry to the United Kingdom and returned to the United States," spokesman Brian Bell said in a statement. "As Aboodella stepped off the airplane in Chicago, he was taken into custody by CBP officers at O'Hare Airport where he was processed and turned over to the Chicago Police Department to await extradition back to Glendale." [KDVR]  [More](#)



 **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi called on Palestinians to mass on Israel's borders until their demands are met. "Fleets of boats should take Palestinians ... and wait by the Palestinian shores until the problem is resolved," Gaddafi said in a speech Sunday night on state television, his first public remarks since Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down. "This is a time of popular revolutions." "This is not a declaration of war. This is a call for peace," he added, according to reports. Israel has rejected a Palestinian right of return, saying that all but a symbolic number of Palestinian refugees should be absorbed in an independent Palestinian state, formed as part of the terms of an Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty. Gadhafi also called Arab states that maintain relations with Israel "cowardly regimes." [JTA]  [More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** TRIPOLI Feb 14 (Reuters) - Libya said it had agreed with Switzerland on the appointment of a chief arbitrator to help repair relations that were stretched to breaking point by a diplomatic dispute last year. Libya's foreign affairs ministry said representatives of the two countries "have mutually agreed to appoint Canadian international law expert Philippe Kirsch ... to chair the Arbitration Tribunal sitting in Berlin" after consultation with arbitrators appointed by the two countries. The spat began two years ago when Swiss police briefly arrested Hannibal Gaddafi, a son of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, though he was later released without charge. Soon after the arrest, Libya withdrew millions of dollars from Swiss banks, halted oil exports to Switzerland and barred two Swiss businessmen working in Libya from leaving the country. [Reuters]  [More](#)

 **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** Five pregnant Nigerians have so far been confirmed dead in Libyan detention after suffering miscarriage. This happened just weeks after seven Nigerians were declared dead. P.M. NEWS learnt that apart from the pregnant women who were said to have encountered complications resulting from the conditions they encountered in detention, five other Nigerians are currently having mental challenges due to the emotional torture they experienced over the years in detention. According to the Destiny Makers Community Christian Campaigns and Action Network (DCCCAN) headed by Adams Makinwa, in a save-our-soul letter to Nigerian government, "just last week, report reached us of the gruesome death of five pregnant Nigerian girls that have suffered from miscarriage while in detention. [PM News Nigeria]  [More](#)

-  **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was "dismayed" by criticism in an article by Radio Netherlands Worldwide. Last week he talked to activist Gaeda al-Tawati, who in an interview with Radio Netherlands Worldwide had described how she had been the victim of smear tactics by the foreign intelligence service. Out of desperation she had threatened to set herself on fire. Activist Gaeda al-Tawati, together with journalist Sharifa Al-Efsay, became the target of a smear campaign by a known member of the intelligence service. The journalist was fired from her job at Libyan daily Qurina last year because of her critical articles. The two women went on to publish their

articles on rights abuses in Libya on opposition websites based abroad. The Libyan regime blocks such sites, though it allows social media like Facebook, albeit under tight control. [RNW]  [More](#)

 **Tuesday, 15 February, 2011:** THE Libyan Day of Rage will take place on 17 February. Muammar Gaddafi gears up for the protests modeled on events in Tunisia and Egypt by trying to deflect any protest away from himself. He wants Muslims to fight the West: Gaddafi also issued a call for Islamic nations to join its strength against the Western powers and said that the world is split into white – a reference to the United States and Europe and their allies – and green – a reference to the Muslim world. He said that white has decided to get rid of the color green and that these countries must unite against the White because all of them white, he said is the enemy of Islam. [Anorak]  [More](#)

[Qaddafi supporters counter Libya's 'day of rage' - Arab News](http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article268313.ece)

<http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article268313.ece>

- Qaddafi supporters counter Libya's 'day of rage'
- By **REUTERS**

Published: Feb 17, 2011

- TRIPOLI: Several hundred supporters of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi gathered in the capital on Thursday to counteract online calls for an anti-government "day of rage" inspired by uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia.
- New York-based Human Rights Watch said Libyan authorities had detained 14 activists, writers and protesters who had been preparing the anti-government protests, and there were unconfirmed reports of two people killed in an eastern city.

In a country where public dissent is rarely tolerated, plans for the protests were being circulated by anonymous activists on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter but telephone lines to some parts of the country were out of order.

- Libya has been tightly controlled for over 40 years by Muammar Qaddafi — who is now Africa's longest-serving leader — but the oil exporter has felt the ripples from the overthrow of long-standing leaders in its neighbors Egypt and Tunisia.
- A Reuters reporter said the pro-government supporters had assembled in Tripoli's Green Square, next to the ancient medina, or old city. They chanted "We are defending Qaddafi and the revolution!" and "The revolution continues!"
- In Libya, the military coup in 1969 which brought Qaddafi to power is referred to as the revolution. There was no sign of any anti-government protests.

On Omar Al-Mokhtar street, Tripoli's main thoroughfare, traffic was moving as normal, banks and shops were open and there was no increased security presence.

- I Jazeera television, and posts on Facebook, said two people had been killed in protests on Wednesday in Al Bayda, east of Libya's second city of Benghazi. But they did not give the source of the information and it was not possible to verify the reports.
- Qaddafi was quoted as saying on Wednesday that "revolutionaries" would prevail, although he did not mention the unrest.

- **'Puppets of Zionism'**

"Down with the enemies, down with them everywhere; down with the puppets everywhere, the puppets are falling, the autumn leaves are falling," the BBC quoted Qaddafi as saying. "The puppets of the USA, the puppets of Zionism are falling."

- The BBC also quoted an unnamed senior Libyan official as warning that the authorities "will not allow a group of people to move around at night and play with the security of Libya." Though some Libyans complain about unemployment, inequality and limits on political freedoms, analysts say an Egypt-style revolt is unlikely because the government can use oil revenues to smooth over most social problems.
- Witnesses and local media reported that several hundred people clashed with police and Qaddafi supporters on Tuesday night in the city of Benghazi, about 1,000 km (600 miles) east of the Libyan capital.

Late on Wednesday evening, it was impossible to contact witnesses in Benghazi because telephone connections to the city appeared to be out of order.

- Human Rights Watch said Libya should free everyone detained for their role in anti-government protests.

"With people from Tunisia and Egypt to Bahrain and Iran asserting their right to protest, the Libyan government is responding in exactly the wrong way," it said in a statement.

"Col. Muammar Qaddafi should learn from his former neighbors that stability has to include respect for peaceful protest," the organization said.

- People posting messages on opposition site www.libya-watanona.com, which is based outside Libya, urged Libyans to protest and drew parallels with the uprising this month that toppled Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"From every square in our beloved country, people should all come together in one city and one square to make this regime and its supporters afraid, and force them to run away because they are cowards," said a post from someone called Mustafa.

- A Facebook page dedicated to the planned protest urged followers to "make it a day of rage in Libya."

Qaddafi says Libya does not need to import Western concepts of democracy because it is run on his system — known as the Third Universal Theory — under which citizens govern themselves through grassroots institutions called popular committees.

Thursday is the anniversary of clashes on Feb. 17, 2006 in Benghazi when security forces killed several protesters who were attacking the city's Italian consulate.

Libya accounts for about 2 percent of the world's crude exports. Companies including Shell, BP and Eni have invested billions of dollars in tapping its oil fields, home to the largest proven reserves in Africa.

AFP: At least 4 dead in Libya clashes: opposition, NGOs

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hRXFC2B0guW8dKhPCoWmMjp4sh4Q?docId=CNG.527c915435c26814aef6a943e8f70089.631>

- At least 4 dead in Libya clashes: opposition, NGOs

(AFP) – Feb 16, 2011

- NICOSIA — At least four people were shot dead in clashes with security forces in protests against Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi's regime, opposition websites and Libyan NGOs based abroad reported on Thursday.
- They said the clashes took place on Wednesday in Al-Baida, a town in eastern Libya.

"Internal security forces and militias of the Revolutionary Committees used live ammunition to disperse a peaceful demonstration by the youth of Al-Baida," leaving "at least four dead and several injured," said Libya Watch, a London-based human rights group.

- Opposition websites, including Libya Al-Youm, likewise based in London, also said at least four protesters were killed by gunfire.

Geneva-based rights group Human Rights Solidarity, citing witnesses, meanwhile, said that snipers on rooftops had killed as many as 13 protesters and wounded dozens of others.

- Videos circulating on the Internet showed dozens of young Libyans apparently gathered on Wednesday night in Al-Baida chanting, "The people want to bring down the regime," and a building on fire.
- Libya faces a nationwide "Day of Anger" on Thursday called by cyber-activists, two days after clashes in the country's second largest city Benghazi left at least 38 people injured, including 10 security forces members.
- Amnesty International, Britain and European Union on Wednesday night urged against the use of force, while Washington called on Tripoli to "take specific measures to respond to the aspirations, needs and hopes" of its people.
- On the eve of the Day of Anger, text messages circulated across the Libyan mobile network from "the youth of Libya" warning against crossing "four red lines: Moamer Kadhafi, territorial integrity, Islam and internal security."
- "We will confront anyone in any square or avenue of our beloved country," the message read.
- Hundreds of regime supporters marched on Wednesday in Benghazi and Tripoli and other Libyan cities, in news bulletins on state television that showed protesters waving flags and portraits of Kadhafi.

The Revolutionary Committees, the backbone of Kadhafi's regime, have warned they would not allow anti-regime protesters to "plunder the achievements of the people and threaten the safety of citizens and the country's stability."

'Day of rage' kicks off in Libya - Africa - Al Jazeera English

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/02/2011121755057219793.html>

- 'Day of rage' kicks off in Libya

Reports of deaths as protesters take to the streets in four cities despite a crackdown, heeding calls for mass protests.

Last Modified: 17 Feb 2011

- Protesters in Libya have defied a security crackdown and taken to the streets in four cities for a "day of rage," inspired by uprisings in [Egypt](#) and [Tunisia](#), reports say.
- Several hundred supporters of Muammar Gaddafi, the country's longtime leader, have also reportedly gathered in the capital, Tripoli, on Thursday to counter online calls for anti-government protests.
- Their action comes amid reports that at least 14 people have been killed in clashes between pro and anti-government protesters since Wednesday.
- New York-based Human Rights Watch said that Libyan authorities had detained 14 activists, writers and protesters who had been preparing the anti-government protests.
- Abdullah, an eyewitness in Benghazi, told Al Jazeera that he saw six unarmed protesters shot dead by police on Thursday.
- He also claimed that the government released 30 people from jail, paying and arming them to fight people in the street.
- Libya has been tightly controlled for over 40 years by Gaddafi, who is now Africa's longest-serving leader.
- According to reports on Twitter, the microblogging site, Libya's regime had been sending text messages to people warning them that live bullets will be fired if they join today's protests.

Thursday is the anniversary of clashes that took place on February 17, 2006, in the country's second largest city of Benghazi when security forces killed several protesters who were attacking the city's Italian consulate.

Ibrahim Jibreel, a Libyan opposition member based in Barcelona, told Al Jazeera, "I think the demonstrations are going

to be rather serious.

"Libyan people have been oppressed for more than 41 years and they see to the west and to the east of them, people have been able to rise and to change their fate."

- At least two people were killed in clashes between Libyan security forces and demonstrators on Wednesday, in the town of al-Baida, east of Benghazi.

The victims were identified as Khaled ElNaji Khanfar and Ahmad Shoushaniya.

- **Angry chants**

Wednesday's deaths come as hundreds of protesters reportedly torched police outposts while chanting: "People want the end of the regime."

- At least 38 people were also injured in the clashes, including 10 security officials.

"All the people of Baida are out on the streets," a 25-year-old Rabie al-Messrati, who said he had been arrested after spreading a call for protests on Facebook, said.

- Violent protests were also reported earlier in the day in Benghazi.
- In a telephone interview with Al Jazeera, Idris Al-Mesmari, a Libyan novelist and writer, said that security officials in civilian clothes came and dispersed protesters in Benghazi using tear gas, batons and hot water.
- Al-Mesmari was arrested hours after the interview.



Late on Wednesday evening, it was impossible to contact witnesses in Benghazi because telephone connections to the city appeared to be out of order.

- State media reported there were pro-Gaddafi protests too across the country, with people chanting "We sacrifice our blood and souls for you, our leader!" and "We are a generation built by Muammar and anyone who opposes it will be destroyed!"
- However, Jibreel said, "There are few who come out in support of the dictator in Libya and they are not going to succeed."

"We are trying to get the voices out of Libya, we are trying to get media attention to the plight of the Libyan people, to get the media to focus on the injustices that are happening in Libya."

"We are urging the governments and diplomatic missions that are in Libya to act as observers, to document the abuses that are going to happen and we know that they are going to happen because this is a totalitarian, brutal regime," he added.

As the wave of unrest spread south and westwards across the country, hundreds of people marched through the streets in the southern city of Zentan, 120km south of the capital Tripoli.

- They set fire to security headquarters and a police station, then set up tents in the heart of the town.

Chants including "No God but Allah, Muammar is the enemy of Allah," can be heard on videos of demonstrations uploaded to YouTube.

Independent confirmation was not possible as Gaddafi's government keeps tight control over the movements of media personnel.

- **Online activism**

In a country where public dissent is rare, plans for Thursday's protests were being circulated by anonymous activists on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

- One Facebook group urging a "Day of Anger" in Libya, which had 4,400 members on Monday, saw that number more than double to 9,600 by Wednesday.

Social media sites were reportedly blocked for several hours through the afternoon, but access was restored in the evening.

Al Jazeera is understood to have been taken off the state-owned cable TV network, but is still reportedly available on satellite networks.

People posting messages on opposition site www.libya-watanona.com, which is based outside Libya, urged Libyans to protest.

- "From every square in our beloved country, people should all come together in one city and one square to make this regime and its supporters afraid, and force them to run away because they are cowards," said a post on the website.

Also calling for reforms are some of Libya's eminent individuals. A group of prominent figures and members of human rights organisations have demanded the resignation of Gaddafi.

The demands came in a statement signed by 213 prominent Libyans from different segments of the society, including political activists, lawyers, students, and government officials.

- **Oil factor**

Though some Libyans complain about unemployment, inequality and limits on political freedoms, analysts say that an Egypt-style revolt is unlikely because the government can use oil revenues to smooth over most social problems.

Libya accounts for about 2 per cent of the world's crude oil exports.

Companies including Shell, BP and Eni have invested billions of dollars in tapping its oil fields, home to the largest proven reserves in Africa.

- *If you are in Libya and have witnessed protests then send your pictures and videos to <http://yourmedia.aljazeera.net>*

Protesters in Libya demand Gaddafi ouster and reforms

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/16/AR2011021607292.html>

- Protesters in Libya demand Gaddafi ouster and reforms
- By Maggie Michael
Thursday, February 17, 2011
- CAIRO - Unrest in Libya spread on Wednesday, with riot police clashing with protesters in Benghazi, the nation's second-largest city, and marchers setting fire to security headquarters and police stations in two other cities, witnesses said.
- The government of longtime dictator Moammar Gaddafi sought to allay further demonstrations by proposing to double government employees' salaries and release 110 suspected Islamic militants who oppose him - tactics similar to those adopted by other Arab regimes in the recent wave of protests.
- Activists using Facebook and Twitter have called for nationwide demonstrations Thursday to demand the ouster of Gaddafi, the establishment of a constitution, and comprehensive political and economic reforms. Gaddafi came to power in 1969 through a military coup and has ruled the country without an elected parliament or a constitution.
- The protest in Benghazi began Tuesday in response to the arrest of an activist. It quickly took on an anti-government tone, witnesses and other activists said. The demonstration was relatively small, but it signaled that anti-government activists have been emboldened by uprisings elsewhere.
- It started at the local security headquarters after troops raided the home of rights advocate Fathi Tarbel and took him away, according to Switzerland-based activist Fathi al-Warfali.

Tarbel was released after meeting with Abdullah al-Sanousi, Libya's top security official, but the protesters proceeded to march through the coastal city to the main downtown plaza, Warfali said.

- Protests were renewed on Wednesday as the families of four other activists still in custody, including author Idris al-Mesmari, marched on security headquarters to demand their release, Warfali said, citing witnesses.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said a total of nine activists have been arrested in Tripoli and Benghazi in an effort to prevent people from joining the rallies planned for Thursday.

Libya's antigovernment protests escalate on 'day of rage' against Muammar Qaddafi - CSMonitor.com

<http://www.csmirror.com/World/terrorism-security/2011/0217/Libya-s-antigovernment-protests-escalate-on-day-of-rage-against-Muammar-Qaddafi>

• Libya's antigovernment protests escalate on 'day of rage' against Muammar Qaddafi

Libya's leader Col. Muammar Qaddafi tried to appease protesters after fierce clashes Wednesday, but unrest continued today in a proclaimed 'day of rage.' Protests have now reached four cities.

• By [Nissa Rhee](#), Correspondent / February 17, 2011

• Protesters in [Libya](#) took to the streets for "day of rage" on Thursday, a day after fierce clashes between Libyan security forces and demonstrators. The protests demanding the end of leader

Col. [Muammar Qaddafi](#)'s 41-year-reign are the most recent in a wave of regional uprisings inspired by [Tunisia](#) and [Egypt](#)'s successful deposing of their longtime presidents.

[The Associated Press](#) reports that there were protests in four cities today, including the eastern port of [Benghazi](#), the country's second-largest city and [a cradle of the country's opposition](#), where at least 14 died and many more were arrested during violent clashes Wednesday.

- Qaddafi took power in 1969 through a military coup and has ruled since then without a constitution or elected parliament. In a bid to quell the rare unrest, Qaddafi on Wednesday offered to release 110 suspected Islamic militants and [double civil servants' salaries](#), the AP reported. The dictator's proposal mirrors those made by other Arab regimes that faced protests in recent weeks.
- As with Libya's Arab neighbors, Qaddafi's offer seems unlikely to satisfy protesters. Yet at the same time, hundreds of [Qaddafi supporters have also rallied in the capital of Tripoli](#) today, reports [Voice of America](#).
- Thursday's protests [fall on the anniversary of clashes](#) that took place in Benghazi in 2006, when security forces killed at least 10 people who were protesting outside the city's Italian consulate. That protest centered on an Italian minister who wore a T-shirt displaying cartoons of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, the [BBC](#) reports.
- Plans for Thursday's protests circulated this week on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). [Al Jazeera](#) reports that while social networking sites were blocked for several hours Wednesday afternoon, Libyans were able to [access the sites again in the evening](#).
- A Facebook group calling for a "day of anger" saw its membership more than double this week, from 4,400 members on Monday to 9,600 on Wednesday, according to Al Jazeera. On another website – [Libya Our Home](#), which is based outside of Libya – Libyans and foreigners alike urged the protesters to stand strong against the government today.

"From every square in our beloved country, people should all come together in one city and one square to make this regime and its supporters afraid, and force them to run away because they are cowards," one post read, according to [an MSNBC translation](#) from the website.

- Protests began Tuesday after the arrest of human rights advocate [Fathi Tarbel](#), the [Washington Post](#) reports, and quickly took on an antigovernment tone. Although the initial protest was small, it showed that Libyans were [emboldened by protests elsewhere](#). Mr. Tarbel was released, but protests continued.
- On Wednesday, demonstrators gathered in Benghazi and nearby Beyida to call for Qaddafi's resignation and the establishment of a constitution, among other political and economic reforms. Marchers [set fire to police stations and security headquarters](#), according to witnesses who spoke to The Washington Post.
- The government's response to the protesters was swift, Al Jazeera reports. In a phone interview with Al Jazeera, Libyan writer [Idros Al-Mesmari](#) said security officials disguised in civilian clothing broke up the protests in Benghazi [using tear gas, batons, and hot water](#). [Mr. Al Mesmari](#) was arrested hours after the interview.
- The [Geneva](#)-based organization Human Rights Solidarity said that [snipers on rooftops were shooting at the protesters](#) on Wednesday, while Libya Watch, a [London](#)-based human rights group, said that "Internal security forces and militias of the [Revolutionary Committees](#) used live ammunition to disperse a peaceful demonstration by the youth of Al-Baida," according to [Agence France-Presse](#).
- It is unclear how many protesters were killed this week. According to the Associated Press, antigovernment websites are reporting that [at least four were killed](#) in Wednesday's protest in Beyida, while Al Jazeera could confirm only the [deaths of two protesters](#).

[Libyan government faces growing frustrations - The Washington Post](#)

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/libyan-government-faces-growing-frustrations/2012/01/22/gIQArnVHNQ_print.html

• Libyan government faces growing frustrations

By Alice Fordham, Tuesday, January 24, 8:21 AM

- BENGHAZI, Libya — As Libya's interim government struggles to bring security, stability and democracy to the country, a burgeoning protest movement is rocking the fragile nation, venting grudges and challenging the legitimacy of the ruling authorities.

The movement is at its strongest in the eastern city of Benghazi, the cradle of the uprising that saw NATO-backed forces topple Moammar Gaddafi's 42-year rule.

Rebel fighters began battling government forces here in February last year. They controlled most of the city within a few days, and a transitional governing council began operating before the end of that month as the city became the [base for the revolution](#).

But almost a year later, support for the council, which has shifted its operations to Tripoli, is rapidly evaporating. People complain of shaky [security](#), delays in the re-opening of schools and courts, and flaws in the interim constitution and proposed electoral legislation, as well as the continued presence of Gaddafi-era officials on the council.

- For more than a month, hundreds of angry demonstrators have gathered nightly in Tree Square in the city center to chant, dance, sing and discuss their grievances.

"What we are asking for is not privileges," said Saleh el-Haddar, a businessman at a recent protest. "We want the courts to work, we want the followers of Gaddafi to go ... and our main concern is transparency."

The simmering discontent bubbled into violence on Saturday, when thousands [rallied](#) outside a government building where council members were meeting local politicians. Protesters threw grenades and home-made bombs, while the council's chairman, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, remained inside, said demonstrators.

Speaking at a news conference after the clash, Abdel Jalil called for patience. "We are going through a political movement that can take the country to a bottomless pit," he said, according to a Reuters report.

His remarks were swiftly followed by the resignation Sunday of [Abdel Hafidh Ghoga](#), the deputy head of the transitional council. He served as head of the lawyers' union under Gaddafi, and was regarded by some as discredited by his association with the late leader.

- **'Honeymoon' is over**

"In Benghazi, we were very lucky, we did not suffer as they did in the west of Libya," said Zahi el-Meghrabi, a professor of politics in Benghazi, referring to months of fighting between rebels and Gaddafi loyalists that left thousands dead. "The transitional council had support — but the honeymoon did not last."

Now, people are frustrated by the confusing ways the government makes decisions and issues legislation, said Meghrabi. Meghrabi said that many were unhappy with an interim constitution announced by the Transitional Council in August, complaining that there had not been sufficient consultation with civil society groups and lawyers.

A draft of the legislation that will guide elections set for the summer, unveiled early this month, was also unpopular, with women's rights activists calling for more than its proposed 10 percent quota for women in a new government and others criticizing clauses banning people with dual citizenship running for office.

Delays in unfreezing Libya's assets abroad were also creating shortages of cash for the government, causing payments to the poor to be suspended and impeding a program for those wounded in eight months of fighting to be treated overseas, Meghrabi said.

Last week, a group of rebel fighters carrying banners complaining about the treatment of the wounded blocked the main highway in Benghazi with trucks. They rattled off rounds of gunfire into the air and detonated sound bombs.

- **A 'correction'**

The example of Benghazi's protests have been followed, although with fewer participants and less violence, in Tripoli and the city of Misurata, where protesters have pitched tents and staged marches, largely peaceful but sometimes violent, calling for the "correction of the revolution." As in Benghazi, they draw support from a broad base: nascent civil society organizations, political activists and former rebel fighters.

Among the shattered buildings and posters in tribute to fallen rebels in Misurata, which saw some of the war's fiercest fighting, a few tents are pitched in an intersection known as Freedom Square.

Protests and sit-ins have called mainly for elections for the local council, which was appointed by consensus after Gaddafi's forces were largely defeated in May. Around 200 people participated in marches and camped out, with success: An electoral committee has now been set up and a local poll is set to be held in a month.

Thus far in Misurata and in a small encampment in the central Algeria square in Tripoli, protesters' demands have not been as strident as their [counterparts' in Benghazi](#). Most people still support the interim government, but want to ensure it stays on the right track, said Mohammed Benrasali, formerly of the Misurata city council.

"We made Gaddafi what he was by not standing up to him," he said. "We need to make Abdel Jalil realize that he cannot take the country by any road but democracy."

In Benghazi, the situation remained explosive after the weekend's events, said Haddar, the protester in Tree Square. "I am hoping that the council will listen to the people and be transparent," he said, charging leaders with "not taking the street seriously."

"We are hoping that it will settle down," he added. "But Benghazi is always the place where everything starts."

['NTC head may resign – if he makes it out alive' — RT](#)

<http://rt.com/news/ntc-resign-libya-regime-411>

- 'NTC head may resign – if he makes it out alive'
- Published: 23 January, 2012
- The deputy head of Libya's National Transitional Council is resigning in light of continuing protests. Sukant Chandan, a spokesman for British Civilians for Peace in Libya, says the Council's head may resign as well – if he doesn't get killed first.

"The Gaddafi regime could control all of Libya, could find peace amongst all the tribes. The new regime cannot even control something in one town or one area," Chandan told RT. "They've been selling their oil and natural resources and sovereignty to NATO. And now the thieves – that is, the rebels – are all falling out with each other, they can't even be paid by their own masters." He continues, "they've performed regime change on behalf of the former colonialists of Libya."

- Chandan says those who wish not to believe what Gaddafi said of life in Libya after the fall of his regime should listen to Jalil, who he says *"probably is about to resign – if he's not assassinated, like NTC military head Abdel Fatah Yunis."*

The analyst says Jalil has warned that Libya is *"in danger of descending into a bottomless pit."*

"So really, this is the achievement of 'freedom and democracy' by NATO," Chandan concluded.

- And Abdel Hafiz Ghoga, the NTC's deputy head, has been accused of opportunism after dropping his allegiance to Gaddafi as the uprising kicked off. On Saturday, crowds of protesters stormed the NTC headquarters in Benghazi, angered by how the council has been handling the country's assets. Demonstrators threw rocks and metal bars at the building, breaking windows and damaging Jalil's car.

Mass rallies have been raging for weeks in the city of Benghazi, which is considered the cradle of the revolution that toppled the Gaddafi regime.

[Gaddafi supporters seize control of Libyan town | Reuters](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/23/us-libya-fighting-idUSTRE80M28Q20120123)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/23/us-libya-fighting-idUSTRE80M28Q20120123>

- Gaddafi supporters seize control of Libyan town
- By Taha Zargoun

TRIPOLI | Mon Jan 23, 2012

- (Reuters) - Fighters loyal to Libya's overthrown leader Muammar Gaddafi took control of a town south-east of the capital on Monday, flying their green flags in defiance of the country's fragile new government.
- The fightback by Gaddafi supporters defeated in Libya's civil war, though unlikely to spread elsewhere, added to the problems besetting a government which in the past week has been reeling from one crisis to another. Gaddafi himself was captured and killed in October after weeks on the run.

Accounts from the town of Bani Walid, about 200 km (120 miles) from Tripoli, described armed Gaddafi supporters attacking the barracks of the pro-government militia in the town and then forcing them to fall back.

"They control the town now. They are roaming the town," said a fighter with the 28th May militia, loyal to Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC), which came under attack.

- The fighter told Reuters the loyalists were flying "brand new green flags" from the centre of town. The flags were symbols of Gaddafi's 42-year rule.
- A resident said four people were killed and 20 wounded in the fighting, during which the sides used heavy weapons.

Bani Walid, base of the powerful Warfallah tribe, was one of the last towns to surrender to the anti-Gaddafi rebellion last year. Many people there oppose the new leadership.

- A Libyan air force official said war planes were being mobilized to fly to Bani Walid. A spokesman for the military council in Zawiyah, near Tripoli, said a 1,500-strong force, drawn from militias across western Libya, was on stand-by.

"If the situation in Bani Walid is still complicated, we will go there," the spokesman, Ayad Laaroussi, said.

But it was not immediately clear what the government in Tripoli could do. It has yet to demonstrate that it has an effective fighting force under its command and Bani Walid, protected behind a deep valley, is difficult to attack.

• EMBATTLED GOVERNMENT

The uprising in Bani Walid could not come at a worse time for the NTC. In the past week its chief has had his office overrun by protesters angry at the slow pace of reform and the second most senior official has quit, citing what he described as an "atmosphere of hatred."

- During Libya's nine-month war, anti-Gaddafi rebels tried to take Bani Walid but did not progress much beyond the outskirts of the town. It later emerged that Saif al-Islam, one of Muammar Gaddafi's sons who was captured in the Sahara desert in November, had been using Bani Walid as a base.
- Soon before the end of the conflict, with Gaddafi's defeat unavoidable, local tribal elders negotiated an agreement under which forces loyal to the NTC were able to enter the town without a fight.

Relations have been uneasy since then and there have been occasional flare-ups of violence.

The resident, who did not want to be identified, said Monday's violence began when members of the May 28 militia arrested some Gaddafi loyalists.

- That prompted other supporters of the former leader to attack the militia's garrison.

"They massacred men at the doors of the militia headquarters," said the resident.

A militia based in Tripoli said its fighters had captured 17 people who, it said, were part of a network trying to smuggle arms to Gaddafi loyalists in Bani Walid and elsewhere. The militia said in a text message that the weapons included Russian-made Grad rockets.

• FRAGILE GRIP ON POWER

The NTC still has the backing of the NATO powers who, with their diplomatic pressure and bombing campaign, helped push out Gaddafi and install the new government.

But questions are now being raised inside some Western governments about the NTC's ability to govern Libya

effectively and secure its borders against al Qaeda, arms traffickers and illegal migrants trying to get into Europe.

- The NTC was pitched into its worst crisis since the end of the civil war at the weekend when a crowd of protesters in the eastern city of Benghazi stormed the council's local headquarters when NTC chief Mustafa Abdel Jalil was inside.

The protesters, who supported the revolt against Gaddafi, were angry that more progress had not been made to restore basic public services. They also said many of the NTC's members were tarnished by having served in Gaddafi's administration.

Abdel Hafiz Ghoga, deputy head of the NTC and target of some of the protests, said he was resigning. Abdel Jalil warned that the protests could drag the country into a "bottomless pit."

[Protests Shake Libya's Interim Government - NYTimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/world/africa/protests-shake-libyas-interim-government.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all)

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/world/africa/protests-shake-libyas-interim-government.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

- Libya Protests Spur Shake-Up in Interim Government

- By LIAM STACK

Published: January 22, 2012

- [Libya's](#) post-Qaddafi transitional government faced a political crisis Sunday after protesters ransacked its offices in Benghazi, highlighting growing nationwide unease with its leadership and triggering a shake-up in which the governing council's No. 2 official resigned and several members were suspended.
- For months, youth groups with a range of complaints have been protesting against the Transitional National Council in Benghazi, the eastern city whose protests sparked the nine-month revolt and which once served as the rebel capital. Protests have cropped up elsewhere, too, including in Tripoli, the capital, where activists have erected a small tent city across from the prime minister's office.
- Protesters are demanding more transparency from the transitional council, which holds executive power and is tasked with overseeing the election of a constituent assembly to draft a new Constitution. It is dominated by figures from the eastern rebel movement, much to the suspicion of other regional factions, and there are accusations, too, that many of its members are tainted by past ties, real or suspected, with the government of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi.

On Saturday night, those frustrations boiled over when a crowd of mostly young men attacked the council's offices in Benghazi, tossing a grenade, smashing windows and forcing their way into the building while the council's chairman, Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, was inside.

The spark appeared to be the online release of a draft election law to govern the selection of the 200-member constituent assembly. Activists said it was prepared without consultation or public oversight and that its winner-take-all rules would encourage Libyans to vote along tribal lines or for rich or prominent citizens in their region, and undercut those seeking to form new parties.

- Seeking to contain the fallout from the attack, Abdel-Hafidh Ghoga, the transitional council's deputy chief, resigned Sunday, telling the Arabic satellite channel Al Jazeera, "My resignation is for the benefit of the nation and is required at this stage."

Speaking to reporters in Benghazi on Sunday, Mr. Abdel-Jalil warned that continued protests could lead the country down a perilous path and pleaded with protesters to give the government more time.

"We are going through a political movement that can take the country to a bottomless pit," Reuters quoted Mr. Abdel-Jalil as saying. "There is something behind these protests that is not for the good of the country."

"The people have not given the government enough time, and the government does not have enough money," Mr. Abdel-Jalil said. "Maybe there are delays, but the government has only been working for two months. Give them a chance, at least two months."

- The interim government suspended several members from Benghazi and announced that it would form a council of religious figures to investigate government officials and council members accused of corruption or ties to the Qaddafi government. It also delayed the official release of the election law.

Both the incident itself and the leadership's response were met with widespread anger in Benghazi, according to Salwa Bugaighis, a lawyer and political activist who was a leading figure in the uprising against Colonel Qaddafi.

"We are worried," she said. "We are afraid that maybe it becomes worse."

Ms. Bugaighis said that the protesters in Benghazi were particularly angry about allegations that millions of dollars — and possibly billions — in government money was unaccounted for.

"They want transparency. They want people from the Qaddafi regime to go," she said. "If there's no transparency, everything will collapse."

- A transitional council member from Benghazi, Fathi Baaja, denied that he or anyone else had been suspended, despite widespread reports to the contrary. He said an Islamist faction — "religious groups and mosque preachers" — on the Benghazi local council had pushed for the suspensions but said that "they have no right to suspend us."

Saying he was among those who had set up the council, Mr. Baaja accused the Islamist rivals of being Qaddafi sympathizers.

"They used to convince people they had no right to revolt against Qaddafi, the father of the country. They said we had no right to go against the head of state, the caliph," Mr. Baaja said. "I never heard their voices say no to Qaddafi, and I never put myself in the same place as them."

Protests have taken place in the city of Misurata as well, which is run by a rival leadership faction and where officials said they were planning to hold elections for a new local council in February, without the blessing of the national council.

- "Everywhere there have been sit-ins and demonstrations" against the council, said Mohamed Benrasali, a spokesman for the Misurata council. People are "accusing it of no transparency and dragging its feet and not taking any actions for transitional justice and many, many issues," he said, adding, "We feel that the head of the regime has changed, but the rest of the regime is in place."

Both Saturday's protest and its political fallout demonstrated the challenges Libya faces, said Fred Abrahams, a special adviser on Libya for Human Rights Watch.

"Ousting Qaddafi will prove more straight-forward than getting a representative and transparent government to replace him," he said.

Critics of the interim government also complain that its performance has faltered on even the nuts-and-bolts level.

Basic services have yet to be restored in some areas, while towns seen as sympathetic to Colonel Qaddafi, like Surt and Bani Walid, remain in ruins after months of fighting.

- The interim government has struggled to exert authority even in Tripoli, where the streets are largely controlled by a patchwork of regional militias whose members defer to their own commanders, not government security forces.

Mr. Abdel-Jalil also accepted the resignation of the head of the Benghazi Local Council, Saleh el-Ghazal, an appointed figure whose replacement he pledged would be elected.

But on Sunday, authorities postponed the planned unveiling of the country's election law, which has been mired in controversy. A draft of the law released on Jan. 2 was criticized for barring dual-nationals from running for office, in a country where scores of political activists were forced into exile.

It also set a 10 percent quota for women in Parliament, which feminist activists called "insulting." Rather than raise the quota, a revised draft released last week announced that the quota would be abolished entirely.

David D. Kirkpatrick contributed reporting from Cairo, Kareem Fahim from Damascus, Syria, and Yusef Sawie from Tripoli, Libya.

[Libya's vice-president Abdel Hafiz Ghoga resigns amid protests against the ruling National Transitional Council | News | National Post](http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/01/22/libyas-vice-president-abdel-hafiz-ghoga-resigns-amid-protests-against-the-ruling-national-transitional-council)

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/01/22/libyas-vice-president-abdel-hafiz-ghoga-resigns-amid-protests-against-the-ruling-national-transitional-council>

• **Libya's vice-president Abdel Hafiz Ghoga resigns amid protests against the ruling National Transitional Council**

[Reuters](#) Jan 22, 2012

- By Oliver Holmes
- The deputy head of Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC) said on Sunday he was resigning after a series of protests against the new government which the country's leader warned could drag Libya into a "bottomless pit."

The protests have pitched the NTC into its deepest crisis since Muammar Gaddafi was overthrown with help from NATO powers last year, and they raise new questions about the council's ability to govern the oil exporting country.

Late Saturday, a crowd demanding the government's resignation forced their way into the NTC's local headquarters in Benghazi while the NTC chief was inside, in the most serious show of anger at the authorities since Gaddafi's ouster.

The NTC has the support of Western powers, but it is unelected, has been slow to restore basic public services, and some Libyans say too many of its members are tarnished by ties to Gaddafi.

- Abdel Hafiz Ghoga, vice-president of the NTC and one of the council's highest-profile members, was the target of some of the protesters' criticism. Last week, students jostled him when he visited a university in Benghazi and he had to be pulled to safety.

"My resignation is for the benefit of the nation and is required at this stage," Ghoga told Al Jazeera television.

He said the national consensus that helped the country rise up and end Gaddafi's 42-year rule had not lasted into peace-time, giving way to what he called an atmosphere of hatred.

"I do not want this atmosphere to continue and negatively affect the National Transitional Council and its performance," said Ghoga, who also acted as the NTC's spokesman.

- DISAPPOINTED HOPES

Protesters say the NTC has failed to live up to the aspirations of the revolt against Gaddafi, the most violent of the "Arab Spring" uprisings.

"We hoped for security, peace and transparency. We have seen the opposite," said Miftah Al-Rabia, 28, who was standing outside the NTC's Benghazi headquarters Sunday with a group of protesters.

NTC chief Mustafa Abdel Jalil, speaking at a news conference in Benghazi just over an hour before Ghoga announced he was resigning, appealed to the protesters to be more patient.

"We are going through a political movement that can take the country to a bottomless pit," he said. "There is something behind these protests that is not for the good of the country."

"The people have not given the government enough time and the government does not have enough money. Maybe there are delays, but the government has only been working for two months. Give them a chance, at least two months."

- He said he had accepted the resignation of Benghazi's mayor, Saleh El-Ghazal, following the protests, and promised elections to choose the mayor's successor.

In a glimpse of the lack of coordination which Western diplomats say pervades the workings of the NTC, Abdel Jalil was asked if Ghoga would be stepping down and said he would not.

Sources in the NTC, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ghoga has not submitted a letter of resignation.

They said he was angry at being manhandled at the university and that a delegation had gone to his home to try to talk him out of resigning.

The location of the protests is particularly galling for the NTC. Benghazi, in eastern Libya, was the birthplace of the revolt against Gaddafi's rule and the site of the NTC's headquarters during the revolt.

- HASTILY-FORMED COUNCIL

The protests add to the list of challenges facing the NTC.

It is struggling to bring to heel dozens of armed militias who have carved the country into rival fiefdoms and are so far refusing to join a newly created national army.

Foreign states are worried about the NTC's capacity to secure its borders against arms traffickers, al Qaeda insurgents and migrants trying to reach Europe illegally.

The NTC was formed in the early days of the revolt against Gaddafi from a hastily-assembled group of lawyers, government officials who defected, Muslim clerics, tribal leaders and civil society activists.

At the time, Gaddafi's troops were using automatic weapons to fire on protests in Benghazi and elsewhere, and there was little time to vet the members.

But nearly six months on from the moment the rebellion took control of the capital Tripoli, Libyans are started to question the council's legitimacy.

- In particular, some people have cast doubt over the loyalties of former Gaddafi lieutenants who are now in the NTC. These include Abdel Jalil himself, who was justice minister under Gaddafi before defecting early in the uprising.

The council says it will dissolve itself once elections are held for a transitional national assembly. That vote is scheduled to take place in about six months.

At the NTC headquarters in Benghazi Sunday, smashed windows bore witness to the protests Saturday night. Guards in camouflage fatigues patrolled the building.

"We still don't know who exactly is in the NTC. There is no transparency," said Al-Rabia, a protester standing outside the building with a group of about 30 other men.

Another protester, 24-year-old Mohammed Mahmoud, said he fought against Gaddafi during the revolt and wounded his shoulder and hand.

"We fought on the front line and received injuries but we did not see the NTC with us," he said. "I have one single question: Why has the NTC failed at everything except selling oil? We want to correct the path of the revolution."

[Protesters storm Libyan government HQ in Benghazi | Top News | Reuters](http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E80L01D20120122?sp=true)

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E80L01D20120122?sp=true>

• **Protesters storm Libyan government HQ in Benghazi**

Sun Jan 22, 2012

- y Mohammad Al Tommy
- BENGHAZI, Libya (Reuters) - Protesters stormed the Benghazi headquarters of Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC) on Saturday while its chairman was still in the building.

People in Benghazi, birthplace of the revolt which forced out former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, have been protesting for weeks to demand the sacking of Gaddafi-era officials and more transparency about how the NTC is spending Libyan assets.

The attack is a serious blow to the self-appointed but internationally recognised NTC, and underscores growing discontent over the way it is running the country.

Many of those who fought in the nine-month civil war that ended with the capture and killing of Gaddafi in October are unhappy with cash compensations promised by the government, saying it does not cover their basic needs.

On a Saturday, hundreds of young men, many wounded from the war, rallied outside the NTC's headquarters.

When Abdul Jalil, NTC chairman, came out in an attempt to address the crowd, some protesters hurled empty plastic bottles at him, prompting security forces to fire tear gas.

"Go away, Go away," the protesters chanted as Abdul Jalil spoke. He then went back into the building but he is believed to have been pulled to safety from a back door when the crowd charged into the building.

- SPOILS OF WAR

Protesters threw stones and metal bars at the building, breaking its windows, before storming the headquarters. One protester left the building carrying a set of loudspeakers and screaming: "Spoils of war!"

Angry protesters also damaged a Toyota Land Cruiser used by Abdul Jalil.

"A large number of wounded people were unhappy because the National (Transitional) Council has not met their demands," said 30-year-old Tareq al-Gheryani as he watched people attacking the NTC's headquarters.

"People are not happy with the council because it has also given government posts to people who are known to have links with Gaddafi."

Interim government officials say it is impossible for them sack hundreds of officials merely because they served under Gaddafi, but stress that those proved to have been involved in human rights abuses or financial fraud will be fired.

The NTC is grappling with problems, including the disbanding of dozens of powerful militias that effectively control the country. The ministries of interior and defence want to integrate them into a military and police force, but militia chiefs have shown little interest in surrendering their arms.

On Thursday, Abdul Hafiz Ghoga, vice president of the NTC, was roughed up by university students in Benghazi. He was surrounded by a crowd and jostled before he was pulled away to safety.

[Libyans storm transitional government headquarters - AP](http://news.yahoo.com/libyans-storm-transitional-government-headquarters-135126104.html;_ylt=AkINa5Ypf1dVD2PbNscfkINvaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTNpcTZ2cWYzBG1pdAMEcGtnA2VkZDM1MmMwLWUwM2YtM2I1ZCC-;_ylv=3)

http://news.yahoo.com/libyans-storm-transitional-government-headquarters-135126104.html;_ylt=AkINa5Ypf1dVD2PbNscfkINvaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTNpcTZ2cWYzBG1pdAMEcGtnA2VkZDM1MmMwLWUwM2YtM2I1ZCC-;_ylv=3

• Libyans storm transitional government headquarters



By RAMI AL-SHAHEIBI | Associated Press

- BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) — Hundreds of angry Libyans on Saturday stormed the transitional government's headquarters in the eastern city of Benghazi, carting off computers, chairs, and desks while the country's interim leader was still holed up in the building.

Libyans have grown increasingly frustrated with the pace and direction of reforms in the country more than three months after the end of the civil war that ousted longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi. Those concerns spurred residents in Benghazi, where the uprising against longtime leader Moammar Gadhafi broke out in February, to begin protests nearly two weeks ago to demand transparency and justice from the country's new leaders.

The melee at the National Transitional Council's headquarters began after protesters broke through the gates using hand grenades and streamed into the grounds of the headquarters. They banged on the building's doors and demanded officials meet with them.

- In a bid to calm tensions, NTC chief Mustafa Abdul-Jalil tried to address the crowd from a second-floor window, but protesters began throwing bottles at him.

Protesters then torched Abdul-Jalil's armored Land Cruiser and broke into the headquarters itself, smashing windows to get inside and cart off furniture and electronics.

A security official in the building said a team of some 50 guards dressed as civilians were trying to calm the protesters.

The official, who served as a revolutionary commander during the civil war, said Abdul-Jalil was still in the building and was refusing to leave. He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

- Some of the protesters pitched tents weeks ago outside the NTC's headquarters to protest a set of election laws they say were drafted by the interim leaders without consulting the public.

"The election laws have not been approved by thousands of Libyans and do not honor those who died for our freedom," said Tamer al-Jahani, a lawyer taking part in the protest. "We don't want to replace one tyrant with another."

The NTC is expected to soon pass the packet of laws, which specify how elections for a transitional parliament will be held. The council only took into account public suggestions through an online survey.

- The NTC's handling of the draft laws has sparked criticism that the council is not living up to its democratic ideals.

Last week, NTC official Abdel-Hafiz Ghoga was assaulted in Benghazi by protesters angry at what they said is the NTC's lack of transparency.

Some demonstrators were demanding more rights for fighters wounded during the civil war.

Protester Ahmed Boras accused the NTC of sidelining anti-Gadhafi fighters.

"It seems to us that these people are no different than Gadhafi and they only speak the language of force," he said.

[Protesters lob grenades, storm Libyan NTC office - AFP](http://news.yahoo.com/grenades-lobbed-libyan-ntc-benghazi-office-181618360.html;_ylt=AntG3owMIKZxp7J.QibuXzFvaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTNpYWFybjZ1BG1pdAMEcGtnAzFjODY3MDQyLTQzYjktM2Q0ZS04M-;_ylv=3)

http://news.yahoo.com/grenades-lobbed-libyan-ntc-benghazi-office-181618360.html;_ylt=AntG3owMIKZxp7J.QibuXzFvaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTNpYWFybjZ1BG1pdAMEcGtnAzFjODY3MDQyLTQzYjktM2Q0ZS04M-;_ylv=3

• Protesters lob grenades, storm Libyan NTC office



- Angry protesters threw home-made grenades and stormed Libya's ruling National Transitional Council offices in the city of Benghazi, setting its front ablaze on Saturday, witnesses said.

The attack in the eastern city that was the cradle of last year's uprising against Moamer Kadhafi came as up to 2,000 protesters, including injured former rebels, demonstrated outside the NTC office, witnesses and an AFP correspondent on the scene reported.

The violence erupted a day before the electoral law and the composition of the election commission is due to be announced.

At least three blasts were heard by the AFP reporter who said he did not see any apparent damage to the office or any casualties.

- "The demonstrators attacked the building and turned NTC offices upside down," an NTC member said on condition of anonymity.

Witnesses said protesters, armed with stones and iron bars, stormed and ransacked the offices as they occupied them.

They said a brigade of former rebels secured a passage to allow NTC head Mustafa Abdel Jalil and other council members to leave the building.

But protesters threw plastic bottles at Abdel Jalil when he tried to calm them down, the witnesses added.

"They set fire to the front (of the office), broke windows and damaged one of the armoured cars that was there," said Fathi Baja, NTC member and the council's political affairs chief.

- He said he and Abdel Jalil got out of the offices separately, adding that he was unaware of who was behind the attack on the office.

"We do not know. Some were very young, like fifteen years, some older. There were many. Some called for the resignation of the entire NTC except mine, Mustafa Abdel Jalil and another member," Baja told AFP by phone from Benghazi.

Witnesses said the grenade blasts occurred when wounded former rebels who helped topple Kadhafi were protesting at being "marginalised" in the new Libya, demanding more transparency in the NTC and opposing what they said were opportunists from joining the ruling body.

Home-made bombs were used regularly by the former rebels during last year's conflict against Kadhafi, especially to attack checkpoints of the former leader's forces.

- Protesters have held regular demonstrations in Benghazi for several weeks, accusing the NTC of lacking transparency and recruiting members who were once seen as loyalists of the former regime.

The grenade blasts come just two days after NTC deputy head Abdel Hafiz Ghoga was manhandled by university students in Benghazi.

Ghoga, who also serves as official spokesman for the interim government, had to be escorted away after being mobbed by angry students at the University of Ghar Yunis in Libya's second largest city.

He escaped unharmed but was forced to endure a tirade of abuse from the crowd, who accused him of opportunism because of his belated defection from the Kadhafi regime.

The NTC called the incident an attack on the Libyan people and the revolution.

It said that "every attack or aggression against the National Transitional Council represents an attack on the sovereignty of the Libyan people and its glorious revolution."

A statement said Ghoga represents the "highest legitimate authority" until the election of a constitutional assembly in June.

Protesters storm grounds of Libya's interim government's headquarters in Benghazi - The Washington Post

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/protesters-storm-grounds-of-libyas-interim-governments-headquarters-in-benghazi/2012/01/21/gIQA4R1FQ_story.html

- Protesters storm grounds of Libya's interim government's headquarters in Benghazi
- By Associated Press, Updated: Saturday, January 21
- BENGHAZI, Libya — Around 200 protesters frustrated with the pace of reforms in Libya stormed the grounds of the country's transitional government headquarters on Saturday to demand a meeting with the nation's interim leaders.

Residents in Benghazi, where the uprising against longtime leader Moammar Gadhafi broke out in February, have been protesting for nearly two weeks, demanding transparency and justice from the country's new leaders.

- Some have pitched tents outside the NTC's headquarters to protest a set of election laws they say were drafted by the interim leaders without consulting the public. The NTC is expected to pass the packet of laws that will determine how elections for a transitional parliament will be held. The council only took into account public suggestions through an online survey.
- The NTC's handling of the draft laws has sparked criticism that the council is not living up to its democratic ideals.

Last week, NTC official Abdel-Hafiz Ghoga was assaulted in Benghazi by protesters angry at what they said is the NTC's lack of transparency.

- On Saturday, the demonstrators used hand grenades to blow off the gates surrounding the compound housing the NTC's headquarters and banged on the building's doors. They shouted through windows at NTC members who could be seen pacing inside the building.
- "The election laws have not been approved by thousands of Libyans and do not honor those who died for our freedom," said Tamer al-Jahani, a lawyer taking part in the protest. "We don't want to replace one tyrant with another."
- Some protesters were demanding more rights for fighters wounded during the civil war.

Protester Ahmed Boras accused the NTC of sidelining anti-Gadhafi fighters.

"It seems to us that these people are no different than Gadhafi and they only speak the language of force," he said.

AFP: Libya number two flees protest in Benghazi

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hoFnoT-dIiocfMLL5oZUfvdPqBiQ?docId=CNG.fa369a52b1f425a2a3ddbaeb5514d298.2f1>

- Libya number two flees protest in Benghazi

(AFP)

- BENGHAZI, Libya — The deputy head of Libya's National Transitional Council was manhandled by protesters on Thursday in the cradle of the uprising that ousted Moamer Kadhafi last year, witnesses said.

Abdelhafiz Ghoga, who also serves as official spokesman for the interim government, had to be escorted away after being mobbed by angry students at the the University of Ghar Yunis in Libya's second-largest city Benghazi, the NTC's wartime base.

Ghoga escaped unharmed from the assault but had to endure a tirade of abuse from the protesters who accused him of opportunism because of his belated defection from Kadhafi regime, the witnesses said.

Students have been demonstrating on the Ghar Yunis campus for weeks to protest against the perceived lack of transparency of the administration that took over after Kadhafi's ouster and the prominent position in it of a number of his longtime lieutenants.

Muammar el-Qaddafi (1942-2011)

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/q/muammar_el_qaddafi/index.html

- Muammar el-Qaddafi (1942-2011)
- Updated: Oct. 25, 2011
- Colonel Muammar el Qaddafi [was an erratic, provocative dictator](#) who ruled [Libya](#) for 42 years, crushing opponents at home while cultivating the wardrobe and looks befitting an aging rock star. He met a violent and vengeful death on Oct. 20, 2011, at the hands of the Libyan forces that drove him from power.

In death, as in life, his circumstances proved startling, with jerky video images showing him captured, bloody and disheveled, but alive. A separate clip showed his half-naked torso, with eyes staring vacantly and what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the head, as jubilant fighters fired into the air. In a third video, posted on [YouTube](#), excited fighters hovered around his lifeless-looking body, posing for photographs and yanking his limp head up and down by the hair.

- Throughout his rule, Colonel Qaddafi, who was 69 when he died, sanctioned spasms of grisly violence and frequent bedlam, even as he sought to leverage his nation's oil wealth into an outsized role on the world stage.
- He embraced a string of titles: "the brother leader," "the guide to the era of the masses," "the king of kings of Africa" and — his most preferred — "the leader of the revolution."
- But the labels pinned on him by others tended to stick the most. President Ronald Reagan called him "the mad dog of the Middle East." President Anwar el-Sadat of neighboring Egypt pronounced him "the crazy Libyan."
- As his dominion over Libya crumbled with surprising speed, Colonel Qaddafi refused to countenance the fact that most Libyans despised him. He placed blame for the uprising on foreign intervention — a United Nations Security Council resolution intended to defend civilians became the contentious basis for NATO airstrikes on his troops.

"I tell the coward crusaders: I live in a place where you can't get me," he taunted defiantly after the uprising against his rule started in February 2011. "I live in the hearts of millions."

That attitude endured to the end. In one of his last speeches, made weeks after Tripoli fell and he was a fugitive, he exhorted Libyans to defeat the uprising.

"The people of Libya, the true Libyans, will never accept invasion and colonization," he said in remarks broadcast by a Syrian television station because he had lost control of Libya's airwaves. "We will fight for our freedom, and we are ready to sacrifice ourselves."

- **Captured and Killed**

Following the fall of Tripoli in August 2011, Colonel Qaddafi and his loyalists fled to his hometown of Surt, where the eight-month conflict reached its bloody climax. Libyan fighters and NATO forces watched for an attempt by Colonel Qaddafi's armed loyalists to flee and seek safety elsewhere. Soon after dawn on Oct. 20, they did, leaving urban bunkers in the Mediterranean town and heading west.

Colonel Qaddafi was captured and killed following a NATO airstrike on his convoy. In a cellphone video, the deposed Libyan leader was seen splayed on the hood of a truck and then stumbling amid a frenzied crowd. His body was shown in later photographs with bullet holes apparently fired into his head at what forensic experts said was close range, raising the strong possibility that he was executed by anti-Qaddafi fighters.

One of Colonel Qaddafi's feared sons, Muatassim, also was captured in Surt and killed, apparently while in custody.

- **Uneasy Celebration; New Beginnings**

Within an hour of the news of Colonel Qaddafi's death, [Libyans were celebrating](#). "We have been waiting for this moment for a long time," Mahmoud Jibril, the prime minister of the Transitional National Council, the interim government, said.

"It is a historic moment," said Abdel Hafez Ghoga, a spokesman for the Transitional National Council. "It is the end of tyranny and dictatorship. Qaddafi has met his fate."

But also voiced in the Middle East was unease at the fact that a bloody revolution ended with yet more bloodshed. "It's not acceptable to kill a person without trying him," said Louay Hussein, a Syrian opposition figure in Damascus. "I prefer to see the tyrant behind bars."

The day after Colonel Qaddafi's death, [United Nations](#) High Commissioner for Human Rights [called for an inquiry](#) into his death amid conflicting accounts of how he met his end and video that appeared to show him alive after his capture.

"We believe there is a need for investigation to see whether he was killed in fighting or some form of execution," Rupert Colville, the spokesman for Navi Pillay, the human rights commissioner, told reporters in Geneva.

- The circumstances of Colonel Qaddafi's death also raised questions about the government's control of the militias in a country that has been divided into competing regions and factions.

[Several days after Colonel Qaddafi's death](#), the head of Libya's interim government announced the creation of a formal committee of inquiry. The announcement, by Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, the chairman of the Transitional National Council, acknowledged the calls by foreign powers and rights groups — including some that supported the rebellion against Colonel Qaddafi's rule — for an investigation. But it was unclear from Mr. Abdel-Jalil's announcement how much authority the committee would have to pursue an investigation and whether anyone might be held accountable.

On October 23, Mr. Abdel-Jalil formally proclaimed to thousands of revelers in Benghazi that the revolution was officially over. The announcement laid the basis for elections and a new government within 20 months, but left unanswered the enormous challenge confronting the interim leaders over how to disarm and unify the brigades of anti-Qaddafi fighters who brought him down and are a law unto themselves.

• Overview

For decades, the West, fascinated and regularly horrified, had watched Col. Qaddafi's every move. The financier of an eclectic array of guerrilla groups around the globe, he had been responsible, according to Western intelligence, for many of the deadliest terrorist attacks in the mid-80s, including the 1988 bombing of [Pan Am Flight 103](#) over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270.

- In February 2011, rebellion erupted in Libya, the latest and bloodiest of the uprisings that swept across the Arab world. Colonel Qaddafi lashed out with a level of violence unseen in the other uprisings, but the rebels fought back and seized the eastern half of the country. Momentum seemed to shift in March, as the superior Qaddafi forces sought to retake several eastern oil cities that had slipped from the government's control in the first days of the uprising, and the rebels faced the prospect of being outgunned and outnumbered in what increasingly looked like a mismatched civil war. With the government forces closing in on the rebel stronghold of Benghazi, the United Nations Security Council authorized the use of force to protect civilians.
- On March 19, American and European forces began a broad campaign of airstrikes against the government of Colonel Qaddafi, unleashing warplanes and missiles in a military intervention on a scale not seen in the Arab world since the Iraq war.

Colonel Qaddafi remained defiant. On May 31, he rebuffed a mediation effort by South Africa's president, Jacob Zuma, saying he would fight on. His words appeared to reflect a [deepening sense of isolation](#), brought on by 10 weeks of NATO bombing, rebel advances, Western leaders' recent reaffirmation of demands for Colonel Qaddafi to quit, and the fact that Russia, an old ally of Libya, had joined those demands.

On June 27, the [International Criminal Court](#) in The Hague [issued arrest warrants](#) for Colonel Qaddafi, his son [Seif al-Islam](#) and his chief of intelligence, Abdullah Senussi, on charges of crimes against humanity, including murder and persecution, stemming from the first two weeks of the uprising. The presiding judge said there were "reasonable grounds" to hold the three men criminally responsible for killing, wounding and imprisoning hundreds of civilians.

• Fall from Power

At the end of August, in a sudden breakthrough after six months of fighting, rebels swept through Libya's capital, Tripoli, declaring victory. Colonel Qaddafi's whereabouts remained unknown, and news reports said loyalist forces still held pockets of the city, stubbornly resisting the rebel advance. On August 23, rebel fighters flooded Colonel Qaddafi's sprawling headquarters compound, overwhelming what remained of its defenses.

As rebels [sought to strengthen their control of Tripoli](#), they placed a nearly \$2 million bounty on Colonel Qaddafi's head and dispatched fighters toward one of his last bastions of support, his tribal hometown of Surt. Colonel Qaddafi said in a radio broadcast that his retreat from the Bab al-Aziziya compound was only a tactical maneuver. He blamed months of NATO airstrikes for bringing down his government and vowed "martyrdom" or victory in his battle against the alliance. Urging Libyan tribes across the land to march on the capital, he said: "I call on all Tripoli residents, with all its young, old and armed brigades, to defend the city, to cleanse it, to put an end to the traitors and kick them out of our city."

Colonel Qaddafi was as [unpredictable on the lam as he was in power for 42 eccentric years](#).

• Background

The United States withdrew its ambassador from Libya in 1972 after Colonel Qaddafi renounced agreements with the West and repeatedly inveighed against the United States in speeches and public statements.

After a mob sacked and burned the American Embassy in 1979, the United States cut off relations. The relationship continued to spiral downward and, in 1986, the Reagan administration accused Libya of ordering the bombing of a German discothèque that killed three people, including two American servicemen. In response, the United States bombed targets in Tripoli and Benghazi.

The most notorious of Libya's actions was the bombing in 1988 of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people. Libya later accepted responsibility, turned over suspects and paid families of victims more than \$2 billion.

- After a surprise decision to renounce terrorism in 2003, Colonel Qaddafi re-established diplomatic and economic ties throughout Europe. He also changed with regard to Israel. The man who once called for pushing the "Zionists" into the sea advocated the forming of one nation where Jews and Palestinians would live together in peace.
- Rather than trying to destabilize his Arab neighbors, he founded a pan-African confederation modeled along the lines

of the European Union. On Feb. 2, 2009, Colonel Qaddafi was named chairman of the African Union. His election, however, caused some unease among some of the group's 53-member nations as well as among diplomats and analysts. The colonel, who had ruled Libya with an iron hand, was a stark change from the succession of recent leaders from democratic countries like Tanzania, Ghana and Nigeria.

- The most significant changes had been the overtures Colonel Qaddafi made toward the United States. He was among the first Arab leaders to denounce the Sept. 11 attacks, and he lent tacit approval to the American-led invasion of Afghanistan. To the astonishment of other Arab leaders, he reportedly shared his intelligence files on Al Qaeda with the United States to aid in the hunt for its international operatives. He also cooperated with the United States and Europe on other terrorism issues, nuclear weapons and immigration.

In August 2009, Colonel Qaddafi embarrassed the British government and drew criticism from President Obama with his triumphant reaction to the release from prison on compassionate grounds of [Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi](#), the only person convicted in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Mr. Megrahi was given a hero's welcome when he arrived in Libya, and Colonel Qaddafi thanked British and Scottish officials for releasing Mr. Megrahi at a time when both governments were trying to distance themselves from the action.

Colonel Qaddafi, born in 1942, was the father of many sons, including [Seif al-Islam el-Qaddafi](#). Until the uprising, Seif Qaddafi was his father's second-in-command and likely successor.

- **The Uprising Begins**

In February 2011, protests broke out in several parts of Libya on a so-called [Day of Rage to challenge Colonel Qaddafi's 41-year-old iron rule](#) — the region's longest. Thousands turned out in the restive city of Benghazi; in Tripoli, and at three other locations, according to [Human Rights Watch](#). The state media, though, showed Libyans waving green flags and shouting in support of Colonel Qaddafi.

Trying to demonstrate that he was still in control, Colonel Qaddafi appeared on television on Feb. 22, 2011, speaking from his residence on the grounds of an army barracks in Tripoli that still showed scars from when the United States bombed it in 1986.

In the long, rambling address, he blamed the unrest on "foreign hands," a small group of people distributing pills, and on brainwashing and the naïve desire of young people to imitate the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia. Without acknowledging the gravity of the crisis in the streets of the capital, he described himself in sweeping, megalomaniacal terms. "Muammar Qaddafi is history, resistance, liberty, glory, revolution," he declared.

- **The Colonel's Security Forces**

Colonel Qaddafi, who took power in a military coup, always kept the Libyan military too weak and divided to rebel against him. About half of Libya's relatively small 50,000-member army was made up of poorly trained and unreliable conscripts, according to the [Center for Strategic and International Studies](#). Many of its battalions were organized along tribal lines, ensuring their loyalty to their own clan rather than to top military commanders — a pattern evident in the defection of portions of the army to help protesters take the eastern city of Benghazi.

Distrustful of his own generals, Qaddafi built up an elaborate paramilitary force, accompanied by special segments of the regular army that reported primarily to his family. It was designed to check the army and subdue the population. At the top of that structure was his roughly 3,000-member revolutionary guard corps, which mainly guarded him personally.

- **A Culture of Corruption**

Libyan culture had become rife with corruption, kickbacks, strong-arm tactics and political patronage since the United States reopened trade with Colonel Qaddafi's government in 2004.

With an agreement on a settlement over Libya's role in the Pan Am bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, finally reached in 2008, officials at the [United States Commerce Department](#) began to serve as self-described matchmakers for American businesses, including Boeing, Raytheon, ConocoPhillips, Occidental, Caterpillar and Halliburton.

Colonel Qaddafi, the State Department said, was personally involved in many business decisions. He also learned how to hide money and investments in case sanctions were ever imposed again, as they were in 2011.

As American and international oil companies, telecommunications firms and contractors moved into the Libyan market, they discovered that Colonel Qaddafi or his loyalists often sought to extract millions of dollars in "signing bonuses" and "consultancy contracts" — or insisted that the strongman's sons get a piece of the action through shotgun partnerships. Colonel Qaddafi's huge cash deposits allowed him to pay his troops, African mercenaries and political

supporters in the early days of the uprising and initially diminished the impact of economic sanctions on his government.

- **The Ongoing Conflict**

On Feb. 25, security forces loyal to Colonel Qaddafi used gunfire to try to disperse thousands of protesters [who streamed out of mosques after prayers](#) to mount their first major challenge to the government's crackdown in Tripoli. Rebel leaders said they were sending forces from nearby cities and other parts of the country to join the fight.

A bold play by Colonel Qaddafi to prove that he was firmly in control of Libya appeared to backfire as foreign journalists he invited to the capital [discovered blocks of the city in open defiance](#). Witnesses described snipers and anti-aircraft guns firing at unarmed civilians, and security forces were removing the dead and wounded from streets and hospitals, apparently in an effort to hide the mounting toll.

The [United Nations Security Council](#) voted unanimously to impose sanctions on Colonel Qaddafi and his inner circle of advisers, and [called for an international war crimes investigation](#) into "widespread and systemic attacks" against Libyan citizens.

- Air power proved to be Colonel Qaddafi's biggest advantage, and rebels were unable to use bases and planes they captured in the east. Planes and helicopters gave the Qaddafi forces an additional advantage in moving ammunition and supplies, a crucial factor given the length of the Libyan coast between the rebel stronghold of Benghazi and Tripoli.

As Colonel Qaddafi's forces tried to retake a series of strategic oil towns on the east coast of the country, which fell early in the rebellion to antigovernment rebels, the West continued to debate what actions to take, including the creation of a possible no-flight zone to ground Libyan warplanes.

On March 12, the Arab League asked the [United Nations Security Council](#) to [impose a no-flight zone over Libya](#) in hopes of halting Colonel Qaddafi's attacks on his own people, providing the rebels a tincture of hope even as they were driven back from a long stretch of road and towns they had captured in the three-week war. That request appeared to tip the balance for President Obama and a majority of the Security Council, paving the way for a resolution allowing the use of force to protect civilians in Libya, a mandate that NATO countries interpreted broadly, launching strikes against Colonel Qaddafi's ground forces as well as destroying his air force.

- **Western Involvement**

After days of often acrimonious debate played out against a desperate clock, [the Security Council authorized member nations to take "all necessary measures" to protect civilians](#), diplomatic code words calling for military action. Benghazi erupted in celebration at news of the resolution's passage.

A military campaign against Colonel Qaddafi, under British and French leadership, was launched less than 48 hours later. American forces mounted a campaign to knock out Libya's air defense systems, firing volley after volley of Tomahawk missiles from nearby ships against missile, radar and communications centers. Within a week, allied air strikes had averted a rout by Colonel Qaddafi of Benghazi and established a no-fly zone over Libya.

The campaign, however, was dogged by friction over who should command the operation, with the United States eventually handing off its lead role to [NATO](#), and by uncertainty over its ultimate goal. Western leaders acknowledged that there was no endgame beyond the immediate United Nations authorization to protect Libyan civilians, and it was uncertain whether even military strikes would force Colonel Qaddafi from power.

In a nationally televised speech March 28, [President Obama](#) defended the American-led military assault, emphasizing that it would be limited and insisting that America had the responsibility and the international backing to stop what he characterized as a looming genocide. At the same time, he said, directing American troops to forcibly remove Colonel Qaddafi from power would be a step too far, and would "splinter" the international coalition.

- **The Endgame**

Six months of inconclusive fighting gave way within a matter of days to an [assault on Tripoli](#) that unfolded at a breakneck pace. By the night of Aug. 21, 2011, rebels surged into the city, meeting only sporadic resistance and setting off raucous street celebrations.

The report of Colonel Qaddafi's death by the highest ranking military officer in Libya's interim government on Oct. 20 appeared to put an end to the fierce manhunt for the former leader who remained on the lam in Libya for weeks after the fall of his government.

Libya's interim leaders had said they believed that some Qaddafi family members — possibly including Colonel Qaddafi and several of his sons — were hiding in the coastal town of Surt or in Bani Walid, another loyalist bastion that the anti-Qaddafi forces captured.

As rumor of his death spread in the capital, Tripoli, car horns blared as many celebrated in the streets.

After permitting four days of public viewing of the slowly decomposing corpses of Colonel Qaddafi, his son Muatassim and his former defense minister Abu Bakr Younes, the military council in Misurata said On Oct. 25 that the three were buried early in the day at a secret location.

[Unrest Reaches Several Cities in Libya - NYTimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/17/world/middleeast/17libya.html?sq=libya&st=cse&scp=2&pagewanted=print)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/17/world/middleeast/17libya.html?sq=libya&st=cse&scp=2&pagewanted=print>

- February 16, 2011

Protests Take Aim at Leader of Libya

By [ALAN COWELL](#)

- PARIS — The protests sweeping the Middle East reached [Libya](#) on Wednesday, with demonstrations against its leader, Col. [Muammar el-Qaddafi](#), reported in several cities.
- In Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city, a crowd armed with gasoline bombs and rocks protested outside a government office to demand the release of a human rights advocate, Reuters and other news agencies reported. The demonstrators, estimated at several hundred to several thousand, marched to the city's central square, where they clashed with riot police officers.
- In the city of Zentan, hundreds marched through the streets and set fire to security headquarters and a police station, according to The Associated Press. The A.P. also said that anti-Qaddafi demonstrations broke out in Al Beyda, east of Benghazi. In both cities, the protests were also spurred by the arrest of human rights advocates, news agencies reported.
- Protesters using social networking sites like [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) are calling for nationwide demonstrations on Thursday to demand Colonel Qaddafi's ouster.

Wednesday's eruptions were highly unusual because Colonel Qaddafi, who has ruled Libya for four decades, commands a pervasive security apparatus to keep dissent in check.

The unrest was not reported in Libya's state-run media, which focused instead on rallies held in support of Colonel Qaddafi in Tripoli, the capital, and other cities. The tactic was reminiscent of pro-government demonstrations unleashed in [Egypt](#) and [Yemen](#) to counter unrest.

- Colonel Qaddafi also proposed a doubling of state employees' salaries and released 110 suspected Islamic militants from jail, The A.P. reported.
- Libyan state television showed images of a pro-Qaddafi rally in Tripoli, where demonstrators chanted slogans critical of [Al Jazeera](#), the Qatar-based satellite broadcaster that provided close coverage of the events in Tunisia and Egypt that have rattled autocratic leaders of the Arab world.
- In Benghazi, a coastal city about 400 miles east of Tripoli, the [BBC](#) quoted witnesses as saying that the unrest was inspired by the arrest of a human rights lawyer, Fathi Terbil, who has been critical of the government. Around 2,000 people took part, the BBC said, quoting witnesses as saying the police used water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets. The number of injuries was unclear.
- Al Jazeera said [on its Web site](#) that Mr. Terbil, a spokesman for the families of prisoners slain when security forces opened fire during riots at the notorious Abu Salim prison in 1996, was later released.

Colonel Qaddafi took power in a bloodless coup in 1969 and has ruled his oil-rich country with an iron fist, seeking to spread Libya's influence in Africa. He has built his rule on a cult of personality and a network of family and tribal alliances supported by largess from Libya's oil revenues.

Internationally, he is regarded as an erratic and quixotic figure who travels with [an escort of female bodyguards](#) and likes to live in a large tent of the kind used by desert nomads.

- In 2003, Colonel Qaddafi moved to refurbish his image abroad, renouncing [terrorism](#) and [a program](#) to build nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and pledging to pay compensation for victims of the bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. Libya later pledged to pay compensation to [victims of a disco bombing](#) in Berlin in 1986.

While those moves eased some strains in Colonel Qaddafi's relationship with the outside world, Western governments have continued to question his human rights record.

[Popular Rage Encounters State Violence in Mideast - NYTimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/18/world/middleeast/18protests.html?scp=1&sq=Libya%20%20day%20rage&st=cse)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/18/world/middleeast/18protests.html?scp=1&sq=Libya%20%20day%20rage&st=cse>

- Popular Rage Is Met With Violence in Mideast
- By [JACK HEALY](#)

Published: February 17, 2011

- Thousands of Libyan protesters defied threats of violence and arrest in several cities on Thursday, mounting one of the sharpest challenges to Col. [Muammar el-Qaddafi](#)'s 40-year rule in a "day of rage" modeled on the uprisings coursing through neighboring countries.
- Despite Libya's heavy hand in controlling security and stifling dissent, protests were reported in the capital, Tripoli; Benghazi, the country's second largest city; and at least one other city.
- The accounts were muted by Libya's strict media controls, but human rights groups said that at least four people had been killed in clashes involving marchers, pro-government demonstrators and security forces. Other unconfirmed reports put the death toll as high as 20 and said that dozens more had been wounded.
- The Libya protests, which started earlier in the week, grew larger and bloodier as the government unleashed thousands of its supporters in countermarches.
- Mohammad Ali Abdallah, the deputy leader of an exiled opposition group, the National Front for the Salvation of Libya, said in a telephone interview from London that roads leading to Green Square in central Tripoli had been closed off and that people living nearby had been warned in text messages from the authorities not to join any protests.
- In Al Beyda, he said, hospital authorities had appealed for international help to cope with an influx of around 30 or 40 people with gunshot wounds after security forces opened fire on protests that erupted on Wednesday night and continued into early Thursday.

The Associated Press quoted opposition Web sites as saying that security forces had fired on demonstrators, killing several, and that the government was refusing to provide medical supplies needed to treat protesters.

[Specter of Rebel Rout Helps Shift U.S. Policy on Libya - NYTimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/africa/17diplomacy.html?ref=africa)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/africa/17diplomacy.html?ref=africa>

• Specter of Rebel Rout Helps Shift U.S. Policy on Libya

By [MARK LANDLER](#) and [DAN BILEFSKY](#)

Published: March 16, 2011

- WASHINGTON — The prospect of a deadly siege of the rebel stronghold in Benghazi, [Libya](#), has produced a striking shift in tone from the Obama administration, which is now pushing for the [United Nations](#) to authorize aerial bombing of Libyan tanks and heavy artillery to try to halt the advance of forces loyal to Col. [Muammar el-Qaddafi](#).
- The administration, which remains deeply reluctant to be drawn into an armed conflict in yet another Muslim country, is nevertheless backing a resolution in the Security Council that would give countries a broad range of options for aiding the Libyan rebels, including military steps that go well beyond a no-flight zone.
- Administration officials — who have been debating a no-flight zone for weeks — concluded that such a step now would be "too little, too late" for rebels who have been pushed back to Benghazi. That suggests more aggressive measures, which some military analysts have called a no-drive zone, to prevent Colonel Qaddafi from moving tanks and artillery into Benghazi.

The United States is insisting that any military action would have to be carried out by an international coalition, including Libya's Arab neighbors.

The rapid advance of forces loyal to Colonel Qaddafi, combined with rising calls from the Arab world to prevent a rout of the opposition, has changed the calculations of the administration, which had clung to a belief that interfering in a Middle East uprising could provoke an anti-American backlash.

- "The turning point was really the [Arab League](#) statement on Saturday," Secretary of State [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) said Wednesday to reporters traveling with her in Cairo. "That was an extraordinary statement in which the Arab League asked for Security Council action against one of its own members."

Mrs. Clinton said she was hopeful that the Security Council would vote no later than Thursday. The American ambassador to the United Nations, [Susan E. Rice](#), is in intensive negotiations over the language of a resolution, sponsored by Lebanon, another Arab state, and backed by France and Britain.

It is unclear how much the administration is willing to put on the line in Libya, given its deep aversion to being entangled in another war and its clear calculation that Libya does not constitute as vital a security interest to the United States as other countries in the region, notably Egypt or Saudi Arabia. Some administration officials voiced the hope that the mere threat of military action could prompt Colonel Qaddafi to show some restraint.

- Still, interviews with several administration officials suggested that events on the ground were forcing its hand. "The regime's military gains have gotten everyone's attention," said a senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity.
[President Obama](#) is under pressure from both foreign leaders and allies in Congress to take decisive action. The French president, [Nicolas Sarkozy](#), sent a letter to the United States and other members of the Security Council, urging them to vote for the Lebanese resolution authorizing a no-flight zone, saying that the world had only days, or even hours, to head off a Qaddafi victory.
On Wednesday, one of Colonel Qaddafi's sons, [Seif al-Islam](#), urged the rebels to leave the country, saying, "Within 48 hours everything will be finished. Our forces are almost in Benghazi."
- Senator [John Kerry](#), the Massachusetts Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he regretted that the debate in Washington over how to respond to Libya had dragged on so long, allowing Colonel Qaddafi to regain his footing.
"I don't like that we've lost this time," Mr. Kerry said during a speech in Washington. "It's compacted the choices, diminished the options. And it's changed the state of play somewhat."
Administration officials contend that a no-flight zone alone would not be effective, in part because they say it could not be set up before April.
Among the other measures being proposed by the United States: sending foreign soldiers to Libya to advise the rebels, or financing them with some of the \$32 billion belonging to the Qaddafi regime, which have been frozen by the [Treasury Department](#). Rebels could use the money to buy weapons, officials said.
- Neither of these steps, however, would come in time to stave off an assault by Colonel Qaddafi's forces on Benghazi.
"What everybody is focused on is drawing a line, literally in the sand, around Benghazi, to prevent Qaddafi's forces from capturing the city and staging a bloodbath," said Tom Malinowski, the Washington director of [Human Rights Watch](#). "If Qaddafi wins, it could kill the moment in the entire Middle East."
But more aggressive military options might make it difficult for a resolution to satisfy Russia and China, two veto-wielding members of the Security Council, which have both opposed such measures in the past. Germany, India and other council members have also expressed skepticism about a no-flight zone.
- On Wednesday, Russia pressed for a resolution calling for a cease-fire, but was rebuffed, said Vitaly Churkin, the Russian ambassador to the United Nations. He said Security Council members had added elements that were far-reaching and required serious political consideration.
With the United States already fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, the administration is fearful of straining an already overstretched military and of being seen as engaged in nation building in the region. "The United States is pretty busy with two wars, and we don't want a third," a senior official said.
But Britain, France, and Lebanon were adamant that time was running out. And Libya's deputy to the United Nations, Ibrahim Dabbashi, who last month broke with the Qaddafi regime, warned that if the international community did not intervene in the next 10 hours, there was a risk of genocide, as bands of mercenaries sent by Mr. Qaddafi attacked the rebel-held city of Ajdabiya.
- Privately, some European officials expressed frustration with the Obama administration, with one saying he believed it was supporting strong measures in an attempt to draw a veto.
The draft resolution would consist of a no-flight zone coupled with a beefing up of sanctions against Libya, including adding more names to the list of Libyan officials who face international travel bans.
Diplomats said a final draft resolution would be worked out Wednesday and likely put to a vote on Thursday. To pass the Security Council, it would need to win nine votes and to avoid a veto from any of the five permanent members: the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China.

Mark Landler reported from Washington and Dan Bilefsky from the United Nations. Helene Cooper contributed reporting from Washington and Steven Lee Myers from Cairo.

[Qaddafi Warns of Assault on Benghazi as U.N. Vote Nears - NYTimes.com](#)

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/18/world/africa/18libya.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

• Qaddafi Warns of Assault on Benghazi as U.N. Vote Nears

By [DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK](#) and [KAREEM FAHIM](#)

Published: March 17, 2011

- TRIPOLI, Libya — Colonel [Muammar el-Qaddafi](#) warned Benghazi residents on Thursday that an attack was imminent, as the [United Nations Security Council](#) seemed headed for a vote Thursday on a resolution authorizing not just a no-flight zone but additional steps to halt the movement of Colonel Qaddafi's forces.

- “We are coming tonight,” Colonel Qaddafi said. “You will come out from inside. Prepare yourselves from tonight. We will find you in your closets.”

Speaking on a call-in radio show, he promised amnesty for those “who throw their weapons away” but “no mercy or compassion” for those who fight.

- Rebel leaders doubted that the loyalist forces could mount an assault tonight, in that they were still fighting for control of Ajdabiya, 100 miles to the south of Benghazi, Thursday morning. But witnesses said there were skirmishes on the road to Benghazi in the afternoon, about 30 miles from Ajdabiya.

- The United States Ambassador to the [United Nations](#), [Susan E. Rice](#), said she has been working furiously on language for the resolution and hoped to bring the measure to a vote by Thursday afternoon.

With the advances made by the loyalist militia in the east, there is growing consensus in the Obama administration that imposing a no-flight zone would no longer make much of a difference, and that it should consider more aggressive airstrikes, which would make targets of Colonel Qaddafi’s tanks and heavy artillery — an option sometimes referred to as a no-drive zone. The United States or its allies could also send military personnel to advise and train the rebels, an official said.

- In the most strident verbal attack on Colonel Qaddafi to date by an American official, Secretary of State [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) said that the Western powers had little choice but to provide critical military backing for the rebels. “We want to support the opposition who are standing against the dictator,” she told an applauding audience in Tunisia on Thursday. “This is a man who has no conscience and will threaten anyone in his way.”

She added that Colonel Qaddafi would do “terrible things” to Libya and its neighbors. “It’s just in his nature. There are some creatures that are like that.”

- The Qaddafi government responded to the potential United Nations action with threats.

“Any foreign military act against Libya will expose all air and maritime traffic in the Mediterranean Sea to danger and civilian and military facilities will become targets of Libya’s counter-attack,” it said in a statement carried on Libyan television and the official news agency, JANA, Reuters reported. “The Mediterranean basin will face danger not just in the short-term, but also in the long-term.”

There were reports on Thursday that warplanes were already bombarding the outskirts of Benghazi for a second day, opening shots, perhaps, in the battle. And after days of batterings at the hands of Qaddafi loyalists, the opposition forces welcomed the promise of Western assistance.

- Mohamed, a rebel spokesman in the embattled, rebel held city of Misurata — the last major rebel foothold in the west — welcomed the new American tone. “We are very heartened yesterday by the moves in the United Nations Security Council and the urgency of the American stand,” he said, speaking over a satellite phone.

Forces loyal to Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi massed outside Misurata on Thursday, t apparently in preparation for an attack.

Musa Ibrahim, a spokesman for the Qaddafi government, confirmed that its forces were preparing to take Misurata just as they did Zawiyah, another western town that had been held by the rebels.

- “It starts in the beginning by surrounding the city,” he said, “then moving slowly to avoid casualties.” Rebels in Zawiyah described heavy casualties — at least dozens — during the Qaddafi forces’ siege of that city.

“It should be finished up tomorrow if not today,” Mr. Ibrahim added.

Rebels in Misurata said that Qaddafi forces had so far appeared to hold back, though electricity, water and telecommunications remained severed a day after fighters held the town against an onslaught of tank and artillery fire.

Loyalist military units surrounded the strategically located town of Ajdabiya in the east, and were massing for a push up the road to the rebel stronghold of Benghazi, 100 miles distant, rebel officials said.

- On Wednesday the rebels had seemed to make some gains in Ajdabiya, the gateway to Benghazi and the Egyptian border. The Qaddafi forces, which had appeared to capture the city with ease on Tuesday afternoon, had withdrawn to the perimeter by Tuesday night, residents said, as rebel fighters patrolled the city streets and the battle flared at surrounding checkpoints.

The Qaddafi forces delivered an airstrike, followed by shelling by tanks and mortars on Wednesday, residents and rebel leaders said. Doctors said at least two were killed Wednesday in addition to 26 deaths the day before.

By day’s end, it appeared that the rebels held control within the city, but that the loyalist forces had the city surrounded and could penetrate their opponents’ feeble defenses at will. Shortly after midnight on Wednesday, however, the explosions in Ajdabiya had given way to the sound of sporadic gunfights.

- “The quiet is uncomfortable,” said Dr. Ahmed al-Jnashi, a doctor at the hospital there. “It’s abnormal. The streets are empty. People are afraid.” He said 38 people had died in two days of fighting, including two children in a car hit by a mortar round.

Dr. Jnashi said witnesses who came to the hospital on Wednesday night said government troops controlled the city’s eastern gate, on the approach to Benghazi, securing it with four tanks. “There is no media in the city,” he said. “No photographers.”

Rebel leaders boasted about their broader arsenal of weaponry — some aged warplanes and a helicopter — as well as their putative gains in Ajdabiya. But there were signs that the Qaddafi forces were simply massing for a renewed assault. The Associated Press, brought to Ajdabiya by the Qaddafi government to document its progress against the rebels, reported hundreds of pro-Qaddafi troops with tanks and artillery waiting outside Ajdabiya’s western gates. Truckloads of ammunition and equipment were reported to be arriving as well.

- In Tripoli, the Qaddafi family sounded increasingly confident of victory. In an interview with a French television channel, Colonel Qaddafi's son [Seif al-Islam](#) told the rebels: "We don't want to kill, we don't want revenge. But you, traitors, mercenaries, you have committed crimes against the Libyan people: leave, go in peace to Egypt."

He added: "Military operations are over. Within 48 hours everything will be finished. Our forces are almost in Benghazi. Whatever the decision, it will be too late."

Colonel Qaddafi commands wide support in Tripoli, the capital and government stronghold, but perhaps not so deep. It seems divided between the manic celebration of those who liked to shout their allegiance and the shrugging resignation of those who admitted that they did not.

Asked how many Tripoli residents opposed Qaddafi, one shopkeeper said "100 percent." But he was fatalistic. "Qaddafi is very strong. He killed many people. What can we do? He is the president," even though Colonel Qaddafi holds no official title of office.

- At a café in the neighborhood of Tajura — an anti-Qaddafi hotbed — patrons initially insisted with unmistakable sarcasm that everything in Tripoli was just fine. One man beckoned a friend to come talk to the foreign reporter, and his friend declined with a gesture signaling police handcuffs and a finger drawn across his neck.

Then, in whispers, the patrons acknowledged the protests staged there after midday prayers on recent Fridays, and said not to expect any more this week. Would the West launch air strikes, they asked?

Despite the bluster by rebel leaders, some in the rebel strongholds were growing fatalistic about their hopes without international help. "People here are terrified," said Ahmed al-Hasi, a former diplomat who left Benghazi Wednesday for Bayda. "People are saying, 'We fight until we die, or we surrender and we are humiliated and then we are killed,'" he said. "It will be a very, very bloody fight, and I know I will fight to the end."

David D. Kirkpatrick reported from Tripoli, Libya, Kareem Fahim from Tobruk, Steven Lee Myers from Tunis, Tunisia, and Dan Bilefsky in the United Nations.

[Rebel supporter Dr. Rejeb Muftakhov Budabusa: "Both NATO and the rebels have already lost the war..."](#)

<http://www.mathaba.net/news/?x=628004>

• Rebel supporter Dr. Rejeb Muftakhov Budabusa: "Both NATO and the rebels have already lost the war..."

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- Amongst other things, this testimony by Dr. Budabusa, initially a supporter of the rebels, represents smoking-gun evidence that the current aggression against the Libyan people was **manufactured**, from day 1. He says, "I was told by participants in the events and their leaders the demonstrations were peaceful. The people there made many complaints to the authorities, but there was no aggression. And then the crowd began bombing, **someone opened fire on an armed military base, someone set fire to a police station, and all seemed to roll into a ditch.**"
- **There were some strange people with guns who started the violence in the streets**, young people began to engage in combat units, though an interesting game, and then the fighting started. Many, many people regret it, but from the day that NATO began the bombing of Benghazi nothing they did was right."
- By Leo Vershinin, Pravda [\[en français\]](#)

In a TV interview, Dr. Rejeb Muftakhov Budabusa, judging by numerous paraphrases and a more or less detailed digest, made a considerable impression on "all Paris" not having forgotten that in February and early March, he ardently advocated "peaceful demonstrations" in Benghazi and for "salvation from the punishment of Cyrenaica."

He's a fairly well-known, serious economist who belongs to the Benghazi elite, and was one of the most prominent dissidents. He then went to Paris, was no less a prominent figure in emigre circles, criticized Gaddafi, and in the early events was the representative of the "MSP" in France.

"Interesting to evaluate the past months," he said today, to La Rex and political scientist, Lev Vershinin.

An interview by Lev Vershinin:

- **What's going on in Libya?**

Mutiny? Feud? Reflection of aggression?

Frankly, the revolt was inspired by some Western countries that now have to show the map and their fight against Libya now is in the open. This war is unjust and illogical.

As you know, I welcomed the event, I welcomed the intervention. I'm from Benghazi, before emigrating myself, I opposed the Jamahiriya [Ed note: Jamahiriya means self-governing society, i.e. the Libyan government which is based on People's Conferences]. I was in Benghazi after the events, I have good relations with many there: the leaders, there are my friends, my former students, many of them took part in the events of February 17, and now almost all have moved away.

What happened in February was the justification for NATO intervention. But few would have thought then that the events themselves are the result of manipulation by NATO. It was triggered by violence, militant groups have been created, it was hoped to help the democratic world.

- But none of the protesters imagined that NATO was seeking to intervene in order to, let's be honest, to arrange a re-colonization of our country. In general, the opposition was not up-to-date and believed that Europe acts sincerely. But it appears that some Libyan officials had been informed, had a preliminary agreement with the Europeans, and know what's going on [an allusion apparently to Jabril, Kusa, Elmesmiri among others who defected from the Jamahiriya at the outset].

I was told by participants in the events and their leaders the demonstrations were peaceful. The people there made many complaints to the authorities, but there was no aggression. And then the crowd began bombing, someone opened fire on an armed military base, someone set fire to a police station, and all seemed to roll into a ditch.

There were some strange people with guns who started the violence in the streets, young people began to engage in combat units, though an interesting game, and then the fighting started. Many, many people regret it, but from the day that NATO began the bombing of Benghazi nothing they did was right.

- **Was it perceived in Benghazi that there were "NATO mistakes" and destruction of cities from the air?**

Well, as people may perceive it? In Benghazi normal people live who understand everything. Previously, NATO literally prayed for, and now it is clear that the protection of the population by Europeans was the least of their worries.

No one has forgotten February, we have nothing to be ashamed of. But people began to think about it and compare. People remember the details, and realize that there was no special unwelcome police repression, although they provoked, and then attacked army units.

- But what can ordinary citizens do now? Do not misunderstand me, myself I think that Gaddafi should withdraw from active work. I do not live at home because I thought he did not have long so did not hide it. I would also like more democratic devices than the general that are in place now. But, sorry, I do not want my country bombed, robbed and humiliated.

Even for me, a Benghaziian to the bone, Gaddafi, a Bedouin from Sirte, today has become a symbol of national unity, the only one whose name unites thousands of different people who are ready to fight against the aggressors. After the war, let's see...

In this sense, Europe miscalculated. We, Libyans, are calm, lazy, easygoing people, but we cannot be humiliated and insulted. There it happens to click.

- But they, with their own hands they made Gaddafi the new Omar Al Mukhtar, 2011. And in the end? They ruined it, they think that if he leaves, it's all over, but some people still cannot forgive and forget. Those who see the leaders of Europe are afraid for their families' future.

And there are those who, in general, do not want to fight, those who, in general, no matter who is in the driver's seat, start to sympathize with al-Gaddafi, because he fought against the aggressors, rather than trying to negotiate. Now his popularity is growing every day, more than he could ever even dream of. And the policy of democratic nations cannot.

- **And what's the solution, in your opinion?**

Both NATO and the rebels have already lost the war and what will happen tomorrow is anyone's guess.