

# Preparing for “Operation Libya”: The Pentagon is “Repositioning” its Naval and Air Forces...

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March 2–“The United States is moving naval and air forces in the region” to “prepare the full range of options” in the confrontation with Libya: Pentagon spokesperson Col. Dave Lapan of the Marines made this announcement yesterday, March 1. He then said that “It was President Obama who asked the military to prepare for these options,” because the situation in Libya is getting worse. The military then began “the planning and preparation” phase for an intervention in Libya. Pentagon planners are working on several specific plans, depending on how the “repositioning of forces” begins so as to have maximum flexibility to implement any option.

In this context, the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, which is located in the Gulf of Aden officially for anti-piracy operations, began to cross the Red Sea to go through the Suez Canal and place itself before the Libyan coast. The SS Kearsarge, an amphibious landing craft carrying a crew of 2,000 marines and attack helicopters is doing the same. A first option would be to impose a “no-fly zone” on Libya: U.S. fighter jets and jets from other NATO countries would prevent any aircraft from taking off from Libyan soil, shooting them down if they did. This measure, whose official reason would be to prevent Gadhafi’s fighter jets from hitting insurgents, in practice would isolate the capital (Tripoli). Another measure that could be implemented simultaneously would be to stop all communications between the capital and the rest of the country. At the same time this process prepares a third option: the landing of forces in Libya, officially to open “humanitarian corridors.”

The naval aviation operations are directed by the United States Naval Forces Command, in Naples, where the headquarters of the naval forces of Africa Command and the Allied Joint Force are located. All three commands are in the hands of the U.S. Admiral Sam J. Locklear III. Also playing an important role is the naval base in Sigonella (Sicily), from which a U.S. Special Forces team for covert missions in Africa has been operation for a while. But it is the entire network of U.S.-NATO bases in Italy, which includes the Sixth Fleet, which has been alerted to be ready to carry out “the full range of options.” This was confirmed by U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in an interview with the Wall Street Journal and the Weekly Standard. About the imposition of a no-fly zone on Libya, said that “France and Italy have the structure to more rapidly implement the operation.”

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton anticipated what would be the political cover for the entire operation. In a speech made yesterday (March 1) at Andrews Air Force Base, she said the U.S. is making “contact with many Libyans who are organizing in the eastern part of the country, while the revolution is moving toward the west,” that is, towards Tripoli. She then

declared that, "We are ready and prepared to offer any assistance to anyone wishing to receive it from the United States." This indirectly confirms the news from various sources that U.S. and NATO "advisers" are working among the rebels. The green light for imposing a no-fly zone and landing of U.S.-NATO forces in Libya would be given at the request of the rebels themselves or their "interim government," headed by some notable who abruptly abandoned the boat of the leader to pass over to that of the rebels.

These facts indicate that there is a plan for "balkanization" of Libya, which takes advantage of the discontent and hatred for the chief and his clan had accumulated in the population and, therefore, the struggle of many (especially young people), who are fighting for genuine democracy and social justice. This plan, conceived in Washington, has as its aims not to extinguish the flames of civil war, but to feed them to split and weaken further Libya. The stakes are clear: control of energy reserves in Libya. The word "revolution" in the mouth to the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton should sound like an alarm bell on the type of "assistance" that it offers "to anyone who wishes to receive from the United States."

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*Translated from Italian by John Catalinotto*

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