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Libyan diplomats defect en masse

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Diplomats at Libyan embassies in the US, the United Nations, the Arab League, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Poland, India and Bangladesh, among others, have either resigned from their posts, or disavowed links to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's government.

Many say that they now stand with the protesters, and have called for international intervention into what at least one deputy ambassador termed a "genocide".

We present here a snapshot of their statements.

Ali Aujali, Ambassador to the United States

"I think [Gaddafi] should step down, of course, after what's happening in our country now. There's no other solution. He should step down and give the chance for the people to make their future.

"How can I support a government killing our people? What I have seen in front of my eyes is not acceptable at all."

Ibrahim Dabbashi, Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations

"The tyrant Muammar Gaddafi has asserted clearly, through his sons, the level of ignorance he and his children have, and how much he despises Libya and the Libyan people," he said in a statement that was endorsed by the staff at the mission, excluding the ambassador.

"This is in fact a declaration of war against the Libyan people," Dabbashi told reporters, surrounded by a dozen Libyan diplomats. "The regime of Gaddafi has already started the genocide against the Libyan people."

The statement called on "the officers and soldiers of the Libyan army wherever they are and whatever their rank is ... to organise themselves and move towards Tripoli and cut the snake's head."

It appealed to the United Nations to impose a no-fly zone over Libyan cities to prevent mercenaries and weapons from being shipped in.

It also urged guards at Libya's oil installations to protect them from any sabotage "by the coward tyrant," and urged countries to prevent Gaddafi from fleeing there and to be on the lookout for any money smuggling.

Dabbashi and his colleagues called on The Hague-based International Criminal Court to start an immediate inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity they said Gaddafi and his sons and followers had committed.

They called on employees of Libyan embassies all over the world to "stand with their people", especially the mission at the UN European headquarters in Geneva, which they said should seek action by the UN Human Rights Council there.

Ali el-Essawi, Ambassador to India

"I have resigned because of the matter of violence used against Libyan civilians," el-Essawi told Al Jazeera.

He said that government forces were "killing people in the streets" and using aircraft to bomb protesters.

Asked if he had tried to explain to his government why he had resigned, he responded:

"No, no, no need to explain. It is explained on the TV channels. You cannot bring the people back to life after you kill them. No need to explain."

He called on the UN Security Council to declare Libyan airspace a no-fly zone "to protect the people". He termed the violence in Libya "a massacre".

Bubaker al-Mansori, Ambassador to Malaysia

"We are not loyal to him, we are loyal to the Libyan people," he told the AFP news agency.

"The protesters here are demonstrating against the killing and murder that are happening in Libya. We cannot stand by and allow this to happen to the whole Libyan community, so including us at the embassy, we are protesting this."

The embassy staff released a statement condemning the "barbaric, criminal, bloodshed, massacre and the total elimination of our innocent civilians whom are armless as they conducted a peaceful demonstration".

Musbah Allafi, Ambassador to Australia

As Allafi met with Australian government officials, Omran Zwed, the mission's cultural counsellor, told *The Australian* newspaper: "We represent the Libyan people and no longer the Libyan regime."

Abdel Moneim al-Houni, Ambassador to the Arab League

Al-Houni resigned on Sunday, demanding that Gaddafi and his commanders and aides be put on trial for the "mass killings in Libya".

Hussein Sadiq al Musrati, Senior diplomat in Embassy to China

"I used to work in this, the Hitler embassy," al Musrati said, refering to the Libyan embassy where he was stationed in Beijing. "I quit about four days ago, when I saw on TV my people being killed by Hitler, Gadhafi. I tell him: 'Finish! Game over. Get out!'"