

TIMELINE OF THE ARAB REVOLT: DECEMBER 2010 – JUNE 2011

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December 17, 2010

Tunisia - Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old unemployed, sets fire to himself in the central Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid, protesting at the confiscation by police of his fruit and vegetable cart. He suffers third-degree burns across his entire body and is subsequently treated in the Traumatology Centre for Severe Burns in the town of Ben Arous.

His self-immolation sparks demonstrations in which protesters burned tyres and chanted slogans demanding jobs. Protests soon spread to other parts of the country including the towns of al-Ragab and Maknasi in central Tunisia, and later the capital, Tunis. Videos of the Sidi Bouzid demonstrations are online soon after the protest began and the Twitter website carries extensive commentary of the protests.

December 19, 2010

Tunisia - Protests spread to Kairouan (holy city located in north-central Tunisia), Sfax (city 270 km southeast of Tunis), and Ben Guerdane (town in south-eastern Tunisia, close to the border with Libya).

December 20, 2010

Tunisia - Mohamed Al Nouri Al Juwayni, the Tunisian development minister, travels to Sidi Bouzid to announce a new \$10m employment programme. But protests continue unabated.

December 21, 2010

Tunisia - President Ben Ali carries out limited cabinet reshuffle and warns that protesters would be punished if rioting continued in the country.

December 22, 2010

Tunisia - Lahseen Naji, a 22-year-old commits suicide in the midst of another demonstration over unemployment in Sidi Bouzid by climbing an electricity pylon and electrocuting himself on the cables, after shouting out "No to misery, no to unemployment!"

Ramzi Al-Abboudi, under the burden of business debt, ironically made possible by the country's micro-credit solidarity programme, commits suicide.

December 24, 2010

Tunisia - Mohamed Ammari, an 18-year-old is killed by a bullet in the chest when police opened fire in the town of Menzel Bouziane, 240km south of the capital Tunis.

Chawki Belhoussine El Hadri, a 44-year-old man, is among those shot by police at the same protest. He dies on 30 December 2010.

Hundreds of protesters rally in front of the Tunisian labour union headquarters over rampant unemployment, clashing with Tunisian security forces in the central towns of al-Ragab and Miknassi. Skirmishes break out when security forces stage overnight crackdown campaigns.

December 25, 2010

Tunisia – Protesters in Kairouan, Sfax and Ben Guerdane again stage demonstrations.

An interior ministry spokesperson says police were forced to "shoot in self-defence" after shots in the air failed to disperse scores of protesters who were setting police cars and buildings ablaze.

December 27, 2010

Tunisia - Mass rally is held in Tunis.

December 28, 2010

Tunisia - President Ben Ali warns in a national television broadcast that protests are unacceptable and will have a negative impact on the economy. He criticises the "use of violence in the streets by a minority of extremists" and says the law will be applied "in all firmness" to punish protesters.

Rally in the town of Gafsa organised by the Tunisian Federation of Labour Unions is blocked by security forces.

Some 300 lawyers stages protests close to government headquarters in Tunis.

The governors of three provinces: Sidi Bouzid, Jendouba, and Zaghouan are dismissed.

Al-Arabiya TV news channel reports the sacking of the ministers of communication, trade and handicrafts, and religious affairs for reasons related to the uprising.

Ben Ali and the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi hold a telephone conversation.

December 29, 2010

Tunisia - Protests continue. Police break-up protests in Monastir and demonstrations in Sbikha and Chebba.

Nessma TV, a private news channel, becomes the first major Tunisian media outlet to cover the protests, after 12 days of demonstrations.

December 30, 2010

Tunisia - Assam El Hadri, shot by police six days prior, dies of his injuries.

President Ben Ali dismisses the governor of the region Sidi Bouzid, Mourad Ben Jalloul.

December 31, 2010

Tunisia - Lawyers across Tunisia respond to a call to assemble in protest over the arrested lawyers and in solidarity with the people of Sidi Bouzid.

Authorities react to the protests with force, and lawyers say they were "savagely beaten".

January 2, 2011

Tunisia - The hacktivist group "Anonymous" announces Operation Tunisia in solidarity with the protests by hacking a number of Tunisian state-run websites and temporarily shutting down the websites of the presidential palace, prime minister, ministry of industry, ministry of foreign affairs, the stock exchange, and the presidential elections site. In a manifesto posted on the prime minister's website the group stated: "Anonymous is willing to help the Tunisian people in this fight against oppression," the statement said. "Cyber attacks will persist until the Tunisian government respects all Tunisian citizens' right to free speech and information and ceases the censoring of the internet".

Several online activists report on Twitter that their email and Facebook accounts were hacked.

January 3, 2011

Tunisia - Protests in Thala over unemployment and a high cost of living turned violent. Police fired tear gas injuring at least nine people. In response protesters set fire to tires and attack the office of Constitutional Democratic Party.

Algeria - Sporadic rioting is reported in Algeria during the first days of January 2011, when the price of many food products increased sharply. The price of flour, cooking oil and sugar have doubled in the past few months. The official unemployment rate stands at about 10%, although independent organisations say it is closer to 25%.

January 4, 2011

Tunisia - The Tunisian Bar Association announces a general strike to be staged January 6 in protest over attacks by security forces against its members.

January 5, 2011

Tunisia - Mohamed Bouazizi dies in hospital in Ben Arous. He was buried in Sidi Bouzid.

January 5-6, 2011

Algeria - Protest in Algiers intensify. Riots spread to Bab el-Oued, a working class district of the capital that was at the centre of the protest movement in 1988, at the beginning of a period of unrest that led to an Islamist insurgency in the 1990s.

According to the official APS news agency, Overnight, protesters ransacked government buildings, banks and post offices in "several eastern cities", including Constantine, Jijel, Setif and Bouira.

Demonstrations take place in Tizi Ouzou, the main city of Algeria's Kabylia region, about 90km east of Algiers. Fresh violence is reported in Algeria's second city of Oran.

Independent reports say that five people died in the riots linked to food price increases and unemployment in Algeria.

January 6, 2011

Tunisia - Abderrazek Kilani, chairman of the Tunisian Bar Association states that 95 per cent of Tunisia's 8,000 lawyers joined a strike, demanding an end to police brutality against peaceful protesters.

January 7, 2011

Tunisia - Authorities arrest a group of bloggers, journalists, activists and a rap singer in a crackdown on dissent. The arrests come in the context of a "cyber war" between the Tunisian authorities and web activists, who have been struggling to break through the country's extensive censorship wall. Hamada Ben-Amor, a 22-year-old rapper released a song on the internet titled "President, your people are dying".

Algeria - Police fire tear gas and use water cannon on stone-throwing youths following Friday prayers in Algiers.

According to AFP, clashes also erupt for the first time in Annaba city in the north-eastern corner of Algeria near the river Seybouse and the Tunisian border, about 550 km east of the capital, where hundreds of people threw stones at police deployed outside government offices.

January 8, 2011

Algeria - At least six protesters are reportedly killed and six others wounded in clashes with police in Tala, 200km southwest of the capital Tunis, near the border with Algeria. Another three people were killed in similar clashes in the Kasserine region.

In Tala, witnesses said police fired their weapons after using water cannons to try to disperse a crowd which had set fire to a government building. The crowd has also thrown stones and petrol bombs at police.

Tunisia - The Tunisian General Union of Labour (UGTT), the country's main union, condemns the authorities for their heavy-handed response to protesters.

January 9, 2011

Tunisia - Two protesters, Chihab Alibi and Youssef Fitouri, are shot dead by police in al-Miknassi.

January 10, 2011

Tunisia - In a message to the nation Ben Ali thanks Muammar Gaddafi for "strong" support. He describes demonstrations as "terrorist acts", attributing them to "hooded gangs who attack public buildings by night". He announces several political and socio-economic measures, vowing personally to create 300,000 jobs over the next two years to reduce the number of graduate unemployed.

The Tunisian government orders an indefinite closure of all schools and universities.

In a brief statement the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon calls for restraint and dialogue.

Algeria - In the Algerian town of Bordj Menail, 26-year-old Aouichia Mohamed set himself on fire in protest against the government.

January 13, 2011

Tunisia - The Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights reports that 66 persons have died since the protests began. At least 13 people were killed in the past two days alone. The government's official toll stands at 23 after several weeks of clashes.

President Ben Ali makes a televised address, announcing unprecedented concessions and promising not to seek re-election in 2014. He also pledges to introduce more freedoms into society, institute widespread reforms and investigate the killings of protesters during demonstrations. Ben Ali orders state security forces not to fire at demonstrators and vowed to cut the prices of staples such as sugar, bread, and milk.

Almost simultaneously, the government appeared to lift its heavy hand from the media, allowing opposition figures onto television and lifting bans on formerly censored websites such as YouTube. The French daily *Le Monde* suddenly becomes available on the internet. Taoufik Ayachi, an opposition figure, and Naji Baghourri, a former journalists' union chief, appeared on television.

Algeria - Mohsen Bouterfif set himself ablaze in Algeria's Tebessa province when a town's mayor failed to secure him a house.

January 14, 2011

Tunisia - President Ben Ali imposes a state of emergency and fires the country's government amid violent clashes between protesters and security forces. In an attempt to quell the mass protest he also promises fresh legislative elections within six months.

State media reports that gatherings of more than three people have been banned and "arms will be used if orders of security forces are not heeded".

Kamel Morjane, the foreign minister, states that Ben Ali is prepared to hold new legislative elections before the 2014 poll. Speaking to France's Europe 1 radio, Morjane said that Ben Ali has decided that presidential and legislative elections will not be held at the same time anymore, and that "in so doing, he accepted the principle of elections before the presidential poll."

In a sign of a deepening political stand-off thousands of protesters converged in front of the interior ministry building chanting slogans such as "Ben Ali, leave!" and "Ben Ali, thank you but that's enough!".

Ben Ali flees Tunisia. He is refused entry into France and several other countries. In the early hours of 15 January his plane lands in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where is granted permission to stay. With him were his wife, a 53-year-old former hairdresser, their son Mohammed, six, their daughter Halima, her fiancé, their butler and two maids. Subsequently an unnamed senior air force official recounted the final moments of the president and his wife on Tunisian soil. As Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali refused to board the plane his wife words were reported as: "Get on imbecile. All my life I've had to put up with your screw-ups." According to the eye-witness account Ben Ali stood on the tarmac in Tunis airport with a small briefcase, wringing his hands and saying: "Leave me, I don't want to go, I want to die here for my country." At his wife's side was Ali Seriati, the president's hated political police chief, who pushed him on to the steps, shouting: "For —'s sake, get on!"

Mohammed Ghannouchi, the 69-years-old Tunisian prime minister (since 1999) and a close ally of Ben Ali, cites chapter 56 of the Tunisian constitution and becomes the interim president. Chapter 56 of the Tunisian constitution, under which Ghannouchi took power, reads: "In the event the president of the republic is incapable of discharging his duties temporarily, he may order for his powers and authorities be delegated to the first minister, save the right of dissolving the parliament. During this period of temporary incapacity, the government shall remain standing until such state of incapacity is eliminated, even if the government is chastised. The president shall inform the speaker of the parliament and the chairman of the Advisers Board of the temporary delegation of his powers."

Ghannouchi's decision is nullified by Tunisia's Constitutional Council which hands the presidency to the Speaker of Parliament.

Jordan - In Jordan hundreds of protesters chanted slogans against Prime Minister Samir al-Rifai in the southern city of Karak.

January 15, 2011

Tunisia - Fouad Mebazaa the speaker of parliament is sworn in as Tunisia's interim president; he orders creation of unity government.

Saudi Arabia officially announces that it is hosting Ben Ali and his family for an unspecified period of time. After their arrival in Saudi Arabia the Royal Court in Riyadh

issues a statement saying: “The government of Saudi Arabia understands the exceptional situation that the people of Tunisia are facing and hopes that stability and security will return to this beloved Arab and Muslim country. On this basis of this and of its support for action that aids the wellbeing of the Tunisian people, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomed President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali and his family to the Kingdom. Saudi Arabia while also announcing its full backing for the people of Tunisia, hopes for greater cooperation between Tunisians so they can surmount this difficult phase in their history.”

Security vacuum left by the departure of Ben Ali is exploited by looters and violent gangs.

January 16, 2011

Tunisia – Tension and uncertainty grip Tunisia as military forces attempt to restore order.

WikiLeaks releases a four-part series of US diplomatic cables that shows the United States knew about the extent of corruption and discontent in Tunisia and chose to support Ben Ali regardless.

Ben Ali holds telephone conversation with Muammar Gaddafi.

Libya - Muammar Gaddafi and Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak discuss the Tunisian political situation on the telephone.

Muammar Gaddafi deplors developments in Tunisia. In a televised address beamed to Tunisia he states that Tunisian people have suffered a great and irreparable loss, shedding blood and pushing their country into turmoil. He criticized the media campaign following the riots, and said the reported cases of corruption and other vices in the government were unfounded. He wondered why the media would be reporting such vices in a country like Tunisia, where resources are limited, instead of focussing attention on countries where billions were looted and sold to the West and the East. The Libyan leader condemned the leaking of official documents, including incitement to hatred, by Wikileaks and various other websites. He said that “these leaks are aimed at destabilizing the region and plunging it into disorder and social unrest under agendas established by foreign intelligence services.”

Algeria - Civil protection officer attempts self-immolation in the town of Oum El Bouaghi in eastern Algeria.

January 17, 2011

Tunisia - Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi appoints opposition figures to a new coalition government, aiming to establish political stability after protests.

Sudanese foreign ministry issues a statement: “the government of Sudan welcomes the choice of the people of Tunisia to determine the political future of their country”.

Morocco - Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation issues a statement: “The Kingdom of Morocco, which has followed with great concern the major events and dramas that have occurred in recent days in sisterly Tunisia, expresses deep and sincere feelings of solidarity with the people of Tunisia as a whole, in this delicate and crucial period in its history.”

Egypt - Abdouh Abdel Moneim – age 48, sets himself on fire outside Egyptian parliament. An interior ministry source said the man was the owner of a small restaurant and was protesting about his poor living standards. Self-immolation as a method of protest is uncommon in the Arab world, where many associate it with protesters in the Far East or the Indian subcontinent. But Egyptian women in rural or poor urban areas have been known to set themselves on fire to protest violent husbands, abusive parents or an unwanted suitor.

Ahmed Hashem el-Sayed, a 25-year-old unemployed man, sets himself on fire in the Egyptian city of Alexandria. He dies in hospital the following day.

Mohammed Farouq Mohammed el-Sayed, a lawyer, sets himself alight outside the prime minister's office in Cairo and is rushed to hospital with minor burns.

Mauritania - In an echo of the incident that sparked the events in Tunisia a 42-year-old Mauritanian sets himself on fire in front of the Presidential Palace in Nouakchott. On his Facebook page, Yakoub Ould Dahoud said that he was protesting the political and economic conditions in the country. He described himself as a "simple citizen who is claiming legitimate rights". Ould Dahoud's online declaration called for "the release of rights activists who are fighting against slavery from civil prison" and demanded lower prices for rice, wheat, oils, sugar and milk. He also called for election oversight and a constitutional amendment banning current and former military figures from seeking the presidency. "Isn't it yet time for the Mauritanian people to freely and seriously choose who to govern them and manage the wealth that suffices them, away from handouts of foreign sabotage governments?" Ould Dahoud asked.

Algeria - In Algeria, a man named Senouci Touat doused himself in gasoline and set himself on fire in the city of Mostaganem, 350 km west of the capital Algiers.

January 19, 2011

Arab League - Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa warns Arab leaders gathered at economic summit in Sharm El-Sheikh that the hardships of ordinary Tunisians that sparked a popular uprising were linked to "unprecedented anger" in the region. He calls on them to "move forward in the development of our societies in terms of human development, technology, economy and society". In their final communiqué the Arab leaders state that "the developmental challenges are no less important than the political challenges facing the region".

January 21, 2011

Tunisia - Demonstrations held in front of the headquarters of the Constitutional Democratic Rally party in Tunis; shots are fired in the air by the army.

Tunisia's caretaker administration approved a general amnesty at its first meeting and declares three days of national mourning for victims of unrest that toppled the previous government.

Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi makes emotional television plea for patience. He promises to retire from public life after the elections, and pledges that all "anti-democratic laws" would be repealed by the transition cabinet. He also announced that the state would provide compensation to those who died during the uprising, as well as their families.

January 22, 2011

Algeria - Anti-government demonstration, organised by the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) in the centre of the Algiers is broke up by police. Several protesters are injured and a number are reported to have been arrested. Demonstrations are banned in Algeria because of a state of emergency in place since 1992, and the government had warned people not to attend the demonstration called by the RCD in central Algiers.

Tunisia - Thousands of protesters, including police officers, lawyers and students take to the streets of Tunis to demand the resignation of the cabinet. They are joined by members of the National Guard and fire departments.

Hundreds of Tunisians defy a night-time curfew and set on a march from Menzel Bouzaiane to Tunis in what they call a "Liberation Caravan".

Yeman - Anti-government demonstrations are reported in Yemen's capital of Sana'a. Some 2,500 people take part in the protests. Dozens of activists are arrested. Protests were also held in the southern port city of Aden, where calls for Saleh to step down were heard

along with the more familiar slogans for southern secession. Police fired on demonstrators, injuring four, and detained 22 others in heavy clashes.

Tawakul Karman a prominent female human rights activist is arrested in the middle of the night in Sana'a and accused of organising the anti-government protests. Her arrest sparks further protests in the capital and the town of Taiz the following day. Karman is the president of Yemen's Women Journalists without Chains and a member of the Islamist opposition party, Islah.

Mauritania - Yacoub Ould Dahoud who set himself on fire on January 17 dies in a clinic in Morocco.

January 23, 2011

Yemen - thousands of protesters including students, activists and opposition groups gather inside the University of Sana'a in Yemen to chant slogans against President Ali Abdullah Saleh who has been in power for 32 years. It was the first demonstration to directly confront the rule of Yemen's president, something that had been a red line few dissenters dared to challenge. The demonstrators clearly drew inspiration from the recent ouster of Tunisia's long-time leader, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. "Oh, Ali, join your friend Ben Ali," the crowds chanted. Police fired tear gas at the demonstrators, whose grievances include proposed constitutional changes that would allow the president to rule for two additional terms of ten years. Saleh's current term in office expires in 2013.

In the evening Yemeni television broadcasts President Ali Abdullah Saleh delivered early to military officers. Saleh announces the raise of salaries for those serving in the army apparently in an attempt to ensure the army's loyalty in the face of the rising challenges. He denies claims by his opponents that he plans to install his son, Ahmed, who commands the Republican Guard and special forces, as his successor. "We are against succession. We are in favor of change ...and these are rude statements, they are the utmost rudeness." After the Tunisian turmoil, Saleh also ordered income taxes slashed in half and instructed his government to control prices. He also deployed anti-riot police and soldiers to several key areas in the capital, Sana'a, and its surroundings to prevent riots.

The "Caravan of Liberation" protest of thousands reaches Tunis.

January 24, 2011

Tunisia - Tunisian Army Chief of Staff Rachid Ammar an impromptu speech to hundreds of demonstrators who gathered near the Prime Minister's Office in Tunis. He vows to "defend the revolution" and warns: "Our revolution, your revolution, the revolution of the young, risks being lost....There are forces that are calling for a void, a power vacuum. The void brings terror, which brings dictatorship... The national army is the guarantor of the Revolution. The army has protected and will protect the people and country... We are faithful to the Constitution. We protect the Constitution."

Police fired tear gas after protesters surged through a security picket and into the compound of Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi. Several windows in the Ministry of Finance were also broken.

The Associated Press reports that some 80,000 have logged their support for "the day of revolution against torture, poverty, corruption and unemployment" in Egypt.

Yemen - Tawakul Karman is granted a conditional release that stipulates that she is not to engage in any unlicensed protest demonstration. Hours after being released, Tawakul Karman returned to the demonstrations and vowed to continue fighting to oust President Saleh.

January 25, 2011

Egypt - Mass protests take place in Egypt on Police Day (commemorating Egyptian police officers who refused to surrender to British military forces in Ismailia). Demands include the firing of the Minister of Interior, the cancelling of the perpetual State of Emergency that suspends civil liberties, and a term limit on the Presidency to end the 30-year rule of Hosni Mubarak. Several cities are affected including Aswan, Mansura, Tanta, Alexandria, Zagazig, Suez, Assiut, Mahalla el-Kubra, Kafr El Sheikh, Balteem, Ismailiya, and Quweisna. Some 20,000 people protest in Cairo.

Demonstrators try to storm the parliament. Three people (Gharib Abdelaziz Abdellatif, 45) die in Suez after being hit by rubber bullets. A police officer is killed in Cairo as a result of a stone hitting his head. An Egyptian human rights organisation, the Arab Network for Human Rights Information, says more than 400 people were detained.

The protests are being co-ordinated on a Facebook page where the organisers said they were taking a stand against torture, poverty, corruption and unemployment.

Twitter confirms that it had been blocked inside Egypt from 1600 GMT.

The "Anonymous" hacker's collective closes down the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Information.

Overnight, police fire tear gas at thousands of protesters in central Cairo to demand Mubarak's ousting and calling for reforms.

Algeria - A fireman in the town of Oum El Bouaghi in eastern Algeria tries to commit suicide by pouring lighter fuel on himself and setting it on fire.

January 26, 2011

Tunisia - Tunisia issues an international arrest warrant and requests Interpol to detain former president Ben Ali his wife Leila and other family members. They are being sought for "illegal acquisition" of assets and "illicit transfers of funds abroad".

Protests in Tunis continue. The demonstrators - mainly young men and teenagers - are demanding the resignation of the interim government led by Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi. A peaceful march is staged by the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries demanding the right to form a free and independent trade union.

Lazhar Karoui Chebbi, Justice Minister, in the national unity government, states that in the disorder that followed the fall of Ben Ali, about 11,000 prisoners had escaped from Tunisian jails. According to him 2,460 prisoners had been released since Ben Ali was ousted from power. It was not clear how many of them were political prisoners.

Egypt - Thousands of people demonstrate in Egyptian towns, despite a strict ban imposed by the authorities. Egyptian police fire tear gas at protesters.

The Egyptian pound hits a 6-year low against the dollar. The stock market loses more than 4% of value --- an estimated \$21 billion --- in the first 15 minutes of trading.

Around 500 people stage protests on the steps and roof of the lawyers union in central Cairo, chanting anti-government slogans, with another 500 listening and watching from the street. Police use water cannons and tear gas on protesters. Scattered protests are reported in Alexandria.

According to a statement from the Egyptian Interior Ministry around 500 protesters had been arrested over the past 24 hours in an effort to clamp down on the public unrest.

In unusually blunt remarks, the US secretary of state, Hilary Clinton, states that widespread anti-government protests over poverty and government repression in Egypt represent an opportunity for the 30-year administration of President Hosni Mubarak to implement "political, economic and social reforms to respond to the legitimate needs and interests of the Egyptian people."

Syria - Hasan Ali Akleh from the city of Al-Hasakah in north-eastern Syria, sets himself on fire.

January 27, 2011

Tunisia - Tunisia's foreign minister, Kamel Morjane, announces his resignation, as authorities attempt to quell unrest by protesters who want to oust other members of deposed former President Ben Ali's ruling party.

In the evening Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi announces major cabinet reshuffle replacing 12 ministers including the defence, interior and finance ministers, who all had served under Ben Ali.

Egypt - The Egyptian stock exchange suspends trading temporarily after a sharp drop within minutes of opening.

Large protests take place in the cities of Cairo, Suez and the industrial city of Ismailiya. In Suez people congregated to demand the release of those detained, and clashes broke out between demonstrators and security forces. A fire station was set alight by demonstrators - police fire rubber-coated bullets, tear gas and water cannon. In Ismailiya, hundreds of protesters fought with police, who used batons and tear gas to disperse them.

Lawyers stage protests in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria and the Nile Delta town of Toukh, north of Cairo.

A Bedouin protester is shot dead in the Sinai region, bringing the week's death toll to seven.

Facebook, Twitter and Blackberry Messenger services are disrupted.

The White House warns the Cairo government and protesters they have an "obligation" to avoid violence. The European Union calls on Egypt to respect the right to protest.

Nobel peace laureate and Egyptian opposition politician Mohamed ElBaradei arrives in Cairo.

Yemen - Thousands of Yemenis demonstrate in the capital Sana'a, calling on president Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down.

January 28, 2011

Egypt - Banks and financial institutions are closed throughout Egypt.

Internet and mobile phone text message users in Egypt report major disruption to services.

Anti-regime protests come to a head after Friday prayers. In Cairo riot police fire tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse tens of thousands of protesters. Eleven civilians are reported killed in Suzez and 170 injured. In Alexandria the governorate building is torched. At least 1,030 people get injured countrywide.

Mohamed ElBaradei joins at least 2,000 people in Friday prayers in Cairo, a day after returning home and saying he is ready to "lead the transition."

Internet services in Egypt go down.

President Hosni Mubarak imposes a dusk-to-dawn curfew and calls on the army to assist beleaguered police in enforcing it.

Protesters set fire to the headquarters of the ruling National Democratic Party in Cairo. The riots continue throughout the night.

Key ally the United States, Britain and Germany express concern about the violence, with Britain saying the protesters had "legitimate grievances."

Jordan - In the Jordanian capital Amman large crowds gather at the city's main downtown mosque, chanting slogans and demanding the dismissal of the prime minister. Some protesters wave the green flags of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Syria – An evening demonstration takes place in the city of Ar-Raqqah in north central Syria against the killing of two soldiers of Kurdish descent.

January 29, 2011

Egypt - Overnight, president Mubarak makes his first appearance to announce that he is sacking his cabinet. Protesters throw stones as riot police try to enter Tahrir Square in central Cairo. Egypt's cabinet meets to formally submit its resignation.

Egyptian state television announces that the curfews imposed in Cairo, Alexandria and Suez have been extended to run from 4pm (2pm GMT) to 8am (6am GMT).

Tens of thousands of protesters flood Cairo streets, ignoring an extended curfew, also applied in Alexandria and Suez. Three people killed in the capital while a mob in Rafah kill three police; the nationwide death toll since 25 January reaches at least 51; the army calls on Egyptians to protect themselves against looters. Dozens of shops ransacked in Cairo; the resignation of the government, promised by Mubarak, is announced; the banned Muslim Brotherhood, the best-organized opposition group, calls for a peaceful transfer of power through a transitional cabinet; Egyptian intelligence chief Omar Suleiman sworn in as vice-president, the first such post to be held in Mubarak's 30-year presidency.

President Hosni Mubarak holds telephone conversation with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. According to *Arab News* during the conversation president Mubarak reassured the king that the situation in Egypt is stable. "What have been seen by the viewers in the world outside are merely attempts of some groups who do not want stability and security for the Egyptian nation. These groups seek to achieve weird and dubious objectives." The Saudi Press Agency issues a statement quoting King Abdullah as saying: "Egypt is a country of Arabism and Islam. No Arab and Muslim can bear that some infiltrators into the brotherly Egyptian people are attempting to destabilize that country's security and stability in the name of freedom of expression, and they have been exploiting the public and spawning hatred and driving them to engage in destruction, arson, looting — terrorizing them and inciting sedition... the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its people and government declares it stands with all its resources with the government of Egypt and its people."

Associated Press reports peaceful protests in Tahrir Square with few police in the crowds, soon followed by news of police opening fire near the interior ministry. A number of people are wounded by gunshots.

Egyptian state television reports that looters have broken into the Egyptian Museum and destroyed two ancient mummies. Demonstrators form a human chain around army tanks in Tahrir Square as they help to protect the museum.

President Mubarak appoints former air force commander Ahmed Shafiq prime minister. Egypt's intelligence chief, Omar Suleiman, is appointed vice-president – the first to hold this office since Mubarak took power in 1981.

In a joint statement Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel, and David Cameron declare: 'The Egyptian people have legitimate grievances and a longing for a just and better future ... We urge President Mubarak to embark on a process of transformation reflected in broad-based government and free elections.'

Algeria - In Algeria more than 10,000 people stage protests against authorities in the northeastern city of Bejaia (Berber-speaking Kabylie region). Organizers say that the latest rally is inspired by events in Tunisia.

Saudi Arabia - Saudi web activists launch an online campaign calling for political reform in the kingdom.

January 30, 2011

Egypt - Thousands of convicts break out of prisons; Egyptian warplanes make deafening low passes over protesters; Mubarak visits central military command; opposition

charges ElBaradei with negotiating with the regime; Obama voices support for "an orderly transition to a government that is responsive to the aspirations of the Egyptian people"; the six days of nationwide protest have left at least 125 people dead; police ordered back onto the streets as the curfew is extended.

Egyptian authorities order the closure of the pan-Arab satellite channel Al Jazeera offices in Cairo following the network's nonstop coverage of the massive protests against the government. Al Jazeera's separate live channel is removed from its satellite platform by the Egyptian government in the morning, the telephones to its Cairo bureau cut and the signal of its main news channel also interfered with.

Reuters reports that 34 members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including seven leaders, escape from prison, after relatives storm the jail north-west of Cairo.

ElBaradei arrives in Tahrir Square to address the crowd, right. He tells them: "You have taken back your rights and what we have begun cannot go back ... We have one main demand – the end of the regime and the beginning of a new stage, a new Egypt."

Israeli PM Binyamin Netanyahu expresses concern about 'stability and security' in the region. The Rafah border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt has been closed.

Several countries, including the US and India, announce plans to organise evacuation flights from Egypt.

Tunisia - Rachid Ghannouchi, the leader of Ennahda, Tunisia's main Islamist movement, returns home after 22 years in exile in London. Up to 10,000 young men and veiled women packed the arrival hall and car park at the airport. According to Reuters news agency, alongside his supporters was a small group of secularists with banners reading: "No Islamism, no theocracy, no Sharia and no stupidity!" In 1989 Ennahda came second to the ruling party in elections, officially winning about 17% of the ballot. However allegations of fraud marred the vote and according to some estimates Ennahda's tally was as much as double the official figure.

Sudan - Hundreds of students protest in the Sudanese capital Khartoum demanding the resignation of the government. Armed riot police surrounds the entrances of four universities in the capital, firing teargas and beating students at three of them.

Some 500 young people also stage protests in the city of el-Obeid in North Kordofan (central Sudan) some 600 kilometres west of the capital. Riot police used tear gas to disperse a large group of demonstrators.

In the Sudan groups have emerged on social networking sites calling themselves "Youth for Change" and "The Spark." "Youth for Change" has attracted more than 15,000 members. "The people of Sudan will not remain silent anymore," its Facebook page said. "It is about time we demand our rights and take what's ours in a peaceful demonstration that will not involve any acts of sabotage."

January 31, 2011

Egypt - Tens of thousands of protesters defy police curfew and demonstrate throughout Egypt.

President Mubarak announces cabinet reshuffle replacing the widely despised Interior Minister Habib al-Adly.

Egypt's army vows it will not use force against the tens of thousands of people protesting for the removal of the regime of president Hosni Mubarak. The statement carried on Egyptian media says: "To the great people of Egypt, your armed forces, acknowledging the legitimate rights of the people... have not and will not use force against the Egyptian people." This announcement is absolutely critical because it takes away a huge measure of uncertainty from the mind of any potential demonstrator.

Vice President Omar Suleiman says that Mubarak had asked him to open dialogue with all political parties on constitutional reform.

The US state department special envoy to Cairo, former ambassador to Egypt Frank Wisner, arrives in the country. His mission is to urge Egyptian leaders to embrace political change.

Yemen - President Ali Abdullah Saleh announces a new package of incentives for young Yemenis. In an attempt to defuse the angry unemployed graduates, Saleh instructs the government to expand social security network to encompass additional 500,000 needy families.

EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels urge "the Egyptian authorities to embark on an orderly transition to a broad-based government with full respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms."

Syria - *The Wall Street Journal* publishes an interview with the Syrian president Bashar al-Assad. According to the president the protests in Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen are ushering in a "new era" in the Middle East, and that Arab rulers would need to do more to accommodate their people's rising political and economic aspirations. "If you didn't see the need of reform before what happened in Egypt and Tunisia, it's too late to do any reform." In

the interview Assad said he would push through political reforms this year aimed at initiating municipal elections, granting more power to nongovernmental organizations and establishing a new media law. His government already made adjustments to ease the kind of economic pressures that have helped fuel unrest in Tunisia and Algeria: Damascus this month raised heating oil allowances for public workers—a step back from an earlier plan to withdraw subsidies that keep the cost of living down for Syrians but drain the national budget.

February 1, 2011

Egypt - Mass anti-government rallies are held throughout Egypt, with some 200,000 people protesting on Tahrir Square in the centre of Cairo, in an effort to force president Hosni Mubarak from power. Thousands take to the streets in Suez, Mansoura, Assiut and Luxor.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan sides with the people of Egypt as protests sweep their country. "No government can survive against the will of its people... The era of governments persisting on pressure and repression is over... As Turkey, we believe that the Arab people don't deserve this... Turkey will remain on the side of the Egyptian and Tunisian people."

Mohamed ElBaradei tells satellite channel Al Arabiya that Hosni Mubarak must step down by 4 February.

Fifty Egyptian Human Rights groups call on Mubarak to step down to save Egyptian's blood.

The UN human rights chief, Navi Pillay, says 300 people may have been killed across the country since the protests began on 25 January.

The US state department orders all non-emergency US embassy and government personnel to leave Egypt.

Senator John Kerry, chairman of the US Senate committee on foreign relations, calls for President Mubarak to recognise that it's time to leave office. "The people of Egypt and events in Egypt have, in their own power and in the simplicity of their spontaneity, moved beyond president Mubarak and his regime and I believe it is vital for president Mubarak to help to transform this moment into the new Egypt and the new future for Egypt."

US Ambassador to Egypt, Margaret Scobey, holds telephone conversation with Mohamed ElBaradei.

US officials confirm that the US state department special envoy to Cairo, Frank Wisner, has met President Mubarak in the morning to discuss the country's political crisis. It is reported that he conveyed President Barack Obama's message that the US sees Mubarak presidency at an end.

In a late night television address to the nation president Hosni Mubarak pledges to step down at the next election due in September 2011. Mubarak attacked those responsible for protests that had been "manipulated by political forces", caused mayhem and chaos and endangered the "stability of the nation". "In the few months remaining in my current term I will work towards ensuring a peaceful transition of power," Mubarak said. "I have exhausted my life in serving Egypt and my people. I will die on the soil of Egypt and be judged by history".

US President Barack Obama holds a 30-minute telephone conversation with President Mubarak after his television address to the nation. Subsequently president Obama made a statement at the White House in which he praised the protesters and called for the transition of power to begin immediately. "What is clear, and what I indicated tonight to President Mubarak, is my belief that an orderly transition must be meaningful, it must be peaceful and it must begin now," said Obama.

Clashes between anti-government and pro-Mubarak protesters in Alexandria.

Jordan - Following street protests King Abdullah of Jordan dismisses his government and appoints a new prime minister led by Maarouf Al Bakhit, a career military man with a reputation for maintaining order and stability. The new government of is told to take "practical, swift, and tangible steps to launch a real political reform process, in line with the king's vision of comprehensive reform, modernization and development."

Tunisia - UN mission sent to Tunisia reports that at least 219 people were killed and 510 injured in the unrest that led to the fall of the Ben Ali regime.

Libya - Jamal al-Hajji, who has dual Libyan and Danish nationality, is in Tripoli shortly after he issued a call on the Internet for demonstrations in support of greater freedoms in Libya.

February 2, 2011

Egypt - Internet services are partially restored in Egypt.

Early afternoon thousands of pro-Mubarak supporters attack pro-democracy supporters in central Cairo. Some ride in on horses and camels (1.24pm). Many brandish iron

bars and baseball bats and they also throw rocks and rip up bits of pavement to create weapons. The battles continue well into the night.

Tony Blair speaking to CNN describes Mubarak as “immensely courageous and force for good”.

The US State Department discloses that Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, has been in direct contact today with Egyptian vice president Omar Suleiman.

Associated Press reports that Frank Wisner, the US special envoy sent by Obama to talk to Egypt's government, is on his way back to the US.

Fighting continued around Tahrir Square past midnight, with both sides building barricades and pro-government supporters throwing molotov cocktails, setting fire to cars and buildings while the army refused to intervene.

Yemen - In Yemen ahead of a planned protest, President Ali Abdullah Saleh declares that he won't seek re-election in 2013.

Syria - Human Rights Watch reports that a group of 20 people in civilian clothing had beaten and dispersed 15 people who had been holding a candlelight vigil in Bab Touma, Old Damascus, in support of demonstrators in Egypt.

February 3, 2011

Egypt - In Cairo following a dramatic night of fighting on streets and rooftops around Tahrir square and the Egyptian museum, violence continues to rage well after dawn.

The Egyptian health ministry says five people have been killed and 836 taken to hospital since pro-government demonstrators attacked pro-democracy protesters on 2 February.

The British telecommunications company Vodafone is forced by the Egyptian government to send out text messages urging pro-Mubarak supporters to "confront" protesters. Under the emergency powers provisions of the Telecoms Act, the Egyptian authorities can instruct the mobile networks of Mobinil, Etisalat and Vodafone to send messages to the people of Egypt. They have used this since the start of the protests. Vodafone Group has protested to the authorities that the current situation regarding these messages is unacceptable. They have made it clear that all messages should be transparent and clearly attributable to the originator.

A retired Egyptian general tells the BBC that the troops stand ready to fire at pro-Mubarak supporters, if they attack protesters today. The general claimed the army could turn on Mubarak as early as tomorrow.

Pro-democracy protesters say they have detained 120 people with IDs associating them with the police or the ruling NDP party.

Reuters reports that Egypt's vice president Omar Suleiman has held a dialogue with the country's political parties and national forces in a bid to end the protests.

The leaders of the Britain, French, German, Italian and Spanish governments issue a statement calling for "quick and orderly transition to a broad-based government." It just stops short of calling on Mubarak to resign.

Egyptian vice-president Omar Suleiman speaking on state television blames the violence on "some other opportunists carrying their own agenda. It might be related to outside forces or other domestic affairs... I blame some sister countries that have unfriendly TV stations, which incite youth against us."

Hosni Mubarak tells Christiane Amanpour of ABC News "I told Obama: 'you don't understand the Egyptian culture and what would happen if I step down now'."

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton condemns the attacks on protesters. "I urge the government and a broad and credible representation of Egypt's opposition, civil society and political factions to begin immediately serious negotiations on a peaceful and orderly transition."

Egypt's Health Ministry says that 13 people were killed and 1,200 injured in last night's clashes between pro- and anti-government demonstrators.

Iranian Foreign Ministry issues a statement supporting protesters in Egypt and declares that these protests would lead to the emergence of "a real independent Islamic Middle East." It calls on people and governments around the world to strongly condemn Israeli and American "interferences aimed at diverting Egyptians' justice-seeking movement, by creating counter-revolt and using rioters." The statement said the protests echo the Islamic state's 1979 Islamic revolution, which toppled the U.S.-backed shah.

Jordan - King Abdullah of Jordan meets leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in the country and states that the pace of political reforms in recent years had faced hurdles and pledges to fight corruption.

Yemen - Thousands of anti-government demonstrators gather in Yemeni capital Sana'a to take part in a "day of rage" against the government. They claim that president Ali Abdullah Saleh's offer to step down in 2013 was not enough.

Algeria - Algeria's president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announces that state of emergency, enforced for the past 19 years, will be lifted in the "very near future". The president's announcement follows growing pressure from the country's opposition groups, some of whom have been inspired by popular uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia.

February 4, 2011

Egypt - Hundreds of thousands of anti-government protesters gather in Cairo's Tahrir Square for what they have termed the "Day of Departure".

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei describes Egypt's anti-government protests as "an Islamic movement" that could represent a severe defeat for US policies in the region. "The events have special meaning for the Iranian nation... This is what has always been said that an Islamic awakening [could] result from the victory of Iran's great Islamic revolution."

Tunisia - In the Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid two civilians die while in police custody. Four policemen are arrested the following day in connection with their death.

Jordan - In Jordan hundreds of protesters, drawn mainly from Jordan's powerful Muslim Brotherhood, staged demonstration in Amman against King Abdullah's government reshuffle declaring that it did not meet their calls for political reform. The march in the Jordanian capital is far smaller than previous anti-government protests. Small protests took place in three other towns in Jordan.

Yemen - In Sana'a tens of thousands of Saleh loyalists flooded the central square in a show of support for the embattled president, forcing the opposition to move its planned anti-regime rally to the University of Sana'a.

Syria - A "day of anger" promoted by Facebook and Twitter activists online fails to ignite protests in Syria. According to the Internet World Stats website which monitors Internet exposure worldwide, only 30,000 Syrians or 0.1% have access to Facebook, the lowest ratio in the Arab world. A Facebook-driven solidarity campaign with Tunisia's uprising produced only nine demonstrators outside the Tunisian embassy in Damascus.

Morocco - Morocco's Minister of Telecommunications, Khaled al-Nasiri, states that the country's authorities welcome anti-government protest being planned on 20 February by

the social networking site Facebook. "We intend to reassure those who are organising protests on the internet that this is an entirely normal thing and is part of the democratic life of Morocco."

February 5, 2011 –

Egypt - Thousands of people spent the night in Tahrir Square following another huge rally against Mubarak.

Several leading figures, including Hosni Mubarak's son Gamal, resign from the ruling National Democratic Party. A relative liberal, Hossam Badrawi, is appointed the party's new secretary general.

Financial analysts report that the cost of the disturbances to the Egyptian economy amounts to \$310 million a day.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, speaking at a security conference in Germany, says there must be clear progress toward "open, transparent, fair and accountable systems" across the Middle East not to risk even greater instability.

Egyptian state television announces the resignation of the Executive Committee of the ruling National Democratic Party, including Gamal Mubarak.

President Obama's special envoy to Egypt, Frank Wisner, tells the international security conference in Germany during a video conference from Washington, that president Hosni Mubarak was needed to oversee a transition to democracy. "We need to get a national consensus around the preconditions for the next step forward. The president must stay in office to steer those changes," For the first time since Egypt erupted into political crisis nearly two weeks ago, the United States indicates it may be willing for president Mubarak to remain in office temporarily. The US state department spokesman, PJ Crowley clarifies Frank Wisner's comments - "We have great respect for Frank Wisner and we were deeply appreciative of his willingness to travel to Egypt last week. He has not continued in any official capacity following the trip. The views he expressed today are his own. He did not coordinate his comments with the US government."

General Hassan El-Rawani, the head of the army's central command, speaks to the masses in Tahrir Square urging them to leave the square.

Despite the cold, rainy conditions, anti-government protesters continue to stand their ground at Tahrir Square.

Saudi Arabia - About 40 women stage protest in front of the Interior Ministry in central Riyadh, demanding the release of prisoners held without a trial.

February 6, 2011

Egypt - Thousands of protesters continue to occupy Tahrir Square where they held Muslim and Christian services to remember those who have been killed in the protests.

Opposition groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, have held talks with Vice-president Omar Suleiman on what happens next in Egypt. The vice president offers a series of concessions including liberalisation of the media and the release of political prisoners

Tunisia - The Tunisian Interior Ministry suspends all activities of the Democratic Constitutional Party (RCD), the political party of ousted president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The announcement followed violence across the country over the weekend that killed at least three people and wounded more than a dozen others.

Jordan - Jordan's Bedouin tribal elders warn of a mass revolt if King Abdullah does not adhere to a promise to reform the country's political landscape. A letter signed by 36 tribal elders criticises overspending and executive interference in government matters. "Political reform is now an urgent matter that cannot be delayed, holding the corrupt and thieves accountable and freezing their assets, prohibiting them from travelling are all part and parcel of political reform." Queen Rania draws particularly harsh criticism from the tribal figures, who accuse her of stealing from the country and manipulating and interfering in national politics. If powerful tribal figures turn against the royal family and the government, it could spell considerable trouble for Jordan. No less than 40% of the Jordanian population is represented in the tribes, and their support and loyalty to the Hashemite ruling family is crucial to the royals, especially in times of crisis and turmoil.

Algeria - Zohra Drif Bitat, a vice-president of Algeria's upper house of parliament and a prominent member of the ruling elite, launches a scathing attack on the government, saying it had been unable to translate huge energy wealth into a better life for ordinary people. "Are we going to continue to tackle our problems with the same actors who have failed? Don't we need new blood... I hope and expect a radical change in the mode of governance."

February 7, 2011

Egypt - Thousands of protesters stay in Cairo's Tahrir Square for the 14th consecutive day.

Reshuffled Egyptian cabinet meets for the first time and agrees to raise public-sector salaries and pensions by 15%. Finance Minister Samir Radwan allocates about 6.5bn Egyptian pounds (£677m; \$960m) to cover the increases for six million employees.

Human Rights Watch now estimates at least 297 people have been killed since protests in Egypt began.

The online activist and Google executive Wael Ghonim is released from 12-day detention. The Facebook administrator is considered the person that started the protests in Egypt. He said he was snatched off the streets two days after the protests first erupted on 25 January. After he left a friend's house, four men surrounded him, pushed him to the ground and took him blindfolded to state security. He said he spent much of the following days blindfolded, with no news of the events on the street, being questioned. He said his interrogators were convinced that foreigners were backing the movement, but Ghonim asserted it was just young Egyptians "who love this country." He also sought to debunk the government's accusations that the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, Mubarak's most bitter rival, was involved in planning the protests.

More arrests of activists are reported, including independent film maker Samir Eshra and Abdel-Karim Nabil Suleiman, who blogs under the name Karim Amer. Amer was the first blogger to be prosecuted in the country, when he was jailed for four years in 2007 for insulting Islam and the president.

February 8, 2011

Tunisia - Tunisian authorities declare that some 234 people were killed during the unrest in the country and 510 injured.

Egypt – Vice president, Omar Suleiman, offers more concessions to the protesters. After meeting with Hosni Mubarak he claims the regime has a plan and a timetable for the peaceful transfer of power. He also says the government would not pursue protesters who have been demanding Mubarak to step down now. A committee has been set up to discuss and recommend constitutional changes that would relax eligibility rules governing who can run for president and limit the number of presidential terms.

During a meeting with heads of state and independent newspapers, vice president, Omar Suleiman, warns "we can't put up with" continued protests in Tahrir for a long time - the crisis must be ended as soon as possible.

US vice-president Joe Biden has another phone call with his Egyptian counterpart Omar Suleiman, and calls for "irreversible progress that responds to the aspirations of the Egyptian people."

Police opened fire on hundreds in Kharga who set a courthouse on fire and attacked a police station, demanding the removal of the provincial security chief.

Human Rights Watch names 52 in Alexandria who have died in the protests. It states that least 297 people have been killed since January 28 – 232 in Cairo, 52 in Alexandria and 13 in Suez. According to the HRW “The actual number of deaths will likely be significantly higher than 297, because our count is only based on key hospitals in three cities. We have only included numbers of dead that we were able to verify ourselves.”

The authorities release 34 political prisoners.

Palestinian Authority - Palestinian authority announces that it would hold local elections across the occupied territories on July 9. A round of local elections was originally scheduled for July last year, but was cancelled as a result of the continuing internal strife. The decision finally to hold local elections comes against the backdrop of political unrest sweeping the Arab world.

Iran - Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, the leaders of the green movement in Iran issue a call for what they have described as "a solidarity move to support the protests in two Muslim countries of Egypt and Tunisia." On his official website, Mousavi has likened the protests in Egypt and Tunisia to those in Iran in 2009. "Undoubtedly, the starting point of what we are witnessing in the streets of Tunis, Sana'a, Cairo, Alexandria and Suez should be seen in the Iranian protests," he said.

February 9, 2011

Egypt – Protesters spill out of Tahrir Square to set up camp outside Egypt's Parliament building. They erect a sign outside the building which reads "closed until the fall of the regime".

US vice-president Joe Biden tells Vice-president Omar Suleiman in a phone call that the US wants "prompt, meaningful, peaceful, and legitimate" reforms. He also urges Egypt to scrap its emergency laws.

A wave of strikes erupts across the economy, including railway workers, public employees and electricity staff.

In the city of Suez, strikes entered a second day. Some 5,000 workers at various state companies — including textile workers, medicine bottle manufacturers, sanitation workers and a firm involved in repairs for ships on the Suez Canal — held separate strikes and protests at their factories.

In the desert oasis town of Kharga, southwest of Cairo, five protesters have been killed in two days of rioting, security officials said. Police opened fire Tuesday on hundreds

who set a courthouse on fire and attacked a police station, demanding the removal of the provincial security chief.

Some 8,000 protesters, mainly farmers, set barricades of flaming palm trees in the southern province of Assiut. They blocked the main highway and railway to Cairo to complain of bread shortages.

Hundreds of slum dwellers in the Suez Canal city of Port Said set fire to part of the governor's headquarters in anger over lack of housing.

Two people, Mustafa Said Bilal and Kitan Abdel Rahman Khadr, are killed by police in Al-Wadi al-Jadid, an isolated town in south-west Egypt.

February 10, 2011

Egypt - President Hosni Mubarak delivers televised address that stuns the crowds massed in Cairo's Tahrir Square and elsewhere by saying he would hand power to his vice-president, Omar Suleiman, but stay on as president until elections in September 2011. In his speech Mubarak reminded Egyptians of his sacrifices as a war hero and his defence of the country's interests in peacetime. "I have lived for this nation," the former air force commander declared, visibly emotional about his own efforts. "I have exhausted my life defending the land and its sovereignty. I have faced death on my occasions. I never bent under foreign pressure. I never sought false power or popularity. I am certain that the majority of people are aware who Hosni Mubarak is... I have delegated to the vice president some of the power - the powers of the president according to the constitution. I am aware, fully aware, that Egypt will overcome the crisis and the resolve of its people will not be deflected and will [inaudible] again because of the - and will deflect the arrows of the enemies and those who [inaudible] against Egypt... I can tell you that I as the president of the Republic I have to respond to your calls but I am also embarrassed, and I will not accept or listen to any foreign interventions... I can tell you before anything else that the blood of your martyrs will not be wasted and that I will not be easy on punishing people who committed these crimes." After a day of fevered speculation that he would announce his resignation, his address has enraged protesters.

Barack Obama issued his strongest censure of Mubarak so far, criticizing the Egyptian government's failure to put forward a "credible, concrete and unequivocal path to democracy". In a written statement the US president said: "Too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the government is serious about a genuine transition to democracy, and it is the responsibility of the government to speak clearly to the Egyptian people and the world."

Tahrir Square is filled with a huge, angry crowd. Reports of mass protests in Alexandria, Mansoura (120km north-east of Cairo), Qin (hometown of Vice-president Omar Suleiman), and Arish (344km north-east of Cairo).

The Libyan News Agency reports a telephone call by Col Muammar Gaddafi to president Mubarak after the latter television address.

Saudi Arabia – Agencies report that ten intellectuals, human rights activists and lawyers have formed the Umma Islamic Party (Hizb al-Umma al-Islami). The founding group includes: Dr. Ahmad bin Sa'd al-Ghamidi, Professor Sa'ud al-Dughaitir, Shaikh Abd al-`Aziz al-Wuhaibi, Shaikh Muhammad bin Husain al-Qahtani, Professor Muhammad bin Nasir al-Ghamidi, Walid al-Majid and Professor Abd al-Karim al-Khadhar.

Iran - The BBC has issued a statement saying that its Persian TV service is being jammed "from within Iran" following the corporation's coverage of the ongoing unrest in Egypt.

February 11, 2011

Egypt - Mass of protesters demonstrate in Tahrir Square in Cairo. Thousands surround state television building in the city and the presidential palace in Heliopolis.

Just after 16:00 GMT vice-president Omar Suleiman announces that president Hosni Mubarak has stepped down and handed over power to the army.

Tunisia - Tunisian authorities detain an armed group, linked to ousted president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, which they suspected of involvement in a wave of violence.

Bahrain - The King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa announces that each Bahraini family is to receive a gift of 1,000 dinars (\$2,650).

Syria - Syria lifts blockade of social networks. This allows, for the first time since 2007, for Syrians to log onto Facebook and YouTube without going through proxy servers abroad.

Palestinian Authority - According to the Palestinian news agency, Maan, several hundred students shouting "Gaza salutes the Egyptians" took to the streets of central Gaza.

February 12, 2011

Egypt - Egypt's military authorities reaffirm the country's commitment to all its international treaties. The announcement, read by a senior officer on state TV, implicitly confirms that the country's peace treaty with Israel will remain intact.

President Barack Obama welcomes Egypt's new military rulers' commitment to civilian rule and respect for all treaties and stresses U.S. support, including financial support, for Egypt.

Obama also calls several foreign leaders including British Prime Minister David Cameron, Jordan's King Abdullah and Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan to discuss the latest developments in Egypt.

Algeria - Defying government's ban, thousands of protesters take to the streets of Algeria's capital and other main cities, including Annaba in the east and Oran in the west, demanding the resignation of the government and president Abdelaziz Bouteflika. In the capital the protesters are overwhelmed by 30,000 strong riot police and brutally dispersed. Some 400 are arrested. Internet providers are shut down and Facebook accounts deleted across Algeria.

Yemen - Protest march in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, calling for president Ali Abdullah Saleh to leave office is attacked by government supporters. Opposition parties pledge to enter into dialogue with President Saleh over a series of political concessions he made last week.

Morocco - A 26-year-old man dies in central Morocco after setting himself on fire in despair at his situation since being dismissed from the army. This is the first reported death in the country from self-immolation.

Palestinian Authority - The Palestinian Authority announces the holding of new legislative and presidential elections by September.

Mauritania - Three main Mauritanian unions organize march followed by a rally in the country's capital Nouakchott, demanding improvements from the government and the opening of negotiations.

February 13, 2011

Egypt - Egypt's new military authorities dissolve parliament and suspend the constitution.

Jordan - Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the U.S. military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrives in Jordan for talks with his military counterpart and with King Abdullah. Mullen subsequently visits Israel.

Algeria - Hundreds of stone-throwing demonstrators clashed with police in the eastern Algerian city of Annaba.

Yemen - Third consecutive day of anti-government protests in the Yemeni capital Sana'a. Protests also occur in the southern Yemeni city of Taiz, where 120 demonstrators were taken into custody.

Bahrain - Bahraini riot police break up protests using tear gas and rubber bullets.

Libya - *Tripoli Post* reports that Libyan authorities have released 12 political prisoners during the past few days, a move interpreted as an attempt to quell political opposition.

Iran - Tens of thousands demonstrate across the country in solidarity with Egyptian and Tunisian protesters. At least two people are killed and dozens injured.

February 14, 2011

Egypt - Early in the morning military police move on the Tahrir Square in Cairo to clear the last remaining democracy protesters. However, fresh protesters arrive soon demanding better pay and working conditions from the country's new military rulers. The groups included: hundreds of uniformed and plain-clothes police, bank workers, transport employees, people working in the tourism industry, ambulance drivers. Jon Leyne, one of BBC correspondent in Cairo reports "there appears to be a whole series of mini-revolutions going on in the wake of the removal of Mr Mubarak."

Egyptian authorities ask the United Kingdom government to freeze the assets of some the former Egyptian officials.

Iran - Hundreds of thousands of people march illegally through Iran. Police fire tear gas into protesters. In Teheran the crowd – whose size far exceeded the predictions of most analysts – assembled despite threats by the Revolutionary Guard in recent days to crush any gathering. At least 20 politicians and journalists are arrested before the rally in the capital. Two persons are killed by the police, including a 26-years old, Saneh Jaleh. Several protesters are wounded in clashes with the police and some 1,500 detained.

Yemen - Thousands of anti-government protesters march through Yemen's capital for a fourth consecutive day, demanding political reforms and the removal of president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Police fire tear gas and stones are thrown, with reports of injuries. At least 17 protesters were wounded and up to 165 others were arrested. Protests are also held in the southern city of Taz.

Bahrain - In Bahrain police disperse web-organised protests in the capital Manama and several villages in the country, including: Daih, Nouidrat, Darraz, Karkazan, Sanabis,

Sitra, and Jed Hafs. Police fired teargas and rubber bullets to break up the pro-reform demonstrations and two protesters are killed. The Facebook page which called for the February 14 uprising, inspired by the protests which ousted the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, had amassed more than 15,000 "likes".

Algeria - Hundreds of youths clash with security forces during protests in the northern Algerian town of Akbou (about 180km east of Algiers).

Palestinian Authority - The Palestinian prime minister Salam Fayyad dissolves his cabinet.

February 15, 2011

Egypt - Hundreds of people clash with police in the Libyan city of Benghazi. The protests began after the arrest of Fathi Terbil, who represents relatives of more than 1,000 prisoners allegedly massacred by security forces in Tripoli's Abu Salim jail in 1996. Privately-owned newspaper Quryna in its online edition reports fourteen people injured, including 10 police officers.

Bahrain - Bahrain's King Hamad bin Issa Al-Khalifa makes a rare television address to the nation and promises to investigate the deaths of the protesters and the continuation of reforms begun in 2002. Following the address, thousands of protesters gathered in Pearl Roundabout in central Manama. The protesters demand: the release of political prisoners; more jobs and housing; the creation of more representative and empowered parliament; a new constitution written by the people; a new cabinet that does not include prime minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, who has been in office for 40 years.

Yemen - Fifth consecutive day of demonstrations in the Yemeni capital Sana'a. Security forces use tear gas and batons to disperse thousands of anti-government protesters calling for president Ali Abdullah Saleh to stand down.

Oman - Oman raises minimum wages by 43 percent for national workers in the private sector. The salary for national workers active in the private sector is increased from 140 rials (\$365) to 200 rials (\$520) per month.

February 16, 2011

Egypt - Labour unrest continues in Egypt despite the ruling military council's call for "noble Egyptians" to end all strikes immediately.

Bahrain - Thousands of people occupy in the centre of the Bahraini capital on a third day of anti-government protests. Thousands of people take part in a funeral for Fadhel Al-

Matrook, a protester shot dead at funeral of another protester on 15 February. Mourners chant slogans calling for the removal of the government. Bahrain's military tightens control of the capital. Riot police fire tear gas at the Pearl Roundabout killing at least three people.

Yemeni president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, has telephone conversation with the king of Bahrain to express his support.

Yemen - Sixth day of consecutive protests against president Ali Abdullah Saleh, is broken up by pro-government supporters bussed in to the capital Sana'a. Up to four protesters are injured, and 2,000 police deployed to break up the clashes. There are also protests in other cities including Taiz where protesters have camped out in a central square for several days. At least two people are killed when police fire shots into the air in the Al-Mansoura district of Aden. The president of Sana'a University is dismissed from office over the escalating protests in the university's campus.

Iran - Iranian television reports fresh clashes during the funeral of Sanea Jaleh, 26-year-old student killed during protests on 14 February. Students and academics are arrested in a raid at a university in Tehran.

Libya - Protests continue into a second day in Benghazi. Heavy clashes between protesters and security forces are reported in the Libyan city of al-Bayda, with police stations set on fire. At least four people are reported killed in the clashes. In Zentan, south of Tripoli, hundreds of protesters march through the streets and set fire to a police station and government offices, before establishing a camp in the centre of the city modeled on Egypt's Tahrir Square. Protests also take place in Rijban and Shahat.

Libyan radio and television broadcasts speech by Col Gaddafi. He makes no mention of the unrest but says that the "revolutionaries" would prevail.

Jordan - Around 1,500 Jordanians demonstrate on in the northern city of Irbid, demanding reforms and denouncing "government corruption." In Amman, a group of young Jordanian university students stage a sit-in outside the royal court and call for King Abdullah II's powers to be curbed.

Anti-government protests are held in the Jordanian southern city of Kut with three people killed in clashes with police. Demonstrations are also reported in the oil hubs of Basra and Kirkuk, as well as other smaller towns. The protesters are angry about a lack of basic services such as electricity and clean drinking water.

Saudi Arabia - Shiites stage a small protest in the town of al-Awamiyah,¹ near the Shiite centre of Qatif in Eastern Province, to demand the release of the three prisoners (Ali Ahmad al Faraj, Ali Salih Abdul Jabbar and Makki Al Abbas), held without charges since 19 March 2009.

Iraq - Kurdish security guards open fire on a crowd of protesters calling for political reforms in Sulaimaniyah in northern Iraq, killing at least two people.

February 17, 2011

Bahrain - Security forces in Bahrain disperse thousands of anti-government protesters in Pearl Roundabout in the centre of capital, Manama. Hundreds of riot police using tear gas and batons move, without warning, on the sleeping protesters in the square at 3 o'clock in the morning. At least five people die as a result of the police operation and 231 are injured. Army takes control of the key parts of the city. Tanks, army patrols and military checkpoints are out on key streets, with helicopters deployed overhead. The country's crown prince appeals for calm and asks protesters to leave the square to begin "dialogue."

Emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council held in Bahrain in order to discuss protests that have erupted in the kingdom .

Yemen - A seventh day of anti-government protests in Yemen. Several thousand people demonstrate in Sana'a. Clashes between several thousands of demonstrators and the police are reported in Aden where at least three persons are killed and nine wounded. Anti-government demonstrations also take place in Taiz, Ibb, Hodeidah in the west, and Baidah in the east. One protester dies in a grenade attack in the central square of Taiz.

Muslim preachers loyal to Saleh stepped into the political fray in a country where religious and tribal allegiances are often stronger than political ones. They call for a unity government but said Saleh should stay in power.

Libya - Protests continue for a third day in several cities in Libya during what the demonstrators describe as a "day of anger". A number of government buildings are set on fire in the city of Zentan, south-west of Tripoli. AFP news agency reports that six people have been killed in clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces in the city of Benghazi. Demonstrations are reported in al-Bayda, where security forces open fire with live

¹ The town of al-Awamiyah was the scene of protests for several weeks in 2009 after police launched a search for Shiite preacher Sheikh Nimr Bagir al-Nimr, who suggested in a sermon that Shiites could one day seek their own separate state.

ammunition on peaceful demonstrators, Yafran, Derna, Ajdabiya, Shahat, and Rejban. Col. Gadhafi drives through the capital, rallying thousands.

Libya threatens to suspend migration cooperation with the EU "if the EU keeps making statements in support of Libyan pro-democracy protests".

Iraq - Anti-government protests take place in the city of Sulaimaniya in the Kurdish region of Iraq. Hundreds of young men, chanting slogans against corruption and high unemployment, try to storm the local government offices – two protesters are killed.

Iran - During Friday prayers services, thousands of worshipers carry signs that call for the prosecution and execution of opposition leaders.

Algeria - Abdelhamid Mehri, former resistance fighter and later secretary-general of the Front de libération nationale (FLN), calls for sweeping political changes in Algeria in an open letter to president Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

February 18, 2011

Egypt - More than one million people gather for a "Victory March" on Cairo's Tahrir Square, the focal point of the unrest, to celebrate the end of Mubarak's rule and to put pressure on Egypt's military rulers to speed up the reform process. Addressing the crowd, Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, an influential Muslim cleric, calls on Arab leaders to listen to their people. "The world has changed, the world has progressed, and the Arab world has changed from within," he said. He also urged Egypt's ruling Higher Military Council to heed the protesters demands and quickly form a new government, free of any association with Mubarak. During the traditional Friday prayers the 365 people who were killed and over 5,000 who were injured during the nationwide uprising are commemorated.

Egypt's ruling military council says it will not tolerate any more strikes which disrupt the country's economy.

Bahrain - Funerals are held of four protesters killed in violent clashes with the police in the capital Manama on 17 February. In Sitra, a poverty-stricken Shiite area of 150,000 people outside Manama, tens of thousands gather to bury three men killed in clashes early the previous day. Mourners shout "God is great" and "down with Al-Khalifa," a reference to the ruling Khalifa family. Following the funerals protesters march on Pearl Roundabout - riot police fired tear gas and live bullets to disperse the crowd. Protesters retake the public space after soldiers leave. Officials at the main Salmaniya hospital report at least 60 people injured, some with gunshot wounds.

Al Wefaq, Bahrain's largest parliamentary bloc, quits the country's parliament.

US president Barack Obama phones King Hamad condemning the violence and urging restraint after the kingdom's security forces ignored Washington's earlier call for calm and opened fire on protesters demanding reforms. According to a White House statement: "the stability of Bahrain depends upon respect for the universal rights of the people of Bahrain, and a process of meaningful reform that is responsive to the aspirations of all Bahrainis."

King Hamad Isa Al-Khalifa asks his eldest son, Crown Prince Salman, to start a national dialogue to resolve the political crisis.

Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa appeals on television for calm. "Today is the time to sit down and hold a dialogue, not to fight."

Yemen - In Yemen during what has been described as nationwide "Friday of rage", four anti-regime protesters are killed and dozens injured in two separate attacks as security forces tried to disperse protesters in the cities of Aden and Taz. Two people are killed in the southern port city of Aden from gunfire as police moved to disperse protesters. In the city of Taiz, one person was killed when a grenade was thrown from a car into a crowd of protesters. In Sana'a, tens of thousands of protesters march through the city chanting anti-government slogans when they are met by riot police and supporters of the president.

Libya - There are renewed clashes between protesters and police in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi. Protesters set fire to government buildings and police stations on the way back from the funerals. Human Rights Watch reports that Libyan security forces kill 35 people in Benghazi. There are reports of clashes in the neighbouring city of al-Bayda. Protesters set fire to a municipal building and demolish a statute of the so-called "green book". Some 24 people are killed and 200 injured. Reports of violence in Darnah, east of Benghazi. Human Rights Watch estimates that the total number of killed over the past three days has risen to 84.

Al Jazeera's signal is jammed on several frequencies and its website blocked in Libya.

Libyan government blocks internet sites and shuts off electricity to protest areas, including the city of Benghazi, to try to quell rising unrest.

Oman - Men and women gather in Ruwi, a commercial district of Muscat, demanding political reforms and better pay. They shout "we want democracy", and "more pay and jobs." Protesters demonstrate for about one hour and leave the district. There are no reported arrests. In another protest in Muscat protesters demand the limit on ministerial term in office to four years. "The cabinet must be appointed from the Shura Council because the members are elected. We can't have ministers serving 10 to 20 years. It is encouraging corruption."

Saudi Arabia - Authorities arrest all ten founders of the Umma Islamic Party (Hizb al-Umma al-Islami) formed on 10 February 2011. They are ordered to withdraw demands for political reform in exchange for their release.

Jordan - Several people are injured in clashes between pro-and anti-government supporters in the Jordanian capital Amman, the first incidents of violence since protests began there.

Algeria - Hundreds of protesters gather in central Algiers, but security forces stop them from gathering in May 1st Square. Some are able to enter but are beaten up and dispersed.

Djibouti - Thousands of people take to the streets of Djibouti to call for president Ismael Omar Guelleh to step down.

February 19, 2011

Bahrain - Al Wefaq bloc in Bahrain rejects a royal call for dialogue. The "February 14 revolution" youth group sets its own conditions for dialogue: withdrawal of troops from Pearl Roundabout and the allowing of protesters to return to the square, release of all political prisoners, explanation of the fate of missing people, resignations of the defence and interior ministers, the security chief, and the prime minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa – the king's uncle and the world's longest-serving prime minister.

In the afternoon, following an order from the Crown Prince, the army withdraws from Pearl Roundabout. Protesters arrive at the square and are confronted by heavily armed riot police, which fire volleys of tear gas and shotgun rounds at the demonstrators. Reports say some 60 people are injured. As the protesters stand firm police pulls out, leaving the square to the jubilant crowd.

Speaking on CNN television Bahrain's Crown Prince, Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa apologised for the deaths. "I think there is a lot of anger, a lot of sadness, and on that note I would like to extend my condolences to all of the families who lost loved ones and all of those who have been injured. We are terribly sorry and this is a terrible tragedy for our nation."

Addressing the nation on Bahrain's television, Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa states: "I am addressing all Bahraini people. Today [Saturday], we have signs of hope. I would like to thank all of the wise [people] and the leaders who responded to the call for calm, maintaining peace and national unity. Brothers and sisters, now we will start a new

phase: a phase during which we will discuss all of our concerns with honesty. I want to deliver a message that calm is required at this time, so all bodies and parties are able to raise their opinions and concerns and issues in a responsible and productive manner... Today, things started to get back to normal. I emphasize again that it's our duty [as Bahrainis] to maintain peace and stability in order to avoid divisions and reaching a crisis. The more we maintain calm, the easier we can achieve our goals. Bahraini people: I hope that we can cooperate and unite and communicate with all political forces in the country. Help us to calm down that situation in order to declare a day of mourning for those we lost yesterday [Friday]."

Libya - Security forces attack demonstrators in Benghazi and al-Bayda. There are reports that in Benghazi security forces have shot dead at least 20 people when troops reportedly used heavy weapons, including machine guns, on mourners at a funeral of 14 of the protesters shot dead by security forces the day before. Some described scenes of chaos as army snipers shot from the roofs of buildings and demonstrators fought back against troops on the ground. One doctor told the BBC that at least 45 bodies and 900 injured people had been brought to Benghazi's Jala hospital - most of them with gunshot wounds. "Ninety percent of these gunshot wounds [were] mainly in the head, the neck, the chest, mainly in the heart," she said. There are reports that Col Gaddafi's government is bringing in elite forces, as well as foreign mercenaries from sub-Saharan Africa.

Al Arabiya News Channel reports that Libya recruited hundreds of mercenaries from Sub-Saharan Africa to help quell a popular uprising. Eyewitnesses reported the arrival of four airplanes carrying "African mercenaries" at Benina International Airport near Benghazi. Protesters in Benghazi caught a number of "African mercenaries" who were in Libyan military uniforms but spoke French and who admitted that they were ordered by Muammar Gaddafi's son, Khamis Gaddafi, to fire live ammunition at demonstrators. According to Al Arabiya a number of airplanes carrying "African mercenaries" had landed in Mitiga military airport, 11 km east of the capital Tripoli.

Yemen - Riot police opens fire on thousands of protesters marching through the Yemeni capital, Sana'a. One protester is killed and seven wounded. This is the ninth consecutive day of protests in Yemen. In Aden government buildings are attack and set on fire. There are reports that security forces have disappeared from the streets, threatening to plunge the port into chaos.

Algeria - Algerian security forces prevent anti-government protesters from staging a march through the capital Algiers.

Tunisia - Tunisia's interim president Fouad Mebazza signs a general amnesty for political prisoners. Human rights groups estimate Tunisia has about 1,000 political prisoners.

Al Jazeera news channel's signal is sporadically disrupted in several countries including Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, throughout the day.

February 20, 2011

Bahrain - Opposition groups and anti-government protesters in Bahrain list their demands that must be met before they will enter into talks with the authorities. These include: the resignation of the government, release of political prisoners, and investigation of the death of protesters.

Libya - Libyan security forces again open fire on anti-government protesters in Benghazi. Eyewitnesses report that the security forces shot at mourners attending a funeral for protesters killed a day before.

Maj. Gen. Suleiman Mahmoud, the commander of the Libyan army garrison in Tobruk, defects. "I decided to withdraw from the revolutionary army and join the people... My destiny is to be with the people, even if it means dying with the people."

In Benghazi senior officers from the Sathi Tohami Air Force Base declare their support for the opposition in front of the main courthouse.

In a rare public admission of the unrest in Benghazi, Libyan state TV reports that an "armed people's base" in the city had come under attack and had its walls breached.

There are also reports of anti-government protests in other eastern cities, including al-Bayda and Darnah, as well as Misrata further west, about 200km from Tripoli.

Reports are beginning to emerge of protests in the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

Fuel and food supplies are cut to the city of Darnah.

Christian Science Monitor reports that some 50 religious leaders in Libya issue a public plea to security forces. "This is an urgent appeal from religious scholars (faqih and Sufi sheikhs), intellectuals, and clan elders from Tripoli, Bani Walid, Zintan, Jadu, Msalata, Misrata, Zawiah, and other towns and villages of the western area... We appeal to every Muslim, within the regime or assisting it in any way, to recognize that the killing of innocent human beings is forbidden by our Creator and by His beloved Prophet of Compassion (peace be upon him)... Do NOT kill your brothers and sisters. STOP the massacre NOW!"

Human Rights Watch reports that at least 233 people died in five Libyan and hundreds were injured in clashes between Qaddafi forces and anti-government protesters since 17 February.

The US State Department issues a statement on Libya: "The United States is gravely concerned with disturbing reports and images coming out of Libya. We are working to ascertain the facts, but we have received multiple credible reports that hundreds of people have been killed and injured in several days of unrest – and the full extent of the death toll is unknown due to the lack of access to international media and human rights organizations."

Late in the evening, Sky News television channel reports that "members of a Libyan army unit have told Benghazi residents they have defected and "liberated" the city from pro-Gaddafi forces."

BBC reports: "At least four separate anti-government protests have broken out in the Libyan capital for the first time, witnesses say." Live ammunition and tear gas were used in the Tripoli suburb of Gourghi, while protesters had also gathered in the neighbouring area of Gergaresh.

Fresh demonstrations have been reported in cities including Tobruk, al-Bayda and Misrata.

The Warfla, a major tribe that has maintained a position of neutrality concerning opposition to Muammar Qaddafi, declares its support for the protesters.

Reuter reports that the leader of the eastern al-Zuwayya tribe threatens to cut oil exports unless authorities halt what he called the "oppression of protesters".

Youssef Sawani, the executive director of the Gadhafi Foundation and senior aid to Qaddafi's son Saif al-Islam resigns "to express dismay against violence". The foundation has been Saif's main vehicle for wielding influence.

Yemen - In Yemen the leader of the secessionist Southern Movement, Hassan Baoum, is arrested in Aden and shots are fired at a demonstration in Sana'a as unrest continues for a ninth consecutive day. President Ali Abdullah Saleh renews his offer for a dialogue with opposition groups, but the offer is rejected by the protesters as long as "we are attacked by security forces". President Saleh rejects demands to step down. Several hundred protesters camp overnight in a square in Sana'a, near the city's university.

Morocco - Thousands of protesters take to the streets in Morocco demanding that King Mohammed VI gives up some of his powers, dismisses the government and clamps

down on corruption.² According to the Reuters news agency, at least 10,000 people marched across central Rabat. One banner, very large, says simply in English: "People want change". Large protest marches also take place in Casablanca, Tangier and Marrakech. The demonstrations across Morocco are largely organised by young people using Facebook. Morocco has a parliament and active political parties. But the constitution makes King Mohammed VI both the highest religious authority and the head of state, with powers to dissolve parliament and name ministers and local governors. much of Morocco's wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small circle of powerful businessmen, royal confidantes and royally-owned companies, according to US diplomatic cables leaked last year by Wikileaks.

Jordan - King Abdullah of Jordan urged speedy reforms, comprehensive dialogue and more efforts to battle corruption amid popular discontent and pro-reform protests. "When I talk about reform, it means that I want real and fast reforms," the king told the members of the government and government officials, MPs, senators and members of the judiciary. "Political reforms need to be modern. I am waiting for government recommendations about a mechanism for a comprehensive dialogue to help achieve political development." The king calls on the government and parliament to "move swiftly to deal with any issue related to corruption."

Iran - For a second time in a week, Iran's opposition drew tens of thousands of supporters to the streets across the nation calling for the end to the Islamic Republic's rule. Thousands gather in Tehran's Vanak and Vali Asr squares. Two young men were shot death by the police. Security forces also clash with demonstrators in the city of Shiraz.

Egypt - *The Daily Telegraph* reports that Egypt's military have promised to protect the ousted president, Hosni Mubarak, from prosecution and to allow him to live freely in retirement in his Sharm-el-Sheikh holiday home.

Tunisia - Tunisia formally requests the extradition of ex-president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia – Saudi authorities release three Shia prisoners held without charge since 19 March 2011, after riots in the town of al-Awamiyah.

² In Morocco the king is customarily treated with utmost reverence. He is considered the commander of the faithful, the leader of Moroccan Muslims who is said to descend from the Prophet Mohammed. The royal family has ruled Morocco since the 17th century and survived both French colonial rule and independence. Since taking the throne in 1999, King Mohammed VI has earned praise for reforms including a new family code that expands women's rights and a truth commission to investigate abuses committed under his father, Hassan II. A poll in 2009 gave King Mohammed VI a 91 per cent approval rate.

February 21, 2011

Libya - At 1 a.m. in the morning Libyan TV broadcasts a pre-recorded speech by Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. The second-eldest son of Muammar Gaddafi delivers a long and rambling speech blaming everyone - foreigners, exiles, drug addicts, drunkards, thugs, Islamists and the media (including Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya and the BBC) - for the crisis. Troops had opened fire on protesters because they were not trained to handle civil unrest, he argues. He warns that if the protesters continued, the European and American fleets would invade to protect the oil, and the Libyan people would be living under an occupation. He claims that the protests had been started by foreign agitators from Tunisia and Egypt. Saif Gaddafi offers almost unlimited concessions, but warns of civil war if the protests continue. “We are not Tunisia and Egypt – says Muammar Gaddafi, our leader, is leading the battle in Tripoli, and we are with him. The armed forces are with him. Tens of thousands are heading here to be with him. We will fight until the last man, the last woman, the last bullet.”

Protesters take over two of the state-run satellite stations, Al-Jamahiriya-1 and Al Shebabiya.

Nine Libyan ambassadors including the ambassador to China, India, Indonesia and Poland resign.

Mustapha Abdeljalil, Libya’s justice minister resigns over “the excessive use of force”.

Two Libyan Colonels, from the Okba Bin Nafe Air Base near Tripoli, defect to Malta in Mirage F1 supersonic fighter jets and ask for political asylum. The jets, recently refurbished under an agreement signed by Gaddafi and Nikolas Sarkozy, broke out of formation when their squadron was ordered to attack Libyan civilians. The Malta Independent Online reported that the aircraft were armed with rocket pods – a deadly anti-personnel weapon.

Libyan state analogue TV stations report that Col. Gaddafi has received calls of support from the leaders of Nicaragua and Mali.

Two oil companies, Statoil and BP, are evacuating employees while Portugal and Turkey arranged for the evacuation of European nationals.

Bahrain - Pro-government rally in Bahrain draws several thousands. The demonstrators pledge loyalty to the Al-Khalifa royal family and call on ant-government protesters to engage in talks on political reform.

Yemen — Thousands of anti-government protesters rally across the country. Pro-government supporters held demonstrations in Sana'a. Two protesters are killed in clashes in the capital.

February 22, 2011

Libya - Col Gaddafi appears for 28 seconds on state television shortly after 02:00 local time. "I want to clarify for them [people he spoke to] that I am in Tripoli not in Venezuela. Do not believe these channels - they are dogs. Goodbye."

Forces loyal to Col Gaddafi open fire in the capital. Witnesses estimate that more than 50 people have been killed in Tripoli since 20 February.

In the afternoon Libyan TV broadcasts long and rambling speech by Gaddafi that was recorded earlier in front of his bombed-out in 1986 residence in the Bab Al-Azizia Barracks. He referred to the protesters variously as "cockroaches", "rats", "mercenaries" and "traitors" who were "drug-fuelled, drunken and duped". Gaddafi said that protesters deserve the death sentence under Libyan law. He called on supporters to take control of the streets today, adding that Libyans could have whatever constitution or legal system they wanted. "I am not going to leave this land, I will die here as a martyr," he said. "Gaddafi does not have a post to resign from, Gaddafi is the leader of the revolution," he said. "This is my country, I will not leave the land of Libya." He called on "those who love Muammar Gaddafi" to come on to the streets in support of him, telling them not to be afraid of the "gangs". "Come out of your homes, attack them in their dens. Withdraw your children from the streets. They are drugging your children, they are making your children drunk and sending them to hell," he said. He urged young people to form committees "for the defence of the revolution and the defence of Gaddafi". He said they would "cleanse Libya house by house".

Libya's interior minister general Abdul Fatah Younis resigns from his post saying he had "joined the revolution" against Gaddafi. Younis was regarded as the second most powerful man in the country. "Our plan now is to support the youth in Tripoli so that it is liberated like Benghazi was," he said.

Human Rights Watch reports that at least 62 bodies had been taken to hospital morgues in Tripoli since 20 February.

More than 1,000 people have been killed and at least 5,000 injured in Libya since February 17, according to Al Hadi Shallouf, Chief of Justice and Democracy for Libya (JADL) party and member of the International Criminal Court in Hague.

Gulf News reports that five major cities in the eastern part of Libya have been liberated.

Libya's official JANA news agency reports that Muammar Gaddafi called the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi today to say that his country "was fine". "The brother leader reassured during (the) telephone conversation the friend Berlusconi that 'Libya is fine, its people are ... holding on to its security, stability and national unity'." "Whoever wants to know the truth should closely follow the Libyan media and not turn to the lies and the fabricated information broadcast by the organs of traitors and the depraved," JANA added.

Libya's ambassador to the United States, Ali Aujali, resigns from what he calls a "dictatorship" regime.

The Arab League suspends Libya's participation in the organization.

UN Security council issues a statement on Libya. It deplores the repression against peaceful demonstrators and expresses deep regret at the deaths of hundreds of civilians. The council calls for "steps to address the legitimate demands of the population".

Bahrain - Tens of thousands of Bahrainis join an anti-government rally in the capital, Manama demanding the dismissal of the government, the replacement of the ruling Al-Khalifa dynasty with a constitutional monarchy, the formation of a "national salvation" government, and an immediate, impartial investigation into who was responsible for the killings during earlier protests.

King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa of Bahrain orders the release of a group of some 23 political prisoners held on terrorism counts, pardons two others, including an exiled opposition leader, in a gesture to opposition activists.

Yemen - Anti-government demonstrations continue in Yemen. Thousands rally at a university campus while hundreds continue to camp out in a nearby square. At least two protesters are killed and 21 wounded in a street battle between pro- and anti-government demonstrators at the gates of Sana'a University. This brings to 12 the number of people killed in Yemen since demonstrations began less than two weeks ago. In Taiz, Yemen's second-largest city, thousands of protesters march in the Safir square. In the port city of Aden, schools are closed, most government employees were not working and many shops were closed as hundreds gathered for another round of protests.

Syria – According to *The Guardian* about 200 stage a peaceful sit-in outside the Libyan embassy in Damascus to show support for Libya's protesters. Fourteen people are arrested and several people beaten by uniformed and plainclothes police.

Egypt - Egypt's military rulers swear in a new Cabinet that replaces several Mubarak-era ministers. The cabinet reshuffle excluded prominent members of the National Democratic Party (NDP), but included an opposition member from the El Wafd Party as minister of tourism. The ministers of defense, interior, foreign and finance that remain had been appointed shortly before Hosni Mubarak left office.

Algeria - Algeria's Cabinet approves a plan to lift a state of emergency that has been in place for 19 years, a move is seen as a bid to defuse discontent.

February 23, 2011

Libya - Fears are growing that Libya's state apparatus, once seen as a powerful and coherent entity is facing collapse as key officials quit the government, with some joining the protesters, and as international isolation mounts.

The cities of Zliten and Misrata, close to Tripoli, are reportedly under the control of anti-Gaddafi protesters – the first cities in the west of the country to fall to the demonstrators.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy called for the European Union to adopt "swift and concrete sanctions" and to suspend ties with Libya.

In his first public response to the Libyan crisis president Barack Obama states the "suffering and bloodshed is outrageous and is unacceptable... This violence must stop. " Obama said he was studying a "full range of options" to pressure Qaddafi's regime to halt attacks against Libyans. The United States strongly supports the universal rights of Libyans and all people to enjoy the freedoms of peaceful assembly, free speech and the ability to determine their own destiny, the president continued. "These are human rights. They are not negotiable. They must be respected in every country and they cannot be denied through violence or suppression."

The Libyan ambassadors to Singapore and Brunei became the latest figures to quit in protest at the crackdown on demonstrators.

Mercenaries and militias are reported to be roaming Tripoli, with much of the capital deserted.

Peru becomes the first country to sever diplomatic ties with Libya in the wake of the Gaddafi regime's brutal suppression of demonstrators. Foreign minister Jose Antonio Garcia Belaunde said he would ask the United Nations to impose a no-fly zone over the country. Peru's action sets itself apart from at least one nearby country, Nicaragua, which has offered support to Gaddafi.

Bahrain - Bahrain releases 308 prisoners. Bahrain's Center for Human Rights said about 100 of them were political prisoners. Those released included 25 Shiite Muslim activists who had been accused of attempting to overthrow King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa and his government.

Saudi Arabia - King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia returns home from Casablanca where he was recuperating following two surgeries in New York in December 2010. Prior to his return King Abdullah announced financial support measures for Saudi citizens estimated to be worth SR135bn (\$36bn). These include a 15 percent pay rise for state employees, reprieves for imprisoned debtors, financial aid for students, as well as an increase in the cash available for Saudi housing loans. He also announced other moves, including a year of unemployment benefits for jobless young people, financial help for setting up businesses or getting married.

In Saudi Arabia the so-called "youth" petition is made public. Signed by 46 people and initiated by young journalists, it calls for the convening of a second national dialogue conference in Mecca, an elected parliament, a separation of powers, a review of the Basic Law, and a basic administrative law, among other demands.

King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa of Bahrain arrives in the Saudi capital for talks with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

February 24, 2011

Libya - In a phone call from the town of al-Zawiya broadcast live, Col Muammar Gaddafi tells the state TV that Osama Bin Laden and his followers are behind the protests sweeping the country. Young people were being duped with drugs and alcohol to take part in "destruction and sabotage". The telephone call was said to be an address to the people of al-Zawiya, 50km west of the capital, where there has been renewed gunfire reported in the streets. Col Gaddafi said the protesters had no genuine demands and were being dictated to by the al-Qaeda leader. "Bin Laden ... this is the enemy who is manipulating people. Do not be swayed by Bin Laden... It is obvious now that this issue is run by al-Qaeda. Those armed youngsters, our children, are incited by people who are wanted by America and the Western world... Those inciting are very few in numbers and we have to capture them." He claims that he is merely a figurehead like the Queen in the UK and cannot make rules, only offer advice. Gaddafi vows to fight until his "last drop of blood", and urges supporters to take to streets.

Anti-government militias are in control of Zuara, about 75 miles west of Tripoli.

Despite the visible presence of security forces, checkpoints and patrols, in Tripoli, residents take to the city's streets, gathering to pray and demonstrate against leader Col. Gaddafi. The UN Security Council prepares to discuss imposing sanctions on the Libyan regime.

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi appears on Libyan state TV. He speaks of a conspiracy perpetrated by "Arab brothers" and mentions that the media "spread lies." He asks Egyptians, particularly, not to participate in the "conspiracy". "Life in Tripoli is normal," he says.

Mass evacuation of foreigners from Libya gathers place.

Libyan diplomats at the Libyan embassy in the Moroccan capital announce they are joining "the people's revolution."

The Swiss government announces the freezing of "any possible assets of Muammar Gaddafi".

The pilot of Gaddafi's private jet, 57-year-old Norwegian Odd Birger Johannsen, has fled with his wife and family to Vienna, reports Norwegian TV2.

Highlights from WikiLeaks diplomatic cables on Libya's ruling family: Gaddafi "enjoys flamenco dancing and horseracing". He fears flying over water or staying in upper floors of buildings.

The Guardian and other mass media in the UK publish excerpts of an article written in 2007 by the former director of the London School of Economics, Anthony Giddens, about his meeting with Gaddafi. "As one-party states go, Libya is not especially repressive. Gaddafi seems genuinely popular.... Will real progress be possible only when Gaddafi leaves the scene? I tend to think the opposite. If he is sincere in wanting change, as I think he is, he could play a role in muting conflict that might otherwise arise as modernisation takes hold."

Yemen - Tens of thousands of Yemenis flood the streets of the capital, Sana'a, to demand the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. There are also protests in Aden and Hodeidah. A bomb explodes during protests in the southern town of Lawdar, Abyan province, killing one person and wounding two. The death brings to 16 the number of fatalities in a wave of nationwide protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 32-year rule in the past week.

Eight MPs from Yemen's ruling party, General People's Congress, have resigned in protest to the violence that anti-government demonstrators have faced as they call for Saleh to go.

Iraq - Thousands gather in Baghdad's Liberation Square to protest against corruption and poor government services. Thousands march on government buildings across the country. The Associated Press reports that in Hawija, police kill three protesters. In Mosul guards fatally shoot three people.

Saudi Arabia - A second Saudi petition entitled "Towards the state of rights and institutions" appears on the internet. It attracts 1,554 signatures before the Saudi authorities block access to it inside the kingdom. The petition calls for far-reaching political and social reforms, including: an elected parliament with full legislative powers, a separation of the offices of king and prime minister, independent judiciary, elimination of corruption and unemployment, the establishment of trade unions and institutions of civil society, freedom of expression and uncensored mass media, and the release of political prisoners. It says that Arab rulers should derive a lesson from the uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and listen to the voice of disenchanting young people. The group that signed the petition includes leading Saudi intellectuals - renowned Islamic scholars, a female academic, a poet and a former diplomat.

Algeria - Algeria officially lifts a 19-year state of emergency. Ending the emergency powers was one of the demands voiced by opposition groups which have been staging weekly protests in the Algerian capital.

February 25, 2011

Libya - Libyan TV shows Col Gaddafi speaking from Tripoli's old city ramparts overlooking the Green Square. "We shall destroy any aggression with popular will," he says. "With the armed people, when necessary we will open the weapons depots. So that all the Libyan people, all the Libyan tribes can be armed. Libya will become a red flame, a burning coal."

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, one of Col Gaddafi's sons, tells CNN-Turk that his family has plans A, B, C. "Plan A is to live and die in Libya, Plan B is to live and die in Libya, Plan C is to live and die in Libya."

Heavy gun fire reported in the Tripoli districts of Fashloum, Ashour, Jumhouria and Souq al-Jomaa.

Libya's ambassador to the United Nations, Mohammed Shalgham, defects during meeting of Security Council and makes plea to the UN to help to stop bloodshed.

Libya's ambassadors to France, Mohamed Salaheddine Zarem, and its ambassador to UNESCO, Abdoulsalam El Qallali, resign. The entire Libyan mission to the UN in Geneva quits.

Libya's ambassador to Bangladesh, Ahmed A.H. Elimam, resigns. The Libyan delegation to the Arab League in Cairo renounces Gaddafi and condemns his attack on "unarmed citizens".

The entire staff of Libya's embassy in New Delhi renounced ties with Gaddafi's government. "We show our sympathy for the souls of our martyrs who died for the freedom of Libya. We announce our full alignment with the people's revolution, successful revolution of 17th February. We announce that we represent the Libyan people and its civil establishments and we don't represent the former regime which violated the religion and tradition and international conventions and human rights. The blood of Libyan people is very precious and that we would not bargain it at any cost and the revolution will be succeeded on the tyrant. Greeting. All Diplomat members of the Libyan Embassy."

President Hugo Chavez gives a lukewarm backing to Gaddafi. "I can't say that I support, or am in favour, or applaud all the decisions taken by any friend of mine in any part of the world, no, one is at a distance. But we do support the government of Libya."

Egypt - Thousands of Egyptians return to Cairo's Tahrir Square to mark one month since the start of their uprising which toppled president Hosni Mubarak and to press for reforms.

Bahrain - Tens of thousands of Bahrainis have gathered in the capital Manama to demand political reform in the 12th straight day of protests.

The Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen visits Bahrain.

Iraq - At least nine people have been killed in anti-government protests in Iraq as thousands take to the streets in cities across the country for a "day of rage". Protests are held in Baghdad, the northern city of Hawija, Iraq's second largest city of Basra, and the Kurdish city of Sulaimaniya.

Jordan - Some 6,000 Jordanians, including the Muslim Brotherhood, youth groups and smaller political parties march in Amman demanding government reforms and parliamentary elections. It is the biggest pro-democracy rally in eight weeks of protest. Police handed out juice boxes and bottled water, and protesters dispersed swiftly when the demonstration officially ended in the early afternoon.

Yemen - Tens of thousands stage pro- and anti-government protests, in probably the largest marches yet, in the capital Sana'a. Some 10,000 people stage a sit-in in the city of Taiz, 200 km south of the capital, and protests erupt across the port city of Aden.

Mauritania - Hundreds of Mauritanian youth stage anti-government protest in a central square of the capital Nouakchott to demand reforms or the resignation of president Mohammad Ould Abdel Aziz.

Saudi Arabia - In Saudi Arabia peaceful marches take place in the Shia towns of Safwa and Qatif in the Eastern Province. Residents of al-'Awwamiyya, an adjacent small Shia town, hold a silent vigil the same day calling for the release of the so-called "Forgotten Prisoners," nine Shia Saudis detained without charge or trial for over 12 years over unproven allegations of their involvement in the 1996 attacks on US military targets in Khobar that killed 19 Americans.

February 26, 2011

Libya - President Barack Obama signs an executive order seizing assets and blocking any property in the United States belonging to Gaddafi or his four sons or daughter and members of his administration. The US shuts its embassy in Libya and suspends all embassy operations in the country.

There are reports of Gaddafi's forces arming civilians in Tripoli loyal to the regime.

Canada evacuates its embassy staff and suspends its diplomatic presence in Libya.

Britain suspends the operation of its embassy in Tripoli and evacuates its staff. The UK revokes diplomatic immunity of Muammar Gaddafi and his family.

Libya's ex-justice minister Mustafa Mohamed Abud al-Jeleil announces the formation of an interim government based in Benghazi.

Egypt - In Egypt overnight clashes are reported in Cairo between the army and pro-democracy protesters. Subsequently the military posts an apology on its official Facebook page stating that harassments practised against activists by military police was unintentional and that no orders were given to attack any Egyptian national.

Judicial committee appointed by Egypt's ruling military council outlines constitutional amendments . It proposes reducing the presidential term to four years and imposes a two-term limit.

Yemen - Two prominent tribal leaders in Yemen desert president Ali Abdullah Saleh and join the anti-government movement. The leader of the Hashid tribe (the president's own

tribe), Hussein bin Abdallah al Ahmar, announces his resignation from the ruling General People's Congress, and urges others to join protests calling for president Saleh to step down.

In Yemen twenty-four people have been killed since February 17 in daily protests against president Saleh across the country.

Tunisia - Security forces in the Tunisian capital fire tear gas into crowds of protesters outside the interior ministry. The demonstration comes a day after police cleared protesters from the streets demanding the resignation of the interim prime minister, Mohammed Ghannouchi. Three people are killed and a dozen wounded in clashes between hundreds of demonstrators and security forces.

Reuters reports that In Tunisia hundreds of journalists and technicians from the state-run TV broadcaster have gone on strike over what they say is continued government censorship of their dispatches.

Bahrain - Thousands of demonstrators marched on government buildings in Bahrain's capital, Manama. A prominent Bahraini opposition leader, Hassan Mushaima, who leads a Shia group known as Haq, returns from exile and urges the kingdom's rulers to make good on their promises of reform with action. "Dialogue ... is not enough. Promising is not enough. We have to see something on the ground," he said, adding that the Gulf state's rulers "have promised before but they did not do anything."

King Hamad reshuffles his cabinet replacing the ministers of housing, health, cabinet affairs and electricity and water.

Oman - Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said reshuffles his cabinet, changing six ministers in "the public's interest," one week after a rare protest calling for political reform. The reshuffle involves the ministries of: commerce and industry, civil service, education, environment, transport, and tourism.

In Oman some 500 protesters demanding democracy and jobs block traffic and break street lights in the largest industrial city Sohar. Protesters chanted: "We want long-term corrupt ministers to go!" "We want the Shura Council to have legislative powers!" "We want jobs!" and "We want democracy!"

Algeria - Reuters reports that the anti-government protests in Algeria are dwindling, with only around 50 people attending a banned rally in the capital, Algiers. The protest in Martyrs Square in the city centre was the third in three weeks and on each occasion the numbers attending have fallen, according to the news agency.

Morocco - Almost 1,000 people rally amid a heavy police presence in Morocco's biggest city Casablanca to demand political reforms and a new constitution. Only an estimated 200 people attend demonstration in Rabat. Efforts to kindle a protest movement in Morocco have met with only limited success.

Mauritania - In Mauritania police disperse a thousand young protesters in the capital Nouakchott who organised a sit-in. They demanded political reforms and the departure of President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz.

Saudi Arabia - A third internet petition is released in Saudi Arabia. "The National Declaration for Reform," signed by more than 330 people, including leading liberal reformers, includes the most detailed reform program. It calls for elections to decision-making bodies on the local, provincial, and national levels, as well as a review of the Basic Law to include rights protections, true separation of powers, and the release of political prisoners, independence of the judiciary, establishment of institutions of civil society, legal and institutional measures to empower women, and anti-discrimination legislation, and the development of national strategy that explicitly recognizes multiculturalism - among other demands.

February 27, 2011

Libya - The UN Security Council votes unanimously to impose sanctions on the regime of Muammar Gaddafi. These involve: travel ban on Gaddafi and his seven sons, a daughter and seven members of his inner circle; the freeze of assets of Gaddafi his daughter and four sons; and arms embargo. Council members also agree to refer the regime's crackdown to the International Criminal Court for alleged crimes against humanity.

UN Security Council resolution 1970 (2011) in Annex I lists the people subject to the travel ban.

1. Al-Baghdadi, Dr Abdulqader Mohammed

Date of birth: 01/07/1950. Passport number: B010574.

Head of the Liaison Office of the Revolutionary Committees. Revolutionary Committees involved in violence against demonstrators.

2. Dibri, Abdulqader Yusef

Date of birth: 1946. Place of birth: Houn, Libya.

Head of Muammar Gaddafi's personal security. Responsibility for regime security. History of directing violence against dissidents.

3. Dorda, Abu Zayd Umar

Director, External Security Organisation. Regime loyalist. Head of external intelligence agency.

4. Jabir, Major General Abu Bakr Yunis

Date of birth: 1952. Place of birth: Jalo, Libya.

Defence Minister. Overall responsibility for actions of armed forces.

5. Matuq, Matuq Mohammed

Date of birth: 1956. Place of birth: Khoms.

Secretary for Utilities. Senior member of regime. Involvement with Revolutionary Committees. Past history of involvement in suppression of dissent and violence.

6. Gaddaf Al-dam, Sayyid Mohammed

Date of birth: 1948. Place of birth: Sirte, Libya.

Cousin of Muammar Gaddafi. In the 1980s, Sayyid was involved in the dissident assassination campaign and allegedly responsible for several deaths in Europe. He is also thought to have been involved in arms procurement.

7. Gaddafi, Aisha Muammar

Date of birth: 1978. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya.

Daughter of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime.

8. Gaddafi, Hannibal Muammar

Date of birth: 20/09/1975. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya. Passport number: B/002210.

Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime.

9. Gaddafi, Khamis Muammar

Date of birth: 1978. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya.

Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime. Command of military units involved in repression of demonstrations.

10. Gaddafi, Mohammed Muammar

Date of birth: 1970. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya.

Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime.

11. Gaddafi, Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar

Date of birth: 1942. Place of birth: Sirte, Libya.

Leader of the Revolution, Supreme Commander of Armed Forces. Responsibility for ordering repression of demonstrations, human rights abuses.

12. Gaddafi, Mutassim

Date of birth: 1976. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya.

National Security Adviser. Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime.

13. Gaddafi, Saadi

Date of birth: 25/05/1973. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya. Passport number: 014797.

Commander Special Forces. Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime. Command of military units involved in repression of demonstrations.

14. Gaddafi, Saif al-Arab

Date of birth: 1982. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya.

Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime.

15. Gaddafi, Saif al-Islam.

Date of birth: 25/06/1972. Place of birth: Tripoli, Libya. Passport number: B014995

Director, Gaddafi Foundation. Son of Muammar Gaddafi. Closeness of association with regime. Inflammatory public statements encouraging violence against demonstrators.

16. Al-Senussi, Colonel Abdullah

Date of birth: 1949. Place of birth: Sudan.

Director Military Intelligence. Military Intelligence involvement in suppression of demonstrations. Past history includes suspicion of involvement in Abu Selim prison massacre. Convicted in absentia for bombing of UTA flight. Brother-in-law of Muammar Gaddafi.

Britain freezes the UK-based assets of Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi, members of his family and their representatives in accordance with UN sanctions imposed on Libya.

UAE Central Bank Governor Sultan Nasser Al Suwaidi sates that the UAE will comply with the United Nations Security Council's resolution that calls for freezing the foreign assets of Libya's leader Muammar Gaddafi.

Anti-Gaddafi forces widen control with foreign journalists confirming that the town of Zawiya is in the hands of protesters.

Bahrain - Protesters stream through Bahrain's diplomatic area and other sites, chanting slogans against the country's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa carries a limited cabinet reshuffle in which four ministers, including two royal family members, are replaced.

Oman - In Oman at least 2,000 people gather for a second day of protests calling for political reforms, in the industrial city of Sohar, 200km northwest of the capital Muscat. Two people are reported killed and five wounded after police fired rubber bullets and tear gas into

the crowd. A police station and the governor's residence are set on fire. Demonstrations also take place in the southern town of Salalah. Police arrest 48 demonstrators.

Sultan Qaboos of Oman orders the government to hire 50,000 Omanis and to pay 150 rials (\$390) a month to job seekers. He also orders the release of the detainees and the withdrawal of the police from the roundabout where hundreds of demonstrators have gathered since about noon on 26 February.

Tunisia - Security forces and anti-government protesters clash in the Tunisian capital, with police firing tear gas and warning shots to disperse stone-throwing youths in a third day of violence.

Late afternoon Tunisian interim Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi announces his resignation on state TV. The departure of Mohammed Ghannouchi, who served under former president Ben Ali since 1999, was a key demand of demonstrators.

Saudi Arabia - King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia orders that state employees on temporary labour contracts be given permanent employment status.

Some 119 Saudi academics and activists join calls made on the internet for King Abdullah to enact sweeping reforms and relinquish many of his powers. There are appeals on Twitter and Facebook for the replacement of the current government with constitutional monarchy and for demonstrations to demand reforms.

Saudi authorities arrest Tawfiq al-Amir, a prominent Shia cleric from al-Hofuf in Eastern Province. Two days before during his Friday sermon he called for a constitutional monarchy and equal rights for Shia.

Yemen - President Ali Abdullah Saleh vows to defend his three-decade regime "with every drop of blood," accusing his opponents of hijacking protests in a ploy to split the nation.

In Sana'a students maintain a sit-in outside Sana'a University, where they have vowed to remain until the fall of Saleh's regime. And in Taz, south of Sanaa, protesters continued their second week camping out in a main square to demand that Saleh stands down.

Iran - Mirhossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karoubi, two Iranian opposition leaders and their wives are moved secretly from their homes where they had been under virtual house arrest for calling on supporters to protest against the government. They are moved to a "safe house" in an area close to Teheran.

February 28, 2011

Libya - Libyan leader Col Muammar Gaddafi tells the BBC that he is loved by all his people and denies there have been any protests in Tripoli.

Witnesses report that pro-Gaddafi forces tried to retake the western cities of Zawiyah, Misrata and Nalut but were repulsed by rebels helped by defecting army units.

European Union imposes sanctions including an arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban on Col Gaddafi and his close entourage.

The US Treasury states that it had blocked \$30bn (£18.5bn) in Libyan assets - the largest sum it had ever frozen.

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani, calls on Muammar Gaddafi to quit - to take a "brave decision" to avoid more bloodshed and destruction in his country.

Egypt - Egypt's public prosecutor issues a travel ban on former president Hosni Mubarak, his wife Suzanne, their two sons Ala and Gamal and their wives. The order also freezes their money and assets. Three of Hosni Mubarak's former officials have been charged with corruption-related offences: former ministers of interior Habib al-Adly, tourism Zuhair Garana, and housing Ahmed al-Maghrabi.

Oman - In Oman at least one person is killed and 20 wounded during the third consecutive day of violence in the town of Sohar. A supermarket is set on fire by several hundred young men who had gathered in the town's main roundabout, demanding higher salaries, jobs for unemployed youth and the dismissal of some government ministers. About 700 protesters also use several trucks in order to block Sohar's port.

Tunisia - The Tunisian minister of industry and technology, Mohamed Afif Chelbi, resigns. He was one of only two remaining ministers who served in the cabinet under the ousted president, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

Bahrain - Thousands of demonstrators remain camped out on Pearl Roundabout in the capital, Manama, as protests move into a 15th day.

US president Barack Obama expresses his support for the King of Bahrain's affirmed commitment to reform.

Yemen - Yemen's president Ali Abdullah Saleh offers to form a unity government within 24 hours but his offer was swiftly rejected by the opposition. According to Mohammed al-Sabry, a spokesman for Yemen's umbrella opposition coalition, "The opposition decided to stand with the people's demand for the fall of the regime, and there is no going back from that."

Qatar - Prime Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jaber al-Thani announces that Qatar will soon hold consultative council elections and that legislative reform is being currently prepared. The 2005 constitution provides for legislative power to be vested in a Shura (consultative) Council made up of 45 members, two thirds of whom would be elected and the rest appointed by the Emir. The Shura Council is currently named by the Emir.

March 1, 2011

Libya - Fighting is reported in the town of Zintan, south of Tripoli, where opposition forces managed to repel the pro-Gaddafi military.

Tens of thousands of foreigners flee unrest in Libya. According to the UN some 140,000 people have crossed into Tunisia and Egypt. The situation on Libya's border with Tunisia has reached crisis point with about 2,000 people crossing into Tunisia every hour. Most are Egyptian but there are also significant numbers of Chinese and Bangladeshis.

The UN General Assembly unanimously suspends Libya's membership in the UN Human Rights Council because of violence by Libyan forces against protesters. This is the first time that a Member State has been suspended from the Council.

Yemen - Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh dismisses the governors of the southern provinces of Aden, Lahej, Abyan and Hadhramout and the western province of Houdieda.

Tens of thousands of people demonstrate on the streets of Sana'a demanding the resignation of president Ali Abdullah Saleh. The president tells his supporters: "The events from Tunisia to Oman are a storm orchestrated from Tel Aviv and under Washington's supervision... What is taking place on Yemen's streets is just a copycat attempt, as Yemen is not Tunisia or Egypt and the Yemeni people are different... We want to know why Barack Obama is meddling in the affairs of the Arab countries... Is Obama the president of the United States of America or a president of the Arab states?" Saleh's remarks, unprecedented in their harshness, signal a growing rift with the United States that could hurt a joint campaign against the al-Qaida terror network in Yemen.

Amnesty International reports that the overall death toll in the recent protests in Yemen has now reached 27, with 24 of the deaths occurring in Aden.

In Sana'a opposition parties join hundreds of thousands of people on anti-government protests for the first time.

Iran - Iranian police fired tear gas and use batons to disperse protesters in Tehran demanding the release of two senior opposition leaders. More than 200 people are arrested. Hossein Mousavi and Mahdi Karroubi, have been moved from house arrest to full-time detention along with their wives.

Tunisia - Tunisia's prominent opposition figure quits the unity government, further destabilizing the interim leadership amid renewed uncertainty about the country's direction. Nejjib Chebbi, who founded the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, resigns because he is not happy with the newly named prime minister and government measures he says aimed at keeping him from seeking the presidency.

Tunisian Islamist party banned for more than 20 years is legalized. The Ennahdha party, branded an Islamic terrorist group by Tunisia's deposed leader but considered moderate by scholars, says it will focus on rebuilding and electing a new leader to prepare for upcoming elections.

Jordan - More than 400 Salafis³ demonstrate in front of the Grand Hussein Mosque in central Amman demanding the release of their jailed colleagues. This is the first public protests of this ultraconservative Muslim group which is banned in Jordan.

Bahrain - Thousands of protesters take to the streets of Manama in a third week of anti-regime demonstrations, as Bahrain's Shiite-led opposition reiterated its demands for major reforms.

Egypt - Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces sets announces provisional date for referendum on the constitution for March 19 as a prelude to a parliamentary election in June followed by a presidential poll.

Oman - In Oman the army clears protesters in the town of Sohar. Later in the capital Muscat, about 200 people gathered in a silent protest in front of the building of the Shura Council, the elected advisory body, asking for jobs and reforms.

March 2, 2011

³ The Salafi movement is banned in Jordan, but has grown in strength in recent years. The Salafists espouse an austere form of Sunni Islam that seeks a return to practices that were common in the early days of the faith. The Salafist rallies are separate from the wave of anti-government protests calling for democratic reforms. During the period covered by this chronology the Salafis held rallies across the country demanding the release of 90 Islamist prisoners, including Abu Mohammed al Maqdessi, the mentor of the former leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al Zarqawi, who was killed in an air strike north-east of Baghdad in 2006. The group also called for the release of Mohammad Shalabi, better known as Abu Sayyaf, who is in prison after being convicted on terrorism charges following riots in the southern city of Maan in 2002. Salafi Jihadist groups emerged in Jordan in the early 1990s in cities such as Zarqa, Salt and Maan.

Libya - Forces loyal to Muammar Gaddafi move into rebel territory in the east, capturing an oil installation and university in the town of Marsa El Brega (or Brega). The situation in the town remains fluid for most of the day. In the evening the BBC reports that the town "seems clear of loyalist troops... The attempt by Col Gaddafi to move on the eastern rebel-held areas appears for now to have been repulsed and, although this is by no means a final victory, it is an important setback for the Libyan leader."

Gharyan and Sabratha, both near Tripoli, are reportedly retaken by Gaddafi forces.

Amid fears by investors that the unrest in the Arab world is spreading, Saudi Arabia's share market, the largest in the Middle East, falls 3.9%, following a 6.8% slide on 1 March. Qatar's stock index drops 3.1%, Kuwait falls 2.9%, and Dubai 3.6%. Dubai stocks slump to 7-year low. Reuter reports that "Concerns about unrest in North Africa have now migrated to the Gulf, albeit in the smaller countries like Oman and Bahrain... The fear is that there will be a ripple effect into other GCC (Gulf) countries, so there's a lot of panic selling." The price of Brent crude rises towards \$116 a barrel. The gold price, at \$1,434.45 an ounce, is almost at a record high, while silver, at \$34.74 an ounce, is at its highest since early 1980.

Yemen - In Yemen several thousand demonstrators gather yet again in the capital Sana'a for what are now almost daily rallies against president Saleh and denied any links to the US.

The White House issues a statement giving details of president Ali Abdullah Saleh's telephone call to John Brennan (White House counter-terrorism adviser) during which the president "conveyed his regret for misunderstandings related to his public remarks that Israel and the United States have engaged in destabilising activities in Arab countries."

Bahrain - Thousands of anti-government protesters in Bahrain gathered outside the country's interior ministry, the latest in a series of daily protests demanding the resignation of the government.

Government supporters also take to the streets in Bahrain. Tens of thousands gathered at a mosque in Manama to show their support for King Hamad bin Isa. They say that political reforms launched by the king a decade ago have resulted in freedoms and a level of democracy unique in the Gulf Arab region.

United Arab Emirates - UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan orders the investment of Dh 5.7 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion) in the expansion of the water and electricity supply sector in the northern emirates. According to the official Emirati news agency WAM, "the move follows the tour of the northern emirates to study the conditions and needs of UAE

citizens made last month on the instructions of Sheikh Khalifa by General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces.” Electricity supply is to be provided to buildings and shops belonging to citizens in the northern emirates, with the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority (ADWEA) being instructed to supply the Federal Electricity and Water Authority (FEWA) with around 1,300 megawatts (MW) of power to meet projected demand. Sheikh Khalifa also issued instructions for the construction of a 100 kilometre main water pipeline from Kalba, at the southern end of the UAE's East Coast, to Dibba, in the north, passing through the cities of Fujairah and Khor Fakkan. Estimated to cost Dh 900 million, the pipeline will supply 23 million imperial gallons per day, MIGD, to Fujairah, 5 MIGD each to Khor Fakkan, Dibba and Kalba and 3 MIGD to Dhadnah. Another 60 km pipeline, costing Dh 300 million, will be built to supply 18 MIGD of water to the Emirate of Umm al-Qaiwain. The water will be supplied from the ADWEA power and desalination plants in Fujairah. Another order provides for the supply by ADWEA of 700 MW to the emirate of Sharjah, construction of a new main transmission station, with a capacity of 400 kV and costing Dh 500 million, in the city of Sharjah and for the supply of an additional 10 MIGD of water to Sharjah, to meet local requirements.

Jordan - Michael Posner, the US assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labour, concludes his two day visit to Jordan. According to *The National* “during the visit he met King Abdullah II, prime minister Marouf Bakhit and other Jordanian officials and civil society members that focused on the importance of democratic reform, civil society, women's rights, the role of an independent media, the protection of ethnic and religious minorities and labour... Posner was there to emphasize American support for King Abdullah's call for a sustained, serious, and comprehensive programme of political and economic reform.”

Egypt - Two leading members of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, Khairat al-Shater and Hassan Malik, are released after serving only part of their sentences.

Oman - Rival groups demonstrate in the Omani capital Muscat, with protesters demanding jobs and political reforms for a fifth successive day and government supporters taking part in a long parade of cars.

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands postpones a state visit to Oman. The monarch was due to begin a three-day visit to Oman on 6 March, accompanied by heir to the throne Crown Prince Willem-Alexander and his wife, Princess Maxima.

March 3, 2011

Libya - For the second day in succession pro-Gaddafi forces launch air strikes on the oil town of Brega. The raid comes a day after 14 people died in clashes between rebels and government troops in the town. The town remains in anti-government hands. Government planes also bomb positions in the town of Ajdabiya.

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, states that he will investigate Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, his sons and senior aides for crimes against humanity.

The Libyan government accepts a plan by Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez to seek a negotiated solution to end the conflict in Libya. Leaders of anti-Gaddafi National Libyan Council in Benghazi reject Chavez's offer saying talk of peace is too late and they would not negotiate via Venezuelan president. They are, however, open to talks on Gaddafi's resignation or exile to stop the bloodshed.

The International Organisation for Migration says that almost 200,000 foreign workers have now crossed from Libya into Tunisia, Egypt and Niger.

US defence secretary, Robert Gates, the, indicated that it is unlikely that a no-fly zone over Libya would be established.

The Netherlands confirms that three of its marines have been captured by pro-Gaddafi forces in Sirte while helping to evacuate two civilians.

Egypt - Egyptian prime minister, Ahmed Shafiq, resigns. He was appointed by Hosni Mubarak on 29 January 2011, a fortnight before the president was forced out of office. His resignation was one of the protesters' key demands. Ahmed Shafiq is replaced by Essam Sharaf, former transport minister. His appointment is significant as he spoke out in support of the revolution and took part in the street protests.

Bahrain – More than 100,000 protesters gather in Manama.

Reuters reports that Bahraini opposition groups were ready to enter talks with the government without pre-conditions. However, in a letter sent to the Crown Prince they state that at the beginning of talks they would like a declaration in principle on new constitution and new government.

Sectarian tension flares up between Shias and recently naturalised Sunni Arabs in Hamad Town south of the capital. The clashes left at least 8 injured before police managed to step in and separate the two sides. This is the first reported sectarian violence since anti-government demonstrations started some two weeks ago.

Yemen - Yemeni soldiers opened fire at anti-government protesters in the northern city of Amran, killing three people. In the capital, tens of thousands assembled near Sana'a University calling for president Saleh's resignation.

Yemen's coalition of opposition parties, joined by some tribal and religious leaders, proposed a five-point "roadmap" for President Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down by the end of 2011. Reuters, quoting senior government official, reports that president Saleh will respond "positively" to the plan.

Saudi Arabia – About 100 people, mostly men and one group of women, stage small protests in two towns in the oil-producing Eastern Province. Demonstrations are reported in the small Gulf coast town of al-Awamiyah, as well as in the nearby Shiite centre of Qatif, demanding the release of prisoners held without trial, in some cases, for more than a decade.

Morocco - King Mohammed VI creates the National Council of Human Rights (NCHR), which replaces the purely advisory Council on Human Rights established in 1990 by King Hassan II.

Palestinian Authority - All banks in Gaza are closed for a day in protest at seizure of at least \$250,000 in cash by gunmen allegedly protected by Hamas police.

March 4, 2011

Libya - A fierce battle take place in the key Libyan city of Zawiya, (50 km west of Tripoli) after loyalist forces launched an operation to retake it from anti-Gaddafi forces. Reuters news agency reports heavy casualties with up to 50 people dead. Fierce fighting is also reported in the oil port of Ras Lanuf, while in the capital, Tripoli, security forces fired tear gas to disperse protesters. A Libyan warplane drops bombs on the rebel-held Mediterranean port town of Ajdabiya, narrowly missing a munitions dump. Anti- Gaddafi rebels hold other areas.

Senior Malian official tells the BBC that several hundred mercenaries from the Tuareg community in Mali have just joined Gaddafi forces. "They are being paid about \$10,000 to join up and... they are being told that they will get \$1,000 a day to fight."

Egypt - Egypt's new Prime Minister, Essam Sharaf, addresses crowd of thousands gathered at Cairo's Tahrir Square before Friday prayers. "I will do my utmost to realise your demands... am here because I get my legitimacy from you."

Protesters in the Egyptian city of Alexandria storm the HQ of the state security agency, believing officers were destroying key documents.

Yemen - Tens of thousands of people demonstrate in several cities across Yemen, including the capital, Sana'a, calling for the ouster of president Ali Abdullah Saleh. The main speaker during prayers at Sana'a University, Yahia Hussein Deilami, tells the gathering that "deposing a tyrant is a religious duty." Saleh's supporters stage counter-demonstrations in some major cities, including Sana'a, but they are outnumbered by the anti-regime protesters, according to security sources.

President Saleh rejects opposition coalition's transition plan to democracy that included reforms to the electoral system and the president leaving power by the end of 2011. Xinhua news agency quotes Mohammed al-Mutawaki, the opposition's rotating chairman: "The president rejected the proposal presented to him through religious clerics' mediation two days ago."

At least four people are killed and seven wounded when Yemeni soldiers armed with heavy machine-guns open fire on protesters throwing rocks at their army post in the northern town of Harf Sofyan.

Some 200,000 people protest in the town of Ibb, 200km south of Sana'a calling for president Saleh to step down.

Ali Ahmad al-Omrani, a tribal sheikh from the southern al-Baida province, tells tens of thousands of protesters at a late night rally in front of Sana'a University that he would resign from Saleh's General People's Congress Party (GPC).

Tunisia - Tunisia's interim president Fouad Mebazaa announces details of new elections promised after the overthrow of president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. Voting for a council of representatives to rewrite the constitution would be held by 24 July 2011. Nearly two months after the departure of Ben Ali, protesters are still camping beside the prime minister's office in central Tunis, saying nothing has changed.

Bahrain - Tens of thousands march in the Bahraini capital Manama renewing calls for the cabinet resignation and demanding the drafting of a new constitution. Over 50,000 people filled the capital's diplomatic and financial district chanting their demands. At the same time, protesters rallied outside the headquarters of Bahrain's state television building in Madinat Isa, 15km south of the capital.

Jordan - Hundreds of Jordanians march through the Jordanian capital, demanding democratic reforms and an end to official corruption. The mainly Islamist crowd, joined by liberal and leftist activists, marched after Friday prayers to a square in the center of Amman,

shouting: "We want to reform the regime," and "we want to fight the thieves who have robbed the country."

Oman - Hundreds of Omanis demanding jobs and political reforms demonstrated across the Sultanate. Around 200 protesters gather in capital Muscat at the headquarters of the Shura Council, where some had camped out overnight in tents. Similar numbers demonstrated in Salalah, the eastern coastal town of Sur where Oman's liquefied natural gas export facilities are based, and Sohar. The silent demonstrators outside the Shura Council in Muscat held placards saying, "We want an elected cabinet of ministers" and "End corruption and create jobs." Demonstrations in other cities concentrated on jobs, salaries and government support including housing benefits, as well as demands for an investigation into the violence in Sohar. In the capital, Sultan Qaboos' supporters drove around the city in a long parade of cars, waving Omani flags and chanting "long live Qaboos."

Saudi Arabia - Saudi Shiites held two small protests in the kingdom's oil-producing Eastern Province. More than 100 protesters march through the city of al-Hofuf to demanding the release of Shiite cleric Tawfiq al-Amir who was arrested after calling for a constitutional monarchy and a fight against corruption. In the Gulf coast town of Qatif, more than 100 protesters demand the release of Amir and other detained Shiites. The rally is dispersed by the police and 22 persons are arrested. There are also reports of a dozen men gathering at the exit of Riyadh's Al-Rajhi mosque and shouting slogans denouncing "oppression" and the monarchy.

March 5, 2011

Libya - Interim National Transitional Council holds its first meeting in Benghazi. The Council names eight of 31 members. According to the minutes of the first meeting, the Council is headed by Mustafa Abdul Jalil, and was attended by: Othman Suleiman El-Megryahi (Batnan Area), Ashour Hamed Bourashed (Darna City), Dr. Abdelallah Moussa El-Myehoub (Gouba Area), Zubiar Ahmed El-Sharif (Representative of the political prisoners), Ahmad Abdrabah Al-Abaar (Benghazi City), Dr. Fathi Mohamed Baja (Benghazi City), Abdelhafed Abdelkader Ghoga (Benghazi City), Fathi Tirbil and Dr. Salwa Fawzi El-Deghali (Representatives of Youth and Women). The Council declares that it is the sole national representative of Libya with all its social and political strata and all its geographical regions. Its membership is open to all Libyans and so far has received the names of the members of the following cities: Ajdabia, Misurata, Zentan, Zawya, Zwara, Nalout, El-Jabel El-Gharbi (West Mountain), Gaat and Kufra. The names will not be declared for safety

reasons till the liberation of all parts of Libya. The Council is waiting for the names of delegations from Tripoli, the South Region and the Middle Region of Libya to join it.

Fighting resumes in Zawiya, 50km west of Tripoli, after rebels earlier repelled a dawn attack by pro-Gaddafi forces to retake the city.

Opposition forces continue to advance westward towards Tripoli. The rebels say they have captured Bin Jawad, having early taken the oil port town of Ras Lanuf.

Thousands of foreign workers fleeing to Tunisia have to pass through dozens of checkpoints on the way from Tripoli to the border. They say they had been robbed by Gaddafi's security forces.

China Central Television reports that the last batch of Chinese workers in Libya has been flown home. An estimated 30,000 Chinese were working in Libya, mostly in the construction and oil industries, before the revolt.

According to Arbor Networks, a US-based network security company internet traffic from Libya falls to zero. Only about six per cent of Libyans enjoy internet access at the best of times, but the shutdown will likely affect attempts to disseminate information from within the country during this crisis.

Egypt - Protesters force their way into state security's headquarters in Cairo's Nasr City neighbourhood and seize classified documents. They say they were trying to save documents they feared were being destroyed by officers afraid of prosecution.

Seven people are injured after a state security building in the coastal city of Alexandria is set alight.

Bahrain - Thousands of Shia protesters in Bahrain have formed a huge human chain around the capital, Manama.

Saudi Arabia - Saudi Arabia's Interior Ministry announces that it would not allow any demonstrations or sit-in protests in the country that are aimed at undermining the Kingdom's security and stability. "Laws and regulations in the Kingdom totally prohibit all kinds of demonstrations, marches and sit-in protests as well as calling for them as they go against the principles of Shariah and Saudi customs and traditions."

Oman – Workers stage a sit-in at a main oil field in Haima, about 500km south-west of the capital, Muscat, demanding more state investments in the area.

Amid mounting protests throughout the country calling for reforms, Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman removes two senior & powerful ministers from the cabinet. He replaces Minister of Diwan of Royal Court, Sayyid Ali bin Hamoud Al Busaidi, with Sayyid Khalid

bin Hilal bin Saud Al Busaidi, and Minister of Royal Office, General Ali bin Majid Al Ma'amari, with Lieutenant-General Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani.

The Public Prosecution Department (PPD) of Oman issues a warning that stern action would be taken against those who indulge in acts of vandalism and arson. "The Public Prosecution Department followed with concern the events in Sohar and some other wilayats of the sultanate which included setting fire, vandalising and damaging of public and private property, as well as blocking roads and hampering traffic flow, which resulted in grave public and private damage," a statement said, adding: "All these acts are against the laws, the tenets of the Islamic Shariah and the morals the Omani society are known for".

Egypt - Gen. Mansour el-Essawy, a former general who led the antiterrorism drive during the 1990s, is named new interior minister. Groups of protesters storm the state security headquarters to rescue files they believed were about to be destroyed by security agents.

March 6, 2011

Libya - Libyan opposition forces suffer their first major setback in the country's east, on a day when pro- Gaddafi's troops launch fierce counter-assaults on rebel-held towns. Government troops launch major assaults in three towns held by the opposition, with fighter jets, attack helicopters and artillery used to strike in Misrata, Zawiya and the eastern oil port of Ras Lanuf. Pro-Gaddafi forces retake the town of Bin Jawad. Anti-Gaddafi rebels are still in control of Tobruk and Ras Lanuf but there has been fierce fighting in Misrata and Zawiya.

Speaking in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI appeals for peace in Libya, extending his prayers for the victims of a "growing humanitarian crisis". Concerns are growing for tens of thousands of foreign workers attempting to flee the country.

Britain officially confirms that its outstretch mission to the Libyan rebels has come to a rather abrupt and embarrassing end. A team of six SAS troops and two MI6 officers seized by Libyan rebels in eastern Libya are released by the rebels.

Libyan Consul General in Mali resigns his post.

Yemen - Five Yemeni soldiers are shot dead in two separate, al-Qaeda suspected attacks, as protests continue against the rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Four soldiers of the elite Republican Guard are killed in the province of Marib, east of Sana'a, when attackers open fire on the soldiers as they pass in a military vehicle. An army colonel is shot dead as he shopped in Zinjibar, capital of the southern Abyan province.

In the south Yemeni city of Ibb, 200km south of the capital, government supporters wielding knives and handguns attacked anti-Saleh protesters, leaving one dead. At least 40 pro-democracy protesters are injured in the clashes.

The US Department of State warns American citizens of the high security threat level in Yemen due to terrorist activities and civil unrest. The Department urges US citizens not to travel to Yemen. US citizens currently in Yemen should consider departing Yemen. The travel warning comes a day after the UK issued similar advice.

Bahrain - Anti-government demonstrators continue to camp out in Bahrain's Pearl Roundabout. A large number of people protested outside the prime minister's office where the cabinet was meeting - the first time a protest had been allowed at the site. The demonstration, which lasted about two and a half hours, was peaceful and broke up before the cabinet meeting ended.

Oman - In Oman the road blockades in Sohar continue. Around 200 staff of Oman Air, the flag carrier of the Sultanate, stage strike demanding higher salaries. The national carrier operates more than 300 flights a week to about 40 destinations in more than 20 countries.

Saudi Arabia - In Saudi Arabia the Council of Senior Scholars, comprising of ten clerics and headed by Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abd al-'Aziz al-Ashaikh, declares that calls for demonstrations and petitions demanding reforms in the desert kingdom, are un-Islamic. "The council stresses that demonstrations are prohibited in this country and that the Islamic way of realising common interest is by offering advice... Reform and advice are the Islamic way and would carry benefits and prevent evil, and that does not happen through intimidating and seditious statements on which signatures are collected."

Saudi Arabia frees Sheikh Tawfiq al-Amir , a Shia cleric whose arrest provoked protests in the town of Qatif in Eastern Province.

According to Reuters security forces detain at least 22 Shia who protested last week over what they say is discrimination.

Jordan - Second demonstration of Salafis in Jordan. Attended by 300 people it is staged outside the King's offices and the government headquarters in Amman.

Egypt - Within the past 48 hours Egyptian protesters have stormed the headquarters of the secret police in Cairo, Alexandria and elsewhere.

March 7, 2011

Libya - In Libya the town of Bin Jawad 60 km from Ras Lanuf, previously held by rebels, falls to forces loyal to Col Muammar Gaddafi. Pro-Gaddafi forces advance towards the port of Ras Lanuf.

In the rebel stronghold of Benghazi, much of the euphoria and excitement that victory was close at hand had faded. Some feared that pro-Gaddafi forces had deliberately retreated to around Gaddafi's Sirte, drawing the inexperienced and poorly-equipped rebel fighters forward and leaving rebel-held towns exposed to a possible counter-offensive.

Foreign ministers of the Gulf Co-operation Council meeting in Abu Dhabi take a tougher line against what they termed human rights violations by Col Muammar Gaddafi's regime. "The ministerial council demands that the Security Council take the steps necessary to protect civilians, including a no-fly zone in Libya." They also call on the Arab League to convene an emergency meeting to discuss the Libyan crisis.

In an interview with FRANCE 24, Muammar Gaddafi repeats his claim that al Qaeda was responsible for plunging the country into chaos and denied media reports of mass killings.

According to BBC Monitoring, South African president Jacob Zuma, in a conversation with Col Gaddafi, calls on the African Union to "take decisive action and uncover the conspiracy that Libya is facing."

Oman - Sultan Qaboos of Oman changes his Cabinet for the third time in less than two weeks to appease anti-government protesters who are demanding political reforms and an end to government corruption. The reshuffle includes 10 new ministers including five elected members from the Majlis Ash'shura.

Bahrain - Protests enter third week of demonstrations in Bahrain.

Jordan - Hundreds of Jordanian journalists working in state-controlled media demand an end to government curbs on media freedom, saying they were an obstacle to democratic transformation.

March 8, 2011

Libya - Pro-Gaddafi forces launch a fierce attack on rebels in the town of Zawiyah 50km west of Tripoli. Some 50 tanks and 120 pick-up trucks were used in the assault. *The Guardian* correspondent, Peter Beaumont reports: "Residents described a hail of bullets with women and children being killed and families trapped within their homes by the ferocity of the fighting." Eventually the town is retaken by troops loyal to Gaddafi.

Gaddafi warplanes fire missiles on residential areas and near rebel positions in the oil port of Ras Lanuf, in a counter-attack designed to halt the rebel advance on his hometown, Sirte.

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, calls on the United Nations to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya, but rejects any intervention on the ground.

The UNCHR reports that more than 215,000 people, mainly migrant workers, have fled Libya.

Yemen - Anti-government unrest continues in Yemen. Policemen and security agents in civilian clothes open fire on protesters in the capital Sana'a wounding at least 50 people. They were trying to stop thousands of people joining a protest camp at the university. Three people are reported dead in a prison riot in support of protests. There were also clashes between demonstrators and security forces in the south of Yemen. Hundreds of schoolchildren join the protests in Aden, chanting "no studying, no teaching, until the president falls." In Ibb province, thousands of people take to the streets to demand action against Saleh loyalists who attacked a protest camp two days before.

Tunisia - The Tunisian interim prime minister, Caid Essebsi, announces a new government, which includes no members of the old regime.

Tunisia's interior ministry announces the disbanding of the State Security Department, under which the secret police operated, and states that it would respect "civic freedoms and rights". The dismantling of the department was a key demand of the opposition.

Oman - Hundreds of protesters gather outside the offices of the state broadcaster in the Omani capital Muscat calling for media freedom and an end to the "misleading of citizens". Demonstrations in support of political reform have been taking place in the Gulf sultanate for weeks and have continued despite the introduction of measures to this effect. The protesters also demand the removal from office of the minister of information, Hamed bin Mohammed Al Rashdi, and advisor to the sultan for cultural affairs, Abdul Aziz Al Rawas.

Egypt - New Egyptian government takes the constitutional oath before Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, the head of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.⁴

⁴ The interim cabinet includes Yehia al-Gamal as deputy PM; Sayed Meshaal as Minister of Military Production; Hassan Younis as Minister of Electricity and Energy; Faiza Abu Naga as Minister of Planning and International Cooperation; Maged George as Minister of Environment; Mohsen al-Nomani as Minister of Local Development; Mohamed Fathi al-Baradei as Minister of Housing and Urban Development; Abdallah al-Husseini as Minister of

At least one person died in clashes between Coptic Christians and Muslims in Cairo. These erupted when Coptic protesters blocked a highway in the Egyptian capital, protesting against the burning of the church in the province of Helwan.

There are ugly scenes in Tahrir Square in Cairo as hundreds of women attempt to hold a "Million Women's March" to highlight their hopes of playing an active part in building a new Egypt. The women are harassed and intimidated by a counter-protest made up of mainly men objecting to the call for a new constitution allowing women to stand for the Egyptian presidency.

Kuwait - Several hundred Kuwaitis gather in front of a government building and call on the prime minister, Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammad al-Sabah, a nephew of the Emir, to resign. Protesters hand out watermelons to MPs heading into parliament.

Syria - Haitham al-Maleh, a prominent Syrian human rights activist and government critic is released from jail under president Bashar al-Assad amnesty for those convicted of minor crimes and prisoners over the age of 70.

Iran - Iranian security forces fire teargas to disperse anti-government protesters as they try to hold a demonstration in central Tehran.

Former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani loses his position as the head of a powerful clerical body charged with choosing or dismissing Iran's supreme leader. This development is a major blow to the reformist movement in Iran.

Mauritania - Mauritania police breaks up youth rally in central square of the capital, Nouakchott. The rally was organised via Facebook, amid calls for political, economic reforms.

March 9, 2011

Libya - Libyan government forces launch new air raids on the eastern oil city of Ras Lanuf, while the western town of Zawiya is engulfed in heavy fighting as Muammar Gaddafi's forces attempted to retake it. Subsequently Libyan state TV reports that Zawiya had

Religious Endowments; Samir Radwan as Minister of Finance; Ibrahim Manna as Minister of Civil Aviation; Atef Abdel Hamid as Minister of Transport; Hussein al-Atfy as Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation; Ayman Farid Abul Hadid as Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation; Amr Ezzat Salama as Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research; Ahmed Gamal Eddin Moussa as Minister of Education; Maged Othman as Minister of Communications and Information Technology; Ashraf Hatem as Minister of Health and Population; Gouda Abdel Khaleq as Minister of Solidarity and Social Justice; and Samir Sayyad as Minister of Industry and Foreign Trade; Mounir Fakhri Abdel Nour as Minister of Tourism; Mohamed al-Guindi as Minister of Justice; Mansour al-Essawi as Minister of the Interior; Nabil al-Arabi as Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ahmed Hassan al-Borai as Minister of Manpower and Immigration; Emad Abu Ghazi as Minister for Culture; and Mohamed Ghorab as Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources.

been "liberated" from the rebels."Security is at about 95%. There are some rats that could be lying in some alleys and inside some flats. We are capturing them one group after the other."

Col Muammar Gaddafi initiates diplomatic offensive by sending four emissaries to Malta, Cairo, Brussels and Portugal. The Maltese government confirms that prime minister Lawrence Gonzi held meeting at the airport in Valetta with the Libya's under-secretary for international cooperation, Mohammed Taher Siyala. Libya's deputy defence minister, Maj Gen Abdul-Rahman bin Ali al-Said al-Zawi, held talks with Egyptian government officials and the Arab League. Portuguese foreign ministry statement said that foreign minister Luis Amado "had an informal meeting in a Lisbon hotel with a Libyan emissary, on the request of the latter, in order to receive information on the situation in Libya."

The Gaddafi regime announces a reward for the capture of the head of the Libyan Interim Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil. Its General Administration for Criminal Investigation is offering 500,000 Libyan dinars (\$410,900 U.S.) "for whoever captures and hands over" the "agent spy" Abdul Jalil, and "another offer of 200,000 Libyan dinars (\$164,300 U.S.) for whoever offers information leading to his actual arrest."

The parliament of Kuwait urges Arab nations to recognise the Libyan Interim Transitional Council as Libya's government.

It is made public that three BBC journalists were detained for 21 hours, beaten and subjected to a "mock execution" by Gaddafi forces after attempting to enter the besieged city of Zawiyah. The men say they witnessed many other detainees who had been tortured and were 'in agony'.

Bahrain - Three parties in Bahrain splinter from the mainstream opposition and call for the creation of a democratic republic. Al-Wafa and Haq, two of the more hardline Shia opposition parties, and the mostly London-based Bahrain Freedom Movement form a "coalition for a Bahraini republic" and call for the peaceful overthrow of the ruling al-Khalifa family.

Morocco - Morocco's King Mohammed VI announces a "comprehensive constitutional reform," which would be drawn up by a committee headed by a constitutional expert. The committee is to consult widely with political parties, youth organisations, intellectuals and others before reporting back in June. A new draft constitution will then be submitted to a nationwide referendum. In a rare live broadcast, the first since thousands of people demonstrated in several cities on 20 February, the king said that the reform would include plans for an independent judiciary, a larger role for political parties, a prime minister

drawn from the majority party and a regionalisation programme to give more powers to local officials.

Egypt - Attackers armed with knives, sticks and machetes clash with pro-democracy activists in Tahrir Square in Cairo. They try to force the activists out of the square.

In Egypt the death toll in Muslim-Christian clashes over the burning of a church rises to 13, with about 140 wounded, the bloodiest clashes in years.

Thousands of Yemenis defiantly demonstrate in Sana'a.

United Arab Emirates - Some 133 UAE prominent academics, activists, lawyers and professionals sign petition addressed to Sheikh Khalifa, the President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, calling for universal suffrage and direct elections of all members of the Federal National Council, the UAE's advisory quasi-parliament. The petition, posted online, cites "rapid regional and international developments that necessitate improving national participation." It also calls for a constitutional amendment that imbues the FNC with broad powers, "which guarantees full legislative and oversight responsibilities".

A Facebook group called "The UAE Revolution" has set March 25 as the date for "a revolution against the era of Sheiks, a revolution against oppression and suppression of freedoms in the U.A.E., a revolution against those who have looted from the people of the U.A.E." It has over 2,700 members but it's not clear how many are Emiratis.

Tunisia - A Tunisian court dissolves the ex-ruling Rally for Constitutional Democracy (RCD) party. Its assets and funds are liquidated.

Saudi Arabia - Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, a nephew of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia questions the need for a ban on women driving. At present in accordance with strict interpretation of Islamic tradition women cannot drive cars and foreign workers serve as their drivers. He suggests that the lifting of the ban on women driving would be a quick first step to reduce the Islamic kingdom's dependence on millions of foreign workers.

March 10, 2011

Libya - France becomes the first country to recognise the Libyan Interim Transitional Council as the country's legitimate government.

Libyan rebels flee the oil port of Ras Lanuf after sustained attacks by forces loyal to Muammar Gaddafi. "Gaddafi is attacking us with planes, tanks, rockets and heavy weapons, we are unarmed civilians and many families and kids were hit," one Libyan tells the BBC.

The Director of National Intelligence (DNI), James Clapper - US President Barack Obama's top intelligence adviser, predicts that in his view Muammar Gaddafi would prevail

in his battle against opposition forces. "I think the [Libyan] regime has more logistical resources in terms of the equipment they have... So I just think from a standpoint of attrition ... that over ... the longer term that the regime will prevail."

Yemen - Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh announces plans to change the constitution to move to a parliamentary system of government. Speaking, beneath a large portrait of himself, to thousands of cheering supporters gathered in a soccer stadium, Saleh said he wanted to form a unity government to help put in place a new political system. "Firstly we will form a new constitution based on the separation of powers. A referendum on this new constitution will be held before the end of this year." The opposition rejects the plan - "these proposals have been overtaken by realities on the ground... "Had the ruling party offered this six months ago, it would have been different. It's too late now."

Saudi Arabia - At least three people are injured after police in the oil-rich city of Qatif in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia fired in the air to disperse protesters. Around 600-800 protesters, all Shia and including women, took to the streets of the city to demand the release of nine Shia prisoners.

After a three-day meeting in Riyadh, foreign ministers from the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), announce a \$20 billion aid package for Bahrain and Oman. The job-generating measure will give \$10 billion to each country to upgrade their housing and infrastructure over 10 years.

In a statement issued after their meeting in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh, foreign ministers from the GCC called on the Arab League to take measures to stop the bloodshed in Libya and to initiate contacts with the National Council formed by the opposition. "When it comes to Libya I think the regime has lost its legitimacy," said the Qatari prime minister and foreign minister, Hamad bin Jasem bin Jaber Al Thani. "We support the no-fly zone. We also support contact with the National Council in Libya. It is time to discuss the situation with them and the [UN] Security Council should shoulder its responsibility."

Jordan - The Grand Mufti of Jordan and six other religious scholars issue a fatwa warning against demonstrations that "cause more harm than good or disturb public order... Demonstrations and sit-ins should not sow the seeds of discord between society members or undermine Jordan's security or ignite social violence or instigate sectarian and regional discord."

March 11, 2011

Libya - Forces loyal to Libyan leader Col Muammar Gaddafi are reported to have made gains against anti-government rebels. Western journalists in the city of Zawiyah, west of Tripoli, confirmed the Gaddafi regime's claims that the city had fallen after days of bombardment. Rebels are reported to have fled from the oil port of Ras Lanuf in the east of the country. Air strikes have been launched against the towns of Uqaylah and Brega.

Yemen - Record number of protesters gathers in several cities in Yemen calling for president Ali Abdullah Saleh to quit and dismissing his offer of reform. Yemenis flooded streets and alleys around Sana'a University in the biggest protest to hit the capital since demonstrations began in January. Estimated 100,000 people stage a sit-in in the capital. Thousands of women participated in these demonstrations. Tens of thousands of protesters also marched in Taiz and Ibb, south of the capital. In the southern port city of Aden, three people were wounded by gunfire and six were overcome by tear gas as police tried to disperse thousands of anti-government marchers. In the central province of Maareb, residents said hundreds of Yemenis demonstrated because they had not been paid for attending Saleh's speech in Sana'a on 10 March. The local newspaper Maareb Press said they been promised 50,000 Yemeni riyals (\$233) and began shouting "the people demand the fall of the regime" when they did not get the money.

Bahrain - Clashes broke out in Bahrain's Sunni Muslim stronghold and home of the al-Khalifa royal family of Riffa, as pro-democracy youths were attacked by rock-throwing pro-government demonstrators. While the mainly Shia Muslim protesters have held nightly rallies at the Pearl Roundabout, and staged demonstrations outside symbolic government buildings across Bahrain's capital, Manama, the clashes in Riffa are the most sensitive yet.

Jordan - Hundreds of Jordanians take to the streets of Amman and other major cities, demanding sweeping political and economic reforms. In Amman small counter protest of around 100 loyalists to King Abdullah is held. Protesters in Jordan have been making their voices heard for nearly two weeks now, but their numbers are slowly declining.

Saudi Arabia - Some 500 protesters demonstrate in the cities of al-Hofuf, al-Ahsa and al-Awamiyah (near Qatif) in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. However, a massive show of force snuffed out a Facebook-based effort to stage unprecedented pro-democracy protests in the capital Riyadh. Security in Riyadh was high-profile and intense, with helicopters hovering overhead and police checks on cars and individuals heading for mosques, where protests were expected after prayers. Rumours were rife in the capital, with anonymous text messages carrying dire warnings of huge fines, loss of nationality and expulsion from the country.

March 12, 2011

Libya - A major new attack by pro-Gaddafi forces is reported near Misrata, thought to be the only significant rebel-held town left in western Libya. In eastern Libya, fresh strikes near Ujala and Brega are reported by Reuters, suggesting that pro-Gaddafi forces were pushing the front line ever further east. The town of Ras Lanuf is lost by rebels.

Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa states during a news conference after a special meeting of the group in Cairo that: "The Arab League has officially requested the U.N. Security Council to impose a no-fly zone against any military action against the Libyan people." The vote for a no-fly zone was opposed by Syria and Algeria.

Yemen- Police in Yemen attack anti-government demonstrators in the centre of the capital, Sana'a, killing up to six people and injuring many more. Reports say hundreds of police moved in, using tear gas, water cannons and live bullets at a protest camp in Tahrir Square. There are also clashes in the southern port city of Mukalla, where a 14-year-old boy is killed by security forces.

Jordan - In Amman some 10,000 Palestinian residents and Bedouin tribesmen stage demonstrations in support of King Abdullah.

Demonstrations take place in the northern Omani town of Ibri (350-km north-west of Muscat). The protests take an employees of the Manpower Ministry hostage.

Algeria - Agence France Presse (AFP) reports that, some 400 anti-riot policemen in central Algiers block around 40 demonstrators who attempted to stage a rally.

March 13, 2011

Libya - Pro-Gaddafi forces advance on rebel-held strongholds in the east of Libya, reportedly recapturing the town of Brega.

Human Rights Watch reports that Libyan security forces controlled by Muammar Gaddafi have launched a wave of arrests and disappearances in Tripoli that has gripped the city with fear. According to Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch, "Gaddafi and his security forces are brutally suppressing all opposition in Tripoli, including peaceful protests, with lethal force, arbitrary arrests, and forced disappearances... Given Libya's record of torture and political killings, we worry deeply about the fate of those taken away."

Yemen - Yemeni police fired live rounds and tear gas at protesters in Sana'a. One person is killed and over 100 wounded.

Bahrain - In Bahrain thousands of anti-government protesters block King Faisal Highway, a four-lane road leading to the financial district of the capital, Manama. The demonstrators drove back police trying to push them from the capital's central square in the most disruptive protests since unrest erupted a month ago. Demonstrators also clash with security forces and government supporters on the campus of the main university in the country.

Oman - In the Omani town of Ibri protesters set the Housing Ministry building and a local sheikh's house on fire which also damaged seven cars. *Gulf News* reports that: "Demonstrations also kept cropping up at different places in Muscat, triggering tail backs that ran a few kilometers. About 30 staff members of the Radisson Blue Hotel marched to the Manpower Ministry in the south MBD area of Ruwi district at around 9am. They raised slogans demanding better pay and treatment for the Omani staff." They were also protests staged by staff at the Muscat Inter-Continental Hotel, Crown Plaza Hotel, the Shangri La Bar Al Jizza Hotel, Petroleum Development Oman, Health Ministry, and Oman International Bank. According to *Gulf News* "protests in private sector firms were spreading like wildfire, with small and big private firms to state-owned companies getting hit by demonstrations by their Omani employees." Private sector workers make about 19 per cent of workers in the Sultanate.

The Oman News Agency (ONA) reports that Sultan Qaboos bin Said has issued a royal decree no.39/2011, granting the Council of Oman "legislative and audit powers as stipulated by the Basic Law of the State and the laws in force." "A technical committee of experts shall be constituted to develop the draft amendment of the Basic Law of the State," and report back in 30 days. The Council of Oman, which previously only offered policy advice, consists of the elected Shura Council and the State Council, made up of members appointed by the sultan himself. The Sultan also issued two royal orders which state: "First: Increase the monthly pensions allocated for families beneficiary of the Social Security Law provisions by 100% with effect from the first of April 2011.

Second: Increase the monthly pension fund for all those covered by the post-service pensions and remunerations law for the Omani employees of the government by a percentage up to 50% of the categories that receive the lowest pension salary. The Civil Service Employee Pension Fund will implement the list regulating these increments."

Morocco - Dozens of people are injured, some of them seriously, in Morocco's biggest city, Casablanca, when police tried to storm the headquarters of a left-wing political

party and cracked down violently on a demonstration for change called for by the February 20 Movement.

Saudi Arabia – More than 200 people stage protests outside the Ministry of the Interior in Riyadh demanding information about prisoners and their immediate release.

March 14, 2011

Libya - The eastern oil town of Brega changed hands several times over the past two days, amid a relentless barrage of air and ground attacks by pro-Gaddafi forces. Ajdabiya, the last major town before the rebel base in Benghazi, comes under heavy aerial attack from pro-Gaddafi forces. In the west, ground forces and tanks begin shelling the town of Zuwara.

Bahrain - Troops from Saudi Arabia and police officers from the United Arab Emirates cross into Bahrain under the aegis of the Gulf Cooperation Council to help quell unrest in the country. They arrive at the request of the Bahrain's government. A convoy of 150 armoured troop carries, ambulances and about 50 other lightly armed vehicles carrying some 1,200 troops enter Bahrain on the 25-km causeway that links the two kingdoms. Later the UAE discloses that it dispatched 500 police officers with the Saudi forces and that other Gulf states would also send troops. The contingent moved towards Riffa, a Sunni area that is home to the royal family and military hospital. The intervention from Bahrain's predominantly Sunni neighbours may deepen the rift between Shia and Sunni Muslims in Bahrain and beyond.

March 15, 2011

Libya - In Libya heavy fighting between government and rebel forces for the oil town of Brega. The town has changed hands several times over recent days. Reports now suggest the rebels are losing control. In the west, government forces appear to have retaken Zuwara and are shelling Misrata city.

Bahrain - King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain declares a three-month state of emergency. At least two people are killed and as many as 200 injured in clashes between anti-government demonstrators and security forces in Manama.

Egypt - Egypt's Interior Minister Mansour al-Issawi dissolves its internal security agency, which had been blamed for decades of human rights abuses. The State Security Investigation Service (SSIS) will be replaced with a new "National Security Force".

Syria - Hundreds of people staged a rare protest in the capital, Damascus, calling for democratic reforms and the release of all political prisoners. A Facebook group, the Syrian revolution against [president] Bashar al-Assad 2011, is said to have called the march.

Oman - Between 400 and 500 private security guards in Oman block the main airport in the capital Muscat in a demonstration to demand higher pay.

Saudi Arabia - About 1000 people stage protests in Qatif calling for the Peninsula Shield Force to be withdrawn from Bahrain. Protests also take place in the town of al-Awamiyah.

Palestinian Authority - Thousands of people demonstrate across the Palestinian territories, calling for political unity between their rival governments.

March 16, 2011

Libya - Libyan government soldiers surround the town of Ajdabiya - the last town before the main rebel-held city of Benghazi. Tanks are also pounding the last rebel-controlled city in the west, Misrata.

Bahrain - At dawn security forces with tanks overrun the Pearl Roundabout in the centre of Bahrain's capital Manama where anti-government protesters have been camped for weeks. At least three civilians were reportedly killed after police fired on mainly Shia protesters. Officials said three police also died. Troops take over the main Manama hospital and smaller health centres treating the wounded. Officials imposed a curfew and banned protests.

Bahrain's health minister resigns in protest against the government's use of force. BBC's Caroline Hawley in Manama reports that Shia judges have resigned en masse.

The largest Shia opposition group in Bahrain, Wefaq, urges followers to avoid confrontation with authorities.

Iran recalls its ambassador to Bahrain, Mehdi Agha-Jafari, to protest the crackdown, state-run Mehr news agency reports.

Bahrain's stock market announces its closure until further notice. Two of Bahrain's main banks - Standard Chartered and HSBC Holdings close all their branches.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says that Gulf states were on the "wrong track" in sending in troops to Bahrain. "We find what's happening in Bahrain alarming. We think that there is no security answer to the aspirations and demands of the demonstrators."

Syria - Protests continue in Damascus. About 150 people had gathered near the interior ministry, demanding the release of political prisoners. At least 35 people are arrested

after they defy a ban on demonstrations and protested in the Syrian capital. Among those arrested are a 69-year-old Damascus university philosophy professor and author Tayeb Tizini, and leading human rights activist Suhair Atassi.

Yemen - Dozens of people are injured in Yemen as police tried to break up an anti-government demonstration in the western city of al-Hudaida. Police opened fire and used tear gas after pro-government loyalists attacked protesters with batons and rocks.

Saudi Arabia - Hundreds of protesters take to the streets of Qatif in support of protestors in Bahrain. They also demand the release of Shia prisoners in Saudi Arabia and withdrawal of Peninsula Shield force from Bahrain.

March 17, 2011

Bahrain - In Bahrain riot police fire tear gas to disperse small protests in the Shia village of Daih, west of the capital, which is a key opposition area. Roads to the nearby villages of Sanabis and Jidhafs are blocked by military vehicles.

Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights states that reports of a military takeover of hospitals in Bahrain was a blatant violation of international law. She writes: "There are reports of arbitrary arrests, killings, beatings of protesters and of medical personnel, and of the takeover of hospitals and medical centres by various security forces... This is shocking and illegal conduct."

Bahraini security forces arrest opposition six leaders. According to a military statement read out on state television "leaders of the civil strife" had been arrested for communicating with foreign countries and calling for the fall of the regime. Those arrested include: Hassan Mushaima, and Abdeljalil al-Singace from the Shiite Haq movement, Ebrahim Sharif, head of the opposition National Democratic Action Society, and Shia activist Abdel Wahhab Huseein and Ibrahim Sharif, who leads a secularists Sunni party.

Sheikh Ali Salman, the leader of Wefaq, Bahrain's largest opposition group calls on King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to withdraw his forces from the Gulf Arab state. He also calls for a U.N. investigation into Bahrain's government crackdown on protests.

Libya - Pro-Gaddafi forces launch their first air attacks on Benghazi, targeting the airport at Benina.

Col Gaddafi's forces attacked the rebel-held town of Ajdabiya, a key objective before launching a ground assault on Benghazi, but rebels deployed tanks, artillery and a helicopter to repel the assault.

Libyan state television reports that the city of Misrata was almost entirely under government control, but rebels and residents in the city deny this.

Saudi Arabia - According to AFP hundreds of Saudi Shiites rally late on 17 March in the east of the kingdom to show solidarity with their fellow Shiites at the centre of protests in Bahrain. "Free Bahrain! Peninsula Shield out!" chanted the demonstrators, taking up the slogans of Bahraini Shiite pro-democracy demonstrators. Witnesses report that Saudi security forces fired tear gas at demonstrators in the city of Qateef where shots also rang out. Marches were also held in the mainly Shiite Eastern Province of Tarut, Safwa and al-Awamiyah.

Yemen - Yemeni security forces and government loyalists clash with opposition activists in Sana'a and Taiz, using guns, tear gas and batons against the protesters. At least 85 people are reported wounded.

March 18, 2011

Libya - UN Security Council passes Resolution 1973 authorizing "all necessary measures" to protect civilians and "civilian populated areas under threat of attack" in Libya, including Benghazi, from forces loyal to Gaddafi. The resolution establishes a no-fly ban "on all flights" "in order to help protect civilians" and "authorises member states... to take all necessary measures to enforce compliance with the ban on flights..." Ten of the council's 15 member states voted for the resolution with Russia, China, Germany, India and Brazil abstaining.

President Barack Obama states that: "All attacks against civilians must stop... Gaddafi must stop his troops from advancing on Benghazi, pull them back from Ajdabiya, Misrata and Zawiyah, and establish water, electricity and gas supplies to all areas. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach the people of Libya ... Let me be clear, these terms are not negotiable... If Gaddafi does not comply ... the resolution will be enforced through military action."

Saudi Arabia - King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, in a rare television address, warns that threats to the nation's security and stability will not be tolerated. After his speech, state television announced a package of new welfare benefits that include: A monthly minimum wage of 3,000 riyals (\$800) and two months' extra pay for government workers; extra grants for university students; a monthly stipend of about \$260 for the unemployed; 500,000 housing units for low-income earners; \$4.3bn spending on medical facilities. State TV also announced that the king had ordered the creation of 60,000 new jobs within the security

forces. The package is worth billions of dollars. He also ordered the setting up of a commission to fight corruption.

Support for Shiites in Bahrain continues. There are reports of peaceful protests of Shiites in several towns of the Eastern Province including: Qatif, al-Awamiyah, Safwa City and al-Rabeeya.

Bahrain - In Bahrain the army demolishes the Pearl monument and removes the grass at the roundabout occupied by opposition protesters for much of the past month that has come to symbolise their hopes for democratic reforms.

Yemen - In Yemen government forces attacked protesters in Sana'a, after Friday prayers, in the most violent crackdown in two months of unrest. Forty-six people are killed and hundreds injured as police and pro-regime gunmen shot at a crowd of tens of thousands of protesters in the capital's Taghyeer Square and pro-government snipers opened fire from rooftops. The BBC quotes statement from a field hospital: "a total of 617 people were injured on Friday, 270 with gunshot wounds and 347 'poisoned by gas'. Tear gas was fired by security forces during the day."

President Barack Obama condemns the violence in Yemen and demands that those responsible "must be held accountable".

Yemeni opposition calls for an international investigation. Reuters is quoting Yassin Noman, rotating president of Yemen's umbrella opposition group, saying there was "no longer any possibility of mutual understanding" between the protesters and president Saleh.

Thousands of people demonstrated in other cities, including Aden, Taiz and Mahweed.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen announces state of emergency and imposes curfew on "armed men in all cities... Security forces and armed forces will take responsibilities to maintain public security".

Nabil al-Faqih, Yemen's Tourism Minister, resigns in protest. The head of the ruling party's foreign affairs committee also quits.

Syria - Syrian security forces kill four protesters (Akram al-Jawabra, Hussam Abdelwali Ayash, Ayham al-Harri and a member of the Abu Aoun family) in the old quarter of the southern city of Daraa in the most violent response to protests against Syria's ruling elite since revolts swept through the Arab world. According to eyewitnesses "Hundreds of protesters were wounded and many were snatched by the security force from the hospital where they had been taken and removed to an unknown location." The demonstrators were

taking part in a peaceful protest demanding political freedoms and an end to corruption in Syria, which has been ruled under emergency laws by president Bashar al-Assad's Baath Party for nearly half a century. Daraa is a centre of tribes belonging to Syria's Sunni Muslim majority, many of whom resent the power and wealth amassed by the elite of the Alawite minority to which Assad belongs. Smaller protests took place in the north-eastern city of Deir ez-Zor, the central city of Homs and the coastal town of Baniyas, home to one of Syria's two oil refineries. A crowd briefly chanted slogans for freedom inside the Umayyad Mosque in Old Damascus before security forces closed in on them.

The Syrian state news agency Sana also reported demonstrations in the town of Baniyas. Al Jazeera television reported protests in the cities of Tartus and Aleppo.

Jordan – Some 1,500 Jordanians gather under a heavy police presence to peacefully demand change ahead of first-ever meeting of a constitutional reform committee. The 53-member committee was organised by the government and asked to draft a new electoral law and amend a law on political parties within a three-month period. Its formation came after several weeks of protests across the country. The committee, headed by senate president Taher Masri and including leaders of political parties, journalists, government officials and activists, also includes three Islamist figures. The Brotherhood, Jordan's most powerful opposition group, refuse to participate in the newly established national dialogue committee unless constitutional amendments were on the agenda that would bring about a parliamentary government.

Mauritania - Hundreds of Mauritanian youths holding a protest rally in the country's capital, Nouakchott. The protest is organised by the February 25th Youth Coordination group. Their list of 28-demand includes calls for the dismissal of the incumbent government led by Moulaye Ould Mohamed Laghdaf and the formation of a national coalition government consisting of technocrats with "broad powers to implement a reform programme that responds to the aspirations of all Mauritians". They also request raise in the minimum wage, and the employment of indigenous labour rather than foreign workers.

March 19, 2011

Libya - Muammar Gaddafi's forces attempt to push into the rebel-held city of Benghazi defying world demands for an immediate ceasefire and forcing rebels to retreat. Reports from the city say that government tanks and artillery had bombarded the city and there was fighting around the university.

At 12:30 Summit for the Support of the Libyan People – an emergency international summit of world leaders opens at the Elysee Palace, in Paris. The meeting at the invitation of the French president Nicolas Sarkozy is also attended by U.N Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon; Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Mousa; President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy; the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton; the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkle; US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton; the prime ministers of: Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani; U.K., David Cameron; Greece, George Papandreou; Canada, Stephen Harper; Netherlands, Mark Rutte; Belgium, Yves Leterme; Poland, Donald Tusk; Italy, Silvio Berlusconi; Denmark, Lars Lokke Rasmussen; Spain, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero; Norway, Jens Stoltenberg; the foreign ministers of: Iraq, Hoghyar Zebari; UAE, Sheik Abdullah Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan; Jordan, Nasser Judeh; and Morocco Taieb Fassi Fihri. Delegation of the African Union failed to attend the summit. The summit issues the following statement:

Paris Summit for the Support to the Libyan People:

Since Feb. 15 this year, the Libyan people have been peacefully expressing the rejection of their leaders and their aspiration for change. In the face of these legitimate requests coming from all over the country, the Libyan regime has carried out a growing brutal crackdown, using weapons of war against his own people and perpetrating against them grave and massive violations of humanitarian law.

Despite the demands which the Security Council expressed in UNSCR 1970 on Feb. 26, despite the condemnations of the Arab League, African Union, Organization of the Islamic Conference's Secretary-General and European Union, as well as very many governments in the world, the Libyan regime has stepped up its violence in order to impose by force its will on that of its people.

This situation is intolerable.

We express our satisfaction after the adoption of UNSC 1973 which, inter alia, demands an immediate and complete ceasefire, authorises the taking of all necessary measures to protect civilians against attacks and establishes a no-fly zone over Libya. Finally, it strengthened and clarified the arms embargo vis-a-vis the Libyan regime and the rules applicable to the Libyan asset freeze, in particular on the National Oil Company, and travel restrictions against the Gaddafi's regime.

While contributing in differentiated way to the implementation of UNSCR 1973, we are determined to act collectively and resolutely to give full effect to these decisions.

Muammar Gaddafi and those executing his orders must immediately end the acts of violence carried out against civilians, to withdraw from all areas they have entered by force, return to their compounds, and allow full humanitarian access. We reiterate that the Security Council took the view that Libyan regime's forces actions may amount to crimes against humanity and that, to this end, it has referred the matter to the International Criminal Court.

We are determined to take all necessary action, including military, consistent with UNSCR 1973, to ensure compliance with all its requirements.

We assure the Libyan people of our determination to be at their side to help them realise their aspirations and build their future and institutions within a democratic framework.

We recall that UN Security Council resolution 1973 does not allow for any occupation of, or attempt to occupy the Libyan territory.

We pay tribute to the courageous action of the Libyan National Transition Council (NTC) and all the Libyans in positions of responsibility who have courageously disassociated themselves from the Libyan regime and given the NTC their support.

Our commitment is for the long term: we will not let Colonel Gaddafi and his regime go on defying the will of the international community and scorning that of his people. We will continue our aid to the Libyans so that they can rebuild their country, fully respecting Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

At the end of the two hour summit president Nicolas Sarkozy announces that French airplanes are already in action over Libya. The international community was intervening to stop the "murderous madness" of Col Gaddafi, he states. "In Libya, the civilian population, which is demanding nothing more than the right to choose their own destiny, is in mortal danger... It is our duty to respond to their anguished appeal." According to French government spokesman, 20 French planes are involved in the Libya operation. At 16:45 spokesman for the French military confirms French aircraft destroyed a number of military vehicles in first attack.

British Prime Minister David Cameron comments after the summit: "The time for action has come. We cannot allow the slaughter of civilians to continue. What is absolutely clear today is that Colonel Gaddafi has broken his word, he has broken confidence and continues to slaughter his own civilians."

At 19:49 British Prime Minister, David Cameron, announces outside No 10 Downing Street, that British forces are in action over Libya. It was "necessary, legal and right" he says.

At 20:15 president Barack Obama tells reporters that the US has begun "limited military" action in Libya.

Col Gaddafi makes a brief speech on the radio promising retaliation against the West and announcing that: "Arms depots are now open and the masses are being equipped with all sorts of weapons in defence of Libya's independence, unity and honour."

By the end of the day the US and the UK have fired more than 112 missiles on 20 integrated air-defence systems and other military facilities, while French planes struck pro-Gaddafi forces attacking rebel-held Benghazi. Cruise missiles hit air-defence sites in the capital, Tripoli, and Misrata.

Agence France Presse (AFP) reports that the United Arab Emirates will be contributing 24 fighter jets (Mirage 2000-9s and F-16s) and Qatar between four and six Mirage 2000-5s to coalition's action over Libya.

Russia and China expresses "regrets" of the coalition's military action in Libya.

Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez condemns military strikes against Libya accusing the United States and its European allies of attacking the country to size its oil. Similar views are expressed by Fidel Castro and the president of Bolivia, Evo Morales.

Egypt - Voting in a landmark referendum on constitutional amendments takes place in Egypt. If approved the changes could pave the way for a return to civilian rule and parliamentary and presidential elections within six months.

Hundreds of Islamists hurl stones and shoes at Mohamed ElBaradei, Nobel Peace laureate and a secular contender for Egypt's presidency, as he tries to vote in a referendum on constitutional amendments.

Syria - Syrian security forces fired tear gas in the southern city of Daraa to disperse crowds at the funeral of two people killed in anti-government protests on 18 March. Thousands have gathered for the funeral and began chanting anti-government slogans.

Yemen - Yemeni police have fired bullets and tear gas at anti-government protesters in the southern city of Aden, injuring at least seven people.

Yemen's Human Rights minister Huda al-Baan announces her resignation in protest at previous day's bloodbath. The undersecretary at her ministry, Ali Taysir, also steps down. Mohamed Saleh Qara'a and Nasr Taha Mustafa, two prominent members of Yemen's ruling party also resign on in protest against the violence.

Algeria - In Algiers security forces swamp the capital, hampering two rallies, one called by youths through the social networking website Facebook, due outside the main post office, and another at the nearby May 1 Square, called by the National Co-ordination for Change and Democracy (CNDC). The planned protest was the seventh attempt since January

by the CNDC to stage a weekly demonstration, along the lines of pro-democracy protests sweeping the Arab world, in defiance of a ban on protests in the capital imposed in 2001.

Bahrain - Bahrain's authorities cut back by four hours a 12-hour curfew that had been imposed on large areas of the capital Manama. The curfew now runs from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. from the Seef Mall area in Manama, through the Pearl roundabout and the financial district to the diplomatic area.

March 20, 2011

Libya - Sustained bursts of anti-aircraft gunfire rattles the Libyan capital Tripoli in the early hours of the morning.

Agence France Presse (AFP) reports that bombs have already been dropped earlier in the morning near Bab al-Aziziyah, Gaddafi's Tripoli headquarters, prompting barrages of anti-aircraft fire from Libyan forces that lasted about 40 minutes.

India, which abstained on the vote over the UN resolution, expresses regret over the air strikes in Libya. In a statement from the foreign ministry it said: "The measures adopted should mitigate and not exacerbate an already difficult situation for the people of Libya."

Libyan official news agency Jana reports that Libya's government has begun distributing arms to more than one million people and will complete the operation within hours. It quotes the defence ministry as saying they "expected the operation to end in the next hours to arm more than a million men and women."

Pope Benedict XVI, leader of the world's 1 billion Catholics, appeals to political and military leaders "to ensure the safety of Libyan citizens and guarantee access to humanitarian aid".

Late at night missiles fired by the coalition forces target and destroy Gaddafi's command centre inside the Bab al-Aziziya army barracks in Tripoli.

Bahrain - In Bahrain commercial life begins to return to normal with the reopening of shops and roads are busy again. Masked soldiers still guard the entrances to the Pearl Roundabout, focal point of protests. The main opposition groups ease conditions for talks to end the crisis. These include the freeing of all detainees, ending of security forces crackdown and the departure of Gulf Arab troops. This is a retreat from much more ambitious conditions for talks it set last week, including the creation of a new government not dominated by royals and the establishment of a special elected council to redraft Bahrain's constitution.

Syria - Syrian security forces open fire and use tear gas against a crowd of ten thousand demonstrators in Daraa, a main city in the strategic Hauran plateau. At least one

protester (Raed al-Kerad) was killed and over one hundred people injured in the clashes. According to various reports the protesters set fire to several buildings, including the local courthouse and the headquarters of the ruling Baath Party which also housed the the Syriatel mobile network owned by Rami Makhlouf, the business-tycoon cousin of the president, whose wealth stirs much comment and resentment. The local Omar mosque, to which victims are being taken, has become a "field hospital." The protest took place as a government delegation arrived to pay condolences for four victims killed by security forces in demonstrations on 18 March. The government sought to appease popular discontent by promising to release 15 children whose arrest helped fuel the protests. The children had written pro-democracy slogans after being inspired by revolts in Tunisia and Egypt. The demonstration marks the third day of protests in Daraa.

Yemen - Tens of thousands of Yemeni protesters gather in the capital, Sana'a, for funerals and a day of mourning following violent clashes over the weekend that left at least 44 dead. Witnesses said the gathering at the funerals was the largest since an opposition movement began in Yemen late January. Demonstrations were also reported in several other regions.

Yemen's ambassador to the United Nations Abdullah Alsaedi resigns in protest over the violence, making him the third government official to step down from his post since 18 March.

Yemen News Agency SABA report in the evening that the Presidential Decree No. 14 for 2011 was issued on Sunday which stipulates the dismissal of the government of prime minister Ali Mujawar. Despite firing his government, president Saleh has asked the cabinet to remain in place until a new one could be appointed.

Egypt - Mohammed Ahmed Attiyah, the Head of Egypt's Supreme Judiciary Committee announces the result of a referendum on constitutional amendments. In total 18,537,954 Egyptians, out of some 45 million eligible voters took part, giving a turnout of 41.2%. There number of invalid votes was 171,190. Some 14,5 million, 77.5%, voted in favour of the proposed changes, while 4 million cast their votes against.

Morocco - Thousands of Moroccans demonstrate in Casablanca, Rabat and other cities calling for more democracy and social justice despite recent promises by King Mohammed VI of deep political reform. According to the protest organisers, the February 20 Movement, some 10,000, marched in Casablanca, some calling for the king's powers to be reduced in the north African country. Estimated 4,000, including many Islamists and veiled

women, rallied in the capital Rabat. The February 20 Movement used Facebook to organise the protests. There were no reports of any incidents by the end of the morning and police kept a low profile. The call for demonstrations was backed by the youth wing of the Justice and Charity movement, regarded as Morocco's main Islamist movement, and by several human rights bodies and non-governmental organisations.⁵

Oman - In Oman about 200 workers at the Muscat and Sohar refineries staged demonstrations demanding higher wages.

Saudi Arabia - Dozens of Saudi men and women protest outside the Interior Ministry in Riyadh demanding the release of prisoners held without trial for years. Large numbers of riot police guard the ministry, and witnesses say a number of protesters were arrested after trying to go into the building. It is the third protest this month by families and activists demanding information on the fate of people held without trial for years on security and terrorism charges.

Hundreds of people demonstrate in Qatif against the presence of the Peninsula Shield Force in Bahrain.

March 21, 2011

Libya - Forces loyal to Muammar Gaddafi fired on a crowd of unarmed people in the rebel-held city of Misrata on Monday and are using civilians as human shields against air strikes by a Western coalition.

The Arab League's Secretary General Amr Moussa - who had criticised the coalition bombarding Libya - makes the following statement after a meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and talks with British Prime Minister David Cameron: "We are committed to UN Security Council Resolution 1973, we have no objection to this decision, particularly as it does not call for an invasion of Libyan territory."

⁵ According to *The National* the demonstrators are also angry that an investment fund run by King Mohammed VI and his advisers, known as the "Makhzen" [a Moroccan term that means the "warehouse" and refers to the royal advisers, business leaders and top bureaucrats who hold power behind the scenes] that dominate the economy, with stakes in banking, insurance, steel, building materials, dairy produce, sugar and cooking-oil companies. SNI, with assets worth at least \$2 billion is controlled by the king and managed by Mohamed Mounir al Majidi, the monarch's private secretary, who has business interests of his own. The 47-year-old king holds stakes in banking, insurance, dairy, sugar and cooking-oil companies; his advisers are involved in ventures from consulting to advertising. According to the website of Bourse de Casablanca, the country's main stock market, SNI combined owns 48.3 per cent of Attijariwafa Bank, the country's largest publicly traded bank; 79 per cent of Wafa Assurance, the largest traded insurer; 63.4 per cent of Centrale Laitiere, its largest dairy; 75.8 per cent of Lesieur Cristal, its largest maker of cooking oils; and 63.5 per cent of Cosumar, the largest sugar refiner. It controls 65 per cent of the steelmaker Sonasid through a joint venture with ArcelorMittal set up in 2006. Lafarge Maroc, the country's largest producer of building materials, is in a 50-50 venture with the Paris-based Lafarge.

Abdel Rahman bin Hamad Al Attiyah, the Secretary General of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council, two members of which are involved in the allied coalition against Libya, states that the action in Libya doesn't constitute "intervention." "What is happening now is not intervention, it is protecting the people from bloodshed..." "These operations are to stop bloodshed in Libya." Asked if GCC members were militarily involved in the allied air strikes on Libya, he said: "Qatar and the U.A.E. are participating in the coalition" as per the UN resolution.

F-15E Strike Eagle jet conducting a mission on the night of 21 March crashes outside Benghazi, apparently from a malfunction. The two pilots are safely ejected.

Yemen - Protests intensified dramatically today across Yemen as tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the central squares of towns and cities to demand the resignation of president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Key military and political figures deserted the president, although the defense minister insisted the military would remain loyal to him.

Top Yemeni tribal leader Sheikh Sadiq Al-Ahmar, leader of the Hashid tribe, calls for the departure from President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The Hashid tribe is considered Yemen's most powerful tribal and includes nine clans, among them Sanhan, long a bulwark of Saleh's regime. "I announce in the name of all the members of my tribe that I am joining the revolution," Al-Ahmar said.

General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, head of the first armoured division and long-time close associate of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, announces he was supporting the protesters and that he has deployed troops in the capital to protect them.⁶ The general said in a statement broadcast by Al Jazeera television. "According to what I'm feeling, and according to the feelings of my partner commanders and soldiers... I announce our support and our peaceful backing to the youth revolution. We are going to fulfil our duties in preserving security and stability." Following his statement dozens of officers of various ranks lined up in central Sana'a to pledge their allegiance to the revolution. Also Mohammed Ali Muhssein, commander of the eastern region, abandons the regime.

⁶ A 2005 US diplomatic cable published by Wikileaks said: "Ali Mohsen would likely face domestic as well as international opposition if he sought the presidency... Yemenis generally view him as cynical and self-interested." Then US ambassador Thomas Krajeski wrote that Mohsen was "a major beneficiary of diesel smuggling in recent years (and) also appears to have amassed a fortune in the smuggling of arms, food staples, and consumer products."

Now the Yemeni crisis has escalated into a fight for power between two of Yemen's most powerful families: Saleh's and the Al-Ahmar family.

Yemen's ambassadors to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Algeria and Spain defect, joining scores of government officials, top security and army officers who join the protesters and support their demands for peaceful transition.

Tanks are deployed in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, apparently to defend key points including the presidential palace, defence ministry and central bank.

Syria - Thousands of protesters gather in the Syrian town of Daraa for the funeral of 23-year-old Raed al-Kerad – the fifth person killed in the city since the arrest began on 18 March. They shouted “God, Syria, freedom”. An 11-year-old boy dies after inhaling tear gas.

Protests are also reported in the town of Jassem, an agricultural town 30 km west of Daraa.

Bahrain - King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain states that a "foreign plot" against his country has been foiled with the help of Gulf Arab forces. He thanked troops brought in from neighbouring countries to help end increasing unrest after weeks of protests.

Kuwaiti navy vessels with a number of ground forces on board dock off the Bahraini coasts, as part of the Joint Peninsula Shield troops deployed in the kingdom.

March 22, 2011

Libya - Renewed allied air strikes over Libya overnight. Coalition cruise missiles attack the Bousseta naval base.

There are reports of continued fighting between pro-Gaddafi forces and anti-Gaddafi inhabitants in the cities of Ajdabiya, Misrata, Zintan, near the Tunisian border, and in the town of Yafran, south-west of Tripoli.

The allied coalition's Operation Odyssey Dawn in Libya is joined by Romania which agrees to provide a frigate and 207 naval troops for three months to enforce a UN arms embargo on Libya.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud at a meeting with British Prime Minister David Cameron in London expresses strong support for the aims of the UNSCR 1973 resolution on Libya, “and the steps being taken by the international community to enforce it.”

Bursts of anti-aircraft fire across Tripoli heralded the start of an apparent fourth night of attacks shortly after 20:15 local time.

Yemen - In Yemen two soldiers reportedly died in clashes between the army and the elite Republican Guard in the south-eastern city of Mukalla.

Demonstrators at Taghyeer Square in Sana'a resumed calls for an immediate end to Saleh's three-decade rule. "Leave, leave!" thousands chanted.

In an address on state television president Saleh told defecting generals that they risk dragging the country into a "bloody civil war," and signaled his terms for leaving office. The president is "ready to leave power by the end of the year after a new government based on parliamentary election is formed," his press secretary, Ahmed al-Sufi, said.

Syria - Hundreds of people march in four southern Syrian towns, Daraa, Nawa, Inkhil and Jasim demanding freedom, the fifth straight day of protests against Syria's ruling elite. There are reports of demonstrations in rural areas around Damascus. Faisal Kalthoum, governor of Daraa, is dismissed and the local head of political security transferred.

Jordan - King Abdullah of Jordan sends a letter to prime Minister Marouf Bakhit directing him to expedite reform plans and setting deadlines for some aspects of the process. The King singles out corruption, political reform, independence of universities, press freedom, economic reform, social justice, independence of the judiciary and equality among citizens as the major issues that need immediate attention and swift action to address. He tells the prime minister that he would not accept groundless excuses for delays in implementing the directives, and urged all Jordanians to work as one team "and not to waste the chance of moving forward towards a better future".⁷

Bahrain - Bahia al-Aradi, the first woman killed after Bahraini government crackdown against the opposition a week earlier, is buried. The protesters shout "Death, death to Al-Khalifa". When Shiites started rallying in February they were asking King Hamad for rights, jobs and Cabinet changes, now demand his overthrow.

Oman – The Omani army clears roadblocks erected by people protesting over private sector pay at two roundabouts in the industrial city of Sohar. "The military asked us to protest

⁷ Highlights from King Abdullah's letter to prime minister Marouf Bakhit

- ⤴ Elimination of corruption and suing the corrupt in transparent measures that give the public access to results of probes
- ⤴ Issuing monthly report on work of Anti-Corruption Commission
- ⤴ Completing all laws governing political action on time
- ⤴ Ending interference in student unions and freedom of political beliefs at universities
- ⤴ Drafting a strategy that ensures professional, freedom and responsible performance of all outlets, within two months
- ⤴ Supporting artists, writers and creative Jordanians
- ⤴ Taking practical steps within three months to revive the economy and create jobs
- ⤴ Ensuring social justice through fair distribution of development gains
- ⤴ Taking measures within one month to prepare the environment to attract foreign investments, especially from Arab countries
- ⤴ Proceeding with policies aimed to guarantee judicial independence

peacefully and to not block the road or damage properties,” said one of several dozen protesters who had moved to the side of a main highway.

Saudi Arabia – The Ministry of Municipal and Rural affairs announces that men-only municipal elections to elect half the members of local councils would be held on 22 September 2011.

March 23, 2011

Libya - Rear Admiral Gerard Hueber, US chief of staff for the Libya mission reports that in the last 24 hours allied aircraft had flown 175 sorties, of these 113 flights were by US aircrafts.

The commander of British aircraft operating over Libya, Air Vice Marshal Greg Bagwell says, Gaddafi's air force "no longer exists as a fighting force..." The allies can now operate "with near impunity" over the skies of Libya.

Ships from NATO nations begin patrolling off the Libyan coast to enforce a UN arms embargo against Col Gaddafi's regime. Six vessels took part in the first day of patrols.

Syria - At least six people are killed after security forces open fire on people camping outside the Omari mosque in the centre of the Syrian town of Daraa. The BBC publishes an account by witnesses who describe how shortly after midnight the power supply and telephone lines to the Old City area in Daraa, where the mosque is located, were cut and police released tear gas and fired live ammunition at protesters camping around the Omari mosque. Ali Ghassab al-Mahamid, a doctor who had gone to help victims of the violence, was killed. Six more bodies were found later in the day. Heavy shooting rattled Daraa throughout the day. Police shot another three people protesting in the city center after dusk. The total death toll since the start of protests now stands at 22. As the casualties mounted, people from the nearby villages of Inkhil, Jasim, Khirbet Ghazaleh and al-Harrah tried to march on Daraa in the evening but security forces opened fire as they approached.

Yemen - Yemen's parliament approves a sweeping set of emergency laws giving broader powers of arrest and censorship to the president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, despite growing calls from opponents demanding he quit to make way for a military-backed democratic transition. The emergency law, last evoked during Yemen's 1994 civil war, suspends the constitution, allows for greater media censorship, bans street protests and gives security agencies arbitrary powers to arrest and detain suspects without judicial process. Only 161 of the 301 members of parliament attended the vote, with those present approving the 30-day emergency law through a chaotic show of hands.

Opposition MPs, along with dozens of members of Saleh's General People's Congress, boycotted the session, rejecting its "unconstitutional" measures. The approval of the emergency laws came as talks between Saudi Arabia and Major General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, a top Yemeni commander who abandoned the president on 21 March failed to yield a clear transition of power.

Algeria - Police in the Oued Koriche suburb of Algiers use tear gas to disperse a crowd of young men who threw stones and petrol bombs to try to stop bulldozers demolishing dozens of illegally built homes. The estate, which has a population of 5,000, is near Bab el Oued, home to the protest movement in Algeria.

Oman - Oman's biggest manufacturing companies, at the Rusayl Industrial Estate, 60 km north of Muscat, agree to workers' demands by increasing their pay and benefits. Workers who earn less than 500 rials a month will get a salary increase of 50 rials, while those paid more than 500 rials will get a 30-rial rise. The employers also agreed to provide medical insurance to all employees and to allow a two-day weekend. The agreement comes after workers on the industrial estate held a strike, stopping production at more than 300 manufacturing units.

Protesters set up a tent camp at a government complex in Muscat, saying they will not leave until several ministers they accuse of corruption leave. Hundreds of demonstrators demanded the ouster of the justice, housing and labour ministers and the attorney general.

Jordan - Some 500 mostly young Jordanians set up a protest camp in a main square in the capital to press demands for the ouster of the prime minister and wider public freedoms. The group which includes left-wing activists, Islamists and political independents, call themselves the March 24 Movement. The group, largely mobilised through Facebook and other internet networking websites, claims that promised reforms have not been pushed through and have called on King Abdullah II to intervene and fast-track political change.

King Abdullah's letter sent the previous day to prime minister Marouf Bakhit is published by the Jordanian media.

Egypt - Egypt's stock exchange re-opens after 38 day of closure and the main index tumbles 9.93 percent.

March 24, 2011

Libya - Allied air strikes hit targets in Libya during night.

A French warplane fires an air-to-ground missile at a Libyan military plane and destroys it just after it landed at Misrata air force base.

Nearly 12 hours of allied air strikes finally brake the Libyan regime's five-day bloody assault on the key rebel-held town of Misrata. Residents said the aerial bombardment destroyed tanks and artillery and sent many of Muammar Gaddafi's forces fleeing from Misrata, ending a siege and attack by the regime that cost nearly 100 lives from random shelling, snipers and bitter street fighting.

Syria - Agence France Presse reports that around 20,000 people have gathered in the Syrian town of Daraa for the burial of victims shot dead yesterday.

Syrian president's spokeswoman, Buthaina Shaaban, states that the Syrian government will consider lifting a state of emergency in place since 1963. It will also prepare new laws for political parties, media and respond to "legitimate demands". The concessions are announced ahead of planned demonstrations tomorrow.

Buthaina Shaaban also announces a 30 per cent salary increase for all government employees.

Yemen - Associated Press reports that presidential guards loyal to president Ali Abdullah Saleh clashed in the town of Mukalla with army units backing opposition groups.

British government urges all British citizens to leave Yemen "without delay" and reduces the British embassy in Sana'a to a core staff. Contingency plans are in place to evacuate British nationals.

March 25, 2011

Syria - Funerals take place in the Syrian city of Daraa, for some of the 25 protesters shot dead by security forces on 23 March. Police start shooting and use tear gas to disperse a crowd of thousands after people lit a fire under a statue of late president Hafez al-Assad, the father of Syria's current president, Bashar al-Assad. Reports say that more than 10 were killed when troops fired on people coming towards Daraa from nearby regions to support the people inside the city.

Demonstrations are also reported in the city of Latakia, where one person is reported killed.

In the capital, Damascus hundreds marched on King Faisal Street chanting: "Peaceful, Peaceful, God, Syria, Freedom". The protest is broken up by security forces and many people are arrested. Another protest reported to the BBC by an eyewitness took place around al-Rifai near Qasar Sousah Square. There are protests in various suburbs of Damascus.

In the town of Hama, in the central Syria, where the elder Assad put down an Islamist revolt in 1982 at a cost of many thousands of lives, residents said people streamed through the streets after weekly prayers chanting "Freedom is ringing out!" - a slogan heard during recent demonstrations in other parts of the Arab world.

In Al-Tall, near Damascus, about 1,000 people rallied to show their support for the Darra protesters and chanted slogans denouncing members of the ruling Asad family calling relatives of the president "thieves."

Al Jazeera TV reports that security forces had killed 20 people in the town of Sanamein.

Syrian authorities release 260 prisoners, mostly Islamists, from Saydnaya jail. Most of those released have completed at least three-quarters of their sentences and are entitled to be freed.

Some 4,000 people demonstrate in the town of Douma on the outskirts of Damascus when, around midnight electricity was cut and the protesters came under attack.

According to a report issued by Amnesty International, 55 people have been killed in Syria since protests began.

Yemen - Tens of thousands rallied in fresh demonstrations in Yemen to renew their demands for the resignation of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the country's increasingly isolated president. Protesters stage what they called a "Day of Departure" demonstration. Tens of thousands of protesters thronged the main square near Sanaa University where they have been camped since 21 February.

Saudi Arabia - Hundreds of Saudi Shiites staged a protest in two villages close to the main Shiite center of Qatif shortly after midday and afternoon prayers. Demonstrators called for political freedoms and an end to what they call sectarian discrimination against Saudi Arabia's Shiite Muslim majority by the absolute Sunni monarchy.

Bahrain - Small protests take place in two Shiite villages in Bahrain despite a ban under martial law imposed last week. A few hundred protesters managed a short rally in the Shiite village of Diraz, shouting "down with the regime" as women swathed in black waved Bahraini flags and held up copies of the Quran. But they fled when around 100 riot police fired tear gas and tried to chase them down. In the village of al-Dair, police fired rounds of tear gas to disperse around 100 protesters who had marched toward a main road next to a runway at Bahrain International Airport.

The Financial Times also reports protests of about 400 people in al-Rabiyah after Friday prayers and some 600 in al-Awamiyah, after mid-afternoon prayers. The protesters who demanded the release of 9 prisoners held without trial since 1996 carry Saudi and Bahraini flags.

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, in the mostly Shiite village of Al Musala, hundreds of protesters formed makeshift barricades of upturned dumpsters and concrete blocks. Police entered the outskirts of the village, firing bird shot and sending protesters scattering into side streets and doorways. In nearby Sannabis, witnesses said riot police swept into the village firing bird shot and tear gas to disperse protesters. Sporadic pops from police antiriot weapons could be heard from the neighbouring Shiite villages, while a police helicopter circled above.

Jordan - One person dies in hospital after Jordanian security forces use batons and spray water to disperse a clash between pro-monarchy and pro-reform demonstrators at the Interior Ministry Circle, (also known as Jamal Abdul Nasser Circle), in Amman. The dead person was identified as 57-year-old Khairi Saad Jamil who officials said died at hospital of a heart attack. But a medical source told AFP the man had "received blows to his chest, and his teeth were broken." ABC News reports that 130 people were injured in the clashes. According to ABC The clashes erupted after around 200 government supporters hurled large stones at more than 2,000 young demonstrators from different movements, including the powerful Islamist opposition, urging regime reforms and more efforts to fight corruption. Sixteen members of the recently formed National Dialogue Committee, comprising of 53 members, announced their resignation in protest at the way the authorities handled the situation.

Libya - A Qatari Mirage 2000-5 jet joins a similar French air force plane to patrol a sector of Libyan air space. Qatar becomes the first Arab country to begin patrolling a U.N.-backed no-fly zone aimed at preventing Gaddafi's forces from attacking civilians.

The UAE commits six F-16 and six Mirage aircraft to the west-led military campaign to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya. It becomes the second Arab state after Qatar to join the UN-authorized mission.

March 26, 2011

Libya - Libyan anti-Gaddafi forces, backed by allied air raids, seize control of the frontline oil town of Ajdabiya from pro-Gaddafi's troops. Gaddafi loyalists seized the town

last week as they advanced east to quell an uprising now in its fifth week. The breakthrough came after a seventh night of bombardment by allies enforcing a UN-mandated no-fly zone.

Large explosions are heard in the Libyan capital Tripoli. According to witnesses a military radar site was on fire in Tajura – one of the city's suburb.

Reuters, quoting US sources, reports that during the past 24-hours coalition forces fired 16 Tomahawk cruise missiles and flew 153 air sorties attacking Gaddafi's artillery, mechanised forces and command and control infrastructure.

French fighter aircraft destroy five Libyan Galeb fighter jets and two MI-35 helicopters in an attack on Gaddafi's forces. A French spokesman says the aircraft were caught on the ground at Misrata air base preparing to launch attacks in the area of the rebel-held town. Misrata is Libya's third biggest city and only 200 km from Tripoli.

Anti-Gaddafi forces seized control of the oil port of Brega, 70 km west along the Mediterranean coast from Ajdabiyah.

Col Gaddafi orders a universal promotion for everyone in the army and police "for their heroic and courageous fight against the crusader colonialist assault," and proposes arming civilian volunteers.

Neither Gaddafi nor his sons have been shown on state television since the Libyan leader made a speech from his compound in Tripoli on 23 March.

Syria - Thousands of mourners in the village of Tafas, near the southern Syrian town of Daraa, burned the local Baath Party headquarters and a police station during the funeral of Kamal Baradan, a protester killed a day earlier.

Reuters reports that at least two people are killed in the port city of Latakia after security forces opened fire on protesters trying to torch the Baath party building." The latest killing brings the number of death protesters, during the last two days, to six.

Amnesty International put the death toll in and around Daraa in the past week at at least 55.

Yemen - Yemen's foreign minister Abubakr al-Qirbi, and a close ally of the president, confirms that agreement is close on a transfer of power from president, Ali Abdullah Saleh. However, subsequently presidential spokesman, Ahmed al-Sufi, states that opposition demands for an immediate transfer of power were unacceptable. According to him Saleh will quit later this year but protesters must go now. Reuters reports that the talks involve Yemen's vice-president, the US ambassador and tribal and military leaders who have defected to the opposition. The BBC correspondent in Yemen indicates several obstacles that need to be

overcome for the crisis to be resolved - the biggest being the actual structure of the power transfer. Another set of issues relates to two relatives of president Saleh, particularly unpopular with the protesters – his son Ahmed who is in charge of the Republican Guards, and his nephew and son-in-law Yahia who heads the security forces.

March 27, 2011

Libya - Libyan TV reports more air strikes overnight at Sabha in central Libya, but there was no independent confirmation. The TV also said there had been air strikes near Col Gaddafi's power base of Sirte, on the Mediterranean coast east of Tripoli.

Anti-Gaddafi fighters reach the town of and Uqayla and push further westwards. AFP reports that they also control the key oil town of Ras Lanuf.

Bloomberg reports that in the 24 hours ending at 11 a.m. Washington time on 26 March, coalition forces flew 167 sorties, or military flights, over Libya, including 88 designed to strike targets on the ground, according to an e-mail from Navy Captain Darryn James, a Pentagon spokesman. Since the Libyan operation began, the U.S. has flown 884 sorties, while coalition allies have flown 540, he said.

The North Atlantic Treaty Alliance takes over military control of allied forces operation over Libya. The mission is restricted to the United Nations mandate to protect civilians and enforce an arms embargo.

Powerful explosions in Tripoli are reported overnight.

Yemen - Agence France Presse reports an interview of US Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, with ABC television. Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh's eventual fall or his replacement by a weaker leader would pose "a real problem" for US counter-terrorism work – says Gates. Saleh's government and the Yemeni security services have helped the United States in fighting Al-Qaeda's Yemeni branch. "I think it is a real concern because the most active and at this point perhaps the most aggressive branch of Al-Qaeda, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, operates out of Yemen," Gates states. "And we've had counter-terrorism cooperation with president Saleh and the Yemeni security services... So if that government collapses, or is replaced by one who is dramatically more weak, then I think we'd face some additional challenges out of Yemen, there's no question about it. It's a real problem," he adds.

Syria - US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, speaking on the CBS talk show "Face The Nation," describes president Assad of Syria as a "reformer" and rules out Western military intervention seen in Libya. "What's been happening there the last few weeks is deeply concerning," Clinton says. "But there's a difference between calling out aircraft and

indiscriminately strafing and bombing your own cities, [and] police actions that frankly have exceeded the use of force that any of us would want to see."

Saudi Arabia - Human Rights Watch publishes report stating that the "scale of arrests [rose] dramatically during the preceding two weeks", up to about 160 protestors and critics being held without charge.

March 28, 2011

Libya - Libyan rebel forces advanced westward with support from NATO air strikes targeting Sirte (population 140,000), port city and the home town of Muammar Qaddafi. Sirte lies 450 km east of Libya's capital - about halfway along the coast between Tripoli and Benghazi.

BBC reports that in the last two days a number of coastal communities and important oil installations, including Ras Lanuf, Brega, Uqayla and Bin Jawad, have fallen to the rebels since they took control of Ajdabiya.

According to the BBC, Britain's Ministry of Defence said its Tornado GR4 aircraft carried out strikes on ammunition bunkers on the morning of 28 March in the Sabha region, in the southern Libya desert. "Initial reports suggest that the bunkers have been destroyed and that the Libyan government has been denied ammunition it uses to threaten civilians in the north of the country," the ministry said in a statement.

Reuters reports that rebels have seized the town of Nawfaliyah, west of Bin Jawad, extending their advance towards Sirte, some 120km away.

Qatar becomes the first Arab nation to recognise the rebel leadership - the Transitional National Council (TNC) - as the official representatives of the Libyan people.

The Gulf Cooperation Council has affirmed Qatar's decision to recognise the Libyan opposition's National Council as the country's "sole legitimate" representative. "The Secretary General of the GCC confirmed that Qatar's recognition of the transitional council as the only legitimate representative of the Libyan people comes in line with the decisions of the GCC with Qatar's stance supporting the choices of the Libyan people and their protection from the continuous brutality of the regime ... The Libyan system has lost its legitimacy."

Syria - Syrian troops are deployed in force in the northern city of Latakia, 350 km north-west of the capital, where at least 12 people have died in a wave of unrest that has shaken the regime.

In Syria police reportedly fire tear gas to disperse crowds marching in the southern town of Daraa.

Yemen - A series of huge explosions at an ammunition plant in the town of Jaar in southern Yemen has kills at least 78 people. The factory was raided by Islamist militants on 27 March amid clashes with government forces. At the time of the blasts residents were in the plant looting ammunition. The dead included women and children. Opposition leader Yassin Noman tells the BBC there had been a "collapse of security" in the country.

US ambassador to Yemen, Gerald Feierstein, holds talks with General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, commander of the military northwest region which covers Sana'a, and Sadiq Al-Ahmar, head of the Hashid tribal federation, the largest in deeply tribal Yemen. Both leading figures have previously defected to the opposition.

The Norwegian daily *Aftenposten*, publishes a WikiLeaks cable containing information that Yemen's president Ali Abdallah Saleh tried to get Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, now a leading dissident officer, killed last year by tricking Saudi forces into bombing his headquarters. "In the winter of 2010," Saudi fighter jets bombing Shiite rebellion targets in Yemen were directed to bomb a building that had been described as insurgent headquarters." But the mission was aborted at the last minute when pilots realised that they were about to bomb the headquarters of General Ahmar.

Egypt - Egypt's ruling military council approves a law opening the door for the formation of new parties that will compete in the parliamentary elections to be held in September 2011.⁸

Bahrain - Bahrain's leading Shiite opposition party, Wefaq, states that 250 people have been detained and 44 others went missing since a security crackdown crushed weeks of protests.

March 29 2011

⁸ According to Reuters the law stipulates that:

The parties' principles, programmes, activities and selection of leaders and members must not be based on religion, geography or race. There should be no discrimination on the basis of sex, language, ethnicity or religion.

Parties must not establish military or paramilitary wings, must not be part of any foreign political organisation and must declare their principles, goals and financial means.

Parties must provide written notification of their intention to begin work to a parties committee made up of judges and which will be chaired by the head of the court of cassation.

The notification must be signed by 5,000 members from 10 governorates, with at least 300 members from each governorate.

Libya - The BBC reports that pro-government forces, using heavy weapons, intensified their attacks on anti-Gaddafi forces, driving them back tens of kilometres over ground they had taken in recent days. The rebels have lost Bin Jawad and most have now fled even further east past the town of Ras Lanuf. Initially they reached Nawfaliya, 120km from Col Gaddafi's birthplace of Sirte, but pulled back to Bin Jawad, some 30km further east.

Misrata, closer to Tripoli, has also come under heavy attack and blasts have been reported in the capital.

A series of powerful explosions rocked Tripoli and state television said several targets in the Libyan capital had come under attack from "crusader aggressors."

At the invitation of the British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, the London Conference on Libya takes place. It is attended by the Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki Moon; Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu; Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen; EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton; the prime minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Jabr Al Thani; Deputy prime ministers of Croatia and Malta; the foreign ministers of Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Iraq, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Morocco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates; USA Secretary of State; the ambassadors of the Arab League, Kuwait, Lebanon, Netherlands, Tunisia; the UN Special Envoy for Libya; and as observer the Australian High Commissioner, Archbishop Antonio Mennini (representing the Holy See), and a representative of the World Bank. The Conference agrees to set up a contact group to coordinate political efforts on Libya's future, which would hold its first meeting in Qatar soon. "We urge Gaddafi and his people to leave and not to pose any more bloodshed," said Qatari prime minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani, adding that the offer of an exit might only be on the table for a few days.

British Foreign Secretary statement following the London Conference on Libya.

This has been an important day for the future of Libya. We have seen two key developments: First, Foreign Ministers and leaders from over 40 countries and organisations including the UN, the Arab League, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the European Union and NATO, met for the London Conference on Libya.

I will list our key conclusions in a moment, but we have certainly widened and deepened the coalition, with a new pledge of support to NATO operations from Sweden, a

growing number of countries committed to implementing the UN Resolutions on Libya, and agreement to a new Contact Group on Libya.

And second, Libya's Interim Transitional National Council have launched, here in London, their vision for a future Libya that is free, democratic and unified today. We have said throughout that we want the Libyan people to be in the lead in determining their future – and today was a significant milestone in that process.

It comes at a time when the forces of the Qadhafi regime continue to shell Libyan civilians in Misurata, Zintan and Rejban in an indiscriminate and brutal manner, underlining why our efforts to protect Libyan citizens must and will continue.

I have here a copy of a letter we have received today from a member of the local council in Misurata, thanking Britain and the allies for their action to relieve the people of Misurata through targeted strikes and the enforcement of the No Fly Zone and for coming to the aid of the Libyan people, as he puts it, in their “most needy of hours”.

He says, in his own words, that the local council can “testify for the effectiveness and the accuracy of those strikes and confirm that there has been not a single case of civilian injury let alone death in and around Misurata” as a result of coalition activity. He goes on to “salute the men and women in uniform who have put their lives on the line to save the lives of Libyans”, saying that “we are forever grateful”.

My colleague Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamed Bin Jassim of Qatar is one of our key allies in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1973. His country is showing great leadership and commitment both in the skies above Libya and at political gatherings like these, and indeed we welcome the fact that Qatar has agreed to host the first meeting of the new Contact Group on Libya which we agreed to form today. Before I turn over to him, and as Chairman of today's Conference, I will now set out our conclusions today in more detail.

Implementing UNSCRs 1970 and 1973

Participants today have reaffirmed the importance of full and swift implementation of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 (2011). Participants reaffirmed their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. They have reaffirmed their commitment to enforce the restrictions and sanctions on the regime and to act to prevent the supply and operations of mercenaries. We are working together to ensure that all states implement these Resolutions, of which Qadhafi still stands in breach. We agreed to consider pursuing, in the UN and regional organisations, additional sanctions on individuals

and entities associated with the regime. Participants here today are implementing these measures as a clear message to Qadhafi that he cannot attack civilians with impunity.

UNSCR 1973 (2011) authorises all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form. A no-fly zone is in place over Libya and is preventing Qadhafi from attacking civilians from the air. We have a broad based coalition to implement the military actions mandated by UNSCR 1973 (2011). So far, the action we have taken has been successful in protecting countless civilians from Qadhafi's forces and in effectively wiping out Qadhafi's air capability. Participants paid tribute to the bravery and professionalism of military personnel from all contributors in the coalition.

Current and potential contributors to military operations, including NATO Allies, also met to underline their commitment to the necessity of military action to implement fully the provisions of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 (2011). They reaffirmed their unified support for this course of action through making effective and sustained contributions to military operations until the international community's goals are secured. Participants, including regional states, welcomed NATO's contribution in agreeing to take on command and control of all military operations to enforce the arms embargo, the no-fly zone, and other actions needed, as authorised in UNSCR 1973 (2011), to protect civilians.

Participants here today have reaffirmed their support through military, logistical, financial or humanitarian contributions and pledges in support of the people of Libya. UNSCR 1973 (2011) laid out very clear conditions that must be met, including the establishment of an immediate ceasefire, a halt to all attacks on civilians and full humanitarian access to those in need. Participants agreed to continue their efforts until all conditions are fulfilled. The Libyan regime will be judged by its actions and not its words.

Preparing for Libya's future

We agreed that it is not for any of the participants here today to choose the government of Libya: only the Libyan people can do that. Participants agreed that Qadhafi and his regime have completely lost legitimacy and will be held accountable for their actions. The Libyan people must be free to determine their own future. Participants recognised the need for all Libyans, including the Interim Transitional National Council, tribal leaders and others, to come together to begin an inclusive political process, consistent with the relevant UNSCRs, through which they can choose their own future. We call on the international community to support this process, working closely with the UN Secretary General's Special

Representative Abdel-Elah Mohamed Al-Khatib. Regional actors, particularly Libya's fellow African countries and Arab neighbours, have an important role to play.

Participants today are concerned for the wellbeing of up to 80,000 internally displaced persons. We have agreed priorities for a humanitarian response. We have also agreed on the need to develop and coordinate the international approach to ensure the availability of sufficient resources to meet the humanitarian needs of the Libyan people. We noted the offer of Qatar to facilitate the sale of Libyan oil where consistent with international law, in particular the provisions of UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 and other relevant UN resolutions, and to support the people of Libya in using the proceeds to help meet their humanitarian needs. Learning the lessons from the past, we agreed on the need for priorities for long-term support. Activities to stabilise the situation will need to start early and be part of an integrated and comprehensive international response.

Taking forward support from the International community for the people of Libya. To take this work forward, participants of the conference agreed to establish the Libya Contact Group. This Contact Group will meet to: provide leadership and overall political direction to the international effort in close coordination with the UN, AU, Arab League, OIC, and EU to support Libya; provide a forum for coordinating the international response on Libya; and provide a focal point in the international community for contact with the Libyan parties. Qatar has agreed to convene the first meeting of the Group as soon as possible. Thereafter, the chairmanship will rotate between the countries of the region and beyond it. The North Atlantic Council, meeting alongside its coalition partners, will provide the executive political direction to NATO operations. Participants welcomed the UN Secretary-General's offer to lead the coordination of humanitarian assistance and planning for longer-term stabilisation support. Turkey, other key regional players and international agencies offered to support this work and take it forward with the Contact Group.

So we have achieved a great deal in a very short time to save lives in Libya and to create the space for the Libyan people to begin to determine their future.

Much work remains to be done, and the nations gathered in London today have demonstrated that we have the will, determination and commitment to continue to act for as long as the threat to the people of Libya remains.

Admiral James Stavridis, NATO's supreme allied commander for Europe and commander of U.S. European Command, in testimony to a U.S. Senate hearing, states that intelligence on the rebel forces battling Gaddafi has shown "flickers" of al-Qaeda or Hezbollah presence, but there is still no detailed picture of the emerging Libyan opposition.

"We are examining very closely the content, composition, the personalities, who are the leaders of these opposition forces... At this point I don't have detail sufficient to say there is a significant al- Qaeda presence."

Independent satellite television channel Libya TV is launched from Dohra, Qatar.

Former Libyan foreign minister Ali Abdussalam Treki, defects to Egypt.

Syria – The government of prime minister Muhammad Naji Otari resigns. Otari has been in charge of the government since September 2003 and survived at least four cabinet reshuffles over the last eight years.

Thousands gather in support of president Bashar al-Assad. Syrian state television shows people in the Syrian capital Damascus and in Aleppo, Hama and Hasaka waving the national flag, pictures of Assad and chanting "God, Syria, Bashar". There are reports that many of the supporters had been mobilised by the government.

More than two hundred protesters gather in Daraa chanting "God, Syria, and Freedom" and "O Hauran rise up in revolt", a reference to the plateau where Daraa is located.

Yemen - Scoffing at pressure to quit at a time of growing insecurity, as highlighted by the blast at an ammunitions plant in southern Yemen, Saleh challenged his opponents to leave the country instead, in remarks published on 29 March he said: "I tell those who appear in the media asking others to leave, that it is up to them to go."

Bahrain – Bahrain's parliament accepts the resignation of 11 members of the largest Shiite opposition party, Al-Wefaq, including its leader Abduljalil Khalil. The vote clears the way for the possible prosecution of the outspoken former MPs now stripped of parliamentary immunity. Al-Wefaq members resigned en masse in protest at the use force against demonstrators. A vote on whether to accept the resignation of another seven members of parliament was delayed. Al-Wefaq" with 18 seats makes up the largest bloc in the 40-member parliament.

Jordan – Agence France Presse reports that Jordan will ban government supporters from demonstrating in the capital as King Abdullah II vowed to fight attempts to "sabotage" the country's reform drive. "From now on protests by loyalists can only be held outside Amman to avoid clashes with the opposition."

March 30, 2011

Libya – Libyan rebels pull out of the oil town of Ras Lanuf under heavy bombardment from Muammar Gaddafi's forces, showing up their weakness without Western

air strikes to tip the scales in their favour. By the middle of the afternoon agencies report that the anti-Gaddafi forces have lost the key oil port of Ras Lanuf and the nearby town of Bin Jawad, and are also in full retreat from Brega. The BBC's Ben Brown, in Ajdabiya, says that the rebels are essentially now in retreat as they simply cannot compete with the discipline and fire-power of Col Gaddafi's forces.

The United Kingdom expels five Libyan diplomats, including the embassy's military attache, because they "could pose a threat to the security" of the United Kingdom.

Nicaragua names former foreign minister Miguel d'Escoto to represent Libya at the United Nations after a senior Libyan envoy Ali Abdussalam Treki was reportedly denied a visa. Treki was to replace Abdulrahman Shalgham, the Libyan UN envoy who turned against Gaddafi. The Libyan government had asked the UN to no longer recognise Shalgham.

Libyan foreign minister Musa Kusa arrives in the United Kingdom on a specially arranged flight organised by the British intelligence service. The Foreign Office in London issued the following statement in the evening: "We can confirm that Musa Kusa arrived at Farnborough Airport [in the south of England] on 30 March from Tunisia. He travelled here under his own free will. He has told us he is resigning his post. We are discussing this with him and we will release further detail in due course. Musa Kusa is one of the most senior figures in Qadhafi's government and his role was to represent the regime internationally - something that he is no longer willing to do. We encourage those around Qadhafi to abandon him and embrace a better future for Libya that allows political transition and real reform that meets the aspirations of the Libyan people." Koussa flew to London from the Tunisian resort of Djerba. He reportedly arrived in Tunisia for a "private visit" on 28 March. He was Libya's intelligence chief 1994- 2009 and is implicated in past Libyan terror attacks on the West. But he changed tack after 9/11, leading cooperation with US/British intelligence in providing information on Al Qaeda, and in decommissioning Libya's nuclear programme in 2003. He is the architect of a dramatic shift in Libya's foreign policy that brought the country back to the international community after years of sanctions.

The Guardian reports that a meeting had taken place between Mohammed Ismail, a senior aide to Gaddafi's influential son Saif al-Islam, and British officials in London. He apparently had visited family members in London, and Britain had "taken the opportunity to send some very strong messages about the Gaddafi regime." Ismail is a fixer who has been used by the Gaddafi family to negotiate arms deals and has considerable contacts in the west.

Syria - President Bashar al-Assad finally delivers the much advertised address to the Syrian parliament. He fails to announce any serious concessions including the much expected

end to 50 years of emergency law. "Syria is a target of a big plot from outside... We will defeat those behind a plot against our country." - he said

Within hours of his speech the Associated Press (AP) news agency reported that troops had opened fire during a protest in the northern city of Latakia.

Bahrain - Bahrain's Shiite opposition head Sheikh Ali Salman, who heads the Al-Wefaq party, warns Iran and Saudi Arabia against using his country as a "battlefield" in a proxy war. Salman urges Iran to keep out of the state's affairs and calls on Saudi troops to leave the country.

Bahrain's foreign minister Shaikh Khaled bin Ahmad Al Khalifa, renews accusations that Lebanon's militant group Hezbollah, which is backed by Teheran, was "training" regime opponents in the country. He says that Manama had "proof" of "plotting with Hezbollah" and of training in Lebanon on how to organise mass protests.

Yemen – Hundreds of thousands of protesters take to the streets in several Yemeni cities.

The death toll from explosions at an ammunition plant in southern Yemen rises to 150.

Egypt – The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces issues a decree establishing an interim constitution until a permanent document is drafted. Presenting the interim document, Maj. General Mamdouh Shaheen, a member of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, states that "The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces will continue to carry out its duties, as outlined in this decree, until a new parliament is elected [in September 2011]... Then the new parliament will take powers including legislation. When a new president is elected, [in November 2011] he will take over the remaining powers of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces." The interim, 62 article constitution, the one suspended when president Hosni Mubarak stepped down on 11 February. Much of it remains the same, with the addition of about eight amendments approved by voters in the referendum on 19 March. The document preserves a constitutional article stating that Islam is the state's religion and the "principles of the Islamic Sharia are the primary source of legislation." No political parties could be established on "religious basis." It also keeps a quota that allocates 50 per cent of parliament's seats to "workers and peasants."

March 31, 2011

Libya – The anti-Gaddafi forces suffer another setback. After making significant gains towards Sirte, they have now been pushed back, retreating from the oil port of Brega (which has changed hands six times in as many weeks) towards Ajdabiya.

Fierce fighting continues in Misrata to the west and Uqayla and Brega to the east.

Yemen - Hamid Al-Ahmar, of the Islamist Islah party, a powerful figure in both tribal and political circles in Yemen, tells the BBC of opposition plans to escalate anti-government protests. According to him the president and his family "have no immediate future in Yemen. They should leave power, they should leave the country for their own safety". Islah is regarded by many observers outside and inside Yemen as a dangerous force, with links to al-Qaeda.

Syria – The Syrian state news agency Sana reports that president Bashar al-Assad has directed a legal committee to “study new laws on national security and counter-terrorism, in order to pave the way for ending the state of emergency.” It is to produce its report by 25 April 2011.

April 1, 2011

Libya – *The Guardian* reports: “Gaddafi regime starts talks with the west to end conflict.” The report states that Gaddafi has initiated a concerted effort to open lines of communication with western governments in an attempt to bring the conflict in the country to an end. Libya’s former prime minister, Abdul Ati al-Obeidi, tells Channel 4 TV news: “We are trying to talk to the British, the French and the Americans to stop the killing of people. We are trying to find a mutual solution.” The newspaper also cites a spokesman for the British prime minister, David Cameron, saying that British officials have been in contact with a number of Libyan officials in recent weeks in behind-the-scenes diplomacy. He stressed that Britain had not been negotiating any possible trade-offs aimed at sealing Gaddafi's exit from power. “There are no deals.”

British media report that an envoy of Gaddafi visited London in the past few days to meet with UK authorities. The BBC and other media say the envoy was Mohammed Ismail, a senior aide to Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, who is British-educated and has been among the most visible of the Libyan leader's children. The reports say Ismail is believed to be back in Libya following his talks with British officials.

Syria – At least 15 people are killed during large demonstrations in the Damascus suburb of Douma when men dressed as civilians opened fire at a largely peaceful anti-

government protest. There are reports of large protests in several other cities. More than 2,000 ethnic Kurds took to the streets of the northeastern city of Qamishli.

Saudi Arabia – Demonstrations by Shiites are reported in Qatif and al-Awamiyah.

April 2, 2011

Libya - Gaddafi's forces launch a fresh assault on Misrata, the last enclave in the west still under the revolutionaries' control. Libya's third largest city was hit with tank and artillery fire. "It was random and very intense bombardment," a spokesman, called Sami, told Reuters by telephone. "We no longer recognize the place. They are targeting everyone, including civilians' homes."

Yemen - The opposition coalition Common Forum calls on the president to hand over power to his deputy, Vice-President Abdu Rabu Hadi. Common Forum, which includes the five biggest opposition groups in Yemen, offers a five-point plan for the handover:

1. President Saleh resigns and is replaced by Abdu Rabu Hadi
2. Abdu Rabu Hadi announces a restructuring of the security forces to make them accountable to the government
3. An interim government is created based on national reconciliation
4. A new electoral commission is established
5. Civil liberties are boosted and an investigation is launched into the killing of protesters.

Syria - Security forces disperse a sit-in in Daraa's, Serail Square and arrested at least 20 people.

April 3, 2011

Libya – Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou receives in Athens, Col Gaddafi's emissary and acting foreign minister Abdulati Al-Obeidi. According to unofficial reports, Obeidi is seeking a way out of the crisis and wants Greece, Turkey and Malta to mediate. Italian foreign minister Franco Frattini, who spoke with the Greek foreign minister after he had talks with Obeidi, states that the Libyan government proposals 'lack credibility' because they ignored the precondition that Col Gaddafi and his family must leave Libya.

After talks in Athens, Abdulati Al-Obeidi travels in his private Cessna jet to Ankara, where he has talks with Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu.

In the evening Abdulati Al-Obeidi arrives in Malta and has talks with Malta's prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi. According to *The Times of Malta* "Dr Gonzi told Mr al-Obeidi that Libya must observe all UN resolutions, the Gaddafi government must step down, Col Gaddafi and his family should leave and there should be an immediate ceasefire and a process which would enable the Libyan people to make its democratic choices."

Italy's foreign minister Franco Frattini announces the recognition of the rebels' Transitional National Council (TNC) "as the only political, legitimate interlocutor to represent Libya."

The New York Times reports that Seif and Saadi Gaddafi, two of Col Gaddafi's sons were offering to oversee a transition to a constitutional democracy that would include their father's removal from power. "The proposals are the latest turn in a drama between Seif and his father that has played out for years on the stage of Libyan public life as the son has alternately pushed forward with calls for political reforms and then pulled back... The idea also touches on longstanding differences among his sons. While Seif and Saadi have leaned toward Western-style economic and political openings, Colonel Qaddafi's sons Khamis and Mutuassim are considered hard-liners. Khamis leads a fearsome militia focused on repressing internal unrest."

Turkish hospital ship transports 250 wounded people and 100 members of their families from Misurata to Turkey for treatment. The ship is escorted by 10 Turkish air force F-16s and two navy frigates.

Members of the Libyan opposition launch a new Qatar-based satellite television station.

Several of the critically wounded from clashes between pro- and anti-government forces in eastern Libya are flown out to Qatar to receive urgent medical treatment.

Yemen - Extraordinary meeting of the GCC foreign ministers is held in Riyadh to discuss the crisis in Yemen.

Syria – President Bashar Assad appoints a new prime minister, former Agriculture Minister Adel Safar, and asks him to form a government. Safar is a member of the ruling Baath Party. Under his watch at the agriculture ministry, a water crisis that experts largely attribute to corruption and mismanagement, intensified and led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. Syria became a net grain importer.

Thousands attend the funerals of 15 people killed on 1 April in the Damascus suburb of Douma. According to the BBC the mourners chanted anti-government slogans, calling for president Assad to be toppled. The bodies of eight were buried in Douma including; Fouad

Ben Ahmad Eid Baleleh, 27; Khaled Mahmoud al-Baghdadi, 37; Orfan Abdel Majid al-Durrah, 19; Haydar Ben Ali Izzeldeen, 39; Ibrahim Ben Muhammad al-Mubayyed, 39; Naim Muhammad al-Mukaddem, 33; Yasser Jamal Abu Aisha, 37; Ahmad Ben Abdel Raheem Rajab Fawwaz, 27. The rest of the victims came from different towns.

Agencies report pro-democracy demonstrations in Daraa and Latakia.

There are reports of Syrian security forces arresting dozens of people - mostly in Daraa and Douma. A joint statement by eight human rights groups, quoted by AFP news agency, said 46 people had been arrested. Protesters released from custody say that all those detained during the protests were beaten, humiliated and branded traitors by the security forces.

April 4, 2011

Yemen- At least 21 people are killed when security forces and armed men in civilian clothes fired on protesters in Taiz, and the Red Sea port of Hudaida.

The Gulf Cooperation Council invites representatives of the Yemeni government and the opposition to talks in Saudi Arabia to put an end to the current crisis in Yemen.

Libya - Libyan state television shows footage of Muammar Gaddafi saluting supporters at his Bab Al Aziziyah compound in Tripoli.

The US government says that it has lifted sanctions on Moussa Koussa, the former Libyan foreign minister who has resigned from his post and left Libya for the UK.

April 5, 2011

Libya - NATO jets bomb Libyan government vehicles near Brega. The alliance reports that Western air strikes have destroyed 30% of Col Gaddafi's forces' military capacity.

The first oil from rebel-held areas of eastern Libya for almost three weeks is loaded on a tanker docked at a terminal near Tobruk, to be exported.

US Air Force Secretary Michael Donley, gives information on Pentagon's costs of engagement in Libya. According to him the U.S. Air Force has spent about \$75 million on the allied military operation against Libya, at a rate of about \$4 million a day. About 50 strike aircraft or fighter jets were assigned to the mission as well as about 39 support aircrafts, including air refueling, transport and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance planes. The US Air Force has flown Boeing Co. (BA)'s F-15E, Lockheed Martin Corp. (LMT)'s F-

16 and Northrop Grumman Corp. (NOC)'s B-2 stealth bomber, as well as aircraft used for close-air support, such as Lockheed's and Boeing's AC-130U.

The Pentagon confirms it has ended its strike mission over Libya after flying a total of 1,600 sorties, 600 of them strike sorties. It continues to provide support to NATO such as air-to-air refueling and intelligence-gathering.

The Gaddafi government appoints Abdelati Obeidi as its new foreign minister. He replaces Moussa Koussa, who sought refuge on the UK.

Col Muammar Gaddafi sends a rambling letter to President Barack Obama.⁹

Our son, Excellency,

President Obama

U.S.A

We have been hurt more morally than physically because of what had happened against us in both deeds and words by you. Despite all this you will always remain our son whatever happened. We still pray that you continue to be president of the USA.

We Endeavour and hope that you will gain victory in the new election campaign. You are a man who has enough courage to annul a wrong and mistaken action. I am sure that you are able to shoulder the responsibility for that. Enough evidence is available, Bearing in mind that you are the president of the strongest power in the world nowadays, and since NATO is waging an unjust war against a small people of a developing country.

This country had already been subjected to embargo and sanctions, furthermore it also suffered a direct military armed aggression during Reagan's time. This country is Libya. Hence, to serving world peace ... Friendship between our peoples ... and for the sake of economic, and security cooperation against terror, you are in a position to keep NATO off the Libyan affair for good.

As you know too well democracy and building of civil society cannot be achieved by means of missiles and aircraft, or by backing armed member of AlQuaeda in Benghazi.

You - yourself - said on many occasions, one of them in the UN General Assembly, I was witness to that personally, that America is not responsible for the security of other peoples. That America helps only. This is the right logic.

⁹ The text of a letter sent to President Barack Obama by the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was published by the Associated Press news agency. The misspellings and grammatical errors are in the original letter.

Our dear son, Excellency, Baraka Hussein Abu oumama, your intervention is the name of the U.S.A. is a must, so that NATO would withdraw finally from the Libyan affair. Libya should be left to Libyans within the African union frame.

The problem now stands as follows:-

1. There is NATO intervention politically as well as military.
2. Terror conducted by AlQaeda gangs that have been armed in some cities, and by force refused to allow people to go back to their normal life, and carry on with exercising their social people's power as usual.

Mu'aumer Qaddafi

Leader of the Revolution

Tripoli 5.4.2011

Yemen – In Sana'a members of the Sanhan tribe loyal to president Ali Abdullah Saleh arrive at a barracks occupied by mutinous troops supporting anti-government protesters. In the ensuing confrontation at least three people are killed and 15 others injured.

The BBC reports that for the second day in Taiz gunmen in plain clothes have been seen firing from rooftops towards protesters in the city's Tahrir Square. According to the reports hundreds of security troops attacked tens of thousands of protesters, and men believed to be plainclothes police were wielding bats and daggers. Protesters responded to the attack by hurling rocks at security forces.

Syria - Some 6,000 mourners take part in a funeral, in Moathamia, for Ahmad al Doumarani, a man shot dead by security forces early in the day.

Syria suspends all football matches. Agencies say that the decision was made in an apparent bid to avoid gatherings that may turn into a rallying point for anti-government protests.

The New York Times reports: "Wissam Tarif, the executive director of Insan, a Syrian rights group, said that at least 173 people had died in the unrest, including 15 in Douma, a working-class suburb northwest of Damascus, and 143 in and around Dara'a, the southern area where the protests began. The Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights, working with the Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies, said it had documented 123 deaths, including 22 in Douma. It said it did not have a number of dead in Dara'a. Both

groups said their figures were based on testimony from doctors, families of the dead and witnesses. It was impossible to verify their numbers.”

Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports that 48 Kurds were released on 5 April, more than a year after they were arrested in the eastern city of Raqqa.

Saudi Arabia - Over a hundred literacy campaign teachers held a rally outside the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Civil Services in Riyadh calling for full time employment. Similar demonstrations take place in Ta'if and Tabuk.

Bahrain - Reuters reports that as a part of a government crackdown, Bahraini firms have fired hundreds of mostly Shiite workers who went on strike to support pro-democracy protesters.

April 6, 2011

Syria – Syria lifts a ban on teachers wearing the full face veil and orders the closure of the country's only casino.

April 7, 2011

Syria – Syria grants key Kurdish demands. President Bashar Assad issues a decree granting nationality to people in the eastern al-Hasaka region where many Kurds live. According to the 1962 census at least 150,000 Kurds are registered as foreigners.

According to Syrian state TV president Assad had fired the governor of Homs province, one of the areas affected by nearly three weeks of protests. Replacing the governor was one of the main demands of protesters last week.

Jordan - Mohammed Abdul-Karim, Jordanian national, sets himself on fire outside the prime minister's office. It is the first such act since political unrest hit the country in January. He is taken to hospital with third-degree burns.

Yemen – Protests take place in the city of Taiz where security forces open fired and shot tear gas at demonstrators.

Bahrain – The Bahrain Defense Force Military Public Security suspends the activities of the National Action Democratic Society (Waad). Its headquarter in Um Al Hassam is shut down until further notice.

April 8, 2011

Syria – BBC reports that at least 23 protesters are killed during anti-government rallies in the city of Daraa. An office of the ruling Baath Party in the Mahatta area of the city

is attacked and set on fire. Protests are reported in Qamishli, Hasakhe, Idlib, Banyas and Homs, where three people were killed. The town of Duma, near Damascus, is been sealed off with internet and mobile phone communications blocked. In Harsata, also on the outskirts of the capital, there are reports of gunfire and of tear gas being fired at protesters – three people were killed. In the coastal city of Latakia hundreds take part in a largely peaceful protest calling for political freedom.

Egypt - Tens of thousands of Egyptians protest in Cairo's Tahrir Square demanding the prosecution of Hosni Mubarak and accusing the military of being too slow to root out corruption from his era. The crowd's demands also include the removal of remaining Mubarak-era officials, such as the powerful provincial governors.

Saudi Arabia - Hundreds of Saudi Shiites protest in the city of Qatif in the Eastern Province demanding the withdrawal of Saudi troops from neighbouring Bahrain and political rights and freedoms at home. The demonstrators, some of them women, wave Bahraini as well as Saudi flags. Others gather in the nearby town of al-Awamiyah.

Yemen – Qatari prime minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani states that the six-nation Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) hoped "to reach a deal with the Yemeni president to step down". In return, he and his family would be granted immunity from prosecution.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh rejects a mediation offer by Gulf nations that called on him to resign in return for immunity from prosecution. He described the proposal as "belligerent intervention" and says he was opposed to any other country resolving the crisis. "Our power comes from the power of our great people, not from Qatar, not from anyone else. This is blatant interference in Yemeni affairs." Some 100,000 people demonstrate in the southern city of Taiz. In the confrontation four people are killed. Hundreds of anti-government protesters are reported to have been hurt in the Yemeni capital Sana'a.

Yemen News Agency SABA reports that president Ali Abdullah Saleh spoke with a number of leaders of the Gulf states in separate telephone calls. He telephoned Saudi King Abdullah bin King Abdul Aziz, Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Libya - Pro-Gaddafi forces launch a surprise attack on Libyan rebels in Ajdabiya, shelling the town and deploying soldiers on the streets. Anti-Gaddafi forces say they had

managed to repulse the attack after several hours of fighting. According to the BBC eight rebels were killed in the clashes.

BBC reports that in the city of Misrata, NATO forces have intensified their air strikes and destroyed 15 tanks after an upsurge of violence.

NATO announces that its jets had destroyed government ammunition stockpiles east of the capital Tripoli, tanks around Misrata and also military vehicles near Brega.

The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, releases his peace plan for Libya. The “road map” contains three elements:

1. A genuine ceasefire should be established immediately and the forces affiliated with Gaddafi should lift the siege they impose on certain cities and withdraw from them.

2. Secure humanitarian zones should be established to provide unimpeded humanitarian aid to all our Libyan brothers indiscriminately.

3. A comprehensive democratic change and transformation process that takes into consideration the legitimate interests of all Libyan people must be launched immediately and urgently. This process should aim at establishing a constitutional democracy in which people would be able to elect their leaders with their free will.

British Royal Air Force (RAF) Tornados destroy seven tanks in Libya. The jets hit two tanks in Ajdabiyah and five in Misratah.

US Treasury Department announces that the United States has imposed financial sanctions on further five senior Libyan government officials and two entities controlled by Gaddafi's children. Those included are: Ali al-Mahmoudi Al Baghdadi - Libya's Prime Minister and member of Muammar Gaddafi's inner circle; Shukri Ghanem - Libya's Oil Minister and Chairman of the National Oil Company of Libya (NOC); Abdulhafid Zlitni - Secretary of the General People's Committee for Finance and Planning; Tohami Khaled - Director of Libya's Internal Security Office; Bashir Saleh - Head of Cabinet – or Chief of Staff – to Muammar Gaddafi. The two organizations on which sanctions were imposed are: The Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation - a Geneva-registered organization founded in Libya in 1998 and incorporated in Switzerland in 2004, owned and controlled by Saif al-Islam Gaddafi; the Waatasemu Charity Association, whose Secretary General is Aisha Gaddafi, Muammar Gaddafi's daughter.

United Arab Emirates – Ahmed Mansour, a blogger and civil society activist, is arrested at his home in Dubai.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates meets in Abu Dhabi, Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi and deputy supreme commander of the UAE armed forces.

Oman - Heavy security prevents fresh protests after Friday prayers in the city of Sohar, where protesters camped out for over a month before security forces moved them out last week. According to Reuters' reports, checkpoints were set up across the city with dozens of armoured vehicles blocking access to protest areas. Residents' names were checked against a list and access to mosques was restricted, while a helicopter flew overhead, witnesses.

April 9, 2011

Egypt – Around 3 am the military attempts to clear protesters camping on Tahrir Square. In the ensuing battle one person is killed and 71 injured. Protesters say they were beaten with clubs and shots were fired. Three vehicles, two of them military, were set on fire during the unrest. The military force finally withdrew and protesters began to reoccupy the square in daylight. According to the BBC corresponded in Cairo “This is the latest worrying sign of tensions between the ruling military and supporters of the 25 January revolution who are becoming increasingly impatient with the pace of change.”

Yemen - Demonstrations erupt in the southern Yemeni town of Taiz, as people rally against the killing of pro-democracy protesters there the day before. Thousands of anti-government protesters take to the streets of other major cities, including Ibb, al-Hudaydah and Hadramawt, in support of the Taiz protesters. Normal life was completely paralyzed in Aden, where government offices, schools, shops and services came to a standstill.

The official Yemeni news agency, Saba, reports that the Yemeni ambassador was recalled for consultation from Qatar after the recent statement made by Qatari prime minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem about the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) offer of mediation between Saleh and the opposition.

Libya - A buoyant Muammar Gaddafi makes his first television appearance for five days. Gaddafi smiled and pumped his fists in the air as he received an ecstatic welcome at a school in Tripoli. He was last seen on 4 April.

Al Jazeera television reports that pro-Gaddafi forces had entered Ajdabiyah.

Reuters reports: “Western generals are increasingly pessimistic that the military stalemate [in Libya] can be broken despite NATO air attacks on Gaddafi's armoured forces.” Misrata, Libya's third largest city is the lone major rebel outpost in the west of the country. It

has been under siege by Gaddafi's forces for weeks. According to Reuters “people in Misrata are crammed five families to a house in the few safe districts to escape weeks of sniper, mortar and rocket fire. There are severe shortages of food, water and medical supplies and hospitals are overflowing.” Analysts predict a long, low-level conflict possibly leading to partition between east and west in the sprawling country.

Bahrain – Frank Gardner, the BBC security correspondent, reports from Bahrain that Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, one of the country's leading human rights activists, and his two sons-in-law, were seized in the middle of the night and taken away. Abdulhadi al-Khawaja who did not resist his arrest was beaten “unconscious” and dragged “downstairs, leaving a trail of blood.” According to Gardner “more than 400 people are believed to have been detained and hundreds more have been sacked from their jobs for taking part in pro-democracy protests.”

United Arab Emirates - Fahad Salim Mohammed Salim Dalk, 38, civil society activist is arrested at 7 p.m. in his flat in Ajman.

April 10, 2011

Egypt – In an apparent concession to protesters Egypt's interim military government has stated that it will remove some provincial governors appointed by former president Hosni Mubarak.

Al Arabiya TV broadcast recorded message from former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. “I have felt great pain – and still – due to the unfair campaigns and unjust accusations to which my family and I have been exposed , aiming mainly to endanger my reputation, question my honesty and mess with my military and political history during which I exerted big efforts for Egypt and its people ... in war and peace... However, as I have spent my whole life in serving the nation with honesty and integrity ... I cannot remain silent in face of the continual campaigns of defamation and false accusations that aim at ruining the reputation and integrity of my family and me.” Mubarak declares that he does not “own any accounts or assets outside Egypt” and agrees for public prosecutor to “to contact all the foreign ministries worldwide to inform them of my approval, and my wife's, to reveal any account that we have abroad since I started my military and political public work until now.”

Former president Hosni Mubarak is summoned by the state prosecutor for questioning over alleged corruption and killings of protesters. Also his sons Gamal and Alaa are summoned to answer questions. Mubarak, his sons and their wives have been banned from leaving the country and their assets have been frozen.

Syria – According to *The Washington Post* several people were killed in the port city of Baniyas, 300km north-west of the capital Damascus. The city has a major oil refinery . Human rights groups named Ayman Soliman, Nizar Higazy and Muhammad al-Dayegh as those killed after Sunday prayers. The authorities for the first time employed soldiers and tanks against anti-government demonstrators. Human rights workers also said that security forces and rooftop snipers fired on hundreds of demonstrators outside the al-Rahman mosque. It has subsequently emerged that some 13 people were killed in the town by security forces.

Mourners demonstrated in Douma; and a sit-in was staged in Daraa.

The National Organisation for Human Rights said 37 people were killed across Syria on 8 April, including 27 in Daraa, three in Homs, three in Harasta and one in Douma, bringing the total death toll to more than 200 since 18 March.

Libya - Delegation of African Union arrives in Tripoli for talks with Muammar Gaddafi. Presidents Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz of Mauritania, Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali, Denis Sassou Nguesso of Congo and Jacob Zuma of South Africa, left the Mauritanian capital Nouakchott in mid-morning and travelled separately to Tripoli. Uganda's Foreign Minister Henry Oryem Okello arrived in Tripoli later.

The opposition forces regain control of the strategic coastal town of Ajdabiya, with help from NATO strikes. Airstrikes blew up 11 tanks belonging to forces loyal to Qaddafi as they approached the town. "The whole of Ajdabiya is under our [anti-Gaddafi forces] control."

Yemen - Foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council, meeting in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, urge Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down and call for a unity government led by the opposition. The GCC offer does not specify a timeframe for a transfer of power to Saleh's deputy. However, it includes protections for the president and his family from prosecution for crimes under his leadership. According to the BBC, late on Sunday [10 April], president Saleh's office issued a statement saying that it welcomed the GCC initiative. It said: "[president Saleh] has no reservations about transferring power peacefully within the framework of the constitution." But he did not specify whether this meant leaving office when his term ends in 2013 or handing over power in January 2012, a date he had recently suggested.

Bahrain - Two Bahraini Shiite activists detained in the wake of anti-regime protests have died in detention, interior ministry announced on 11 April. Ali Issa Saqer, 31, died at the hands of prison security guards after "causing chaos in detention". "Security men had to

intervene to restore security ... but he resisted, forcing them to engage him, which resulted in him receiving several wounds," police statement said. Photos taken before his burial showed criss-cross purple lash marks all over his back. His legs were also badly bruised, and his toes and feet were covered in purple bruises. There was a big bruise on the left side of his head and possible burn marks on his ankles and wrists, said Daniel Williams, a senior researcher with Human Rights Watch (HRW), who viewed the body as it was being prepared for burial. Another detainee, Zakaraya Rashed Hassan, 40, arrested on April 2, had been "found dead" in his prison cell.

United Arab Emirates – Authorities arrest another activist advocating political reforms in the country. Professor Nasser Ahmed Khalfan bin Gaith, an outspoken economist who teaches economic law at La Sorbonne in Abu Dhabi, is arrested in Dubai. Dr bin Gaith is a member of the online political forum, UAE Hewan, which is blocked in the country, and organiser of a petition to demand a greater say in the election of Gulf state's quasi-parliamentary body, the Federal National Council (FNC). In a recent article on a UAE website, bin Gaith voiced unusually bold criticism of the Western-allied Gulf Arab states' political system and their moves to create jobs and raise social spending in a bid to prevent the eruption of popular unrest. "They have announced 'benefits and handouts' assuming their citizens are not like other Arabs or other human beings, who see freedom as a need no less significant than other physical needs. So they use the carrot, offering abundance. But this only delays change and reform, which will still come sooner or later," he wrote. "No amount of security -- or rather intimidation by security forces -- or wealth, hand-outs, or foreign support is capable of ensuring the stability of an unjust ruler."

Saudi Arabia – Small group of literacy teachers and unemployed university graduates demonstrate in front of Ministries of Civil Services and Education in Riyadh and the Ministry of Education in Jeddah.

April 11, 2011

Libya – After meeting Gaddafi for several hours in his Bab al-Aziziyah compound the AU delegation says that the Libyan government has accepted an African Union peace plan to end the eight-week-old conflict. According to the BBC, the AU deal's main points are:

An immediate ceasefire

The unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid

Protection of foreign nationals

A dialogue between the government and rebels on a political settlement
The suspension of NATO airstrikes.

After talks in Tripoli Jacob Zuma returned to South Africa. His foreign minister and the other AU heads of state travelled on to Benghazi for talks with the Interim National Transitional Council. BBC correspondent in Benghazi, Jon Leyne reports that "The AU delegation arrived in Benghazi to a rough reception, with demonstrators shouting 'Gaddafi out' and mobbing their vehicles".

After four hours of talks, the rebels reject the terms of the ceasefire deal. They stated, "The proposal did not include Gaddafi and his family from standing down... Any reforms which were included would be within the Gaddafi regime and that is also unacceptable."

Moussa Koussa, former Libyan foreign minister, now in London, tells the BBC: "I ask everybody to avoid taking Libya into civil war... This would lead to so much blood and Libya would be a new Somalia... More than that, we refuse to divide Libya. The unity of Libya is essential to any solution and settlement for Libya."

Egypt - A military court in Egypt sentences an internet activist, Maikel Nabil, 26, to three years in jail for criticising the armed forces. He was arrested last month for blogs that criticised the army's role during anti-government protests. This was the first trial of a blogger by a military court since the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces assumed control on 11 February.

Yemen - Thousands demonstrate on Sana'a University Square on the streets of Taiz, Aden, Hudaida, Ibb and the south-eastern province of Hadramaut to protest against the GCC plan. The protesters are not happy with the GCC proposal because it allows president Saleh to remain in the country and it appears to offer him immunity from prosecution. The protesters want to see legal action against Saleh and his sons, who occupy key security and political posts.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh rejects GCC foreign ministers plan for the transfer of power in Yemen, having accepted it the previous day. Saleh's carefully worded rejection statement praised the GCC's offer, but insisted on his remaining in office until the 2013 elections.

Syria - Syrian security forces brake up a demonstration of some 1,500 student at Damascus University in support of anti-government protesters.

Twenty-two people are arrested in Baniyas, as funerals are held for four people who died when security forces opened fire on protesters over the weekend.

Fayez Sara, 61, a well-known Syrian writer and journalist, is arrested. He is the third well known opposition figure detained since 10 April.

April 12, 2011

Libya - French foreign minister, Alain Juppe, says that NATO is not doing enough to destroy heavy weaponry used by Muammar Gaddafi's forces in Libya. "NATO must play its role fully. It wanted to take the lead in operations," - efforts so far were "not enough". His views are echoed by UK's Foreign Secretary William Hague who also urges NATO allies to intensify military operations. Senior Libyan rebel, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, is quoted by Reuters as saying, "NATO's air fleet cannot deliver the occupied cities where Gaddafi's forces, using the civilian populations as a human shield, have now taken cover."

The British Foreign Office confirms that former Libyan foreign minister, Moussa Koussa, who sought refuge in London, has left the UK for meetings in Qatar for an international meeting on Libya. It is expected that he will return to the UK in the next few days after the trip to the Middle East. The hope in Whitehall is that Koussa's lenient treatment by the UK authorities will send a positive signal to other would-be Libyan defectors as part of a broader strategy of eroding Muammar Gaddafi's position.

Bahrain - Following a case filed by the Bahrain Information Affairs Authority against *Al Wasat* newspaper, the General Prosecution summons its former editor-in-chief Mansoor Al Jamri, managing editor Walid Nouwehed and head of local news Aqeel Mirza. They are charged with publishing fabricated news and made-up stories in a manner that may have harmed public safety and national interests.

Egypt - Former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak suffers heart problem during an investigation into corruption and abuse allegations, and is admitted to hospital in Sharm el-Sheikh.

Syria - Syria's leading pro-democracy group, the Damascus Declaration, estimates about 200 people have died in protests in the country, since they first erupted in March in the southern city of Daraa.

Troops lock down the town of Baniyas. There are reports of dozens of people being injured in clashes with security forces, and that soldiers were preventing ambulances from getting into the town. The security forces storm the nearby village of Bayda, which is subsequently surrounded by army vehicles.

White House Press Secretary, Jay Carney, states that the Obama administration is “deeply concerned” about reports that Syrians injured in protests are being denied access to medical care and condemns continuing violence in the country. “The escalating repression by the Syrian government is outrageous, and the United States strongly condemns the continued efforts to suppress peaceful protesters... The Syrian government must respect the universal rights of the Syrian people, who are rightly demanding the basic freedoms that they have been denied.”

April 13, 2011

Egypt - Egypt's state TV reports that the prosecutor general has ordered the detention of former president Hosni Mubarak, ahead of an investigation into corruption and abuse allegations. His detention order will be in place for 15 days. Mubarak, 82, is in hospital after reportedly suffering heart problems. The prosecutor also has ordered the detention for 15 days of Alaa and Gamal Mubarak – the two sons of the former president. Hosni Mubarak, along with his sons and their wives, have been banned from leaving the country. The family's assets have been frozen.

Libya - The Libyan contact group of foreign ministers meets in Doha, Qatar. Its final statement stipulates that: "Participants remained united and firm in their resolve... Gaddafi and his regime has lost all legitimacy and he must leave power allowing the Libyan people to determine their own future." "Participants agreed that a Temporary Financial Mechanism could provide a method for the INC (interim national council) and international community to manage revenue to assist with short term financial requirements and structural needs in Libya." The language of the statement indicated a stronger stance than that seen at the group's meeting two weeks ago, reflecting increased pressure by Britain and France, who are delivering most of the air strikes on Gaddafi's armour. The next meeting of the contact group will take place at the beginning of May in Italy.

Loud explosions are reported in Tripoli, with NATO later saying that it had attacked munitions bunkers 13km from the Libyan capital

Five Libyan diplomats are expelled from Germany for intimidating Libyan citizens living there.

Libyan state-run TV reports that NATO aircraft attacked the Libyan cities of al-Aziziya and Sirte.

Libyan rebels report heavy fighting in central and eastern Misrata, but say they are making progress against government troops

AFP news agency reports that Libyan Foreign Minister Abdelati Laabidi flies to Cyprus as Col Gaddafi's regime pursues a diplomatic offensive among Mediterranean nations.

Yemen - Rival Yemeni forces have clashed in the capital Sana'a, killing two soldiers, as protests continued across the country. Troops loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh clashed with those supporting Gen Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, who has defected to the opposition.

Saudi Arabia - Saudi authorities have freed 13 Shiite activists detained for taking part in demonstrations calling for the release of jailed relatives in the Eastern Province.

April 14, 2011

Bahrain - The government of Bahrain files a lawsuit in court seeking to disband two Shia opposition groups. State media report that the ministry of justice and Islamic affairs "is seeking to dissolve the Islamic Action Association and al-Wefaq". The two groups were accused of violating the constitution and "harming social peace and national unity".

Libya - NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen tells a foreign ministers' summit that the alliance needs "a few more" aircraft for its mission in Libya.

Tunisia - Tunisia's Justice Minister Tunisian, Lazhar Karoui Chebb, says that the authorities want to try former President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali on 18 different charges, including voluntary manslaughter and drug-trafficking. These charges are among 44 to be made against Ben Ali, his family and some former ministers.

Syria - President Bashar al-Assad forms a new government under recently-appointed Prime Minister Adel Safar.

Morocco - King Mohammed VI pardons or cuts the sentences of 190 detainees, including Islamist political prisoners, on the advice of National Human Rights Council (CNDH).

Saudi Arabia - Protests take place in Qatif and al-Awamiyah against the use of the Peninsula Shield Force troops in Bahrain. The protestors also demand the release of prisoners held without trial.

April 15, 2011

Jordan – According to agencies reports more than 2,000 demonstrators protest across Jordan to demand a greater political freedoms. About 1,000 protest outside Amman's municipal building after Friday prayers.

United Arab Emirates - Abdullah al Shehi, a retired army officer in his 60s, is taken for questioning from his home in Ras Al Khaimah. Al Shehhi is the head of the Al Shahouh Folklore Society, one of the four civil society associations that signed a second petition calling for universal suffrage in upcoming Federal National Council elections. Despite the fact that he is being treated for cancer he has been arrested three times before. He is released on 17 April.

Jordan – Islamist Salafist demonstrators armed with swords, daggers and clubs attacked police in the northern industrial town of Zarqa during protests. Zarqa is the hometown of al Qa'eda leader Abu Musab Zarqawi, who was killed in an air strike north-east of Baghdad in 2006. According to *The National* "Fifty-one policemen, including senior officers, were stabbed with knives, beaten with bats or hit with sharp tools."

Security forces arrest 70 Islamists after violent protests in which many people, most of them policemen, were hurt. The suspects, members of the ultra-conservative Sunni Muslim Salafist movement, are rounded up during raids in the town of Zarqa and nearby Rassifeh, hours after Islamist protesters attacked police. Among the detained are 22 prominent figures of the Islamist group including its chief in Jordan, Abdul Shahatah al-Tahawi, and other leaders of the movement: Abdul Qader, Amer Dmour, Abdul Rahman Naqeeb and Saad Hneiti.

April 21, 2011

United Arab Emirates - Mariam Mohammed Khalfan Al-Roumi, the UAE social affairs minister, issues a decree dissolving the elected board of directors of the Jurist Association - one of the country's most prominent civil society organizations. The decree states, the Jurist Association violated section 16 of the UAE's 2008 Law on Associations, which prohibits nongovernmental organizations and its members from interfering "in politics or in matters that impair State security and its ruling regime." The Jurist Association and three other non-governmental organizations had signed a petition seeking political reforms in the country. According to Human Rights Watch the action against the Jurist Association is part of a broader crackdown on peaceful dissent by the UAE government.

Saudi Arabia – Protests are reported in Qatif and al-Awamiyah against the use of the Peninsula Shield Force troops in Bahrain. The demonstrators also demand the release of prisoners held without trial.

April 22, 2011

Jordan – The authorities detain 136 people on "terrorism" charges after scores were hurt when Islamist Salafist protesters clashed with police in the northern city of Zarqa. A police spokesman states that "the involvement of 100 other people on the run... will be referred to the attorney general of state security once they are arrested."

Saudi Arabia – After meeting government officials, leading Saudi Shiite clerics call on protesters to end two months of demonstrations in the kingdom's oil-producing Eastern Province, in an apparent bowing to government demands.

Human Rights Watch reports that more than 160 Saudi activists have been arrested since February 2011.

April 23, 2011

Saudi Arabia – *Gulf News* reports civil disobedience actions by groups of women in Riyadh and other cities responding to a ban on their participation in the 22 September 2011 municipal elections. Ignoring the ban, groups of women were seen standing at the gates of registration centres in the capital city. About 60 Saudi women academicians and researchers have launched a Facebook campaign under the name 'Baladi' or 'My Country'. Fawzia Al Hani, chairperson of the group, told reporters that women who had approached registration centres in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam in the past three days — to press for their right to take part in the elections — were not violating any law. "The law reads: 'Woman has the right to cast her vote and stand as a candidate'," she added.

April 24, 2011

Morocco – Agence France Presse reports peaceful demonstrations of several thousand people Casablanca, Tangiers and Marrakesh. The protesters demand end to corruption, an independent judiciary, constitutional reforms, legislative elections as well as more jobs for university graduates. The marches are organised by the February 20 Movement.

April 25, 2011

United Arab Emirates – Foreign Ministers, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, confirms the arrests of several opposition individuals. "The public prosecutor in the UAE called some people [in] and those procedures are completely compliant with the UAE laws... We are confident that the UAE laws are transparent and clear. The justice system in the UAE is trustworthy and I don't think there is anyone who is above the law in any way." His statement is made at the conclusion of an EU-GCC meeting held at Emirates Palace hotel in Abu Dhabi

April 26, 2011

United Arab Emirates – The official news agency of the UAE, WAM, reports a statement by the country's Attorney General, Salim Saeed Kubaish, that five persons "were held... for being found committing crimes of instigation, breaking laws and perpetrating acts that pose threat to state security, undermining the public order, opposing the government system, and insulting the president, the vice president and the crown prince of Abu Dhabi." Four are named as Ahmed Mansour, Nasser Ahmed Khalfan bin Gaith, Fahad Salim Mohammed Salim Dalk, Hassan Ali al Khamis. The fifth, identified as Ahmed Abdul Khaleq, was not carrying identification papers.

Jordan - A military court charges 146 hardline Islamists with plotting terrorist acts in Jordan after they clashed with police in Zarqa earlier this month.

April 28, 2011

Morocco - A bomb attack in the main square of the Moroccan city of Marrakech kills 16 people, including 13 foreigners. At least 23 people were injured. The blast wrecked the Argana cafe in Djemaa el-Fna square, a popular tourist spot. The remote-controlled nail bomb was detonated at lunchtime.¹⁰ Three Moroccans were subsequently arrested in connection with the bombing.

Syria – Hundreds of members of the ruling Ba'ath Party resign in protest at the increasingly bloody crackdown of pro-democracy demonstrators.

UN Security Council fails to agree on a European and US-backed statement condemning the government's use of violence. The draft proposed by France, Britain, Germany and Portugal is opposed by several members of the Security Council, including Russia, Lebanon and India.

¹⁰ The attack was the deadliest in Morocco since 12 suicide bombers killed 33 people in co-ordinated strikes in Casablanca in 2003.

Saudi Arabia – Agence France Presse reports the arrest of 20-30 Shiites, including two bloggers, for allegedly taking part in protests in the oil - rich Eastern Province. The list of arrested include prominent writer Hussein al-Yusef and his son.

April 29, 2011

Morocco – The MAP news agency reports that the death toll in Marrakech terrorist attacks has risen to 16. At least 11 of those killed are foreigners, and at least 20 people are injured.

Libya – Libyan government sends text messages to mobile phones of its armed supporters, urging them to stop firing in the air in order to save ammunition for "our crusader enemies."

In Tripoli residents report rising tensions over fuel shortages. Witnesses say there have been clashes between residents and troops, some with stones and tear gas, at gas stations in recent days, after security forces tried to cut into huge lines.

Hundreds of refugees fleeing Libya land on the Italian island of Lampedusa in a fresh wave of arrivals of around 1,300 migrants in the past two days.

Syria - Hamza al-Khateeb, a 13-year old boy is detained by security forces during a protest in Saida, 10km east of the town of Daraa. According to eye-witnesses; "People were killed and wounded, some were arrested. It was chaotic we didn't know at that point what had happened to Hamza. He just disappeared."

April 30, 2011

Libya – Muammar Gaddafi makes his latest appearance on state TV. In a speech lasting one and a half hours, he reaffirms his commitment to a ceasefire but added it must not be one sided.

May 1, 2011

Libya – UN staff leaves Tripoli because of the deteriorating situation.

Saudi Arabia – Authorities detain Fadhil al-Manasif, a Shiite activist in the town of Awwamiyya . He has been documenting demonstrations in the Eastern Province.

May 2, 2011

Libya – Funeral of Gaddafi's youngest son Saif Al-Arab Gaddafi takes place at the El Hani cemetery in Tripoli. He was killed with three of Gaddafi's grandchildren during air

strikes by coalition forces on 30 April. Large crowd chanting support for Muammar Gaddafi attends the funeral.

Syria - Reuters reports that Syrian secret police agents wielding assault rifles arrested human rights campaigner Diana Jawabra outside her home in the Mezza West district of Damascus.

A military spokesman announces the arrest of 499 people in the town of Daraa, a week after thousands of troops backed by tanks swooped on the town to crush protests. The spokesman also announced the deaths of two members of the security forces "as well as 10 terrorists."

May 3, 2011

Libya – The Swiss foreign ministry announces the freezing of around \$415 million from funds owned by Gaddafi.

Reuters reports attack by Gaddafi's forces on the rebel held town of Zintan in the Western Libyan mountains.

Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the prosecutor for the International Criminal Court, tells the UN security council that the Libyan regime systematically committed and covered up war crimes.

Syria - Syrian security forces swept into the coastal city of Baniyas. The city centre has been under the control of demonstrators since Assad loyalists known as "al-shabbiha" opened fire on 10 April after a protest demanding the "overthrow of the regime".

May 5, 2011

Yemen - The Associated Press reports that on this day a drone strike by US special operations forces targeted US-born al-Qaida cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, but a malfunction caused rockets to miss him by a matter of minutes.

Syria – Mass arrests are made by Syrian soldiers in the Damascus suburb of Saqba - scenes of demonstrations against the regime last week.

Libya – Britain orders the expulsion of a further two Libyan diplomats from the Libyan embassy in London.

The Red Star 1, a ship carrying 1,138 people evacuated from the besieged Libyan city of Misrata, arrives in Benghazi.

The second meeting of the Contact Group on Libya is held in Rome and co-chaired by Italy and the State of Qatar, with the participation of 22 countries and representatives from the United Nations, the Arab League, NATO, the European Union, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Gulf Cooperation Council to discuss developments in and prospects for the situation in Libya. The African Union attended as an invitee. Observers included representatives from 6 countries and from OCHA and the World Bank.

Egypt - Former interior minister Habib al-Adly is sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for money laundering and profiteering.

May 6, 2011

Syria – Britain, France and Germany are again pressing for the UN Security Council to respond to the Syrian government's deadly crackdown on protesters.

Protests are reported in many towns including Jama, Latakia, Deir al-Zour, Salamieh, Baniyas, Homs, Derbassiye, Zabadani and the Midan district in Damascus.

Saudi Arabia - Hundreds of demonstrators take to the streets of Qatif protesting at crackdown on demonstrations in Bahrain.

Yemen - Hundreds of thousands of people take part in a rally against the Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Libya - France orders 14 more Libya diplomats to leave France within 48 hours.

May 7, 2011

Syria – Syrian opposition figures called on president Bashar al-Assad to: “Stop shooting at demonstrators, allow peaceful demonstrations, remove all your photos and those of your father, release all political prisoners, allow political pluralism and free elections in six months.”

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton released the following statement about the violence in Syria: I am deeply troubled that the Syrian government chooses to continue to use force and intimidation against the Syrian people. The United States condemns in the strongest terms the Syrian government’s actions over the past five weeks and calls on it to immediately cease the killing, arrest, and harassment of protestors, activists, and journalists. I am particularly troubled by ongoing reports of deaths of citizens at the hands of the Syrian government, including accounts today that at least 30 people were killed when Syrian security forces again opened fire on peaceful protestors throughout the country. On behalf of the

United States, I extend our sincerest condolences to the families and friends of those who have lost their lives.

The Syrian people, like people everywhere, have the inherent right to exercise their universal freedoms, including peaceful assembly, expression, and speech. The Syrian government must respond to the Syrian people's call for change. It must realize that violence and intimidation will not answer their call.

The Syrian government's actions are neither those of a responsible government nor a credible member of the international community. We will continue to hold to account senior Syrian officials and others responsible for the reprehensible human rights abuses against the Syrian people. We welcome the European Union's decision to join us in these efforts with similar steps. We will also continue to work both unilaterally and with our international partners to determine the most effective next steps if the Syrian government chooses not to abandon its current path.

Jordan - Dozens of protesters staged demonstrations near the Syrian embassy in Amman.

May 8, 2011

Egypt - Angry demonstrations erupt in the capital after a Coptic church in the Imbaba (a poor neighbourhood in the north-west of Cairo) was burned down. Fighting broke out over rumours, which turned out to be false, that a Christian woman was being held inside a church and prevented from converting to Islam. Egyptian media described the Imbaba attackers as Salafis¹¹ – fundamentalist Muslims who want the imposition of sharia law.

Syria – Agencies report large demonstrations in Homs, Zabadani, Douma, Hama and several suburbs of Damascus. Thousands of people are arrested by Syrian police and security services.

Yemen - Hundreds of thousands of people take part in a rally against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. President calls the demonstrators outlaws and terrorists.

Morocco - Thousands of Moroccans march in Marrakesh to demand reforms and condemn the 28 April terrorist attack.

¹¹ Salafis demonstrated in front of the US embassy in Cairo after the killing of Osama Bin Laden.

Bahrain - King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa issues a Royal decree lifting the State of National Safety from 1 June 2011.

May 9, 2011

Syria – Mathew Weaver of *The Guardian* gives the following account of the situation in Syria today: "There are military operations still going on in Homs, Baniyas and Tafas and we now have checkpoints and gunfire in six areas around Damascus, including Moadamiyeh, Harasta and Douma."

The Guardian quotes western diplomats in Damascus saying that Iran is playing an increasingly active role in helping the Syrian regime in its crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. There has been a "significant" increase in the number of Iranian personnel in Syria since protests began in mid-March.

The EU imposes restrictive measures against Syria. The full statement by the Council of the European Union states:

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 9 May 2011

EU imposes restrictive measures against Syria

The Council has adopted a regulation and a decision providing for an embargo on exports to Syria of arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression, as well as a visa ban and an assets freeze.

The visa ban and the assets freeze targets 13 officials and associates of the Syrian regime who have been identified by the Council as being responsible for the violent repression against the civilian population in Syria.

The decision and the regulation, together with the list of persons subject to the restrictive measures, will be published in the Official Journal on 10 May 2011.

Rami Abdul-Rahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, says security forces are conducting house-to-house raids to detain dissidents, with raids focused in Homs, Baniyas, some Damascus suburbs and villages around Daraa.

Libya - State television shows footage of Gaddafi wearing brown burnouse and sunglasses visiting a school in Tripoli reportedly in morning of 7 May, with pupils shown shouting anti-Western slogans. He could be seen entering the school surrounded by bodyguards.

NATO commander of the Libya operation Lieutenant-General Charles Bouchard states that air strikes hit armoured vehicles firing on civilians near both Misurata and Ajdabiya. According to him NATO jets also struck ammunition stockpiles east of Tripoli being used in attacks on Misurata and other populated areas. The Associated Press reports that warplanes destroyed 17 tanks and damaged nine more.

Yemen – Al Jazeera reports that security forces in Yemen opened fire on protesters in the southern city of Taiz, killing at least one man and wounding 10 others.

May 10, 2011

Syria – The EU publishes details of restrictive measures against 13 Syrian officials it has accused of playing a role in the violent repression against anti-government demonstrations. The list does not include president Bashar al-Assad, reportedly at the request of certain member states, including Germany. The measures - asset freezes and travel bans - are part of a package of sanctions that also include an arms embargo that goes into effect on 10 May 2011 as part of EU efforts to force Syria to end violence against anti-government protesters.

1. Maher al-Assad

President Bashar al-Assad's 43-year-old brother. Principal overseer of violence against demonstrators. Commander of the army's 4th Division, member of the Baath Party Central Command, strongman of the Republican Guard.

2. Ali Mamlouk

The 65-year-old head of the General Intelligence Service, a position he has held since 2005. Involved in violence against demonstrators.

3. Mohammed Ibrahim al-Chaar

Minister of interior. Involved in violence against demonstrators.

4. Atef Najib

Former head of Political Security in the city of Daraa; involved in violence against demonstrators.

5. Hafez Makhoulf

A 40-year-old colonel and the Head of Unit in the General Intelligence Directorate, Damascus Branch. He is close to Maher al-Assad and involved in violence against demonstrators.

6. Mohammed Dib Zeitoun

Head of Political Security; involved in violence against demonstrators.

7. Amjad al-Abbas

Head of Political Security in the city of Baniyas; involved in violence against demonstrators in Baida.

8. Rami Makhoul

The 41-year-old first cousin of Bashar and Maher al-Assad and one of the most powerful businessmen in Syria. Described as an "associate" of Maher, Makhoul bankrolls the regime, allowing violence against demonstrators.

9. Abd al-Fatah Qudsiyah

Head of Syrian Military Intelligence; involved in the repression against the civilian population.

10. Jamil Hassan

Head of Syrian Air Force Intelligence; involved in the repression against the civilian population.

11. Rustom Ghazali

Head of Syrian Military Intelligence - Damascus Countryside Branch; involved in the repression against the civilian population.

12. Fawwaz al-Assad

A leader of the Shabiha, or undercover militia; involved in the repression against the civilian population.

13. Munder al-Assad

Took part in the repression against the civilian population as part of the Shabiha militia.

The Guardian quotes the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights saying that at least 400 people had been rounded up in the coastal town of Baniyas since 7 May, adding to an estimated 7,000 already in detention across the country.

The non-governmental National Organization for Human Rights in Syria says 757 civilians have died since the countrywide protests against president Bashar al-Assad began on 18 March.

Under pressure from fellow member states, Syria withdraws its candidacy for membership on the UN Human Rights Council. Syria's candidacy is replaced by Kuwait.

A website called the Committee of Martyrs of the Syrian Revolution names 757 people killed in the violence in Syria in last seven weeks.

Libya - NATO warplanes struck at least four sites in Tripoli in the heaviest bombing of the city in weeks.

Egypt - Former tourism minister Zoheir Garranah is jailed for 5 years .

Gulf Cooperation Council – Agence France-Presse and Reuters report that Jordan and Morocco have asked to join the Gulf Cooperation Council.

May 11, 2011

Libya - Gaddafi makes his first appearance on Libyan state television since 9 April. He is filmed from a distance sitting with tribal leaders.

NATO says it has carried out more than 2,400 air strikes in Libya since March 31.

Yemen - Yemeni forces open fire on demonstrators in three major cities, killing at least 18 and wounding hundreds in one of the fiercest bouts of violence witnessed in nearly three months of popular unrest.

Syria - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urges Syria to halt mass arrests of anti-government protesters and to heed calls for reform.

Bahrain - Al Jazeera reports that the Bahraini police carried out raids on girls' schools as part of a crackdown against pro-democracy protests.

May 12, 2011

Syria - Security forces arrest civil rights activist Najati Tayara on a street in Homs.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu states that the outside world should not interfere in Syria's internal affairs.

We also think that the outside world should not interfere in Syria's internal affairs so as to avoid adding complicating factors. We hope the international community can play a constructive role in maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East.

US embassy in Damascus issues a statement on calling the Syrian government to allow peaceful protests. The statement reads:

The United States Embassy witnessed, on the evening of May 12, the third peaceful demonstration this week of protesters who disagree with American policy towards Syria. The United States respects the right of these demonstrators to express themselves in peaceful marches.

The U.S. Embassy regrets that the Syrian Government has denied the rights of thousands of other Syrians to demonstrate peacefully to criticize Syrian policy. Most recently, on the evening of May 11, Syrian security forces, using clubs and batons, brutally assaulted a group of Aleppo university students who sought to march peacefully to demand an end to Syrian security operations targeting some Syrian cities.

The United States believes there should be no double standard. The Syrian Government should grant all Syrians the right to express themselves peacefully, as required of it by its signature on the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

May 13, 2011

Libya - Gaddafi's compound in Tripoli is hit by NATO rockets again, a few hours after he appeared in public for the first time in almost two weeks. Gaddafi was shown on state television in a traditional brown robe addressing tribal leaders.

Saudi Arabia – Protests are reported in the cities of al-Awamiyah and Qatif in solidarity with anti-government protesters in Bahrain. The demonstrators also call for the immediate withdrawal of Saudi troops from Bahrain.

Egypt - Tens of thousands of people gather again in Cairo's Tahrir Square. The rally is being held as a show of religious unity after Muslim-Christian clashes, last weekend, left 12 dead.

Reuters reports the arrest of Suzanne Mubarak, wife of the deposed Egyptian president. She is detained for 15 days pending further investigations into corruption allegations.

Syria – UN reports that up to 850 people have been killed since the violent crackdown in Syria began.

Thousands of security personnel have successfully crushed a protest in Midan, a Sunni neighbourhood of Damascus which two weeks ago saw the largest anti-government protests in the capital since the unrest began.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warns against foreign intervention in Syria, calling on its opposition not to seek a repeat of the "Libya scenario".

Yemen - Vast crowds of people gather in Taiz, in southern Yemen, to protest against president Saleh's government.

Qatar's news agency QNA said reports that Qatar has withdrawn from talks to end Yemen's crisis based on a plan to allow Saleh to step down with immunity from prosecution. "The government [of Qatar] was obliged to take the decision because of the stalling and

delays in the signing of the agreement, the escalation of the events, the severe confrontations and the lack of wisdom which contradict the spirit of the initiative."

May 14, 2011

Syria - Representatives of Syria's Kurds, the largest ethnic minority in the country, call on all opposition forces inside and outside the country to join together to form a single political body responsible for overseeing a transition from dictatorship to democracy.

May 15, 2011

Libya - The head of Britain's armed forces, Sir David Richards, says NATO should step up its military campaign against the Gaddafi regime by broadening the range of bombing targets.

In his Sunday address Pope Benedict XVI expresses his "apprehension" about the conflict in Libya and calls for "negotiation and dialogue to prevail over violence, with the help of the international bodies who are working to find a solution to the crisis."

Egypt - Several Coptic Christians are injured in Cairo after they were attacked at a demonstration outside Egypt's state TV building. A Christian leader calls for an end to the protest.

Reuters reports that Suzanne Mubarak, wife of the deposed Egyptian president, has been arrested on corruption allegations.

Yemen - Vast anti-government demonstrations take place in Sana'a and in the southern city of Taiz. A defiant president Saleh described the protesters as "saboteurs".

Israel - As many as 15 people are killed when Israeli troops opened fire on pro-Palestinian demonstrators who breached its borders on three fronts. Four of those killed are shot in a Golan Heights village after Syria appeared to allow thousands of demonstrators to cross the border. Israel blamed Syria for the violence and accused it of trying to divert attention from its political unrest. Syria accused Israel of "criminal practices".

Saudi Arabia - About 1,000 people in the city of Qatif defy a ban on demonstrations and stage peaceful protest to demand the withdrawal of Saudi troops from Bahrain.

May 16, 2011

Libya – According to Agence France Presse, NATO bombs struck the Bab al-Aziziya area of Tripoli where Muammar Gaddafi resides. Three explosions were reported, and the blasts also evidently shook a hotel near the city centre where many foreign journalists live.

International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo requests ICC judges to issue arrest warrants against Muammar Abu Minya Gaddafi, Saif Al Islam Gaddafi and the Head of the Intelligence Abdullah Al Sanousi from crimes against humanity committed in Libya since February 2011.

May 17, 2011

Libya – A Tunisian security source reports that the chairman of Libya's National Oil Corporation, Shukri Ghanem, has defected from Muammar Gaddafi's administration and fled to neighbouring Tunisia. Ghanem, an internationally respected technocrat, is credited with liberalising Libya's economy and energy sector.

Russia hosts a representative of Gaddafi's government in Moscow and calls on Tripoli to stop using force against civilians, comply fully with UN Security Council resolutions and withdraw armed groups from cities. The talks indicate Russia's desire to act as peacemaker and preserve its influence in Libya, where it has billions of dollars of arms, energy and infrastructure contracts.

NATO air strikes hit government buildings in Tripoli. British planes hit a number of targets include a building used to train Gaddafi's bodyguards.

Egypt - Egypt's former first lady Suzanne Mubarak is released on bail after agreeing to hand over assets to the state.

May 18, 2011

Yemen - A deal that would end the rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh within a month is due to be signed by the Yemeni president and the opposition today. Two previous near-deals fell through at the last minute. The president refuses to sign this one too, at the last moment despite a telephone call from John Brennan, a White House adviser on national security, urging him to sign the agreement.

Syria - The Associated Press quotes an interview given by president Bashar al-Assad to *Al-Watan* newspaper in which he says that the country's security forces have made mistakes during the uprising against his regime. He does not acknowledge any responsibility himself, but blames poorly trained police officers at least in part for a crackdown that has killed more than 850 people over the past two months.

Syrian activists claim 8 more people have been confirmed killed in Tel Kelakh, which has been bombarded by tanks for a fourth day.

Switzerland imposes embargo on arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression.

Saudi Arabia – BBC website publishers report by Michael Buchanan, “Saudi woman seeks to put women in the driving seat”, giving an account of the driving campaign by Najla Hariri - believed to be the only woman regularly driving in a Saudi city. The 45-year-old, mother of five, says she was inspired by the protests taking place elsewhere in the Middle East.

May 19, 2011

United States - President Barack Obama delivers an address on the United States' policy on the Middle East and North Africa at the State Department in Washington. He describes the National Transitional Council as “legitimate and credible.” Middle East analysts say the president’s speech on the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa was effective in aligning American policy with the sweeping changes in the region. However, they also say his remarks on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could prove to be a major distraction from his overall message.

May 20, 2011

Libya - NATO planes hit eight Gaddafi warships.

Syria – More than 20 people are reported to have been killed in the largest and most widespread demonstrations in Syria since protesters took to the streets 10 weeks ago. Most of the casualties took place in the city of Homs, but there are reports of violence across Syria.

The Syrian government claims it is withdrawing forces from the besieged border town of Talkalakh. Opposition groups say at least 35 people have been killed in the town in the last four days.

Morocco – Reuters reports that in a daring breach of protocol, a group of jobless graduates worked their way through a crowd to near the king after he led Friday prayers and chanted "Your majesty, we want jobs." State television cut off a live broadcast as the slogans began. The outburst was almost unprecedented in a country where the king is treated with utmost reverence.

Yemen - President Ali Abdullah Saleh promises early elections in what is being seen as another stalling tactic.

May 21, 2011

Saudi Arabia - Manal al-Sharif, a 32-year old mother and women's rights activist who helped to start a women's right to drive campaign, is detained for six hours after a video showing her driving in Khobar in the Eastern Province. In reaction to al-Sharif's arrest, several more Saudi women published videos of themselves driving during the following days.

May 22, 2011

Morocco - Moroccan police beat protesters who defied a ban on demonstrations across the country, leading to arrests and dozens of injuries. According to Reuters, in major cities, including Rabat, Casablanca, Tangier, Fes and Oujda, police armed with batons and shields moved people off the streets wherever they gathered. The demonstrations end in a huge number of casualties and arrests. The 20 February Movement reports some 90 protesters hurt, six with fractured arms and two with fractured legs. Reuters suggests that the violence appears to signal a tougher government line against the protest movement, which has become more defiant after demonstrations started in February but has yet to attract mass public support. The protests were in response to a call by the February 20 Movement, a loose youth-led network from various ideological backgrounds, mostly leftist and Islamist. Many are affiliated with authorised political parties. Relying mostly on the Internet, the group is pressing King Mohammed VI to establish a parliamentary monarchy, enforce accountability and grant the judiciary full independence.

Syria - King Abdullah II of Jordan urged Syrian president Bashar al-Assad to reach out to protesters. His call is echoed by Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa, who appeals to Assad to accelerate socio-economic and political reforms, provide more freedoms and announce new elections.

Yemen - President Ali Abdullah Saleh once again refuses to sign a deal that would see him leave office in return for legal immunity. Western and Arab diplomats, including the British ambassador to Yemen, are trapped inside the UAE embassy in Sana'a for several hours by a mob loyal to Saleh.

May 23, 2011

Yemen – President Ali Abdullah Saleh refuses, at the last moment, to sign a deal that would see him leave office in return for legal immunity - deal negotiated by GCC.

President Saleh's forces attack the house of Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar's house in Hasaba, Sana'a. In response Sheikh Sadeq issues the "Tribal Call" which in effect calls every tribesmen to join him in defending his honor, attacking one's house is a great dishonor in tribal law. The attack on Sadeq's residence signals irreconcilable breakdown between the two most important tribal confederations.

Libya – Reuters reports that Gaddafi forces are shelling neighbourhoods in the west and south of the western city of Misrata.

Syria - The European Union extends its sanctions on Syria to president Bashar al-Assad, and other senior officials.

Egypt - Hundreds of Egyptians stage an unprecedented show of online defiance against their country's military leadership, taking to their blogs to write at times scathing critiques of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) that assumed power after longtime president Hosni Mubarak stepped down in February.

Saudi Arabia – Manal al-Sharif who drove a car in Khobar is re-arrested. The Khobar prison chief Ayoub ben Nahit is quoted in *al-Watan* newspaper as saying Sherif faced accusations of "violating the rules and the system by driving her car, roaming the streets of the province". He also accuses her of "inciting public opinion" by posting video of her driving a car on YouTube.

May 24, 2011

Libya – It is announced that Britain and France are to deploy attack helicopters against Libya in an attempt to break the military stalemate.

Syria - The Guardian profiles five key figures in the Syrian opposition who are emerging as possible leaders of the Syrian rebellion: Suhair Atassi; Burhan Ghalioun; Radwan Ziadeh; Adnan Mohamed and Michael Kilo.

Switzerland announces the freezing of assets of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad.

Egypt – The prosecutor general, Mahmoud Abdel-Meguid, announces that former president Hosni Mubarak and his two sons, Gamal and Alaa, will stand trial on charges of abusing power and amassing wealth.

May 25, 2011

Yemen – The Associated Press reports a message of defiance from president Ali Abdullah Saleh. He cited as saying that he will not step down or allow the country to become a "failed state". His spokesman quoted him saying "I will not leave power and I will not leave Yemen."

Libya – During a press conference in London, President Barack Obama states that winning the war in Libya would be a "slow, steady process". He plays down hopes of an early breakthrough. "I think that there may be a false perception that there is a whole bunch of secret super-effective air assets that are in a warehouse somewhere that could just be pulled out and would somehow immediately solve the situation in Libya... That's not the case... People have to be patient."

Syria – The body of Hamza Ali Al-Khatteb, a 13-year-old boy detained by Syrian Airforce Intelligence on 29 April is released to his family. The child had spent nearly a month in the custody of Syrian security, and when they finally returned Hamza's corpse it bore the scars of brutal torture: his eyes were swollen and black and there were identical bullet wounds where he had apparently been shot through both arms, the bullets tearing a hole in his sides and lodging in his belly. Lacerations, bruises and burns to his feet, elbows, face and knees, consistent with the use of electric shock devices and of being whipped with cable, both techniques of torture documented by Human Rights Watch as being used in Syrian prisons. On Hamza's chest was a deep, dark burn mark. His neck was broken and his penis cut off. His name has become a rallying cry for protesters. A Facebook page honoring his death had more than 105,000 connections by the end of June 2011.

Britain, France, Germany and Portugal circulate a draft resolution to the UN Security Council condemning Syria for its bloody crackdown against pro-democracy protesters.

May 26, 2011

Yemen - Fighting rages for a fourth day in Sana'a between anti-government tribesmen and forces loyal to Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Witnesses report that the house of a Yemeni tribal leader was severely damaged in the fighting.

The United States calls for a ceasefire in Yemen and urges president Saleh to stand down. The French government blames Saleh for the violence.

The US has ordered all non-essential diplomats to leave Yemen and urged all Americans there to depart.

Libya - Pentagon spokesman Colonel Dave Lapan states that the US military is supplying bombs and spare parts to allies carrying out strikes in the NATO-led air campaign

against the Gaddafi regime. "We have provided material support, including munitions, to Allies and partners engaged in operations in Libya" since 1 April. The statement is the public confirmation that the Pentagon is providing ammunition to NATO allies, amid reports that some countries were running out of supplies of precision-guided bombs or parts. According to Colonel Lapan since NATO took the lead in the air campaign on 1 April, the United States has provided allies and partners with about \$24.3 million worth of "repair parts, ammunition, and technical support."

According to Agence France Presse five powerful explosions hit the Libyan capital Tripoli during the night rocking an area where Muammar Gaddafi has his residence. A column of smoke is seen rising from Gaddafi's compound.

Saudi Arabia – The investigation into the alleged offences committed by Manal al-Sharif, a 32-year old mother who drove around the eastern city of Khobar, is extended by another ten days. She is kept in prison during the period of inquiries. It is disputed by lawyers whether it is illegal for women to drive under national law but it is socially and religiously unacceptable in many quarters.

May 27, 2011

Yemen - Hundreds of militants, alleged to be al-Qaeda fighters, seize Zinjibar, the capital of the country's southern Abyan province, taking advantage of a breakdown of authority resulting from the government's battle with armed tribesmen seeking to topple president Ali Abdullah Saleh. According to Al Jazeera up to 300 fighters entered the southern coastal town and took over "everything" in the area. At least four protesters were reportedly shot dead by security forces in the city of Taiz.

One of Yemen's principal tribal leaders Sheikh Sadeq al-Ahmar announces a ceasefire in fighting between his Hashid tribe and forces loyal to president Saleh. He told a rally of hundreds of thousands of people that he backed a peaceful uprising. The ceasefire has held in Sana'a but outside the capital a tribal militia seized control of two army bases prompting government air strikes.

Egypt - An estimated 100,000 Egyptian protesters return to Cairo's Tahrir Square on a 'Second Day of Rage'. One of their demands is the replacement of the ruling military council.

Syria - There are reports of protests across Syria.

Libya - Gaddafi's forces launch rocket attacks overnight in the rebel-held town of Zintan and are fighting rebels on the outskirts of Misrata, which Gaddafi's enemies also

control. In Tripoli, several large explosions were heard and a column of smoke seen rising from Gaddafi's Bab al-Aziziyah compound.

Libyan Prime Minister Al-Baghdadi Ali Al-Mahmoudi gives a rare news conference during which he repeats offers of a ceasefire. In the past similar offers were rejected by the opponents of the regime because they say Gaddafi's departure is a precondition. Al-Mahmoudi states: "Libya is serious about a ceasefire," but adds: "The leader Muammar Gaddafi is the leader of the Libyan people; he decides what the Libyan people think. He is in the hearts of the Libyan people."

Speaking on the sidelines of the G8 summit at Deauville in northwestern France, Russian deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov issues the strongest call yet for the embattled Muammar Gaddafi to stand down. "We believe that Colonel Gaddafi has forfeited legitimacy due to his actions... indeed we need to help him go," Ryabkov said. The statement marks a dramatic change of tone for Moscow, which has been critical of UN-sanctioned Western strikes on Gaddafi's forces as they try to quash a pro-democracy rebellion.

According the Russian daily newspaper *Kommersant* reports that US President Barack Obama asked his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev to convey to Muammar Gaddafi that he will remain alive if he leaves Libya. The two presidents met on the sidelines of the G8 summit in France. *Kommersant* report suggests that both Obama and French President Nicolas Sarkozy were pressing Russia to accept the role of mediator because they feared the conflict was reaching a stalemate. "Acknowledging that the conflict has dragged on for too long, and the West has severed all connections with Gaddafi and his circle Russia has been offered to act as a mediator in negotiations with the Libyan leader."

May 29, 2011

United Arab Emirates - Dr Anwar Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister of State for Federal National Council (FNC) Affairs and Chairman of the National Election Committee (NEC), states during a lecture at the UAE University in Al Ain, that this year, it is expected that around 70,000 Emiratis will cast their votes in [indirect] elections on 24 September. This would be a nine-fold increase on 2006, when 7,757 Emiratis — 6,595 men and 1,162 women — turned out to vote. "This year's election campaigns will be more organised and more up-to-date as we gained good experience in the 2006 elections," he said. "For political consolidations, we are following strategic programmes step by step. Now we are in the third stage of this manual and it would expand extensively. In

the coming years, we would move to the fourth step, which would open up more public participation in the electoral process of the country.

Saudi Arabia - King Abdullah issues a decree approving 18 new salary scales for government employees. The new scales that came into effect a day earlier include a 15-percent inflationary allowance.

Morocco – Some 15,000 people gathered in the Sbata district of Casablanca, responding to a call from 20 February Movement, to demand more democratic freedoms, jobs and better social conditions. According to CNN report, police sealed off streets around the district to block people, swelling the numbers, and then sent several 30-strong squads of truncheon-wielding officers charging into the crowd.

May 30, 2011

Yemen – Hundreds of soldiers loyal to Yemen's embattled president Ali Abdullah Saleh storm a protest camp in the southern city of Taiz killing at least 20 people.

At least 30 people reported killed in strikes on city of Zinjibar, which is said to be held by al-Qaeda-linked fighters.

Syria - Syrian troops bombard a town in the central province of Homs with artillery, killing at least one person.

Reuters reports that tanks have stormed the town of Talbiseh in the central province of Homs.

President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela expresses support for Syria's president Bashar al-Assad. He blames "terrorists" for the protests in the Syrian city of Daraa.

Libya – South African President Jacob Zuma arrives in Tripoli for talks with Muammar Gaddafi. According to Xinhua news agency “Zuma, during his several hours' visit to Tripoli, held what he described as a ‘detailed and long’ talk with the embattled Libyan leader, during which he informed Gaddafi of ‘recent steps and measures taken by the AU,’ and iterated an AU call for dialogue between the Libyans.”

Eight high-ranking Libyan military officers, including five generals, appear at an Italian government-arranged news conference in Rome, saying they were part of a group of up to 120 military officials and soldiers who defected from Gaddafi in recent days.

President Hugo Chávez announces that envoys from Muammar Gaddafi's government have flown to Venezuela to discuss ways to resolve Libya's conflict.

May 31, 2011

Bahrain – King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa calls for talks on reform involving all parties in the Gulf Arab state "without preconditions" from 1 July. The King's address does not offer a framework or agenda of negotiations. "Who does not want more efficient government performance? Who does not want more effective legislative representation? Or political associations and civil society groups that work in the framework of national unity and the rule of law?"

Yemen - Clashes erupt in Sana'a, shattering a truce between loyalist troops and dissident tribesmen, as security forces shot dead seven protesters, sparking strong condemnation from Washington. Government forces attacked the heavily guarded home of Sheikh Sadeq Al-Ahmar. Ahmar's armed followers fought back and reoccupied several government buildings they had seized in the first round of fighting between the sides last week. Live ammunition against protesters in Taiz is used by government forces and seven protesters are reported shot dead. Elsewhere, 13 Yemeni soldiers are killed by militants in south Yemen: eight died from clashes with suspected Al-Qaeda fighters, and five others in a car bomb that targeted a military convoy. In the south suspected Al-Qaeda fighters killed 11 soldiers and wounded 31 in separate attacks near Zinjibar, capital of Anbar province. Two more soldiers died of wounds sustained earlier. That latest attacks bring to 41 the number of soldiers and civilians killed in fighting in or near Zinjibar since 27 May.

Members of the Hashid tribe seize the headquarters of General People's Congress in Sana'a - the ruling party in Yemen.

June 1, 2011

Syria - Human rights activists report that Syrian troops have bombed the southern town of Hiraq (near Daraa) killing at least eight people.

Human Rights Watch publishes report detailing "crimes against humanity" in Daraa, since protests began there on 18 March. It is based on more than 50 interviews with victims and witnesses to abuses. Some of the deadliest incidents documented in the report include:

An attack on al-Omari mosque, which served as a rallying point for protesters and a makeshift hospital for the wounded protesters, and attacks on ensuing protests from 23 to 25 March, killing more than 30 protesters;

Attacks on demonstrators during two protests on 8 April, resulting in at least 25 deaths; Attacks during a protest and a funeral procession in the town of Izraa on 22 and 23 April, resulting in at least 34 deaths; Killings during the blockade of Daraa and neighboring

villages beginning on 25 April, and during an effort by residents of neighboring towns to break the siege on 29 April, which left up to 200 dead.

Syrian dissidents meet at an opposition conference in the Turkish town of Antalya. They declare that their main aim, at this stage, is to get the UN security council to pass a resolution referring members of president Assad's regime to the international criminal court.

Bahrain – The authorities lift martial law on in what the government hopes will be a sign to tourists and business of a return to normal. With Bahrain's state of emergency over, military prosecutors can no longer call in civilians but military courts will still hear several cases started since martial law began on 15 March. Forty-eight doctors and nurses are on military trial on charges ranging from incitement against the government to storing weapons and seizing control of a major hospital during the unrest. Twenty-one opposition figures, seven of whom are abroad, are on military trial on charges of seeking to overthrow the system. Most of them are from parties that called for a republic. During the martial law dozens of Shiite places of worship were demolished and four people died in custody.

Yemen Overnight Street battles in Sana'a leave at least 41 people dead, some trapped in burning buildings. Arab embassies are evacuating their staff and the few remaining western residents are being advised to leave urgently. *The Guardian* reports: "No safety, no electricity, no water, no phone network, and people with no jobs, the situation is very bad these days." Reuters reports that at least 120 have been killed in the clashes between tribal fighters and government troops since they began last week.

Libya – NATO and its partners in the military campaign to protect Libyan civilians decided to extend their mission another 90 days. The decision is made during a meeting of ambassadors from the 28 NATO countries plus ambassadors from the five non-NATO countries participating in the Libya campaign - Jordan, Qatar, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco.

Libya's oil minister Shukri Ghanem officially defects to the anti-Gaddafi side. He tells reporters that he had left the regime two weeks ago and arrived in Rome on 31 May.

Egypt - The Middle East News Agency reports that, Abdel-Aziz Omar, head of the court of appeals, has issued the trial date for the ousted Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak on charges of corruption and intentionally killing protesters. It will start on 3 August. His two sons will also be tried on charges of corruption.

June 2, 2011

Bahrain - Formula One race in Bahrain is cancelled after teams objected to it being rescheduled in October.

Syria - Syrian security forces continue their assault on the central town of Rastan, hitting it with artillery and gunfire.

Morocco - Khaled al-Amari, 30-year-old member of Morocco's main opposition group, dies after reportedly suffering a severe beating at the hands of police during a protest in the city of Safi. Officers deny that his death was a direct result of police violence, despite eyewitness accounts that he was severely beaten.

Saudi Arabia - Reuters reports the arrival of President Barack Obama's chief counter-terrorism adviser, John Brennan, to Saudi Arabia en route to the United Arab Emirates. Apparently he is seeking help from both countries to pressure Saleh into stepping down.

June 3, 2011

Yemen – Rocket attack on a mosque in the presidential compound in Sana'a, by opposition tribesmen determined to topple the president, kills 11 bodyguards and seriously wounds five senior officials who were worshipping alongside president Saleh. The president is seriously wounded in the attack. Reuters subsequently reported that the president's injuries were more serious than previously reported. Saleh was initially said to have received shrapnel wound. However, according to Yemeni and US officials he also suffered burns to over roughly 40 percent of his body. Two members of Saleh's extended family are also injured in the strike - Kannan Saleh, a son of Yemen's central security chief, and Tarek Saleh, the son of a Republican Guard commander.

Saleh delivers an audio address on television to reassure supporters, but his voice sounds laboured and the address was made accompanied by an old photograph of him on the screen.

Earlier Friday, intense government shelling flattened the homes of two tribal leaders and a military general who also joined the opposition.

Kuwait - Around five thousand Kuwaitis, including a delegate from Kuwait Lawyers Society take part in a demonstration held at the 'Will Yard' (Demonstration Yard) outside the parliament house under the slogan 'For the Sake of Kuwait'.

Bahrain - A motor racing council meeting in Barcelona agrees to reinstate the Formula One Grand Prix race cancelled earlier this year after pro-democracy protests erupted in the kingdom. The race is now scheduled for 30 October.

Majority Shias demanding political reforms continued to stage protests, two days after the lifting of emergency rule that the country's minority Sunni rulers hope will bring back tourism and commerce after months of turmoil. Police fired tear gas to break up a protest by some 500 people "Down with (King) Hamad" and "Gulf forces out" in the district of Sanabis.

Sheikh Issa Qassim, the most revered Shia cleric in Bahrain, tells worshippers at Friday prayers the opposition would need a popular mandate to enter any talks and suggested the king's offer was not serious. "Any political society, party or person will need a clear mandate from the street before entering any negotiations," he said. "Domestic security in any country is clear — it comes from a serious initiative for reform ... The security approach is no longer able to keep people quiet."

June 4, 2011

Yemen – President Ali Abdullah Saleh is flown to Riyadh on board a Saudi medical aircraft for surgery to remove shrapnel from his chest, the result of a rocket attack on the presidential compound the previous day. A second plane reportedly carried 24 members of his family.

Several officials, including caretaker Prime Minister Ali Mohammad Mujawar and head of parliament Abdulaziz Abdulghani, also hurt in the bomb attack are also taken for treatment to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia – A well-known Saudi actress, Wajnat Rahbini, is detained in Jeddah for driving her car. She is released the following day without bail.

June 5, 2011

Yemen - Thousands of democracy activists sang and danced in the streets of Sana'a, celebrating the departure of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, hoping it marks the end of his three decades in power. In the southern city of Taiz tens of thousands celebrated Saleh's departure with a fireworks display.

Bahrain - Police clashed with Shia marchers in outlying villages less than a week after Bahrain repealed an emergency law.

Libya – British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, visits the National Transitional Council in Benghazi and describes the NTC as "the legitimate representatives of the Libyan people".

Morocco – Estimated 60,000 of protesters take to the streets of Rabat and Casablanca to condemn the death of Khaled al-Amari and to demand an end to the country-wide government crackdown on peaceful demonstrations. Many protesters believe that the recent escalation in violence is meant to quash mass mobilisations before the 1 July referendum on reforming the constitution.

June 6, 2011

Yemen – US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton states “We are calling for a peaceful and orderly transition.” “We feel that an immediate transition is in the best interests of the Yemeni people.” In a joint statement, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and the prime ministers of Britain, Spain and Italy thanked Saudi Arabia for receiving Saleh for treatment, and called on all parties in Yemen to “find a means of reconciliation on the basis of the GCC initiative.” “Saleh’s departure to Saudi Arabia isn’t just courtesy from the Saudi ruling family,” said Egyptian political analyst Nabil Abdel-Fattah. “The security of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf is linked to security in Yemen.”

The Guardian reports that the United States and Britain are pressing Saudi Arabia to persuade the Yemeni president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to formally stand down and implement a deal under which he would relinquish power in exchange for immunity from prosecution and financial guarantees about his future.

Libya – NATO confirms that during the past 24 hours has hit the following targets. In Tripoli: 1 Command & Control Facility. In the vicinity of Tripoli: 2 Command & Control Facilities, 1 Surface-To-Air Missile Storage Facility, 1 Ground Forces Compound, 1 Air Defence Forces Compound, 4 Surface-To-Air Missile Launchers, 1 Radar. In the vicinity of Brega: 3 Military Vehicles. In the vicinity of Misrata: 1 Armoured Fighting Vehicle.

Saudi Arabia - The Shoura Council recommends to the government that it takes necessary measures to allow Saudi women to vote in municipal elections under Islamic law. In the upcoming municipal elections in the Kingdom, women are not allowed either to vote or to contest the polls. The Council’s recommendation is for future elections. Hundreds of women around the Kingdom have joined an online campaign called Baladi, Arabic for "My Country", in protest at their exclusion from the municipal elections. In April, dozens showed up at voting registration centres in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam to demand their right to vote but were turned down by officials.

Egypt – The interim government agrees on a \$3bn loan package with the International Monetary Fund to help stabilise the country's finances during the post-Mubarak transition period.

Bahrain – Some 47 doctors and nurses who treated injured anti-government protesters during the unrest in Bahrain go on trial in a security court on accused of participating in efforts to overthrow the monarchy.

June 7, 2011

Yemen – Yemen's Defense Ministry reports the killing by its troops of at least 30 militants just outside the city of Zinjibar.

Saudi Arabia – Saudi border guards kill Abdullah bin Abdul Rahman Al-Sayel, a Saudi terrorist trying to make his way to Yemen through the Al-Wadeeah border post. The man was also involved in a fatal attack on a police office in Qassim a month ago.

June 8, 2011

Yemen – The International Committee of the Red Cross reports that Some 20 bodies have been retrieved in and around Sana'a since 4 June by ICRC and Yemen Red Crescent teams . More than 200 people have been killed and thousands have fled Sana'a in the last two weeks as fighting intensified. Officials and residents described dire scenes in the southern Abyan province where the army and Islamist militants have fought for days, causing thousands of residents to flee. The fighting has reduced Zinjibar, once home to more than 50,000 people, to a ghost town without power or running water. Protests are held in the southern city of Taiz.

Syria - Columns of government tanks surround Jisr al-Shughour, near the Turkish border, and most of the town's 41,000 people are reported to have fled after armed clashes three days earlier.

Syrian refugees stream across the border into Turkey where they are accommodated in a tent city set up by Turkey's Red Crescent in the border town of Yayladagi. Turkish authorities report that more than 30 Syrian refugees have been treated at Turkish hospitals for wounds they suffered in clashes in northern Syria.

The Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan calls on Syria to rein in violence against its people. "Syria should change its attitude towards civilians and should take its attitude to a more tolerant level as soon as possible." Erdogan also promised not to turn away

refugees as residents of the Syrian border town Jisr al-Shughour headed for the Turkish frontier to escape a feared military assault.

Tunisia - Tunisia's interim government postpones elections, due to be held in July, until 23 October 2011. The Tunisian electoral commission had asked for the delay, saying it needed more time to prepare a credible vote.

Libya - Spain recognises the Libyan rebel National Transitional Council as the country's legitimate representative. It follows France, Qatar, Maldives, Italy, Kuwait, the Gambia, and Jordan who recognised the NTC earlier.

Gaddafi's forces attack Misrata from three sides, in the heaviest bombardment since the rebels took control of the city.

NATO'S intensifies aerial bombardment of Tripoli hours after Muammar Gaddafi made a rare speech on state television vowing to fight to the death.

June 9, 2011

Libya – The third meeting of the Libya Contact Group is held in Abu Dhabi, UAE, under the co-chairmanship of UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister of Italy Franco Frattini, and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. It reiterates support for the Transitional National Council and calls for the establishment of an international mechanism to unfreeze Libyan state assets, formerly controlled by the Muammar Gaddafi's regime. The meeting, attended by 20 foreign ministers, including from the GCC, and envoys from world organisations, pledged more than \$ 1.4 billion to help support Libya's opposition group. (Italy pledged up to \$ 600 million to the rebel council and France pledged \$ 421 million. Kuwait renewed a pledge for \$ 180 million and Turkey and Qatar \$ 100 million each.)

Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the chief prosecutor of the international criminal court, states that according to new evidence submitted to the court, Muammar Gaddafi's regime in Libya is using rape as a weapon of conflict. He tells reporters at the UN in New York that there even evidence that the government had been handing out doses of Viagra to soldiers to encourage sexual attacks. US Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice made similar allegations in April.

NATO has continues to bomb Tripoli in one of heaviest bombardment of the capital so far.

Yemen - Yemeni government troops try to recapture areas held by Islamic militants killed 12 suspected al-Qaida members in the Doves and Kod areas of the southern province of Abyan.

Saudi Arabia - Saudi authorities detain six women for driving cars in the capital in defiance of laws allowing only male motorists on the kingdom's roads. Saudi Arabia has no formal ban on women driving. But as citizens must use only Saudi-issued licences in the country, and as these are issued only to men, women drivers are anathema.

Jordan - King Abdullah II pardons 1,184,000 criminal offenders to mark the 12th anniversary of his accession. The pardon covers traffic violators and those who committed petty crimes, but also some detainees who took part in street protests demanding reforms. The amnesty excluded prisoners involved in terrorist acts, but 11 hardline militants will have their sentences significantly slashed under a special amnesty.¹²

June 10, 2011

Bahrain – *Gulf News* reports that about 400 people have been put on trial in Bahrain for their roles in weeks of protests that rocked the kingdom this year. Wefaq, which represents Bahrain's Shia majority, said up to 50 people had already been sentenced, with penalties varying from a short prison term to execution. Twenty-one activists face charges of attempting a coup in coordination with a foreign terrorist organisation - among them the prominent hard-line Shia dissident leader Hassan Mushaima and Ebrahim Shareef, head of the leading secular party Waad.

Sheikh Isa Qassim, the country's most senior Shia cleric, says there is no chance of talks with the country's Sunni rulers while security forces maintain their clampdown on protesters. "We cannot negotiate in such conditions," he told worshippers in a mostly Shia area outside the capital, Manama. "The brutal force and abusive language being deployed against us can never destroy our will and desire to achieve our rights and dignity."

Yemen – Tens of thousands of Yemenis take to the streets of the capital in parallel protests one demanding the country's wounded leader surrender any claim to power, another calling him back home. Thousands of anti-Saleh demonstrators filled Siteen Street in the heart of Sanaa demanding Saleh formally hand over power to his deputy, Abd-Rabbu

¹² Jordan's 14 prisons house some 8,308 prisoners.

Mansour Hadi, the acting president. Near the presidential headquarters, a smaller group of Saleh supporters gathered after Friday prayers to urge his return to the country.

Sheikh Sadiq Al-Ahmar, leader of the opposition tribal confederation, leads a march through the Change Square in Sana'a carrying bodies of 41 fighters killed last week in battle with government troops.

Agence France Presse reports that president Ali Abdullah Saleh, in a Saudi hospital, is in poor condition and is suffering breathing problems.

Libya - Gaddafi's forces shelled the town of Gadamis, 600km southwest of Tripoli, for the first time since a February uprising against his rule.

The Associated Press reports 22 people killed by Gaddafi's forces on the outskirts of Misrata.

Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, tells NTV television, that has offered a "guarantee" to Muammar Gaddafi in return for his departure from Libya but has received no reply. Gaddafi "has no other option than to leave Libya - with a guarantee to be given to him... We have given him this guarantee. We have told him we will help him to be sent wherever he wants to go." "Depending on the reply we will get from him, we will take up the issue with our (NATO) allies, but unfortunately we have received no reply so far," he said.

Norway announces it will withdraw completely from the NATO-led operation against Libya by 1 August, and in the meantime will scale down its fighter jet contribution from six to four planes.

Libyan state television reports that NATO warplanes had attacked targets in the neighbourhood of Ain Zara in the southeast of the capital Tripoli.

Syria – The British Foreign Office issues the following statement: “We remain extremely concerned by the Iranian government's repression of its own people and its support for violent elements in the region. We have seen credible information suggesting Iran is helping Syria with the suppression of protests there, including through the provision of expertise and equipment. We had already raised this issue with the Iranian chargé in London.”

Agence France Presse reports accounts of four named Syrian army deserters of atrocities committed by soldiers in suppressing anti-government protests, under threat of execution if they disobeyed orders. The four conscripts interviewed by AFP, who fled to Turkey, recounted instances of rape and wanton murder as president Bashar al-Assad's forces combat demonstrations against his regime across the country.

June 11, 2011

Libya – Agencies report a letter purported to be from Muammar Gaddafi which suggests to the US Congress that he is ready to negotiate a ceasefire in the three-month-old conflict. The US State Department said it had heard about the letter, but not seen it. In the three-page letter, Gaddafi is reported to be saying that he was grateful for the "thoughtful discussion of the issues." "We are ready to sit at the table with appropriate internal interlocutors led by the United States. Let's stop the destruction and begin the negotiations to find a peaceful solution for Libya." "Our nation must not be colonized again by Europeans. Our Country must not be divided again," the letter apparently states. Gaddafi also asked for humanitarian assistance and "accommodation between the parties within Libya that are at odds." The letter is dated June 9, 2011 and is signed by "Muammar Gaddafi, Commander of the Great Revolution."

Attack by Gaddafi forces near Misurata kill dozens of rebels and NATO aircraft bomb Zuwarah in western Tripoli.

Yemen – *The National* of Abu Dhabi reports from Sana'a: "The government ministries are closed, police stations are empty, gunmen and thugs roam the streets and there is growing concern over who is running the country as the president recovers in a Saudi hospital from an assassination attempt... Saleh is still exercising power from his hospital bed through his family, most notably his son, Gen Ahmed Ali Saleh, who commands Yemen's most highly trained troops... He has deployed thousands of security personnel in Yemen's main cities since the attack on June 3 on [the] presidential compound... Gen Ahmed is prepared to use all necessary options if opposition forces try to take over power in his father's absence."

Yemeni state media report that Yemen's army killed 21 Al-Qaeda members in the southern province of Abyan, 18 of them in Zinjibar. Ten soldiers were killed in fighting there and in the city of Lawdar.

Bahrain - Thousands of Bahrainis shouting "we are victorious" gather for a rally for political reform, in the first large demonstration since a democracy protest movement was crushed in March.

The government appoints, Khalifa al-Dhahrani, the speaker of the Council of Representatives, to lead the national dialogue.

Kuwait - Hundreds of Kuwaiti youths rally for the ouster of the country's prime minister, Sheikh Nasser Mohamed al-Ahmed al-Sabah, and for democratic reforms to resolve an on-going political crisis.

June 12, 2011

Syria - The Syrian army has taken control of the northern town of Jisr al-Shughour following what state media has described as heavy fighting.

Jordan – In a televised address marking the 12th anniversary of his accession to the Hashemite throne, King Abdullah II promised to relinquish his right to appoint prime ministers and cabinets. In the future cabinets will be formed according to an elected parliamentary majority. The BBC reports that the king, however, first wants to see Jordan's splintered 33 political parties merge into three main political blocs from which cabinets can be formed. King Abdullah also added that more reforms would be announced, including new election and political party laws, but warned that sudden change could lead to "chaos and unrest" like in other Arab countries.

Libya - The UAE officially recognizes the Transitional National Council, as the "sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people". *The National* quotes a government statement saying: "Based on this, the UAE's dealings with the TNC will take the form of a government-to-government relationship in all issues related to Libya. There is no legitimacy in Libya today but for the TNC." The current Libyan ambassador to the UAE is given 72 hours to leave the country.

Libyan state television broadcasts pictures of Gaddafi meeting the president of the international chess federation, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, (a former Russian provincial governor). Images are shown of Ilyumzhinov playing chess with Gaddafi in Tripoli.

Yemen – Russia begins evacuation of its nationals from Yemen. According to the Interfax news agency there are about 1,000 Russians citizens are in Yemen.

June 13, 2011

Syria - Heavy shelling and gunfire is reported in the north-western town of Jisr al-Shughour, two days into a military assault that has caused more than 5,000 refugees to flee into neighbouring Turkey.

Iran - Iranian security forces used baton charges and tear gas to disperse hundreds of protesters at a silent rally in central Tehran marking the second anniversary of the country's

disputed presidential election. Riot police and plainclothes basij militia are deployed in various locations in the capital, arresting at least tens of protesters.

Libya - Germany recognizes the Transitional National Council as "the legitimate representatives of the Libyan people". TNC is now recognized as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Libyan people by Australia, Britain, France, Gambia, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Qatar, Senegal, Spain and the UAE.

Tunisia - Tunisia's interim prime minister, Beji Caid Sebsi, interviewed by Al Jazeera, discloses that "Ben Ali's trial will start on 20 June." "He will be tried in a military and in a civilian court." Tunisian authorities have been preparing several legal cases against Ben Ali, including conspiring against the state, voluntary manslaughter, drug trafficking and peddling of archaeological artifacts. Officials in Tunis have said the first charges will relate to the discovery of cash, weapons and drugs in presidential palaces, including almost two kilograms of narcotics, thought to be cannabis, and \$27m in cash.

Jordan - Jordanian and western media quote eyewitness accounts of vehicles in the convoy King Abdullah II being hit twice by stones and bottles during a visit to the southern town of Tafila, scene of recent protests. Jordanian government denied these reports.

June 14, 2011

Libya - Canada recognizes the National Transitional Council (NTC) as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people.

Syria – BBC reports that Syrian tanks have fanned out around towns and villages near the Turkish border, widening a crackdown on 12 weeks of anti-government protests. Witnesses say troops are pursuing a "scorched earth" strategy, destroying houses and crops as residents flee.

The Arab League for the first time publicly criticizes the violence in Syria, saying Arab states are "angry and actively monitoring" the crisis.

Bahrain - Bahrain has defied international criticism by continuing the military trial of dozens of medical personnel accused of trying to topple the government.

June 15, 2011

Syria - Syria's feared 4th division, commanded by Maher al-Assad, brother of Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, is reported to have moved to the eastern city of Deir Azzor. The same

division has been in control of the town of Jisr al-Shughour, forcing most remaining people in the besieged enclave to flee to the nearby mountains bordering Turkey.

Thousands of civilians fled in panic as tank columns pushed into Ma'arat al-Numan, on the road between Damascus and Aleppo, in an expanding military campaign against the protest movement.

Bahrain – Bahraini authorities announce that it will sue *The Independent*, British daily, accusing it of "orchestrating a defamatory and premeditated media campaign" against the Gulf state and neighbouring Saudi Arabia. It singled out for criticism the newspaper's award-winning Middle East correspondent, Robert Fisk.

June 16, 2011

Libya – The BBC reports six explosions in the centre of Tripoli, near the fortified Bab al-Aziziya compound of Muammar Gaddafi. The report also says that Russian envoy, Mikhail Margelov, who met representatives of the Interim Transitional National Council in Benghazi, holds talks with the Libyan government in Tripoli as part of attempts to mediate in the conflict. Russian Interfax news agency quotes Margelov as saying that he was told "Gaddafi is not prepared to leave, and the Libyan leadership will talk about the country's future only after a cease-fire."

The Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* carries an interview with Saif al-Islam Gaddafi who says that his father, Muammar Gaddafi, will never leave Libya. "He was born here and intends to die and be buried here, alongside those he holds dear." Colonel Gaddafi would agree to have elections. "They could be held within three months. At the maximum by the end of the year, and the guarantee of transparency could be the presence of international observers. The important thing is that the election should be clean, that there should be no suspicion of vote-rigging." Saif Gaddafi says: "I have no doubt that the overwhelming majority of Libyans stands with my father and sees the rebels as fanatical Islamist fundamentalists, terrorists stirred up from abroad, mercenaries on the orders of [president Nicolas] Sarkozy."

Russia and China express concern about the Libya conflict and urged NATO to stick strictly to UN Security Council resolutions.

June 17, 2011

Morocco - In a televised speech King Mohammed VI announces a series of constitutional reforms, to be put to a national referendum on 1 July. The proposed reforms

would give the prime minister and the parliament more executive authority, and would make Berber an official language in Morocco, together with Arabic. Under the proposed reforms the prime minister will have the authority to appoint government officials and to dissolve the parliament - the powers previously held by the king. However, the king would remain the military commander-in-chief and would retain his position as the chair of the Council of Ministers and the Supreme Security Council, the primary bodies responsible for the security policy. A new constitutional provision would also confirm the king's role as the highest religious authority in the country. The King's proposals are rejected by the 20 February Movement as insufficient. The Movement calls for "truly democratic constitution and a parliamentary monarchy".

Saudi Arabia – About 30 to 40 women take to the steering wheel during women's driving campaign day. Reports of women driving cars come from Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam.

June 19, 2011

Morocco - Pro-government demonstrators attack democracy activists protesting against the constitutional reforms unveiled by the king on 17 June, which they believe do not go far enough.

June 20, 2011

Syria – President Bashar al-Assad delivers speech at Damascus University pledging to introduce reforms within months. Assad expresses regret about the protest deaths, saying that they were a great loss to the nation and him personally. But, the "saboteurs", who had smeared the image of Syria across the world during the protests, had to be isolated. "What is happening today has nothing to do with reform; it has to do with vandalism." "The demands of the street do not justify inflicting damage on the country." The president states that a national dialogue would start soon to review new legislation including laws on parliamentary elections, the media, and allowing political parties other than his Baath Party, as well as look at possible changes to the constitution. It is his third address to the nation since protests began in March 2011.¹³

¹³ For full text see: http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/syria/bashar_assad_speech_110620.htm

Turkish President Abdullah Gul says the speech is "not enough". "Assad should clearly and precisely say: 'Everything has changed. We're transforming the system into a multi-party one. Everything will be organised according to the Syrian's people will, and I will be carrying out this process.'"

Turkish officials say that more than 10,000 Syrian refugees have already crossed into Turkey and another 10,000 are sheltering close to the border just inside Syria in the olive groves and rich farmland around the town of Jisr al-Shughour.

Tunisia - The trial of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in absentia is held in the capital. The Tunis Criminal Court is hearing two embezzlement, money laundering and drug trafficking cases against the ousted dictator. At the end of the one-day trial Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali and his wife Leila are sentenced to 35 years in jail for embezzlement and misusing public funds. The couple, who fled to Saudi Arabia in January after a popular uprising, are also fined \$66m (£41m).

June 22, 2011

Bahrain - Nineteen activists are given life sentences and others long-term imprisonment for taking part in protests earlier this year. The following full list of defendants is published by the Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights:¹⁴

- 1-Abdulwahab Hussain Ali (life sentence imprisonment)
- 2-Ibrahim Sharif Abdulraheem Mossa (5 Years imprisonment)
- 3-Hassan Ali Mushaima (life sentence imprisonment)
- 4-Abdulhadi Al Khawaja (life sentence imprisonment)
- 5-Abduljalil Abdullah Al Singace (life sentence imprisonment)
- 6-Mohammed Habib Al Safaf. (Mohammed Habib Miqdad) (life sentence imprisonment)
- 7-Saeed Mirza Ahmed. (Saeed AlNouri) (life sentence imprisonment)
- 8-Abduljalil Mansoor Makk (Abdul Jalil Miqdad) (life sentence imprisonment)
- 9-Al Hurra Yousif Mohammed (2 Years imprisonment)
- 10-Abdullah Isa Al Mahroos (5 years imprisonment)
- 11-Salah Hubail Al Khawaj (5 years imprisonment)
- 12-Mohammed Hassan Jawad (15 years imprisonment)
- 13-Mohammed Ali Ismael (15 years imprisonment))

¹⁴ <http://byshr.org/?p=632>

14-Abdul Hadi Abdullah Mahdi Hassan (Abdulhadi AlMukhodher) (15 years imprisonment)

15-Akeel Ahmed Al Mafoodh (15 years imprisonment)

16-Ali Hassan Abdullah (Ali Abdulemam) (15 years imprisonment)

17-Abdulghani Ali Khanjar (15 years imprisonment)

18-Saeed Abdalnabi Shehab (life sentence imprisonment)

19-Abdulraoof Al Shayeb (15 years imprisonment)

20-Abbas Al Omran (15 years imprisonment)

21-Ali Hassan Mushaima (15 years imprisonment)

June 23, 2011

Libya - Britain and France both reject a call by Italy for a pause in the bombing of Libya.

The British government reveals that the cost of the campaign in Libya has run to £260m.

Syria - The *Hürriyet Daily News* reports that Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and his Syrian counterpart Walid Muallim held talks about the military movements near the Turkish-Syrian border and the Syrians fleeing into Turkey. The daily also quotes Syrian “rights groups” saying that more than 1,300 civilians have been killed and some 10,000 people arrested in the crackdown that has seen troops dispatched to crush revolt in cities across the country.

The European Union announces fresh sanctions against the Assad regime, adding 11 individuals and businesses to a list of Syrians already targeted.

June 24, 2011

Iran - Iran's former deputy foreign minister, Muhammad Sharif Malekzadeh, a close ally of the hardline president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is arrested on charges of financial corruption. Malekzadeh resigned from his post two days ago – only a week after he was appointed – after coming under pressure from the conservative-dominated parliament for his connections to Ahmadinejad's controversial chief of staff and close confidant, Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei.

June 26, 2011

Morocco - Thousands of people demonstrate around the country both for and against Morocco's proposed new constitution, just a week before it is put to a referendum. In downtown Rabat, the capital, a march of at least 1,000 calling for the boycott of the referendum is blocked by police as well as a few hundred government supporters. The two groups, separated by riot police, chanted rival slogans. Activists reported brief scuffles and some injuries. In Casablanca, government supporters also block march organized by the February 20 movement.

June 27, 2011

Syria - The Syrian government announces that it will hold talks on 10 July 2011 to set the framework for the national dialogue promised by President Assad. The state news agency reports that constitutional amendments, including changes to an article which puts the Ba'ath Party at the centre of Syrian politics, would be on the agenda of the meeting. The proposed meeting is dismissed by opposition figures.

June 28, 2011

Bahrain - Saudi Arabia announces that it would pull out some of its 1,500 troops sent to Bahrain "because the situation is getting much calmer."

June 29, 2011

Egypt - Tahrir Square in Cairo sees the worst clashes between demonstrators and the police since the fall of Hosni Mubarak. The violence came after the trial of the former interior minister, Habib al-Adly, on the charge of unlawfully killing pro-change protesters had been delayed by a judge this week, with no reason given to the public. More than 1,000 people are injured in the confrontation.

Libya – *Le Figaro* reports that in May France has parachuted in weapons to help Berber tribes advance on the Libyan capital Tripoli. According to Deutsche Presse-Agentur "large quantities" of rocket launchers, assault rifles, machine guns and anti-tank missiles were dropped on the Djebel Nefousa mountains.

Saudi Arabia – Associated Press reports that At least five Saudi women have been arrested after defying the kingdom's ban on women drivers.

June 30, 2011

Egypt - Demonstrators have started a new sit-in in the Tahrir Square in protest at the pace of change conducted by Egypt's interim government. *The Guardian* quotes Nabil Abdel Fattah, a political analyst at the al-Ahram Centre saying: These clashes are the result of Egypt's new regime trying to reproduce the authoritarian policies and brutal, unaccountable security apparatus that were the tools of dictatorship for the old regime, and they are a critical turning point for the revolution.

We are seeing the same tactics – tear gas, bullets, state violence – that Mubarak used, and more importantly we are hearing the same discourse from Egypt's interim rulers. 'This is a plot to destabilise the country, there are shadowy groups trying to sow discord.

Saudi Arabia – According to *The Guardian* Prince Turki al-Faisal, a former Saudi intelligence chief and ambassador to Washington, warned senior NATO military officials that if Iran comes close to developing a nuclear weapon, “the existence of such a device ‘would compel Saudi Arabia ... to pursue policies which could lead to untold and possibly dramatic consequences’”. He did not state explicitly what these policies would be, but a senior official in Riyadh who is close to the prince said that his message was clear. "We cannot live in a situation where Iran has nuclear weapons and we don't. It's as simple as that," the official said. "If Iran develops a nuclear weapon, that will be unacceptable to us and we will have to follow suit."

END NOTES

* Prof. Dr., University of Lublin (Poland) and the University of Exeter (United Kingdom).

Sources:

ABC News, Agence France Presse, Al-Jazeera, Amnesty International, Arab News, Arab Times, Associated Press, BBC, Bloomberg, CNN, Corriere della Sera, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Deutsche Welle, Financial Times, Gulf News, Haaretz.com, Human Rights Watch, Hürriyet Daily News, Interfax news agency, Jordan Times, Khaleej Times, Le Figaro, Los Angeles Times, Magharebia.com, Middle East Online, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, Reuters, Saudi Gazette, The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The National, The Ottawa Citizen, The Wall Street Journal, Time, Voice of America, WAM, Xinhua News Agency, Yemen Observer.