

R2P: “No Confirmation Whatsoever” according to the Pentagon that Gadhafi “Fired on his Own People”

Read the Pentagon transcript

By [Global Research](#) and [Global Research](#)

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3 June 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Responsibility to Protect: The War on Libya was launched but there was “No Confirmation Whatsoever” according the Pentagon that Gadhafi “fired on his own people from the air”

The war on Libya was launched on the pretext and justification that Gadhafi was killing civilians and that the US and NATO had a responsibility to come to the rescue of innocent civilians.

Below is the transcript of a March 1st Press briefing at the Pentagon.

On the very same day a UN no-fly-zone resolution was being discussed, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Michael Mullen, “admitted their utter ignorance as to what’s happening on the ground in Libya”

(for further details see Eric Pottenger and Jeff Friesen, [Victors’ Justice and the “Responsibility to Protect”: Who are the Real War Criminals?](#) Global Research, June 3, 2011)

Sec Gates and Adm. Mullen plead ignorance.

Q. Do you see any evidence that [Gaddafi] actually has fired on his own people from the air?

SEC. GATES: **We’ve seen the press reports, but we have no confirmation of that.**

ADM. MULLEN: That’s correct. **We’ve seen no confirmation whatsoever.**

PENTAGON BRIEFING WITH SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT GATES AND ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF MODERATOR: COLONEL DAVID LAPAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MEDIA OPERATIONS LOCATION: PENTAGON, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA TIME: 2:44 P.M. EST DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2011

Federal News Service

March 1, 2011 Tuesday

Q: Mr. Secretary, Admiral Mullen just mentioned that in Libya **Moammar Gadhafi is waging war on his own people, as you put it.** What — is U.S. military intervention realistic? And what specific kinds of options are you considering? Could you describe, for

example, the possibility of a no-fly zone or arming rebel forces?

SEC. GATES:

... I would — I would note that the U.N. Security Council resolution provides no authorization for the use of armed force. There is no unanimity within NATO for the use of armed force. And the kinds of options that have been talked about in the press and elsewhere also have their own consequences and second- and third-order effects. So they need to be considered very carefully.

Our job is to give the president the broadest possible decision space and options, and to go into the things that we're thinking about, the options that we're providing, I think, have the potential to narrow his decision space. And I have no intention of doing that.

Q: Do you see any evidence that [Gaddafi] actually has fired on his own people from the air? There were reports of it, but do you have independent confirmation? If so, to what extent?

SEC. GATES: **We've seen the press reports, but we have no confirmation of that.**

ADM. MULLEN: That's correct. **We've seen no confirmation whatsoever.**

Q: Mr. Secretary, could you give us your assessment of the situation on the ground? How bad is it? Can the rebels take Tripoli? Are thousands dying?

SEC. GATES: Well, the — **I think the honest answer, David, is that we don't know in that respect, in terms of the number of casualties.** In terms of the potential capabilities of the opposition, **we're in the same realm of speculation, pretty much, as everybody else. I haven't seen anything that would give us a better read on the number of rebels that have been killed than you have.** And I think it remains to be seen how effectively military leaders who have defected from Gaddhafi's forces can organize the opposition in the country. And we are watching that unfold, as you are.

Q: **Do you have any requests from rebel leaders for air strikes — (inaudible) — have you heard of any of that?**

SEC. GATES: **No.**

....

Q: Mr. Secretary and Admiral Mullen, based on what you've seen to date, **do you have any reason to think that Gadhafi would be prepared to leave voluntarily,** or do you think that some form of force, whether it is rebels, whether ultimately it's U.N. sanctions, Western intervention, whether some form of force would be needed to push him out of power?

SEC. GATES: Well, all I can say is that sometimes you actually have to listen to what people say. And he's saying he's not leaving. (Scattered laughter.)

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