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Former Libyan intelligence chief must be sent to the ICC

Former Libyan intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senussi must be sent to the International Criminal Court to face charges of crimes against humanity, Amnesty International said following reports of his arrest in Mauritania. He is wanted by the ICC in relation to its investigation into the situation in Libya.

"Today's news of al-Senussi's apprehension is an important moment for the victims of his alleged crimes in Libya," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty International Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"While Mauritania is not a state party to the Rome Statute, it is still obliged to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Court according to the UN Security Resolution that referred the situation in Libya to the Court. The Mauritanian authorities should give priority to the ICC arrest warrant against al-Senussi and conduct legal proceedings for his transfer without delay.

"Amnesty International is also concerned that other alleged crimes by al-Senussi should be fully investigated by a competent and independent authority - including allegations of serious human rights violations in Libya prior to 2011, such as the Abu Salim prison killings in 1996," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui.

She added: "In the absence of a functioning Libyan court system and for as long as the Libyan justice system remains weak and unable to conduct effective investigations into alleged crimes, the International Criminal Court is an important mechanism for accountability in Libya."