

British Mission to Libya: “No Evidence of Gaddafi Violence”

By [Tom Rayner](#)

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

The Libyan government has renewed its call for independent fact-finding experts to come to the country to assess allegations of violence against civilians.

Speaking to Sky News, deputy foreign minister Khalid Kaim said: “We are asking for professional fact-finding missions.

“We asked the British government for this in the first week of the conflict but never received a reply. When we have claim and counter-claim, this is unacceptable.”

It comes as the United Nations outlines plans for a humanitarian team to be sent to the besieged city of Misratah.

It also follows the surprise finding of a British campaign group who claimed they had seen ‘no evidence’ that Colonel Gaddafi’s forces had attacked, bombed or killed any civilians in western Libya, despite widespread condemnation of the regime from organisations such as the UN, the African Court of Human Rights and the International Criminal Court.



The group spent a week in Tripoli and other towns

The mission, from British Civilians For Peace in Libya, led by Dave Roberts, of the Socialist Labour Party, spent a week touring Tripoli and a number of other towns in the west of Libya.

The 13-person group comprised a number of humanitarian campaigners involved in projects in Ramallah and Gaza, as well as film-makers, bloggers and political activists.

They travelled to Libya last week after forming a few days earlier.

It is unclear who funded their visit.

In their interim findings, the campaign group claimed they had been able to “corroborate civilian casualties and fatalities due to Nato bombing” but “could find no evidence that three areas of Tripoli cited in UN resolution 1973 had been subjected to government forces bombardment”.

We are deficient but we’re the only people doing this... there is a need for an independent international fact-finding intervention, Dave Roberts, British Civilians For Peace in Libya

Although Mr Roberts acknowledged the group's visit had been facilitated and overseen by minders from the Libyan Government and a Libyan non-governmental organisation (NGO), he claimed they had been able to speak freely to organisations and individuals in many towns in western Libya, although not those which have seen the most significant fighting in recent weeks, such as Misratah, or Yafran, Zintan and Nalut in the Nafusa mountain range.

Among the towns the campaign group visited were Zawiyah, Bin Walid, Tajoura, Fashloom and Suk Jooma.

The group's interim report also criticised media coverage of events in Libya, saying: "We are concerned that Western media outlets are failing in their duty to report on the conflict truthfully."

Speaking at the news conference in Tripoli, Mr Roberts referred to the restrictions that had been put on journalists, saying "one of the reasons you are being locked up is because your independence is being questioned".

British Civilians For Peace in Libya

DELEGATION MEMBERS:

David Roberts
Dr Anour Izzadine
Nidaa Sabbagh
Manzur Sadaq
Baboo Zanghar
Ishmahil Blagrove
Majed Sabbagh
Richard Mejuh
Mohamed Elhaddad
Martin Longhurst
Agab Eldoor Khamis
Mohiuddin Zakaria
Sukant Chandan



[Note: This section of the article is there to refute the conclusions of the British team, Global Research Editor]

However, when Sky's chief correspondent Stuart Ramsay put to the delegates that Sky News had recorded footage in Zawiyah which showed civilians and children being severely injured during government bombardment, it was unclear whether the campaigners had seen the report, or factored in reports like it in their conclusions.

Indeed, they admitted that they had not conducted any research into wider media reporting or into video posted online on social media networks by those who claim they witnessed the onslaughts.

Mr Roberts acknowledged that he and his fellow delegates were “not experts”, adding: “We are deficient but we’re the only people doing this... there is a need for an independent international fact-finding intervention by a professional, credible and acceptable organisation.”

When asked by journalists whether they had sought access to detainees in Libyan prisons, Mr Roberts said they had not but would take the suggestion on board.

Sources in Tripoli who oppose the Gaddafi government have told Sky News they believe several thousand people in the city have been arrested and continue to be detained on suspicion of holding anti-regime views.

In New York, a UN spokesman reiterated the importance of allowing humanitarian missions to access the country.

“The Libyan government said that it would ensure unimpeded access through the Tunisian border into Libya up to Tripoli and said it would ensure safe passage for humanitarian workers to enter areas where the government of Libya is in control,” he said.

We bring to the attention of Global Research readers the text of the Group’s Press Release published prior to the departure of the mission on April 9, 2011.

Advocating peace through civil means by Libyan, AU and UN initiatives in Libya Description 7th April, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRITISH PEACE DELEGATION HEADS FOR LIBYA TO CALL FOR AN END TO THE KILLING

LONDON - ENGLAND

A twenty-five person peace delegation made up of academics, lawyers, journalists and professionals will be departing for Libya on 9th April, to call for an immediate ceasefire in Libya and an end to all hostilities. This is the first half of a two stage process that will involve reconciliation talks with tribal leaders, government officials and key opposition figures. After almost three weeks of continual bombing by Coalition forces and heavy fighting in key cities, countless civilians have lost their lives and there appears to be no end in sight to the untold suffering of the people. An immediate end to the conflict and the protection of civilian lives is the aim of this mission.

The Civilians for Peace Delegation will be meeting with key officials and parties to the conflict and calling for:

1. An immediate ceasefire and an end to hostilities from all sides, including NATO.
2. Immediate peace talks between representatives of government and the opposition.
3. Fair and honest arbitration between the opposing forces.
4. The immediate positioning of credible and impartial International Observers to monitor a possible ceasefire.

5. Humanitarian corridors to provide Medical assistance, food and water to civilians in the affected areas.

In addition, the Civilians for Peace delegation will be calling on the African Union to take a lead role in arbitrating peace and for the United Nations to call an immediate meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the Libyan situation and the broadening crisis in the region.

The delegation will be leaving on Saturday 9th April @ 5.45pm from Terminal 4, Heathrow Airport. There will be a press statement made from Terminal 4 @ 2.30pm and members of the public are encouraged to attend and to support the delegation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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SPOKESPERSON: Sukant Chandan - Tel: (+44 7854147868)

MEDIA: Ishmahil Blagrove - Tel: (+44 7958287687) (read less) 7th April, 2011 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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