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The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 26, 2011

Weekly Address: President Obama Says the Mission in Libya is Succeeding

WASHINGTON – In his weekly address, President Obama told the American people that the military mission in Libya is succeeding even as responsibility is transferred to our NATO allies and partners. Qaddafi's air defenses have been taken out, his forces are no longer advancing across the country, and in places like Benghazi, his forces have been pushed back. Every American can be proud of the lives we have saved and of the service of our men and women in uniform who once again have stood up for our interests and our ideals.

Remarks of President Barack Obama
Washington D.C.
March 26, 2011

Last week, when I ordered our armed forces to help protect the Libyan people from the brutality of Moammar Qaddafi, I pledged to keep the American people fully informed. Since then, I've spoken about the limited scope and specific purpose of this mission. Today, I can report that thanks to our brave men and women in uniform, we've made important progress.

As Commander in Chief, I face no greater decision than sending our military men and women into harm's way. And the United States should not—and cannot—intervene every time there's a crisis somewhere in the world.

But I firmly believe that when innocent people are being brutalized; when someone like Qaddafi threatens a bloodbath that could destabilize an entire region; and when the international community is prepared to come together to save many thousands of lives—then it's in our national interest to act. And it's our responsibility. This is one of those times.

Our military mission in Libya is clear and focused. Along with our allies and partners, we're enforcing the mandate of the United Nations Security Council. We're protecting the Libyan people from Qaddafi's forces. And we've put in place a no fly zone and other measures to prevent further atrocities.

We're succeeding in our mission. We've taken out Libya's air defenses. Qaddafi's forces are no longer advancing across Libya. In places like Benghazi, a city of some 700,000 that Qaddafi threatened to show “no mercy,” his forces have been pushed back. So make no mistake, because we acted quickly, a humanitarian catastrophe has been avoided and the lives of countless civilians—innocent men, women and children—have been saved.

As I pledged at the outset, the role of American forces has been limited. We are not putting any ground forces into Libya. Our military has provided unique capabilities at the beginning, but this is now a broad, international effort. Our allies and partners are enforcing the no fly zone over Libya and the arms embargo at sea. Key Arab partners like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have committed aircraft. And as agreed this week, responsibility for this operation is being transferred from the United States to our NATO allies and partners.

This is how the international community should work—more nations, not just the United States, bearing the responsibility and cost of upholding peace and security.

This military effort is part of our larger strategy to support the Libyan people and hold the Qaddafi regime accountable. Together with the international community, we're delivering urgent humanitarian assistance. We're offering support to the Libyan opposition. We've frozen tens of billions of dollars of Qaddafi's assets that can help meet the needs and aspirations of the Libyan people. And every day, the pressure on Qaddafi and his regime is increasing.

WATCH THE VIDEO



March 26, 2011 5:30 AM

[Weekly Address: The Military Mission in Libya](#)

BLOG POSTS ON THIS ISSUE

March 28, 2011 6:14 PM EDT

[Remembering the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire](#)

Today, as part of Women's History Month and in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett and Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis welcomed four remarkable women organizers to the White House.

March 28, 2011 6:09 PM EDT

[Presidential “Latinos and Education” Town Hall—A Key to Winning the Future](#)

March 28, 2011 5:59 PM EDT

[Asamblea pública del Presidente sobre “Los latinos y la educación” — La clave para triunfar en el futuro](#)


El Presidente Obama estará participando en una histórica asamblea pública dedicada a la educación y la comunidad latina el

lunes, 28 de marzo en Bell Multicultural High School, una escuela secundaria de enseñanza en dos idiomas ubicada en el centro de la comunidad hispana en Columbia Heights, en la capital del país.

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Our message is clear and unwavering. Qaddafi's attacks against civilians must stop. His forces must pull back. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach those in need. Those responsible for violence must be held accountable. Moammar Qaddafi has lost the confidence of his people and the legitimacy to rule, and the aspirations of the Libyan people must be realized.

In recent days, we've heard the voices of Libyans expressing their gratitude for this mission. "You saved our lives," said one Libyan. Said another, "Today, there is hope."

Every American can be proud of the lives we've saved in Libya and of the service of our men and women in uniform who once again have stood up for our interests and our ideals. And people in Libya and around the world are seeing that the United States of America stands with those who hope for a future where they can determine their own destiny.



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