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## **Security Council and African Union failing Libyan people**

The organization said the response of the UN Security Council fell shamefully below what was needed to stop the spiralling violence in Libya, and called for concrete action, including an immediate arms embargo and assets freeze.

The UN Security Council yesterday issued a statement calling for an end to the violence and urging Libya to act with restraint and respect human rights, but took no substantive measures.

The organization also criticized the African Union, which has not convened its Peace and Security Council to address the human rights crisis in Libya.

“Colonel al-Gaddafi has publicly made clear his readiness to kill those who oppose him in order to stay in power,” said Salil Shetty, Amnesty International’s Secretary-General.

“This is unacceptable. Colonel al-Gaddafi and all those reporting to him need to know that they will be held personally accountable under international law for the crimes they commit.

“His threats make the half-hearted response from the international community even more shocking. What Libyans need now is not mere words of concern but immediate, concrete action.”

Amnesty International said that as a bare minimum the UN Security Council must impose an immediate arms embargo against Libya and an asset freeze against al-Gaddafi and his key security and military advisers.

The call came as Colonel al-Gaddafi gave a speech in which he called protesters “cockroaches” and “rats”, and compared the situation to China, saying that national unity had been “more important than the people of Tiananmen Square.”

Amnesty International also criticised the response of the African Union to the unfolding crisis, which has seen hundreds killed and persistent reports of mercenaries being brought in from African countries by the Libyan leader to violently suppress the protests against him.

“It is outrageous that the African Union Peace and Security Council has not even met to discuss the emergency taking place in one of its own member states,” said Salil Shetty.

Amnesty International called on the African Union to ensure that its member states, particularly those bordering Libya, are not complicit in human rights abuses in Libya.

The organization also urged the Arab League, which yesterday banned Libya from participation in its meetings, to act at once on its public commitments, in particular by launching an independent Arab investigative committee into the crisis in Libya.

**In full, Amnesty International called on:**

- The United Nations Security Council: to immediately impose an arms embargo on Libya preventing transfer of equipment and personnel, implement an asset freeze against Colonel al-Gaddafi and his senior military and security advisers and state unequivocally that crimes under international law in Libya will be investigated and punished.
- The African Union and its member states: to immediately investigate reports that armed elements are being transported from African countries to Libya, acting to secure the land borders into Libya and monitor suspicious flights.
- The UN General Assembly: to immediately suspend Libya from the 47-member UN Human Rights Council.
- The UN Human Rights Council: to deploy a fact-finding mission to Libya to make rapid recommendations on human rights abuses and whether a referral to the International Criminal Court is warranted.
- Libya and neighbouring countries: to facilitate the safe departure of those who wish to leave Libya.