



NATO and Libya

Operational Media Update

For 20 OCTOBER



21 October. Allied Joint Force Command NAPLES, SHAPE, NATO HQ
(more information: www.jfcnaples.nato.int)

Mission

NATO took control of all military operations for Libya under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1970 & 1973 on 31 March 2011. The aim of Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR is to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under attack or threat of attack.

The mission consists of three elements: an arms embargo, a no-fly-zone and actions to protect civilians from attack or the threat of attack.

Over the past 24 hours, NATO has conducted the following activities associated with Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR:

Air Operations

Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR air assets continue monitoring missions over Libya. Since the beginning of the NATO operation (31 March 2011, 06.00GMT) a total of **26,156** sorties, including **9,634** strike sorties*, have been conducted.

Sorties conducted 20 OCTOBER: **67**
Strike sorties conducted 20 OCTOBER: **16**

**Strike sorties are intended to identify and engage appropriate targets, but do not necessarily deploy munitions each time.*

Key Hits 20 OCTOBER:

11 Armed Vehicles were struck in the vicinity of Sirte**

*** For further information on the NATO strike yesterday, please see the following page.*

Arms Embargo Activities

A total of **12** ships under NATO command are actively patrolling the Central Mediterranean.
14 Vessels were hailed on 20 OCTOBER to determine destination and cargo. **0** boardings (**0** denied) were conducted.

A total of **3098** vessels have been hailed, **296** boardings and **11** denials have been conducted since the beginning of arms embargo operations.

International Humanitarian Assistance Movements as recorded by NATO

Total of Humanitarian Movements*****2139**: (air, maritime)
Ships delivering Humanitarian Assistance 20 OCTOBER: **0**
Aircraft delivering Humanitarian Assistance 20 OCTOBER: **4**

****Some humanitarian movements cover several days.*

Command and Control

NATO's operational commander for Operation Unified Protector is **Lieutenant-General Charles Bouchard** of the Canadian Air Force. His office and staff is located at the Allied Joint Force Command Naples.

For any operational query:

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NATO strike in Sirte area 20 October 2011

NAPLES – Now that NATO has had the opportunity to conduct a post strike assessment of yesterday's strike, we are able to provide a more comprehensive picture of events.

At approximately 08h30 local time (GMT+2) on Thursday 20 October 2011, NATO aircraft struck 11 armed military vehicles which were part of a larger group of approximately 75 vehicles manoeuvring in the vicinity of Sirte. These vehicles were leaving Sirte at high speed and were attempting to force their way around the outskirts of the city. The vehicles had a substantial amount of mounted weapons and ammunition, posing a significant threat to the local civilian population.

The convoy was engaged by NATO aircraft to reduce the threat. Initially, only one vehicle was destroyed, which disrupted the convoy and resulted in many vehicles dispersing and changing direction.

After the disruption, a group of approximately 20 vehicles continued at great speed to proceed in a southerly direction, due west of Sirte, and continuing to pose a significant threat. NATO again engaged these vehicles with another air asset. The post strike assessment revealed that approximately 10 pro-Qadhafi vehicles were destroyed or damaged.

At the time of the strike, NATO did not know that Qadhafi was in the convoy. NATO's intervention was conducted solely to reduce the threat towards the civilian population, as required to do under our UN mandate. As a matter of policy, NATO does not target individuals.

We later learned from open sources and Allied intelligence that Qadhafi was in the convoy and that the strike likely contributed to his capture.

NATO does not divulge specific information on national assets involved in operations.