

# NATO Military Operation: Escalation in the Bombing Campaign, “Boots on the Ground”

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Global Research, May 08, 2011  
8 May 2011

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)  
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The North Atlantic Treaty Organization confirmed on May 7, 2011 a total of 5510 sorties since March 31st. This figure does not include the strike sorties undertaken from the 19th to the 30th of March.

Out of 5510 sorties, 2204 are classified as “strike sorties”, involving the bombing of one or more targets.

NATO identifies only a few of the targets out of several thousand strike targets.

There is evidence that NATO is also striking civilian targets including government buildings and residential areas.

According to NATO, “a total of 20 ships under NATO command are actively patrolling the Central Mediterranean.”

Meanwhile, there are confirmed reports of foreign troops on the ground.

NATO has acknowledged the presence of 20 British, 10 French and 10 Italian special forces. Other reports suggest that the number of foreign troops and intelligence operatives are larger than those which are being reported.

In mid-April, Britain sent in military advisers. US intelligence operatives were already deployed: “This deployment is fully within the terms of UN [Security Council Resolution] 1973, both in respect of civilian protection and its provision expressly ruling out a foreign occupation force on Libyan soil,” British Foreign Secretary William Hague said. [“Our officers will not be involved in training or arming the opposition’s fighting forces.”](#)

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