

Statement on Libya

The uprising against the Qaddafi-led regime and the resulting armed conflict in Libya is growing more intense, and the danger of foreign military intervention by the major imperialist powers including Canada looms larger with each passing day. Indeed, NATO commandoes are already reported to be inside the country, training the insurgent forces in Eastern Libya, and a massive naval armada is being assembled offshore preparing for a full-scale assault.

The turmoil and resulting loss of life in Libya is horrendous and deeply regrettable; however this crisis must be resolved by the Libyan people themselves, not through foreign interference. The Communist Party of Canada is categorically opposed to imperialist intervention in any form, or under any pretext.

Efforts to mediate a peaceful, political settlement to the conflict under the aegis of the African Union have been stymied by the imperialist powers which seek to impose a military solution that would advance their economic and political interests not only in Libya but also throughout North Africa and the Middle East as a whole.

The mainstream corporate media equates the uprising in Libya with the previous uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, but they are not at all the same. The opposition to the Qaddafi-led regime is multi-layered and very heterogeneous. On one hand, they include those justifiably demanding greater democratic rights and freedom of expression, and an immediate end to political suppression and human rights abuses by the current government.

Deteriorating socio-economic conditions have also fed the fire of revolt. The social advances ushered in by the 1969 revolution which overthrew the monarchic regime significantly improved the living conditions of the Libyan working class. Financed largely through the revenues of the nationalized oil industry, universal access to quality healthcare, education (including post-secondary studies) and social services were all greatly expanded and improved, and the real incomes of the people soared, helping Libya achieve the highest level of GNP per-capita income and human development index ranking in all of Africa. However since the early 1990s, there has been a steady rollback in progressive social policies, under the tutelage of the IMF. A number of key industries were privatized, wealth became ever more concentrated in the hands of the well-connected, unemployment (especially among youth) grew substantially, and social disparities widened along both class and regional lines, aggravating long-standing tribal relations inside the country.

There can be no doubt that these political and socio-economic grievances and contradictions laid the objective basis for the resulting protest movement. The

unacceptable actions of the Qaddafi-led regime in violently suppressing the largely peaceful protests further inflamed the situation, widening the social base of the opposition.

On the other hand however, the opposition forces are also composed of reactionary and imperialist-sponsored elements, including pro-monarchist forces which have never forgiven the '69 revolution for dethroning King Idris, as well as well-financed pro-imperialist groupings such as the so-called "National Front for the Salvation of Libya" which is bankrolled by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious CIA-run conduit which finances counter-revolutionary forces around the globe (in Cuba, Venezuela, etc.). The NFSL has maintained a para-military training base for a 'liberation army' across the Libya-Egypt border for years, armed and financed by U.S. imperialism.

These are the reactionary forces which the imperialist powers are actively supporting and promoting – a puppet 'government-in-waiting' that U.S. imperialism and its allies, including Canada, plan to impose on the Libyan people once they have crushed the Qaddafi regime. In this sense, it is fully accurate to speak of an imperialist conspiracy to impose its own solution through military force – either unilaterally or under the cover of the UN Security Council – with the aim of securing Libya's oil resources, and tilting the political-economic and strategic balance of forces throughout the region back in its favour.

That is why it is absolutely crucial that the peace and labour movements and all progressive, anti-imperialist and peace-loving people across Canada do everything possible to:

- prevent such an imperialist-led military 'solution' to the Libyan crisis, hypocritically disguised as a "humanitarian intervention";
- to oppose the threatened imposition of a "no-fly zone" which would constitute an act of war under international law;
- to condemn the aggressive role of the Harper Conservative government in this dangerous misadventure;
- to demand the immediate recall of the *HMCS Charlottetown*, a heavily-armed warship it has sent as part of the NATO military build-up;
- to oppose that UN-imposed sanctions on Libya which will inflict further pain on the already suffering masses of Libyan people;
- to uphold the national sovereignty of Libya; and
- to promote a peaceful, political solution to this crisis.

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