Stepping up the pressure on the Libyan regime

Women demonstrating in Benghazi
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"The situation in Libya remains a cause of great concern," said Minister Westerwelle in Berlin on 13 March. General Gaddafi was continuing to wage war on his own people. "We are slowly cutting off the Gaddafi regime's supply of money," he said after the EU extended its sanctions. It was now important, he went on to say, that the UN Security Council convened as quickly as possible to discuss the situation in Libya. "We want the sanctions to be coordinated so that the political pressure on Gaddafi is as strong as possible."

The Arab League addressed the situation in Libya on 12 March. Westerwelle welcomed its "clear stance" against the crimes committed by the Gaddafi regime. Germany would coordinate "all further steps closely with the Arab League and our partners in Europe, as well as within the United Nations".

**Debate on a possible no-fly zone**

Within the scope of the efforts to step up the pressure on Gaddafi's government, there have also been discussions at international level on the imposition of a no-fly zone. For instance, the Arab League called upon the UN Security Council to take measures to impose such a zone. At the same time, however, it had rejected any form of foreign intervention, stressed Guido Westerwelle.

"It's not clear how a no-fly zone, which would require military intervention from outside, is to be imposed without violating Libya's territorial integrity and sovereignty, as the Arab League has demanded," Westerwelle went on to say. Moreover, it was unclear how the Arab League itself intended to participate in imposing the no-fly zone.

On 14 March, Guido Westerwelle again emphasized, "We believe it's crucially important that Germany doesn't get drawn into a protracted war in North Africa."

With Resolution 7360 of 12 March, the Arab League called upon the Security Council to live up to its responsibility to address the deteriorating situation in Libya and to take measures to establish a no-fly zone against Libyan military aircraft. These measures should serve to protect the Libyan people while honouring the sovereignty and regional security of neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the League decided to cooperate and communicate with the Libyan National Transitional Council and appealed for humanitarian aid for Libya.

**EU tightens sanctions**

Westerwelle at the meeting in Brussels
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At their meeting in Brussels on 10 March, the EU Foreign Ministers decided to tighten their sanctions against Libya and to impose "restrictive measures" against key sections of Libya's investment and banking system. Furthermore, they again extended the list of persons upon whom the EU imposed visa bans and an asset freeze on 28 February.

"We are slowly cutting off the Gaddafi regime’s supply of money", stated Foreign Minister Westerwelle. He went on to say that Germany had acted swiftly to implement the sanctions. Libyan assets worth billions had been frozen in German banks.

Furthermore, at the Extraordinary European Council held in Brussels on 11 March the EU Heads of State and Government called on Muammar Gaddafi to relinquish power immediately and stated that he was no longer an interlocutor for the EU. The EU's High Representative, Catherine Ashton, had talks with the Arab League in Cairo on 14 March.

Council Decision 2011/137/CSFP of 28 February 2011 on the sanctions against the Libyan leadership

Council Decision 2011/156/CSFP of 10 March 2011 on extending the sanctions against the Libyan leadership

Declaration of the Extraordinary council Meeting on developments in Libya and the southern neighbourhodd region, 11 March 2011 (PDF, 95 KB)

**Westerwelle presses for further United Nations sanctions**

The UN Security Council imposed sanctions against the Gaddafi regime with Resolution 1970 of 26 February. These included a weapons embargo as well as an asset freeze on the ruling family and travel bans. What is more, the Security Council decided that the International Criminal Court in The Hague should examine events in Libya.

Following the extension of EU sanctions, Foreign Minister Westerwelle is pressing for the UN Security Council to convene again as quickly as possible. "We want to step up the pressure on Gaddafi with targeted sanctions."


![Migrant workers from Bangladesh in a refugee camp at the Tunisian-Libyan border](image)

© picture alliance / dpa

**Humanitarian aid**

Germany has increased its humanitarian aid for Libya. Foreign Minister Westerwelle announced on 11 March that funding would be increased by 2.2 million euro to a total of 5 million euro. He said the funds were to be used to support the work of UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as NGOs. Among other things, refugees from Bangladesh at the border with Tunisia would be evacuated.

The situation in Libya remains difficult to monitor. The fighting between insurgents and pro-government troops continues. Muammar Gaddafi and his son Saif Al Islam have threatened repeatedly to fight until the very end.

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