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Thorough investigation urged over Libya rape case

The Libyan authorities must thoroughly investigate the case of a woman who said she had been raped by forces loyal to Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi, Amnesty International said today.

“Iman al-Obeidi’s allegations are stomach-churning. The Libyan authorities must immediately launch an independent and impartial investigation and bring those responsible to justice if the allegations are well-founded,” said Malcolm Smart, Amnesty International’s Middle East and North Africa Director.

“It is extremely disturbing that Iman al-Obeidi was forcibly dragged away by Libyan security officials when she tried to speak to journalists. The authorities must say where she is now and guarantee her safety and well-being. If she is being detained, she should be released immediately.”

“The Libyan authorities have a long record of silencing those who dare speak out against human rights violations. It is all the more worrying that they did not hesitate to do this, using heavy-handed methods, despite the presence of the international media.”

Iman al-Obeidi was detained on Saturday after bursting into a Tripoli hotel where international journalists had gathered and saying she had been raped.