

# Hands Off Libya - No Foreign Intervention! For a Peaceful Political Solution to the Conflict! Keep Canadian Military at Home!

On Thursday of this week, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1973, authorizing the imposition of a “no-fly zone” on Libya and the use of “all necessary measures” short of an invasion – including naval blockades, bombardment and air strikes – against Col. Muammar Gaddafi’s forces in order “to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas” in the rebel-held Eastern part of Libya. The resolution also imposes a ban on all air travel (including civilian flights) in Libyan airspace, toughens the arms embargo, and widens the freeze of offshore Libyan assets.

In reality, the UN decision hands the U.S. and its NATO allies a *carte blanche* to launch a full-scale onslaught against Tripoli and other government-held areas. Res. 1973 goes far beyond the “no-fly zone” concept to include attacks on Libyan military units and equipment which “threaten” the population, essentially expanding the scope of potential military action to include virtually every conceivable form of attack. Such a military assault will further enflame the internal conflict which has already exacted a heavy toll amongst the Libyan population, and will put “civilians and civilian-populated areas” at greater, rather than lesser risk.

**The Communist Party of Canada condemns this Security Council action which was bullied through by the U.S., Britain and France**, passing by a vote of 10-0 with 5 abstentions (China, Russia, Brazil, India and Germany), under the dangerous and thoroughly hypocritical doctrine of “humanitarian interventionism”. This doctrine is dangerous because it provides a convenient pretext to override one of the most central and fundamental principles of the U.N. Charter – namely, respect for the national and territorial sovereignty of *all*

member-states – thus providing official sanction for wars of aggression and occupation by the imperialist powers under the cover of ‘international humanitarian relief’.

Its invocation by Washington and its imperialist allies is also outrageously hypocritical, when US & NATO forces have inflicted thousands of casualties on innocent civilians in wars of occupation in



Afghanistan and Iraq, and continue to do so up to the present day. Where is this burning concern “to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas” in these countries, and in Pakistan, where the U.S. has repeatedly launched unmanned drone attacks causing hundreds additional deaths among unarmed civilians?

Or take what is happening right now in Bahrain and Yemen, where reactionary and dictatorial governments are slaughtering unarmed civilian protestors in broad daylight – protestors whose only ‘crime’ is that they have peacefully taken to the

streets to demand democratic change. Or the repeated Israeli massacres of Palestinians in Gaza and the other occupied territories – surely the most outrageous case of imperialist double standards. Why have Washington, London and Paris remained so conspicuously silent in the face of these outrageous atrocities?

The answer is very simple: because these are ‘US-friendly’ client states which faithfully serve imperialist interests in the region. In Libya, on the other hand, the imperialist powers want a ‘regime change’ to replace Gaddafi with a more ‘predictable’ and pliant puppet government, and to strengthen their hegemony in North Africa & the Middle East where their ‘influence’ (a.k.a. their economic interests centred on control of the region’s vital oil resources) is increasingly threatened by the rising tide of democratic upsurge throughout the Arab world.

In response to the passage of the UN resolution, the Libyan government has announced an immediate cessation of military action and is calling for an “open dialogue” to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Tripoli has

also invited the United Nations and other international organizations such as the African Union to send fact-finding missions to the country to confirm the ceasefire decision, and to pave the way to a negotiated settlement.

Many may question whether Gaddafi’s ceasefire offer is genuine. Unfortunately, the western powers are already dismissing this initiative without even bothering to confirm the intentions of the Libyan regime, and are preparing to launch military action, clearly revealing their true intent to impose regime change through military aggression.

However bad the current situation, **it will be much worse with a foreign invasion.** The Communist Party urges all Canadians who oppose war and aggression to speak out to demand that our government withdraw our troops and warships now, and to demand that the imperialist powers, including Canada, refrain from military aggression against Libya and instead support a peaceful resolution to this crisis. Let the Libyan people settle themselves with a political solution. **“Hands off Libya!”**



*Libyan Foreign Minister Kussa announcing ceasefire*

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