

Libya: Campaign of enforced disappearances must end

Amnesty International 29 March 2011 (...) Libyan forces loyal to Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi have carried out a campaign of enforced disappearances in an attempt to crush growing opposition to his rule, Amnesty International said today in a new briefing paper.

Libya: Detainees, disappeared and missing details over 30 cases of individuals who have disappeared since before protests began, including political activists and those suspected of being rebel fighters or supporters of fighters.

"It appears that there is a systematic policy to detain anyone suspected of opposition to Colonel al-Gaddafi's rule, hold them incommunicado, and transfer them to his strongholds in western Libya" said Malcolm Smart, Amnesty International's Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"Given the circumstances of their enforced disappearance there is every reason to believe that these individuals are at serious risk of torture and ill-treatment."

"Colonel al-Gaddafi must halt this outrageous campaign and order his forces to abide by international law."

Disappearances began taking place even before protests against Colonel al-Gaddafi had turned into armed rebellion. (...) (...) Amnesty International called on Colonel al-Gaddafi and those around him to allow immediate independent access to those detained in order to check on their safety and help protect them from torture, and to urgently inform their families of their whereabouts.

The organization also urged those holding detainees to ensure that all alleged or known fighters who are captured are treated humanely in line with international law, and to give them immediate access to the International Committee of the Red Cross. (...)

(...) The cases documented by Amnesty International are believed to represent only a small proportion of the total number of people who have been detained or have disappeared in the custody of Colonel al-Gaddafi's forces in recent weeks. (...) See [full report](#) . 3. African Rights Court issues first ruling against a state

Human Rights Watch

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(...) The Libyan government should immediately comply with the first binding ruling against a state by the newly operational African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Egyptian Initiative on Personal Rights (EIPR), Human Rights Watch, and Interights said today.

In its pioneering decision, issued on March 25, 2011, and published on March 30, the court unanimously ordered Libya to end any actions that would cause the loss of life or violation of

anyone's "physical integrity" in violation of international human rights law. The ruling is binding on Libya, which is required to report back to the court in 15 days on the steps it has taken to carry out the ruling.

"The African Court's first ruling is a key moment for the protection of human rights in Africa," said Clive Baldwin, senior legal adviser at Human Rights Watch. "The African Union should now ensure that Libya quickly abides by its first ruling." (...)

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