

## LIBYA CONFLICT: SITUATION UPDATE

MARCH 2011

**MARCH 31:** The Pentagon indicated it would soon withdraw jet fighters and ground-attack planes from the NATO-led campaign in Libya in the coming days. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, testifying in front of the House Armed Services Committee, indicated that U.S. forces would “significantly ramp down” their commitment in Libya, while still providing unique capabilities that other nations do not have. According to Gates, during Operation Odyssey Dawn, the United States provided the bulk of air assets, firepower, logistics and command and control. He said the U.S. role will concentrate in electronic attack, aerial refueling, lift, search and rescue, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support. U.S. strike aircraft including AC-130s and A-10 ground-attack planes would still remain on standby in case NATO requested them. NATO has stated it has 205 alliance jets and 21 naval vessels involved in the Libya operation. ([Department of Defense](#), [LA Times](#))

**MARCH 31:** Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton indicated that the United States was unlikely to provide arms to the rebels. Gates said the United States should provide communications, surveillance and other support. Clinton was described as cautious due to the possible ties between some rebels and al-Qaeda. Without U.S. arms, the French would be the only coalition member providing the rebels with weapons and training. NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said as far as NATO was concerned the arms embargo on Libya applied to both rebels and pro-Qaddafi forces. ([New York Times](#), [Wall Street Journal](#))

**MARCH 31:** NATO members warned rebels not to attack civilians as they continued to fight pro-Qaddafi forces. An unnamed senior Obama administration official said, “We’ve been conveying a message to the rebels that we will be compelled to defend civilians, whether pro-Qaddafi or pro-opposition.” U.S. officials have indicated that Qaddafi forces were arming civilians in Sirte, Qaddafi’s hometown, and these civilians were fighting alongside Libyan troops. ([New York Times](#))

**MARCH 31:** French officials warned that the opening of Libya’s vast arms depots by rebels and pro-Qaddafi troops was raising concerns that shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles could find their way into the hands of terrorists, as dozens of the weapons have disappeared. ([Department of Defense](#))

**MARCH 31:** Ali Abdussalam el-Treki, a former Foreign Minister and UN ambassador, who had worked in Qaddafi’s inner-circle for decades, had defected to Egypt. This was the second high-level defection from Qaddafi’s inner-circle, as Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa defected to the United Kingdom. ([New York Times](#), [al-Jazeera](#), [Washington Post](#))

**MARCH 31:** NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen announced NATO had assumed full command of Coalition operations in Libya from U.S. Africa Command. The NATO campaign, dubbed Operation Unified Protector, is under the command of Canadian Lt. Gen. Charles Bouchard. ([Department of Defense](#))

**MARCH 31:** Clandestine CIA operatives have been on the ground in Libya for several weeks gathering intelligence for military airstrikes and to liaison and vet the rebels. The number of CIA operatives is unknown; many of them came from the CIA’s Tripoli station while others have more recently arrived from a CIA staging ground in the UAE. U.S. officials said the CIA and British operatives were not directing the rebel forces, which recently suffered a major reversal at Sirte. President Obama signed a secret finding several weeks ago giving the CIA the authority to provide arms and other support to the rebels, however, no arms have been shipped yet due to internal debates in the administration. There are also dozens of British SAS, SBS and MI6 intelligence officers are working alongside the Libyan rebels and locating Qaddafi’s surface-to-air missile batteries. ([New York Times](#), [Military Times](#), [Washington Post](#))

MARCH 31: U.S. officials hailed the defection of Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa as an example of the growing splits inside Qaddafi's inner circle. Koussa and other senior Libyan officials have recently reached out to at least 12 countries to discuss either defections or ways to end the Libyan conflict. There is hope inside the Obama administration that a larger rebellion could take place. Koussa flew from Tunisia aboard a private jet to a noncommercial British airfield in Farnborough, southwest of London. He has not been promised or granted immunity by the British. Koussa was the head of Qaddafi's intelligence service from 1995 to 2009, and is believed to be one of the masterminds behind many of Libya's acts of state-sponsored terrorism, including the Lockerbie bombing in 1988 that killed 270 people including 189 Americans. ([Wall Street Journal](#), [New York Times](#), [BBC](#))

MARCH 30: The U.S. military has been employing U-2 spy planes, Global Hawk drone, and an E-8 Joint JSTARS, to track Libyan troop movements. The Air Force also has Predator drones in reserve. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 30: According to U.S. and NATO officials, pro-Qaddafi forces have adopted new tactics after suffering numerous airstrikes on their tanks and armored vehicles. Qaddafi's troops have left their heavy armor behind and have begun using technical and civilian minivans, sedans and SUVs, making them difficult to distinguish from rebel forces and civilians. ([Associated Press](#))

MARCH 30: U.S. officials have said that Libyan rebels are not subject to U.S. sanctions on the Qaddafi regime provided the rebels avoid business regime entities, potentially allowing them to sell oil from rebel-held areas. There are, however, legal questions surrounding any potential rebel oil sales. Rebels do not have legal title to oilfields, lift stations and pipelines and terminals and oil companies and insurance companies would be unlikely to risk sending tankers and personnel to the area. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 30: White House Press Secretary Jay Carney has stated the administration had not reached a decision to provide arms to the rebels. The White House said it is assessing options for "all types of assistance." British Foreign Secretary William Hague said his government has made no decision about arming the rebels and that "we want to know about any links with al-Qaeda." French Defence Minister Gerard Longuet stated arms assistance was not compatible with UNSCR 1973. ([Military Times](#), [Washington Post](#), [BBC](#))

MARCH 30: Of the estimated \$550 million dollars spent by the United States in the Libya campaign so far, the U.S. Air Force has spent approximately \$50 million, or \$4 million per day, depending on the expenditure of munitions. U.S. expenditures are expected to level out at about \$40 million a month according to Pentagon officials. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz told the Senate Appropriations Committee that the Air Force's new F-22 fighter, which was expected to be used early on in the Libya campaign, would be used "in the early days" of a Libyan operation, had not been used because there are no F-22s based in Europe or the Middle East and the warplanes were poorly suited for air to ground operations. ([The Hill](#))

MARCH 30: A NATO airstrike against a Libyan ammunition depot in Mizdah, approximately 100 miles south of Tripoli, caused rockets to go off and hit the town's hospital, an apartment complex and a house. Several civilians were injured but there were no deaths reported. ([LA Times](#))

MARCH 30: British Prime Minister David Cameron informed British lawmakers that "helping" the Libyan rebels arm themselves for defense would not be counter to UNSCR 1973's arms embargo on Libya. Belgium and Denmark have stated they are against arming the rebels. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 30: There were no allied airstrikes on pro-Qaddafi forces in Sirte as rebel forces advanced on the city and were routed by superior firepower from Qaddafi's troops entrenched with rockets, artillery and tanks outside of Sirte at

the town of Bin Jawwad. The rebels reportedly retreated en masse to Uqaylah, reportedly retreating from the strategic cities of Ras Lanuf and Brega. ([LA Times](#), [BBC](#))

MARCH 30: Ugandan officials have said President Yoweri Museveni would welcome Qaddafi to live in exile in Uganda. Uganda is the first country to offer Qaddafi exile. ([Associated Press](#))

MARCH 29: U.S. intelligence agencies have said that there are some Islamists fighters with potential ties to al-Qaeda among the anti-Qaddafi rebels, but the number was relatively small and they played a limited role. A former Libyan Islamic Fighting Group leader Noman Benotman estimated that around a thousand “freelance jihadists” are fighting among the anti-Qaddafi rebels. He also said al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, an al-Qaeda offshoot in North Africa, has tried but failed to co-opt the leadership of the rebel movement. ([Washington Times](#), [Wall Street Journal](#))

MARCH 29: There is an intense debate inside the Obama administration about whether to supply weapons to the rebels. Some officials believe that providing arms would deepen U.S. involvement and that some rebels have links to al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda affiliates. France had been strongly pushing the Obama administration to begin arming the rebels, while rebel leader Mahmoud Shammam, said they would welcome arms along with political support. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 29: At the London Conference on Libya, allies created a contact group to lead enforcement of U.N. sanctions and organized political efforts against Qaddafi and a second trip to Libya was expected to be made by the U.N. Special Envoy Abdelilah Khatib, the former Foreign Minister of Jordan. Khatib was expected to negotiate terms for Qaddafi’s exit from the Libya; although there appears to be contention that if Qaddafi did abdicate whether any deal would include immunity from possible war crimes trials. ([LA Times](#))

MARCH 29: A Navy P-3C Orion launched several AGM-65F air-to-surface missiles at the Libyan Coast Guard vessel Vittoria, a 12-meter patrol craft, which was attacking merchant vessels in the port city of Misrata—where a rebel forces remains besieged by pro-Qaddafi forces and has reportedly being resupplied by rebel ships from Benghazi—forcing it to beach. The Orion was joined by an Air Force A-10 and the U.S. guided-missile destroyer Barry, the A-10 strafed two smaller Libyan ships, destroying one and forcing the crew to abandon the other. ([Military Times](#))

MARCH 29: The U.S. guided-missile destroyer Barry launched 22 Tomahawk cruise missiles at weapon storage sites near Tripoli. The pace of U.S. airstrikes has increased recently, there were reportedly 119 strikes on Monday, 107 on Sunday and 88 on Saturday. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 29: U.S. Admiral James Stavridis, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, said intelligence agencies had found “flickers” of an al-Qaeda or Hezbollah presence in the rebels but that there was no detailed portrait of the emerging Libyan opposition. ([Daily Telegraph](#))

MARCH 29: The Pentagon has stated that the military campaign in Libya has cost about \$550 million so far, which is largely for bombs and missiles. This is the first official price tag for operations in Libya released so far. ([Boston Globe](#), [Reuters](#))

MARCH 29: At a conference in London to discuss the future of Libya, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with the Libyan Interim National Council’s Mahmoud Jabril, a former head of Libya’s economic planning council. It was their second meeting in two weeks. The Obama administration is also planning to send a diplomatic liaison to the rebel capital of Benghazi to open up communications with the rebel government. Chris Stevens, who was formerly the Charge d’Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, has been appointed to communicate with the Libyan opposition. The United States is reportedly trying to make the \$30 billion dollars in Qaddafi’s funds frozen by the U.S. Treasury available to the rebels. ([CNN](#))

MARCH 29: Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt was to ask parliament today to send eight Gripen fighter jets to join Coalition operations in Libya, but he insisted they not be used in ground strikes. This would be the first mission abroad for the Swedish Air force since the early 1960s. ([Daily Telegraph](#), [Stockholm News](#))

MARCH 28: President Obama delivered a primetime address arguing that the U.S. military campaign in Libya was necessary to avoid a massacre at Benghazi, that the mission was in America's interests but the military role would be limited to protecting civilians, not regime change. ([White House](#), [Washington Post](#))

MARCH 28: The U.S. military employed two AC-130 flying gunships, six A-10 tank-killer attack aircraft and two B-1B bombers against Libyan ground forces over the weekend, targeting enemy ground troops and supply convoys. The AC-130s are flying out of an air base in Italy. They were requested by Gen. Carter Ham, who said they are likely to continue being used over Libya to ratchet up the pressure on Qaddafi's forces. ([Washington Post](#), [New York Times](#))

MARCH 28: Coalition aircraft have begun psychological operations against pro-Qaddafi forces, sending messages in Arabic and English telling Libyan soldiers to leave their posts and go home. U.S. intelligence-gathering aircraft, such as the EC-130J Commando Solo have also taken the lead in the Coalition in intercepting Libyan radio transmissions and using the information to relay attacks on Libyan ground forces. Global Hawk drones have also been tracking Libyan ground force movements, providing intelligence to E-3 Sentry AWACS that relay targets to warplanes for attack. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 28: U.S. warplanes also attacked three Libyan vessels off the contested western port of Misrata. Besieged rebel forces in Misrata were reportedly resupplied by a boat delivering weapons and ammunition from Benghazi, and received three resupply boats on Sunday, said Aiman Abu-Bakr, a rebel leader. One Libyan patrol boat, the Vittoria, was forced to beach. Two smaller vessels were hit and one sank. It was the first known incident of attacks at sea since Coalition forces began operations in Libya. ([Wall Street Journal](#), [New York Times](#))

MARCH 28: The United States launched six Tomahawk cruise missiles against the headquarters of Qaddafi's elite 32nd Brigade, one of the regime's most loyal units and is highly active in terms of attacking civilians. Also struck were several targets around Tripoli and Sabha, mostly ammunition stores, bunkers, and an SA-6 site in Tripoli. In the last 24 hours, the coalition has flown 178 sorties, most of which were airstrikes. Airstrikes have also been conducted around command-and-control sites in Sirte. So far in the campaign, U.S. forces have fired 199 Tomahawks, Coalition forces have fired seven, and approximately 600 precision-guided munitions have been used, 455 by the U.S., and 147 by the Coalition in approximately 983 sorties. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 28: According to General Carter F. Ham, the commander of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), "The regime still vastly overmatches opposition forces militarily." He also said that "the regime possesses the capability to roll them back very quickly. Coalition air power is the major reason that has not happened." ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 28: Qatar granted diplomatic recognition to the Transitional National Council—the rebel government in Benghazi—as the official government of Libya. Qatar became the first Arab state and the second country after France to officially recognize the rebel government. Qatar has reportedly sent shipments of medical supplies to rebels besieged in Misrata, and to Benghazi, and has also sent warplanes to Coalition operations over Libya. Qatari Mirage fighters have flown in formation with French fighters out of airbase in Crete in four-plane patrols over rebel-controlled eastern Libya. The Qatar has brought along several Pakistani technical advisors that assist the Qatari air force. ([BBC](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Associated Press](#))

MARCH 28: Rebel forces are reportedly closing in on Nawfaliyah, a town west of Bin Jawad, and extending their advance towards Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte, approximately 120km (75 miles) west. However, rebel forces appear to

have run into Qaddafi's first line of defenses, with regime forces dug into positions along a heavily mined road and are shelling the rebel forces advancing. Qaddafi forces appear to have withdrawn their heavy armor from Sirte further north to the Greater Tripoli area. ([BBC](#), [al-Jazeera](#))

MARCH 28: U.S. warships launched six Tomahawk missiles from positions in the Mediterranean Sea, bringing the total number of long-range cruise missiles fired by the coalition to 199. ([CBS News](#))

MARCH 28: There are indications that Coalition operations in Libya will be conducted under new and stricter rules of engagement under NATO command. Potentially, these new rules would not allow NATO warplanes to target pro-Qaddafi forces unless they posed an immediate threat to civilians. Individual Coalition participants and pilots have had a wide-range of discretion on which targets to strike. There is speculation that until these new rules come into effect, French and British will increase airstrikes to inflict as much damage as possible on Qaddafi's forces. Additionally, NATO's Secretary-General ruled out the alliance would arm rebels, insisting the UN-sanctioned arms embargo applied to the entire country. ([Guardian](#), [CNN](#))

MARCH 28: The British military announced that British Tornado GR4 aircraft had struck pro-Qaddafi ammunition bunkers in the Sabha region, which far south of Tripoli. The bunkers were reportedly being used to supply Qaddafi's forces further north, and initial reports indicated that they were destroyed by the airstrike. ([BBC](#))

MARCH 27: Pentagon officials said that pro-Qaddafi forces remain a potent threat to civilians and the U.S. military is looking at plans to increase U.S. firepower and intelligence gathering over Libya. This would possibly include the introduction of the Air Force's AC-130 gunship, attack helicopters and unmanned drones. These assets would allow more precision strikes on pro-Qaddafi forces in heavy urban areas like Misrata, which Allied airstrikes have largely avoided because of the potential for civilian casualties. Allied airstrikes outside Misrata continued throughout the night, reportedly destroying a major ammunition depot used by pro-Qaddafi forces. ([LA Times](#), [Associated Press](#))

MARCH 27: The U.S. military stated that in the previous 24 hours, U.S. aircraft had conducted 88 combat strikes against Libyan targets, down from 96 strikes the previous day. AV-8B Harrier jets from 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit conducted airstrikes on pro-Qaddafi tanks and armored personnel carriers near the city of Misrata. (Military Times, [ENC](#))

MARCH 27: NATO members agreed that the military alliance would take full command of Coalition operations in Libya, ending over a week of intense negotiations over the alliance's involvement. Canadian Lieutenant General Charles Bouchard, commander of the NATO operations, said NATO had already taken over the no-fly operation. The first NATO sorties flew over Libya on Sunday. However, full transition of Coalition operations to NATO command is expected to be complete by the end of the week. ([Reuters](#), [CNN](#), [NATO](#))

MARCH 27: A Pentagon official stated the United States was beginning to reduce the number of U.S. warships involved in operations off the coast of Libya. According to the official, at least one of the Navy submarines, which have been used to fire Tomahawk missiles into Libya, had left the area and that a further withdrawal of U.S. naval forces was likely. ([New York Times](#), [Military Times](#))

MARCH 27: Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated Coalition operations had prevented Qaddafi's forces from entering Benghazi and taken out a significant portion of Qaddafi's armored forces. He said, "I think we have, to a very large extent, completed the military mission, in terms of getting it set up." Gates said the Obama administration and Coalition had not made a decision on supplying arms to rebel forces, although he said UNSCR 1973 permitted such action. Gates said NATO taking control of the operations would allow the U.S. military to begin reducing its presence. Further, Gates acknowledged that the war in Libya was "not a vital national interest to the United States." Both Gates

and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton left open the length of U.S. involvement in Libya. ([Department of Defense](#), [New York Times](#), [LA Times](#))

MARCH 27: The French military announced its warplanes had struck pro-Qaddafi armored vehicles and a large munitions depot in Misrata and Zintan. ([CNN](#))

MARCH 26: Coalition airstrikes began targeting Qaddafi's hometown and coastal stronghold of Sirte for the first time. Additionally, there were at least nine suspected airstrikes in Tripoli. Qaddafi had reinforced his forces in Misrata with about 1,000 gunmen as Coalition airstrikes on pro-Qaddafi forces on the outskirts of the city have driven them deeper into the city to blend in amongst civilians as they engage in street-to-street fighting with rebels. ([Washington Post](#))

MARCH 26: President Obama used his weekly radio address to Coalition involvement in Libya and address. Obama said he ordered U.S. warplanes over Libya to avert a humanitarian catastrophe and a "blood bath" at Benghazi. The President stated that the United States is not being drawn into a wider war in Libya. ([LA Times](#), [White House](#))

MARCH 26: Pro-Qaddafi forces pulled back from Ajdabiya in the face of a rebel offensive and Coalition airstrikes. Rebels took Ajdabiya and continued westwards for 50 miles, taking the city of Brega and Ras Lanuf with little resistance. Ajdabiya is important because it controls the water supply to Bengazhi, which Qaddafi forces had disrupted. Brega and Ras Lanuf have important oil refineries and a port. Rebels continued advancing the front line west from Ras Lanuf toward Bin Jawwad, near Sirte. ([Ministry of Defense](#))

MARCH 26: General Carter F. Ham confirmed that Coalition airstrikes were striking troops from the Libyan 32nd Brigade, a crack unit based out of Tripoli and commanded by one of Qaddafi's sons, Khamis Qaddafi. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 25: According to British military officials, Qaddafi controls 600 miles of coastline including numerous ports that will need to be monitored by Coalition warships. Coalition warships using helicopters and aircraft will be employed to gather intelligence and assist commanders in boarding operations if necessary. Coalition warships will patrol the Libyan coast for weeks at a time and will be supported by tankers and other auxiliary ships. ([Ministry of Defense](#))

MARCH 25: A naval academy and depot approximately 20 miles from Tripoli were reportedly hit by an airstrike and destroyed. U.S. military officials stated the Coalition no-fly zone extended from the Libyan coastline, to Sabha, approximately 480 miles south of Tripoli. However, Coalition airstrikes had failed to break pro-Qaddafi forces' siege of Misrata, where a small rebel force is held up. ([WSJ](#))

MARCH 25: The U.S. military stated Coalition forces had fired 16 Tomahawk cruise missiles and flown 153 sorties in the past 24 hours against pro-Qaddafi forces, targeting artillery, mechanized forces and command and control infrastructure. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 25: The United Arab Emirates announced it was joining the U.S.-led Coalition and dispatching six F-16s and six Mirage fighters to enforce the no-fly zone over Libya. A former UAE air force commander stated that the UAE had delayed its deployment because of disagreements with the United States and Europe over the unrest in Bahrain. The UAE is the second Arab state to offer aircraft for the Libyan operations, with Qatar the first. ([AFP](#))

MARCH 25: A NATO official said planning for NATO's no-fly operation was assuming the mission would last 90 days, although this could be adjusted as necessary. Admiral Edouard Guillaud, the head of French armed forces, said "I doubt that it will be days...I think it will be weeks. I hope it will not take months." ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 25: British Tornado GR4 warplanes conducted on armed reconnaissance sortie over eastern Libya launched

“coordinated” airstrikes overnight around Ajdabiya. The British aircraft fired a number of Brimstone missiles at pro-Qaddafi armored vehicles that were threatening civilians in Ajdabiya airstrikes. ([BBC](#))

MARCH 25: French warplanes destroyed a pro-Qaddafi artillery battery near the frontline city of Ajdabiya, 150 km (90 miles) south of Benghazi. Ajdabiya is strategically located along the coastal highway running east-west, making it vital for both sides to control. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 25: Diplomats at the United Nations said Sudan had granted Coalition forces permission to use Sudanese airspace to enforce the no-fly zone. Additionally, Uganda said it would freeze Libyan assets worth about \$375 million in accordance with U.N. sanctions. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 25: U.S. and European officials hammered out a deal to transfer Coalition command of the Libyan no-fly zone to NATO in several days. However, officials confirmed U.S. aircraft would still be flying combat missions against pro-Qaddafi ground forces. The transfer to NATO command was arranged by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and her French, British and Turkish counterparts. ([Washington Post](#), [LA Times](#))

MARCH 24: There are now twenty-six Coalition warships are participating in operations off the coast of Libya, including twelve U.S. warships and two European aircraft carriers, France's Charles De Gaulle and Italy's Garibaldi. Combat aircraft from both carriers are participating in operations. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 24: Pro-Qaddafi forces are reportedly running low on fuel, ammunition and food because the allied aircraft have cut supply lines to Qaddafi's stronghold of Sirt, where Qaddafi is from. U.S. military officials said in addition to Coalition airstrikes against pro-Qaddafi forces outside of Ajdabiya, Coalition strikes were conducted against a regime command and control facility and a surface-to-air missile site near Tripoli, along with an ammunition dump near Misrata. ([LA Times](#))

MARCH 24: French Rafale fighter destroyed a Libyan warplane on the ground after it flew over Misrata in defiance of the no-fly zone. The Libyan aircraft was a Soko G-2 Galeb, a twin-seat ground attack and reconnaissance aircraft produced by Yugoslavia. It is reportedly the first Libyan warplane to fly since the beginning of Coalition military operations. ([ABC News](#), [BBC](#), [LA Times](#))

MARCH 24: According to Navy vice Adm. Bill Gortney, Coalition warplanes conducted 130 sorties in the past 24 hours. 49 airstrikes were against targets around Tripoli and Ajdabiya. Approximately half of the sorties were flown by U.S. aircraft. ([LA Times](#))

MARCH 24: Col. Gaddafi's Bab Al-Aziziya compound in Tripoli was attacked by Coalition aircraft for a second time. The Bab Al-Aziziya compound was also struck on March 20 by two British Tomahawk missiles. According to U.S. officials, the strike was not pre-selected but a target of opportunity taken by the pilots. ([ABC News](#))

MARCH 24: A Coalition airstrike was reported at a microwave tower on a Libyan military base in Tajura, a suburb east of Tripoli, which allegedly killed 18 Libyan military personnel. Fuel tanks located south of Tripoli were also struck, according to Libyan military officials. ([CNN](#))

MARCH 24: According to Vice Marshall Greg Bagwell of Britain's Royal Air Force, airstrikes had successfully degraded Libyan air defenses enough to allow Coalition aircraft to operate with “near impunity” across Libya. ([CNN](#))

MARCH 24: French aircraft struck Libyan airbase approximately 155 miles south of the Libyan coastline, likely at al-Juffra airbase—one of the two airbases in the remote Libyan interior. Al-Juffra is located along the main highway that

leads to Chad, Sudan and Niger from which mercenary fighters and arms have been flowing north to support pro-Gaddafi forces. ([ABC News](#), [BBC](#))

MARCH 24: U.S. naval forces along with the Britain's HMS Triumph, a Royal Navy Trafalgar Class submarine, fired approximately a dozen Tomahawk missiles at Libyan air defense targets in Tripoli and south of the capital. Other missiles struck an ammunition bunker around Misratah and against pro-Gaddafi forces south of Benghazi. ([Ministry of Defense](#), [ABC News](#))

MARCH 24: Turkey, which had initially opposed handing off the no-fly zone operation to NATO, shifted its opinion, apparently after pressure from President Obama to participate, and has insisted the no-fly zone be limited to a NATO-only operation. Turkey announced it was sending 6 warships including 4 frigates, 1 submarine and 1 support vessel to the Libyan coast to enforce the arms embargo. ([WSJ](#), [Reuters](#), [AGI](#), [White House](#))

MARCH 24: Coalition warplanes struck targets in the town of Sebha in southern Libya, located approximately 480 miles south of Tripoli. Sebha is a known stronghold of Col. Gaddafi and the location of a major Libyan military base. ([BBC](#))

MARCH 23: On the fifth day of operations over Libya, the 13-nation alliance had reportedly flown more than 336 sorties. The United States had flown 212 of the sorties, while coalition sorties totaled 124. Of the 336 sorties, 108 were dubbed "strike sorties," meaning they encountered pro-Gaddafi forces in some way. Additionally, the number of Tomahawk missile launches totaled 162. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 23: Romanian President Traian Basescu won support to participate in coalition naval operations off the coast of Libya. A Romanian frigate carrying 205 Romanian sailors and two naval officers would join Coalition naval forces in the Mediterranean to enforce the arms embargo. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 23: Coalition airstrikes reportedly halted Qaddafi's assault on the rebel-held western city of Misratah and Ajdabiya. The strikes targeted pro-Qaddafi tanks, artillery and rocket launchers in and around the cities, as well as mobile surface-to-air missile sites and lines of communication and supply. Some pro-Qaddafi tanks and fighters fled the cities, but reportedly returned to their positions during the night and continued attacking. Prior to the Misratah strikes, U.S. Rear Admiral Peg Klein said airstrikes, which had been suppressing Libya's air defenses, would begin hitting Gaddafi's ground forces. ([Reuters](#), [Washington Post](#))

MARCH 23: The French foreign minister, Alain Juppé, stated that representatives from the United States, Europe, Africa and the Arab nations would meet next week in London to discuss command of military operations in Libya. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 23: Germany announced it was withdrawing four of its naval ships in the Mediterranean under NATO command. In order to compensate this withdrawal, Germany announced it would deploy 300 more troops to Afghanistan to support surveillance aircraft. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 23: A Danish F-16 for the first time dropped precision bombs on targets in Libya, the first Danish airstrike of the campaign. ([Ennahar](#))

MARCH 23: Navy Adm. Gary Roughead stated the EA-18G Growler, the Navy's newest electronic warfare aircraft, had performed well in operations over Libya. The five-jet Growler squadron had been flying missions over Iraq just 47 hours before being redeployed to Libya. ([American Forces Press Service](#))

MARCH 23: General David Petraeus, the commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, said he was not concerned that operations in Libya would divert military resources from Afghanistan. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 22: U.S. planes bombed the wreckage of the F-15 fighter that went down in Libya due to mechanical failure. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the wreckage was bombed, “to prevent materials from getting into the wrong hands.” ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 22: Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates stated that operations in Libya would soon decline significantly. Secretary Gates, visiting Moscow, rejected assertions by Russian officials and others that air strikes in Libya were causing a significant number of civilian casualties. ([New York Times](#))

MARCH 22: Four British Tornado GR4's relocated from RAF Marham in Norfolk, England, joining ten Typhoons and four Tornado GR4's at Gioia del Colle airbase in southern Italy to conduct operations over Libya. The redeployment brings the total RAF aircraft stationed in Italy to eighteen. ([British Forces News](#))

MARCH 22: Two Italian F-16s flying out of Trapani-Birgi participated in operations over Libya. ([Avionews](#))

MARCH 21: Four British Tornados flew south from RAF Marham in Norfolk, England for an armed reconnaissance flight over Libya to protect civilians from attacks by pro-Gaddafi forces, no missiles were reported fired. ([British Forces News](#), [Ministry of Defense](#))

MARCH 21: Six Danish F-16s were reported to have flown ‘high risk’ missions over Libya. Four Danish aircraft were waiting for U.S. instructions to join operations over Libya while two would be kept in reserve. Danish aircraft are reportedly flying out of the U.S. air base in Sigonella, Sicily. According to Danish officials, their aircraft had not fired any missiles, and had not been fired upon. ([Reuters](#), [Copenhagen Post](#))

MARCH 21: Canada deployed six CF-18 Hornets over northern Libya, but they did not carry out any strikes. Canadian aircraft were reportedly flying out of Decimomannu airbase in Sardinia, Italy. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 21: Norway deployed six fighter aircraft to Crete to join the operations over Libya. The Norwegian Defense Minister, however, stated they would not engage in action until an effective, transparent command structure was in place. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 21: Two U.S. Air Force crew members ejected from their F-15E Strike Eagle after the aircraft encountered an equipment malfunction over Benghazi. The F-15E was assigned to conduct a strike mission against Gaddafi regime missile capabilities. At the request of one of the downed crewmembers, two Marine Harriers dropped two 500-pound bombs on a force moving towards him before a Marine Osprey helicopter landed to pick him up. The rescue operation stirred controversy after reports that Libyan civilians were wounded by the bombs or shot by the rescue team. The other crew member was recovered and provided care by Libyan civilians (or rebels) and was also rescued. ([Washington Post](#), [New York Times](#))

MARCH 21: General Carter Ham, the commander of U.S. Africa Command, stated that no Libyan military aircraft had been observed flying since operations began; Libyan naval vessels had returned to or have remained in port and after the initial strikes there have been no detections of emissions from regime long-range, air-defense radars. Coalition forces were working on extending the no-fly zone southward, then westward from Benghazi to Brega, Misratah, and then to Tripoli. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 21: General Carter Ham noted that distinguishing between pro-Gaddafi and rebel forces were very difficult, especially when they are in close contact. He reported that coalition forces were aware that some rebels had armored vehicles and heavy weapons. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 20: Qatar was poised to move four French-made Mirage 2000/9 combat aircraft to Souda airbase on Crete to participate in operations over Libya. France dispatched its Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier toward Crete to participate in the operation. The carrier is loaded with 15 fighter planes and joined by a French submarine and half a dozen support ships. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 20: U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that the U.S. expected to turn control of the Libya military mission over to a coalition — probably headed either by the French and British or by NATO — “in a matter of days.” ([Associated Press](#))

MARCH 20: Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that coalition strikes had already taken out most of Gaddafi’s air defenses and airfields, and that the no-fly zone in Libya has been effectively established. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 20: Italian forces joined operation over Libya for the first time with six Tornado flying out of Trapani airbase in Sicily. Earlier Italian officials said 8 aircraft had been assigned to the mission. Additionally, 15 French combat planes conducted patrols over Libya without encountering resistance. ([Reuters](#))

MARCH 20: 15 U.S. Air Force F-15Es and F-16s and Marine Corps Harriers flying from bases in Europe, supported by U.S. Navy EA-18G Growlers and joined by aircraft from France and the U.K., attacked pro- Gaddafi mechanized infantry forces located approximately 10 miles south of Benghazi. The strikes halted the regime’s advance on Benghazi. In all, Coalition forces flew approximately 60 sorties, half of which were done by U.S. forces. The strikes were not conducted in coordination with rebels. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 20: Three B-2 Spirit bombers operating from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri dropped a total of 45 one-ton JDAMs on Libyan aircraft fields and shelters around Ghardabiya, not far from Misratah, the targets were successfully destroyed. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 20: 12 Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from U.S. and British ships in the Mediterranean against Libyan command-and-control facilities, a Scud surface-to-surface missile facility and a re-attack of an air-defense site which had previously been attacked. Targeted Libyan radar sites are reported to have been successfully disabled or destroyed, the only remaining operational radar sites are reportedly around Tripoli and Surt. ([Department of Defense](#))

MARCH 20: The RAF, operating under Operation Ellamy, launched Tornado GR4 fast jets from RAF Marham in Norfolk, England, which flew to Libya where they launched Storm Shadow missiles at Libyan air-defense targets. They then flew back to RAF Marham, completing a 3,000-mile round trip—the longest range bombing mission conducted by the RAF since the Falklands conflict. In addition to a Trafalgar-class submarine and Typhoon air support, the U.K. announced that two Royal Navy frigates were off the coast of Libya supporting coalition operations. ([Ministry of Defense](#))

MARCH 19: British Prime Minister David Cameron announced British forces were in action over Libya as part of the international coalition enforcing the United Nations Security Council resolution in order to support the Libyan people. Cameron stated the “time for action has come” after it became clear that Muammar Gaddafi had violated his own ceasefire. ([Office of the Prime Minister](#))

MARCH 19: France announced it was sending its Charles De Gaulle aircraft carrier to the Libyan coast to participate in the operation; Canada stated its fighter jets had reached the region but would need two days of preparation before participating. ([BBC](#))

MARCH 19: President Barack Obama announces he ordered the U.S. military to begin, “a limited military action in Libya in support of an international effort to protect Libyan civilians.” The President reiterated a promise not to deploy any U.S. troops on the ground into Libya. ([White House](#))

MARCH 19: Participants at the Paris Summit release a communiqué demanding a ceasefire and reiterating their determination to enforce UNSCR 1973. They also praise the Libyan National Transition Council (NTC). Summit participants include leaders from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece, Canada, Norway, Qatar, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Morocco; and representatives from the United Nations, European Union, and the Arab League. ([Communiqué](#))

MARCH 19: In the opening salvo of Operation Odyssey Dawn, two U.S. destroyers and four submarines—along with one British submarine—located in the Mediterranean Sea fired approximately 112 Tomahawk cruise missiles. The missiles struck more than 20 different targets of the Libyan air defense system including surface-to-air missiles, early warning sites and communication facilities. The majority of the targets were located in western Libya, in and around Tripoli, Misratah, and Surt. These missile strikes were designed to create the conditions necessary to set up the no-fly zone and begin manned-flights over Libya. ([Department of Defense](#), [New York Times](#))

MARCH 19: French military forces begin Operation Harmattan. Approximately twenty French aircraft enforced a no-fly zone over eastern Libya to protect the rebel stronghold of Benghazi. The French plane fired the first shot in Libya at 1645 GMT. French aircraft attack Gaddafi ground forces on the highway between Benghazi and Ajdabiya, destroying a number of tanks and armored vehicles. ([Ministre de la Défense](#))

MARCH 18: The United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Arab States released a joint statement after a high-level summit meeting in Paris demanding that Qaddafi immediately implement a cease fire and stop attacks against civilians ended in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973. Further, the coalition called on Gaddafi to stop his troops from advancing on Benghazi, pull back his troops from Ajdabiya, Misratah, and Zawiyah, and re-establish water, electricity and gas supplies to all areas. They warned that if Gaddafi did not comply, then UNSCR 1973 would be enforced through military action. ([Office of the Prime Minister](#))

MARCH 17: The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1973, which authorized member states to act through national or regional organizations to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack from pro-Gaddafi forces, excluding any form of a foreign occupation force. In addition to a no-fly zone, it authorized an asset freeze and an arms embargo—including the prevention of armed mercenary personnel flowing into Libya. Voting for the resolution were permanent Security Council members the United States, the United Kingdom, and France; they were joined by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Gabon, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, and South Africa. Abstaining from the vote were permanent Security Council members Russia and China; they were joined by Germany, Brazil and India. No member states were opposed. ([UNSCR Resolution 1973](#), [New York Times](#))