

# NATO's War in Libya: Protecting to Kill, Killing to Protect...

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## ***NATO bombings, al-Qaeda and the Arab Spring***

*In war, truth is the first casualty. Words of wisdom, gifted to us by Aeschylus.*

*Truer than ever now, two thousand years later, as NATO bombs Libya in the name of 'protecting' its civilians.*

But isn't there a paradox here, asks young Turkish academic Ayça Çubukçu. "When "the international community" intervenes militarily in Libya under a cosmopolitan obligation to protect Libyans as humans, it will be killing Libyans and others. And if the Interim Transitional National Council is killing Libyans and others, it is also claiming to be protecting Libyans' ([Killing in the Name of: Libya, Sovereignty, Humanity, Jadaliyya, March 11, 2011](#)).

It is a paradox that we must not shy away from, she writes, or else we will preclude other questions. When the world is reminded of its responsibility to protect Libyans from the 'excessive use of force' by the Gaddafi government, when it is urged to prevent crimes against humanity, when the UN or NATO, as if they were a 'shorthand for the world' are tasked with this responsibility, we forget to ask, 'Why? Why this responsibility, why upon the UN or NATO, why upon "the world," why now, why in Libya, and not, say, not in Gaza?'

Killing Libyans, in order, to protect Libyans. Protecting Libyans, in order, to kill Libyans. The war against Libya is based on fraudulence. Fabrication. Lies.

The UN Security Council, as Mahdi Nazemroaya details in 'Libya and the Big Lie: Using Human Rights Organizations to Launch Wars' passed two resolutions against Libya on the basis of '[unproven' claims](#)'. Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was killing his own people in Benghazi and other parts of the country. He'd ordered Libyan forces to kill 6,000 people. He'd hired African mercenaries to massacre civilians. Jet attacks were being conducted to quell the 'uprising.' These claims were widely disseminated. They provided the basis for Libya to be referred to the UN Security Council at the UN headquarters in New York City, for Libya to be kicked out of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva ('Libya and the Big Lie: Using Human Rights Organizations to Launch Wars,' Global Research, September 29, 2011).

International action should be taken against Libya, demanded the Libyan League for Human Rights (LLHR) and 70 non-governmental organisations in letters sent to president Obama, the European Union's High Representative Catherine Ashton, and the UN secretary general Ban-ki Moon, on February 21, 2011. The LLHR and NGOs invoked the Responsibility to Protect doctrine (RTP).

But out of the coalition, points out Nazemroaya, only 20 assert to be actually human rights groups. Plus, interestingly enough, the LLHR is tied to the International Federation of Human Rights which is based in France, which has links to the National Endowment for Democracy. Some readers may well remember how the NED had been characterised by its first acting president, [`A lot of what we \[the NED\] do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA.`](#)

When asked to provide `evidence` of the Benghazi massacres, LLHR's general secretary Dr Sliman Bouchuiguir, was unable to.

But lack of evidence or unproven claims did not deter the U.N. Security Council from sanctioning the Libyan Arab Jamahuriya on the basis of the letter and the claims made by the LLHR. Nor did it hinder the U.N. Security Council from approving military action in Libya. No one has bothered to investigate the claims against Gaddafi, pointed out the Indian ambassador to the UN, the only person to do so as India, alongwith Russia, China, Germany and Brazil abstained from voting.

The unsubstantiated claims have not prevented NATO from launching its war on Libya last March. From conducting 24,140 sorties since, including [9,010 strike sorties](#). It's a `humanitarian` war, we are repeatedly told.

The ball of lies rolled on to the Hague, it inspired the International Criminal Court to issue an arrest warrant in May against the Libyan leader, accusing him of crimes against humanity (for the sake of record, I'm no admirer of Gaddafi, see `The Opportunity of a Century.' Western Military Intervention in Libya?, [New Age, February 28, 2011](#)).

The court, reports BBC News, had grounds to believe Gaddafi had ordered attacks on civilians during Libya's four-month uprising. [`Thousands of people are believed to have been killed in the conflict.`](#) Warrants were also issued for two of Gaddafi's top aides - his son Saif al-Islam and intelligence chief Abdullah al-Sanussi. Chief ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said, `Col Gaddafi must be arrested in order to protect civilians.' The warrants were welcomed by the Nato Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen because "It reinforces the reason for Nato's mission to protect the Libyan people from Gaddafi's forces."

White House spokesperson Jay Carney chimed in, there must be `justice and accountability.' But what about justice for the people of Iraq, and the accountability of Bush & Co., perpetrators of the Mother of All Lies, the Weapons of Mass Destruction lie? The British foreign secretary William Hague said those responsible for "atrocities" must be held to account. But what about holding former British foreign secretary Jack Straw to account for `atrocities' in Iraq, for, had he not insisted, `Saddam's removal is necessary to eradicate the threat from his weapons of mass destruction'? The French president Nicolas Sarkozy said of Gaddafi: "After 41 years of dictatorship, it is perhaps time to stop, for him to leave power" (BBC News, June 27, 2011). But perhaps it is time for western leaders who insist on delivering democracy and freedom throughout the world, to stop? For them, to leave power?

Gaddafi had ordered airstrikes against his people to quell discontent, went the claim. It was reported as well by al Jazeera and the BBC on February 22-the Libyan government had inflicted air strikes on Benghazi, Libya's largest city, [and on the capital Tripoli](#). However, the Russian military, which had monitored the unrest via satellite from the very beginning, said its satellite images show that `nothing of the sort was going on on the ground.' According to the Russian military, `as far as they are concerned, the attacks some media were reporting

have never occurred' ( `Airstrikes in Libya did not take place' - [Russian military, RT, March 01, 2011](#)).

As anti-war groups gather evidence, including pictures and videos of [war crimes being committed by NATO and NATO-backed rebels](#), it is indisputably clear that NATO bombings and the civil war fomented by the Western powers have claimed far more lives than were ever threatened by the Gaddafi regime (Bill van Auken, Mass killing and humanitarian disaster in NATO siege of Sirte, [WSWS, September 27, 2011](#)). The killing and destruction continues more than six months after NATO began its bombing campaign and more than a month after it proclaimed the fall of the Gaddafi regime.

Civilian targets, for NATO, are legitimate, and these have included one or more hospitals, a clinic, factories, warehouses, agricultural sites, schools, a university, one or more mosques, non-military related infrastructure, a food storage facility, a water-purifying plant and others. No humanitarian crisis existed until NATO arrived, writes Stephen Lendman, pointing out that in paramilitary controlled areas, Amnesty International had confirmed only 110 pro and anti-Gaddafi supporter deaths combined, `most likely more of the former than latter as rebel cutthroats rampaged through areas they occupy.' Currently, the numbers of dead and injured civilians have escalated to many times more that number, `largely from NATO attacks.' He reminds us that before the conflict had erupted, `Libyans had the region's highest standard of living and highest life expectancy in Africa because Gaddafi's oil wealth provided healthcare, education, housing assistance and other social benefits. Imperial war, of course, changed things. Libyans now hang on to survive' ([Daily NATO War Crimes in Libya, July 29, 2011](#)).

Further surprises are in store for those who take the US-led war on terror at face value, who believe in presidents Bush and Obama when they say that al-Qaeda, being a terrorist organisation, is America's arch enemy number one ([Obama sets Qaeda defeat as top goal in Afghanistan, Reuters, March 27, 2009](#)). One that is accepted by the UN Security Council, the EU, and NATO. Well, sorry, to shatter illusions but as it so happens the [jihadists and NATO are working together in Libya](#). Western media's "pro-democracy" rebels are led by Al Qaeda paramilitary brigades under the supervision of NATO Special Forces. `The "Liberation" of Tripoli was carried out by [none other than] "former" members of the Libya Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG).' These "former" Al Qaeda affiliated brigades, writes Michel Chossudovsky, constitute the backbone of the "pro-democracy" rebellion (The "Liberation" of Libya: NATO Special Forces and Al Qaeda Join Hands, [Global Research August 28, 2011](#)).

This has been confirmed by Susan Lindaeur, a former CIA asset who claims to have `extremely good ties, and knowledge, and depth of resources inside Libya today.' In a RT interview, Lindaeur said, `What I'm finding is video documentation that NATO rebels are actually the same Al-Qaeda fighters that we've been dealing with in Iraq and Afghanistan, who've now come home to Libya...' ([CIA Asset: Libyan Opposition is al-Qaeda, RT, September 12, 2011](#)).

In the meanwhile, Libya's new 'leader' Mustafa Abdel Jalil, the National Transitional Council chairman, has declared that Sharia law will provide the basis to guide the country after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. 'We seek a state of law, prosperity and one where sharia is the main source for legislation, and this requires many things and conditions' ([Daily Mail, September 13, 2011](#)).

Gaddafi, Lindaeur points out, is `a socialist Muslim, and he has a very different agenda that

is not [the reactionary Islamists' interpretation of] Shariah [Islamic law]. Gaddafi has a very strong record on women's rights: Women have the right to education, hold property, divorce, hold jobs, have income—many rights that other women in the Arab world do not have. So he is a moderate. And he is not involved in any terrorism at all. [That \[rumor\] is absolutely foolishness.](#)'

But, why attack Libya? Is it the oil? Samir Amin thinks not, no, 'it's not oil that they [the US] are after — they already have that. Their goal is to put Libya under their tutelage to establish Africom (US military command for Africa),' currently based in Stuttgart (Germany). 'African countries had rejected its establishment in Africa' (Arab revolts changing everything, [Monthly Review Magazine, Sunday, August 21, 2011](#)).

Whereas James Petras thinks it was the 'Arab spring,' the popular uprisings which caused the NATO countries to shift abruptly from embracing Gaddafi to launching 'a brutal scorched-earth invasion of Libya in a matter of months.' The near total destruction of Libya, a secular regime with the highest standard of living in Africa, was meant to be a lesson, he says. A message from the imperialists to the newly aroused masses of North Africa, Asia and Latin America: The fate of Libya awaits any regime which aspires to greater independence and questions the ascendancy of Euro-American power (NATO's War Crimes in Libya: Who Grieves for the [Fallen Heroes? September 10, 2011](#)).

What occurred in Libya was no popular uprising but purely NATO's war, 'From the beginning the 'rebels' depended completely on the military, political, diplomatic and media power of NATO, without which the de facto mercenaries would not have lasted a month, holed up in Benghazi.'

A bloody sight. NATO's leaders. Protecting to kill, killing to protect.

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