

Dangerous Crossroads: The West is ready to invade Libya

Military analysts across the globe say that an international military campaign against Libya is imminent.

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David Cameron. Photo: EPA

Britain may lead a military operation against Col. Muammar Gaddafi. Prime Minister David Cameron is demonstrating a profound insight into the situation in the Middle East and a zealous support for austerity sanctions or even a military invasion of Libya.

David Cameron has been dubbed “Blair’s heir” for the tough foreign policy he borrowed from Tony Blair, who without blinking an eye backed the US military campaign against Iraq. Now, Mr. Cameron is ready to lead a campaign against Libya.

Top British strategists are concerned over Cameron’s transformation into a belligerent leader after his crucial role in slashing defense spending and setting the deadline for troops withdrawal from Afghanistan. Now, he is in daily contact with the US president to secure the resignation of Muammar Gaddafi. And encouraged by David Cameron, the EU’s Foreign Minister Baroness Ashton is meeting with NATO officials to discuss a no-fly zone over Libya.

Analysts explain Mr. Cameron’s moves by fears that Gaddafi might return to international terror practices with greater financial capacity than before. Besides, the British prime minister has got several reliable allies in Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy, the latter having assumed the “war hawk” principles too, following a surprise move on Thursday when he recognized the legitimacy of the opposition government in Libya and expressed readiness to carry out pinpoint strikes at Gaddafi’s troops.

The EU leaders have dismissed Sarkozy’s moves as a “sovereign position” which has nothing to do with that of the EU. But military analysts across the globe say that an international military campaign in Libya is imminent. In the opinion of Vice-President of the Institute of Geopolitical Problems Leonid Ivashov, preparations for an air blockade of Tripoli are nearly over.

The Enterprise aircraft carrier is on its way to the region, and so are ships and air defense

platforms. These are enough to paralyze Gaddafi's radar fields, airfields and flight control systems.

Former Bundeswehr Lieutenant Colonel Jurgen Rose thinks along the same lines.

Similar operations have been held before, in so-called no-fly zones in Northern and Southern Iraq. Gaddafi's fighter planes can be shot down without fearing a response from air defenses and his airfields, and aircraft and runways can be easily destroyed too. Libya's hopelessly outdated aircraft have no chance.

Many experts agree that while Libya's air space is easy to seal off, the political aspect of the crisis remains outstanding and both NATO and the EU are aware of that. NATO leaders have made it clear that there will be no more military interventions without a UN mandate. NATO's reputation in the Islamic world is bad enough. But a carte blanche from the UN Security Council is unlikely as a number of countries, including permanent members, are opposed to such a move.

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