

# US tells Gaddafi to deliver democracy, not threats

## Nato steps up air strikes as allies vow to remain united

AFP, Madrid

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi yesterday to step down instead of brandishing threats of attacks on European civilians. Clinton, on a visit to Nato ally Spain, demanded Gaddafi deliver democracy rather than menaces and vowed that the military alliance would complete its mission to protect Libyans from his regime.

"Instead of issuing threats, Gaddafi should put the well-being and interests of his own people first and he should step down from power and help facilitate a democratic transition," the secretary of state said.

"The Nato-led mission is on track and pressure on Gaddafi is mounting and the rebels have been gaining strength and momentum. We need to see this through," she told a news conference.

Clinton, speaking alongside Spanish Foreign Minister Trinidad Jimenez, was responding to Gaddafi's

warning Friday that the Libyan people could one day strike Europe.

"They could attack your homes, your offices, your families could become legitimate military targets because you have transformed our offices, headquarters, homes and children into military targets which you say are legitimate," Gaddafi said in Tripoli.

"If we decide to do so, we are capable of throwing ourselves on Europe like swarms of locusts or bees."

Spain's foreign minister said Nato would stay united in the face of Gaddafi's warning.

"The answer of Spain and the international coalition is to maintain the unity and determination with which we have been working in the past months," Jimenez said.

"We are working together to protect the Libyan people from the threats and violence that Gaddafi is employing against them. We will stay until we achieve our goals."

Nato intends to carry out United Nations resolutions to protect the Libyan people "and allow the Libyan people to fulfill their legitimate aspirations to live in peace", Jimenez said.

The Spanish parliament voted June 20 to indefinitely extend Spain's mandate to take part in the Nato-led operation in Libya.

Spain has sent four F-18 fighter jets and a Boeing 707-refuelling plane to help enforce a no-fly zone over Libya, as well as a frigate, the S7-74 submarine Tramontana and a CN-235 maritime patrol plane to prevent arms flowing into the country.

Spain says it spends about 14.4 million euros (\$21 million) a month on the Libya operations.

"We are very grateful for the contribution that Spain is making in the mission in Libya both in the no-fly zone and of course with the arms embargo," said Clinton on the final day of her four-day trip to Hungary, Lithuania and Spain.



PHOTO: AFP

Passengers and crew members onboard a US vessel gesture in the port of Athens on Friday. Coastguard officials intercepted the vessel after it tried to sail from port to join the Gaza-bound flotilla-- in defiance of a Greek ban -- to challenge Israel's naval blockade on that part of Palestine, an activist on board said.

## GADDAFI WARRANT AU will not cooperate with ICC

AFP, Malabo

African nations will not execute an International Criminal Court arrest warrant issued for Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, an African Union summit decided Friday.

The summit in Equatorial Guinea said the warrant issued on Monday hampered efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between Gaddafi's forces and Libyan rebels.

An assembly of the summit decided that "AU member states shall not cooperate in the execution of the arrest warrant," according to a text of the decisions.

The warrant "seriously complicates the efforts aimed at finding a negotiated political settlement to the crisis in Libya, which will also address, issues related to impunity and reconciliation," it said.

## NEWS IN brief

### Malaysia holds MP, five activists, under security law

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia has detained six members of an opposition party, including a lawmaker, under a tough security law ahead of a rally for electoral reforms, an activist group and police said yesterday.

The six members of the Socialist Party of Malaysia were arrested under the Emergency Ordinance, which allows indefinite detention without trial, said Nalini Elumalai, a representative of local rights group Suaram.

Police have arrested about 150 opposition politicians and activists over the past week for trying to shore up support for the electoral reform rally.

### Medvedev orders to restore Belarus power supplies

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has ordered power supplies to be restored to cash-strapped Belarus after it made a late debt payment, the Kremlin said yesterday.

The Russian power company confirmed to AFP that power supplies would be switched back on Saturday.

Russia cut power supplies to Belarus on Wednesday after it failed to meet a second late payment deadline amid a severe economic crisis, but Minsk on Friday said that it had settled its latest bill of \$22 million.

### Germany heads UN SC

AFP, United Nations

Germany took over the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council on Friday for a month, a "period full of events," according to Berlin's UN Ambassador Peter Wittig.

"There is a broad range of crises and conflicts underway in the world that will require our diplomatic talents. I'm sure Germany can help ensure the Security Council will provide global security," Wittig told AFP.

Germany, which abstained from a Council vote on authorizing Nato military operations in Libya, wants to play a post-conflict role.

### Maria Shriver files for divorce with Schwarzenegger

AFP, Los Angeles

Maria Shriver, the wife of actor and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, has filed for divorce, according to documents filed Friday in Superior Court in Los Angeles.

Shriver, 55, cited "irreconcilable differences" with her husband, whom she met in 1977 and married in 1986.

Schwarzenegger, 63, admitted in May that he had fathered a child with the family's long-time housekeeper, Mildred Baena, and announced the couple's separation.

### Russia plans Arctic army brigades

BBC ONLINE

Russia's defence minister said yesterday that he has plans to create two specialist army brigades to be based in the Arctic.

The announcement comes days after Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Russia would strongly defend its interests in the region.

Anatoly Serdyukov said Russia had studied the specialist Arctic troops in Finland, Norway and Sweden.

At the same time he promised to look after the region's vulnerable ecology.

It is believed that there are substantial unexploited reserves of gas and oil under the Arctic Ocean.

### Morocco says 'yes' to reforms

AFP, Rabat

Moroccans have given a resounding "yes" vote to a new constitution proposed by King Mohammed VI, who offered reforms in a bid to quiet protests inspired by pro-democracy uprisings in the Arab world.

More than 98 percent of voters backed a new constitution put forward in a referendum on Friday. Voter turnout was 72.65 percent.

The result was welcomed abroad, with The United States and France hailed the referendum.

Under the draft constitution, the king will remain head of state, the military, and the Islamic faith in Morocco.

But the prime minister, chosen from the largest party elected to parliament, will take over as the head of government.

Analysts said the result was a step toward democracy for Morocco, but far from the final one.

### US wars leave 225,000 dead, cost \$4.4 trillion

AFP, Washington

US wars launched since the attacks of September 11, 2001 have left 225,000 dead and cost up to \$4.4 trillion, according to a new study by university researchers.

The study published by Brown University this week focused on the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and counter-terrorism campaigns in Pakistan and Yemen, which came in the wake of the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

The authors argued that governments almost always go to war underestimating the potential duration and costs of a conflict while overestimating "the political objectives that can be accomplished by the use of brute force."

The study said "an extremely conservative estimate" of the casualty toll was about 225,000 people killed and 365,000 wounded in the wars so far.

The number of soldiers killed comes to 31,741, including about 6,000 Americans, 1,200 allied troops, 9,900 Iraqis, 8,800 Afghans, 3,500 Pakistanis as well as 2,300 US private security contractors, it said.

The civilian toll was much higher, with an estimated 172,000 dead, including about 125,000 Iraqis, 35,000 Pakistanis and 12,000 Afghans, it said.

The study acknowledged that estimating the number of dead was difficult, particularly the toll for insurgents, putting the number at between 20,000 to 51,000 insurgents killed.

The wars also have triggered a massive flow of refugees and displaced persons, with more than 7.8 million displaced, mostly in Iraq and Afghanistan, it said.

The study estimated the financial cost of the wars at a minimum of \$3.7 trillion and up to \$4.4 trillion, which represents about a quarter of the country's current debt.

### SECTARIAN VIOLENCE Clashes in N Ireland hurt six policemen

AFP, Belfast

Six Northern Ireland police officers were injured as "significant disorder" erupted on the streets of Belfast yesterday, just over a week after the worst clashes there for years.

Rioting flared following a Protestant march through the city on Friday night with police using water cannon and rubber bullets to try to disperse the crowds, the Police Service of Northern Ireland said.

Police vehicles brought in to be used as barriers between groups of rival Protestants and Catholics were damaged and missiles were hurled at officers trying to restore order.

Seven people were arrested for disorderly behaviour, police said.

Northern Ireland saw some of its worst sectarian violence in years last week.

### Bahrain parties begin national dialogue

CNN ONLINE

Bahrain's government and the opposition started talks yesterday in a bid to agree on reforms following months of unrest in the Gulf state.

Representatives of the main Shia opposition bloc, Al Wefaq, and the leftist Waad party are among the groups joining the so-called National Dialogue initiative in the capital, Manama, called for by Bahrain's King Hamad.

The dialogue is intended to focus on reform, with the aim of reaching a consensus on how to achieve it.

The government released more than 100 prisoners as a goodwill gesture early yesterday, former Al Wefaq lawmaker Sayed Hadi Al-Mosawi said.

The group's secretary-general told a rally of thousands Friday that the group would stick to its demands, which include the immediate release of all political prisoners and a democratic government for all.

Bahrain's majority Shia community has long complained of discrimination by the ruling Sunni elite.

Sheikh Isa Qassim, the country's senior Shia cleric, said in his Friday sermon that if Al Wefaq participated in the dialogue, it must make progress in supporting and putting into practice grass-roots demands.

He said the group should withdraw from such talks if it was not producing results.

The head of an independent commission appointed by King Hamad to investigate charges of human rights abuses during recent government crackdowns on pro-reform protesters vowed Thursday to carry out a fair, methodical and transparent investigation.

### Bashir orders army to 'clean' Kordofan rebels

AFP, Khartoum

Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir on Friday ordered the army to fight in South Kordofan until it has "cleaned" the border state of rebels, in a speech just eight days before the south secedes.

"I ordered the Sudanese Armed Forces to continue their operations in South Kordofan until they clean the state of rebels," Bashir told the faithful at a mosque in Khartoum during Friday prayers, in a speech broadcast on state television.

Heavy fighting has raged in the embattled northern border state since June 5 between government forces and fighters aligned to the SPLA, the military wing of the ex-rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement, ruling party of the south.

The conflict has dramatically escalated tensions between north and south Sudan prior to southern independence on July 9.

Bashir's speech, just hours after his return from an official visit to China, appears to have destroyed the prospects of peace in South Kordofan that were raised by the signing of a preliminary deal between the Khartoum government and the northern branch of the SPLM in Addis Ababa on Tuesday.

The accord boosted hopes of a comprehensive political and security settlement for the ethnically divided northern states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan, which are both home to a large number of SPLM supporters.

### Four Yemen troops killed in protest city

AFP, Sanaa

Four Yemeni Republican Guards were killed and four wounded in yesterday clashes in Taez south of Sanaa with anti-regime gunmen, four of whom were also wounded, witnesses and tribal sources said.

The fighting between the Guards and "defenders of the revolution" against President Ali Abdullah Saleh began yesterday morning and was still ongoing in the evening, witnesses said.

The clashes broke out when the Guards tried to enter a new area in the north of Taez, they said. Six houses have been destroyed in the fighting.

Taez has been a centre of protests calling for the departure of Saleh, who has been in power since 1978.



PHOTO: AFP

Former International Monetary Fund leader Dominique Strauss-Kahn (R) and his wife Anne Sinclair leave New York State Supreme Court on Friday in New York City. Strauss-Kahn spent his first full day free from house arrest yesterday after prosecutors cast doubt about the credibility of a maid accusing him of sexual assault.

### Treasure found in Indian temple

AFP, Thiruvananthapuram

A treasure trove of gold and silver jewelry, coins and precious stones said to be worth billions of dollars has been found in a Hindu temple in southern India, officials said yesterday.

The valuables have an estimated preliminary worth of over 500 billion rupees (\$11.2 billion), said Kerala Chief Secretary K Jayakumar, catapulting the temple into the league of India's richest temples.

The thousands of necklaces, coins and precious stones have been kept in at least five underground vaults at the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple which is renowned for its intricate sculptures.

"We are yet to open one more secret chamber which has not been opened for nearly 140 years," Jayakumar told AFP.



The actual value of the treasure haul can be ascertained only after it is examined by the archaeological department, said Jayakumar.

The temple, dedicated to Hindu lord Vishnu, was built hundreds of years ago by the king of Travancore and donations by devotees have been kept in the temple's vaults since.

A necklace found on Thursday was 18 feet (six metres) long. Thousands of

gold coins have also been found.

Since India achieved independence from Britain in 1947, a trust managed by descendants of the Travancore royal family has controlled the temple.

But India's Supreme Court recently ordered that the temple be managed by the state to ensure the security of valuables at the shrine.

Until now, the Thirupathy temple in southern Andhra Pradesh state was believed to be India's richest temple with offerings from devotees worth 320 billion rupees.

The revelation about the huge riches in the Padmanabhaswamy temple has forced police to sharply step install security cameras and alarms.

Authorities also plan to set up a commando force for security, said Kerala director general of police Jacob Punnoose.



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