

Nato offers armada for Libya arms embargo

AFP, Brussels

Nato nations yesterday offered an armada of ships and submarines to enforce an arms embargo against Libya, as Western allies sought to settle a row over the organisation's role in a no-fly zone.

Six nations agreed to contribute up to 16 vessels to prevent Muammar Gaddafi from bringing in weapons from the Mediterranean, with Turkey offering five warships and a submarine despite its reservations about the military campaign.

The Nato mission will have the means to intercept and board suspicious ships, and the authority to fire a warning shot across the bow of vessels trying to slip away, a Nato official said on condition of anonymity.

But the 28-nation alliance was still undecided over its possible role in a no-fly zone.

Libya ground invasion likely: Russia

AFP, Moscow

Russia believes a ground invasion of Libya is almost a certainty and feels justified in abstaining from a UN Security Council vote sanctioning military action, a top official said yesterday.

"There is no coordinated plan in place and the operation can drag on," Kremlin foreign policy adviser Sergei Prikhodko told the ITAR-TASS news agency.

"We understand that sooner or later, if the air operation gets bogged down, a ground operation will be inevitable, whatever they tell us," Pikhodko said.

The operation has been particularly strongly opposed by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who this week compared the UN resolution to a medieval call to crusades.

France has resisted giving Nato command of the international campaign, saying operations led under the flag of the Western alliance could alienate Arab nations that it wants to bring into the action.

After days of sometimes heated debate, Nato ambassadors were holding new talks yesterday on the question. "Discussions are continuing at Nato in a positive spirit," Nato spokeswoman Oana Lungescu said.

Eager to hand over the lead for the mission, the United States said Tuesday that the United States, France and Britain all agreed Nato should play a "key role" in the future command structure.

An arrangement proposed by France would give a special committee of foreign ministers from the international coalition political control of the mission, with Arab participation.

A French diplomatic source said the

no-fly mandate could be run out of Nato's naval base in Naples, Italy, now serving as the command base for the arms embargo.

"Those who are members of Nato want to see a role for Nato," US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said. "But we also want to integrate our other partners."

The Western coalition wants Arab nations to join the operation.

Kuwait and Jordan have agreed to provide a logistical contribution to the international coalition.

"The French are right to warn that the symbolic and political weight of Nato in political control of this campaign would be very badly seen in the Arab world," French security analyst Heisbourg said.

"Nato is the institutional incarnation of the West," Heisbourg said. "There's nothing more Western than Nato."

Post-Gaddafi regime would be 'democratic and secular'

AFP, Paris

Representatives of the Libyan opposition's interim national council said in Paris that a post-Gaddafi regime would be "democratic and secular".

They also predicted late Tuesday that the embattled Libyan leader, who has continued to press against rebel-held towns despite a UN-backed military campaign, would fall quickly, opening the way for a rebuilding of Libya's society.

"The future Libya will be democratic and secular," said Mansour Saif Al-Nasr, an emissary, though not a member, of the interim council, based in the rebel-held stronghold of Benghazi.

"The Libyan people are a moderate people, and the state will not be led by clerics," he told a large gathering of writers, ex-ministers and reporters assembled by Bernard Henry-Lévy, a French intellectual who helped facilitate France's recognition of the rebel authority.

The interim national council (INC) has 31 members, but the identities of only eight have been revealed because most still live in zones held by forces loyal to Gaddafi.

A second opposition spokesman, Ali Zeidan, said rebel forces needed military hardware to defend their positions and pressure the Gaddafi regime.

"We want the coalition to continue to destroy its military capacity," said Zeidan, the council's informal spokesman in Europe. "We have the men. What we are asking for is the arms."

JAPAN DISASTER

Damage cost up to \$309bn, will take 5 yrs to rebuild

AGENCIES

Japan yesterday said the cost of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami could hit \$309 billion, double the Kobe quake and nearly four times more than Hurricane Katrina.

The total cost from collapse or damage to houses, factories and infrastructure such as roads and bridges was estimated at 16 to 25 trillion yen over the next three fiscal years, the Cabinet Office said.

Japan may need up to five years to rebuild from the disastrous earthquake.

It also estimates that 0.5 percentage points will be shaved from the country's economic growth this year.



Families offer flowers and food to their dead relatives at a temporary cemetery in Miyagi prefecture yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

JAPAN NUCLEAR CRISIS

Smoke hinders work

Nuclear fears shut 25 embassies in Tokyo

AFP, Osaka

Smoke again disrupted efforts yesterday to regain control of a tsunami-stricken Japanese nuclear plant, where engineers were close to restoring a water pump at one of the reactors.

Workers were pulled back after a plume of dark smoke rose from the number three reactor unit.

"Smoke has risen from the number three reactor. As a precautionary measure, workers have been temporarily evacuated," said an official from plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co.

The source of the smoke was not immediately known but no flames were seen and there was no report of a

rise in radiation levels.

Engineers have now linked up an external electricity supply to all six reactors and are testing system components and equipment in an effort to restart the cooling systems and measuring instruments.

Power has been partially restored to the control room of the number three unit, which is a particular concern as the core contains a mixture of uranium and volatile plutonium.

"If possible, we want to restore the pump tomorrow (Thursday)" an official from the nuclear safety agency said, speaking before the new smoke scare interrupted work.

There is also concern about the

spent fuel pools of the reactors numbers one to four.

The nuclear emergency following the earthquake and tsunami in Japan has led 25 embassies to temporarily shut their doors in Tokyo, Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto said yesterday.

The foreign ministry's press division said the following countries had closed their doors: Angola, Bahrain, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Kosovo, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama and Switzerland.

Career Opportunity

The Westin Dhaka, a 5-Star Luxurious Business Hotel- managed by Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. U.S.A. and owned by Unique Hotel & Resorts Ltd (UHRL), the following positions are open for recruitment:

Director of Human Resources

The Westin Dhaka is a company that prides itself on its employee development, engagement and customer service, the role of this position has a direct impact on its culture. The Westin Dhaka requires an experienced Director of Human Resources to join our team of professionals in providing exceptional customer service. If you would like to work with a company that can take you around the world and feel that you have the leadership skills to succeed please keep reading.

Basic Function:

To provide strategic advice to the General Manager and guidance to the executive committee members, while maintaining a high professional standard within the HR office. The DHR will oversee all areas of the HR function and ensure that the team members are trained to provide exceptional service to the hotel employees. This hands on role will involve you in all areas on Human Resources.

Duties include:

- Recruitment, overseeing the line level, and activity involved in supervisor and above.
- Training & Development, facilitating training courses, and maintaining the integrity of The Westin Dhaka programs and engaging with the hotel management to ensure all employees are receiving the training they require.
- Undertaking project work from the General Manager and Westin Regional office.
- Succession planning, to ensure that the hotel departments are developing their teams and ensuring there is "a person in the pocket".
- Overall management of employee relations.

The successful applicants meet the following selection criteria:

- Master's Degree in Human Resources.
- At least 10 years' experience managing a Human Resource Department.
- Sound Knowledge of Bangladesh Labor Code 2006.
- Highly developed interpersonal, problem resolution & leadership skills.

Director of Engineering

Reporting to the General Manager, this role is responsible for managing the maintenance function of the hotel.

Duties include:

- Providing sound advise to the General Manager.
- Leading all maintenance works.
- Managing contractors.
- Managing building compliance, environment and waste management.
- Enhancing the guest experience.

The successful applicants meet the following selection criteria:

- B. Sc or MS in mechanical/electrical/refrigeration streams.
- Previous experience in a similar position in a five star hotel, armed forces, merchant navy or a hospital.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Strong leadership skills with a hands on approach.
- A flexible and innovative approach.

Executive Assistant Manager

Duties include:

- Providing the leadership expertise that ensures the effective and efficient operations of the hotel.
- Maintaining a liaison between the General Manager and operations of the hotel.
- Managing operations of the hotel in order to maximize profitability and achieve the stated operational goals.
- Ensuring super guest service and product quality.

The successful applicants meet the following selection criteria:

- Graduation in tourism & hospitality management/ business administration.
- At least 15 years experience in the relevant field.
- Sound knowledge of rooms division and food & beverage.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Strong leadership skills with a hands on approach.
- A flexible and innovative approach.
- Ability to teach / train, coach, counsel, and/or develop others, plan, set goals, and execute.
- Should have strong analytical skills & draw strategic conclusions from data as well as make sound decision based on analysis.

Interested applicants whose profile matches with the above criteria and if you are ready to take the challenge, then you are requested to submit your CV along with a cover letter indicating the position to Human Resource Department, The Westin Dhaka, Plot # 1, CWN(B), Road # 45, Gulshan-2, Dhaka 1212 or e-mail: hr@westindhaka.com no later than 07 April, 2011. Candidates whose applications most closely match the selection criteria will be contacted to arrange an initial interview.

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NEWS IN brief

Biden, Hillary Clinton salute Japan resilience

AFP, Washington

US Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Tuesday voiced admiration for the response of ordinary Japanese to the major earthquake as they pledged continued US support.

"I've traveled around the world and I promise you the whole world is looking at the courage, bravery and the resolve being demonstrated by ordinary people," Biden told reporters.

"This has been an unprecedented disaster, but it has provoked an unprecedented show of resilience by the Japanese people and a pledge of cooperation and friendship from the American people," Hillary Clinton said, on her own visit

Cuba releases last two of its 75 dissidents

AFP, Havana

Cuba has freed the last two of a group of 75 opposition activists detained by the government in 2003, representatives for the communist island's dissident movement said yesterday.

Dissidents told AFP said that Felix Navarro, 57, a teacher and political activist and Jose Ferrer, a 40-year-old fisherman, an opposition movement member were released early yesterday.

Karzai urges Taliban to stop Afghan school attacks

AFP, Kabul

Afghan president Hamid Karzai yesterday urged the Taliban to stop attacking schools, saying education was the only way to bring peace and stability to the violence-hit country.

The Taliban banned women from being educated or working during their brutal 1996-2001 rule, and continue to attack schools and teachers as part of their campaign against Afghanistan's Western-backed government.

Gates in Egypt for talks on Libya conflict

AFP, Cairo

Defence Secretary Robert Gates flew into Cairo yesterday for talks on the Libyan conflict and to reaffirm US backing for democratic reforms in Egypt after an uprising ousted Hosni Mubarak.

His previously unannounced visit comes with US and allied aircraft enforcing a UN-mandated no-fly zone against the regime in neighbouring Libya, where rebels are fighting to overthrow ruler Muammar Gaddafi.

I Coast crisis 'forgotten'

Says UN

BBC ONLINE

As the world focuses on Libya and Japan, UN aid agencies are warning that Ivory Coast is rapidly becoming a forgotten humanitarian catastrophe.

About 500,000 people have fled violence there - but a UN appeal for funds to help them has met with little response.

There has been fighting between forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo, who is refusing to step down as president, and those of his rival, Alassane Ouattara.

The UN recognises Ouattara as the winner of November's presidential poll.

UN aid agencies are already struggling with serious security issues in their operation in Ivory Coast - now they have serious funding problems too.

An appeal for \$32m has received just \$7m so far. For the World Food Programme, the situation is even worse.

"No funding for the \$16m we need to buy food on the market to get it into Ivory Coast," said spokeswoman Emilia Casella.

"We've been calling on our donors really to understand that they have to pay attention to all the crises going on in the world."

2011 to be key one in human history

Says William Hague

BBC ONLINE

This year will be seen in centuries to come as a key one in the development of human history, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague has predicted.

He warned that, if the situation in the Middle East and Africa went wrong, the effect on the world economy would make the recent financial crisis seem like a "mere prelude" to greater problems.

"Imagine if it went wrong. Imagine if, actually, extremism, terrorism were promoted. Imagine the financial consequences as well as the human and moral consequences of this going wrong."

"This going wrong in the Middle East, the area that produces so much of the world's oil and gas, that contains so many tensions in the world, would have financial consequences that would make the last three years seem the mere prelude to much greater difficulties. That is why the stakes are so high."

Mr Hague said there were signs of growing disquiet in sub-Saharan Africa, including Zimbabwe.

The efforts of regimes to stifle reporting were "futile" in a "global communications age", he added.

"It's very hazardous to write history when we are still taking part in it but in one or two hundred years I think 2011 will be seen as a very important year in the development of human history."



William Hague