

PUBLIC

ANNEX 9.24

Libya revolt as it happened: Tuesday

- Thousands of people are still massing at Libya's border with the Tunisia - the UNHCR says the situation is reaching crisis point
- The UN has suspended Libya from the Human Rights Council, the first time it has taken such action, and debate continues over imposing a no-fly zone over Libya
- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has said "the winds of change are sweeping the Middle East and North Africa"
- Col Gaddafi remains in place while his opponents are setting up interim administrations in the towns they now control
- You can also follow events on

- Live page reporters: David Gritten, Michael Dobie, Anna Jones and Joe Boyle
- All times in GMT

0000 That's where the BBC's live coverage of the events in Libya ends for today. Thank you for following, on a day where, despite many hopes and expectations, Col Gaddafi is still the ruler of Libya. Though he is increasingly embattled, he continues to insist he has no position from which to resign and anyway, his people love him. Stay with the

for all the news from Libya and the wider world.

2356 On Col Gaddafi's claims that protesters are drugged, CNN correspondent

in Libya tweets: "Haven't found these famous hallucinogenic pills in #Libya yet. People tell me if those pills are out there, it's clear who is taking them."

2353 Australia's ABC News asked Dr Jerrold Post, mental health expert at George Washington University in the US whether Col Gaddafi can be considered "sane".

2350 He continued: "No country can be convicted beforehand. We consider this decision to be precipitated without first awaiting the results of the international independent inquiry commission designated by the Human Rights Council."

2349 Here's more on the comments from Venezuela's ambassador to the UN, Jorge Valero, at today's debate. He said such a resolution "could only take place after an objective and credible investigation that would confirm the veracity of such events".

2339

tweets: "The struggle against #gaddafi is full of stories of successes and failures, but above all it is full of dignity... If you r just realizing #gaddafi is evil and you can no longer be silent. welcome. The struggle didn't start last week."

2334 The President of the UN General Assembly, Joseph Deiss, said today's resolution was their "duty to all the men and women who are hoping and struggling to have their rights respected and who today are running the greatest risks. Their hopes must not be dashed."

2330 Or at least he did. There are various reports on Twitter suggesting the anti-Gaddafi forces who now control Benghazi have renamed it "Feb17 Martyrs Stadium" in honour of those who have died in the unrest.

2326 Libya and Venezuela have enjoyed a close relationship for several years. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has visited Libya several times and has a football stadium in Benghazi named in his honour.

2323 That remark did not go down well with US ambassador Susan Rice, who called them "willful and ugly distortion," AFP reports.

2320 Earlier, Colombia's UN ambassador criticised Venezuela for not speaking out against the Gaddafi regime. [See 2001 entry.] It's now emerged that during the UN debate, Venezuela urged members to "put a stop to the invasion plans against Libya", which ambassador Jorge Valero said were being planned by the US.

2314 The BBC has correspondents across Libya, reporting on the dramatic events.

has reports from all the major areas on one page, and shows which towns are under whose control.

2311 Jim Muir says some of those crossing are arriving "in a state of complete exhaustion and hardly able to breathe".

2305 Our

now focuses on the humanitarian crisis at Libya's border, and contains Jim Muir's video report from the no-man's land.

2258 The Guardian's Peter Beaumont has been

where, he says, only Gaddafi supporters are being given treatment.

2256 "With Russia making it clear it won't back a no-fly zone at the UN, military action is looking more and more unlikely, and there's clearly a limit to how deeply the US wants to get involved in Libya," says our correspondent.

2254 The BBC's Andrew North in Washington says officials there are sounding noticeably more cautious about the idea of imposing a no-fly zone over Libya.

2251

tweets: "Good news! UN Human Rights Council doesn't always get it right, but in suspending Libya they've somewhat repaired having them in 1st place."

2245

tweets: "This is another clear warning to #Qadhafi and those who still stand by him: they must stop the killing. He must go, and he must go now."

2242 The US ambassador to the UN

tweets: "For the first time ever, the UN General Assembly has suspended an HRC member. #Libya's leaders brought this upon themselves."

2235 Collen Kawiya in Tripoli, writes: "The situation is very calm and cool, almost 99.9% of the people here are in true love for Gaddafi. He still enjoys more support here. "

2230 Walid Netfa in Benghazi, writes: "I think that Col Muammar Gaddafi is an unstable and insane person. I can't believe that he has been ruining the country for almost 42 years. He MUST go."

2217 Britain's ambassador to the UN, Mark Lyall Grant, says resolution passed this evening "is a sign that both the countries in the Middle East and the countries in Africa do support human rights and they are no longer prepared to tolerate the abuse of those human rights and violence against the civil populations by the leaders in any part of the world".

2210 The BBC's Jeremy Bowen is in Tripoli and

on the simmering tensions in the capital. Despite the colonel's claim, the protesters seem to be neither drugged nor al-Qaeda dupes, he says.

2203

tweets: "Cruel and Unwanted" is how the US and UK describe the #Gaddafi regime. Took 42 yrs for them to realize this?!"

2157 The London School of Economics (LSE) has been coming under increasing pressure to hand back a

£300,000 (\$488,000) donation it was given by a foundation run by Col Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, in 2009.

the university is discussing using the money to set up a grant for Libyan students.

2153

tweets: "Citizens in the city of #Nalut report that #Gaddafi forces JUST outside city. Tonight they will protect their city!"

2145 Mr Hague's statement continues: "Libya's suspension from the Council is unprecedented. But it is absolutely right that a regime that has failed so shamefully in its responsibility to its people and that has been referred to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court should not be allowed to continue to enjoy the rights of membership."

2144 UK Foreign Secretary William Hague says the UN's decision to suspend Libya from the Human Rights Council "demonstrates the unity of the international community and its commitment to hold the Libyan regime accountable".

2136 The BBC's Imogen Foulkes in Geneva says the message to the US and Europe from the IOM and UNHCR is clear: "Now you have rescued your own citizens, spare a thought for others who are just as vulnerable."

2134 The organisations say they are "urgently appealing to governments for a massive humanitarian evacuation of tens of thousands of Egyptians and other third country nationals who have fled into Tunisia from Libya".

2132 UNHCR and the International Organisation for Migration have issued a joint statement saying 40,000 people are currently waiting on the Libyan side of the Tunisian border. An estimated 75,000 people have crossed over since 19 February.

2129 More from Canada - the country says its has frozen C\$2.3bn (£1.4bn:\$2.4bn) of Libyan assets, AP reports.

2121 In Northern Ireland, victims of IRA violence have

to get compensation from Col Gaddafi's regime. The IRA was one of the terror groups occasionally armed and funded by the Libyan leader

2113 Confirming an earlier tweet (see 2052), Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper tells parliament: "In light of the trouble and likely ongoing concerns in the region, the HMCS Charlottetown will depart Halifax tomorrow to take part in Canadian and international evacuation operations that are already underway in Libya."

2109

tweets: "U.S. is dispatching two expert humanitarian assistance teams to assist people who are trying to flee from #Libya"

2108 But our UN correspondent says the likelihood of a no-fly zone being sanctioned by the UN is very unlikely. She says there is strong opposition from, among others, China and Russia to any kind of military intervention.

2107 More from the BBC's Barbara Plett at the UN: The decision to suspend Libya was very unusual decision if not unprecedented. There was support from the beginning from Arab states who might once have blocked the move.

2104

tweets: "At the Enghelab-Eskandari intersection, people rushed to help a youth who was arrested by the regime's agents and released him #Iran "

2059 A full quote from Mr Ban's earlier speech, where he used stronger-than-usual words: "From the beginning of the crisis I have called on the Libyan leadership to hear and heed our strong collective call to end the violence and to respect human rights and the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people. The transition to a new democratic system of governance should start now. Excellencies, the winds of change

are sweeping the Middle East and North Africa."

2055 The UN General Assembly decided to throw Libya out of the UNHCR because of the regime's "gross and systematic violations of human rights".

2052

tweets: "HMCS Charlottetown will deploy from #Halifax tomorrow morning for #Libya <http://ow.ly/45Qti>"

2050 The BBC's Barbara Plett at the UN in New York: "The decision by the 192-member body in effect seals the international isolation of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and his loyalists."

2047 The UN suspends Libya from the Human Rights Council.

2046 A Nigerian at the country's embassy in Tripoli tells the BBC's Hausa service that about 7,000 of his compatriots are waiting to get out of Libya - and they have all gone to the embassy to seek refuge.

2040 More on the US ships making their way towards Libya: an Egyptian official tells Reuters that two US warships - capable of carrying hundreds of marines - will pass through the Suez Canal on Wednesday morning.

2033

tweets: "Flag changed at #Libya embassy in #Malta tonight to pre-#Gaddafi era flag. "

2027 The UN secretary-general is laying out his plans for the coming days at the organisation's headquarters. Mr Ban is more animated than usual, saying the "winds of change are sweeping the Middle East and North Africa" and exhorting UN members to stand firm and support the aspirations of the people in the region.

2025 Mr Ban says the UN needs "concrete action on the ground" to provide medical and humanitarian support for Libyans.

2023 Mr Ban appeals to all countries in the region to keep on their air, land and sea borders to allow fleeing Libyans in.

2022 Italy says it will send humanitarian aid to Tunisia to help with the refugee crisis from Libya, AFP reports citing Ansa news agency.

2020 UN chief Ban Ki-moon opens his address in New York with a strong accusation, saying there has been "clear incitement to violence by Col Gaddafi and his supporters".

2016 Semukanga Julius in Kampala, Uganda, writes: "Forty-one years still in power and the president still insists on the seat. That is not democracy. African leaders should take the leadership, stop blaming western countries for the situation and instead call on them for solution."

2011 More from French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe on the debate about foreign intervention. "I don't know what would be the reaction on the Arab street, if Arabs around the Mediterranean saw Nato forces landing on southern Mediterranean territory."

2006 Mahdi in Tripoli, writes: "I am from Somalia. I fled my country because of civil war and now it's so hard for me to get out of here. I need help."

2004 "I think they are the only countries that have expressed some kind of support or reduction from the condemnations that the whole world is giving to Gaddafi," he said.

2001 Colombia's UN ambassador Nestor Osorio has said the support voiced for Col Gaddafi by Nicaragua and Venezuela is "scandalous". The leaders of both countries are long-time friends of Col Gaddafi.

1959 The opposition group

tweets: "Confirmed: the Independence flag is raised at the Libyan embassy Malta. We can see a bright future God willing."

1957 More from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on a possible Lockerbie probe. AFP reports that a lawmaker in Congress asked how the US "could gather evidence and put together a case against Gaddafi and all those with whom he might have conspired" on the attack. Mrs Clinton replied that she would "follow up" the query.

1953 US Defense Secretary Robert Gates tells reporters at the Pentagon: "It remains to be seen how effectively military leaders who have defected from the Gaddafi forces can organise the opposition in the country. We are watching that unfold as you are."

1952 The Pentagon says there is "no confirmation whatsoever" that Col Gaddafi's forces have used air power to attack civilians.

1950 Adm Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, says the US is looking at contingencies but has not made any decisions yet.

1946 The US Pentagon is currently holding a briefing on Libya.

1940 France's new Foreign Minister Alain Juppe says foreign intervention in Libya would be "extremely counter-productive" in the eyes of Arab public opinion, AFP reports.

1936 Here's that

on what a no-fly zone over Libya would mean and how it would be put in place.

1934 Activist

tweets: "#Gaddafi forces have mobilized near the liberated city of #Zintan. Protesters vow to stand their ground & triumph over the dictator."

1932 The Guardian's correspondent

tweets: "Egyptian workers fleeing east from tripoli say govt checkpoints now in several towns held last week by rebels."

1928 The bombing of the Pan Am flight killed 270 people, many of them American. Libyan Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, the only man ever convicted over the attacks, was released from a Scottish jail last year on health grounds.

1925 US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has backed a call for an investigation into the possible role Col Gaddafi played in the Lockerbie bombing in 1988, AFP reports.

1920 State TV has broadcast footage of pro-Gaddafi demonstration purportedly in the north-western town of al-Khums. The crowds were shown chanting: "Allah, Muammar, Libya and nothing more" and "The people want Colonel Muammar".

1917 Reuters reports that despite the chaos, two million barrels of oil were shipped from Libya over the last 24 hours.

1914 Oliver Miles, who was UK ambassador to Libya when London broke off diplomatic relations with Tripoli, said any foreign military intervention would be "disproportionate" and have a negative effect, as some Libyans have said they would fight foreign troops.

1910 The BBC's Lyse Doucet in Benghazi says there are occasional bursts of gunfire in the city. "We are told it is the sound of celebration, but can never be sure," she says.

1908 UNHCR has

showing what it looks like when tens of thousands of desperate people attempt to cross a border post.

1906 If you didn't see it yesterday, this is the full-length

in which he said his people love him and would die for him.

1904

tweets: "Misrata & Zawia r quit right now, Benghazi is worried about Tripoli, Albida is busy with forming the national council."

1902 "This is the independence era flag. We buy this cloth and we sew it here with the tailors, because the flag is rare," says one man.

1900 What's always remarkable during political unrest, is how quickly the opposition manage to get hold of large quantities of anti-regime flags to hoist in protest. Reuters has been speaking to some tailors in Benghazi running up makeshift pre-Gaddafi flags.

1850 There's been a lot of talk today about imposing a no-fly zone over Libya. We'll soon be bringing you some analysis from BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner on what this would mean and how it would be enforced. He says: "As some cynics suspect, is this just playing for time in the hopes that Gaddafi soon yields to pressure and steps down."

1846

tweets: "After smelling the air of freedom they will not allow no one to close that window ever."

1844 Libyan Youth Movement have posted

showing how some feel about the prospect of foreign intervention.

1840 More on Libya's diplomatic defections - the regime has told the US it has dismissed its ambassador there, Ali Aujali, for jumping ship.

1838

tweets: "MISRATA: City out in numbers, huge peaceful protests currently taking place, eye witness says the city is all."

1834 US national security spokesman Tommy Vietor tells reporters there are currently no plans to provide arms to anti-Gaddafi forces, Reuters reports.

1828 State TV has broadcast what it says is a confession from two young men that they stole weapons from a depot in Al-Qaryat. Pro-Gaddafi media has been insisting throughout that the only violence has been caused by people stealing weapons and fighting with the army as it tries to restore order.

1825 AP is reporting comments from Libya's deputy UN ambassador Ibrahim Dabbash. He says Col Gaddafi is trying to replace him and ambassador Mohamed Shalgham - both have turned their backs on the regime.

1822 If you're just joining us, welcome to the BBC's live coverage of the unrest in Libya. Despite a day when the outrage against Col Gaddafi at home and overseas has increased yet again, he remains in power, in the capital - or parts of it - at least. The US has said he is "delusional".

1818 Spokesman Jay Carney told reporters that US ships were being moved closer to Libya in preparation for a humanitarian emergency, but added: "We aren't taking any options off the table."

1817 The White House has repeated its view from previous days that it isn't ruling out anything in relation to Libya.

1816

tweets: "As I am a north african, I am touched, impressed and proud of our neighbor."

1815

tweets: "From #Tripoli: No one goes outside after sunset prayer for fear of snipers or mercenaries."

1811 The BBC's Lyse Doucet has been given

in Benghazi's Revolution Square showing pictures and caricatures of Col Gaddafi. "None of these portraits are flattering," she say.

1810 We now have a

from cities under anti-Gaddafi control. Abdul-Baset in Zawiya told the BBC: "We are surrounded by pro-Gaddafi fighters but hopefully we will win."

1805 Egyptian Foreign Minister Hossam Zaki said he knew people had been through hell in Libya but asked them to consider the practical difficulties in moving such large numbers.

1802 Egypt has come under angry criticism from its nationals trapped on the border, who say it must come to their rescue. But the BBC's Yolande Knell says the transitional government - still trying to restore normality after the country's own upheaval, has said it's doing all it can.

1800 AP's reporter spent two days with anti-Gaddafi forces in Nalut. One of them, a civil servant called Mustafa, says: "When the uprising started, we took whatever arms we could find and we exploded - we took our town back."

1757 The Associated Press has filed an intriguing report from the town of Nalut, close to Libya's border with Tunisia. Anti-Gaddafi forces have been in control there for almost two weeks, but residents now fear the colonel's forces are preparing to attack.

1756 As yet there's no firm confirmation of whether Senussi has been removed and if so why, but it could prove significant. In a

last week, Frank Gardner suggested: "As long as [Senussi] keeps advising Gaddafi to tough it out there is little chance of his stepping down."

1750 Mr Senussi is the "Chemical Ali" of Libya, says our correspondent, and many Libyans would say he has gallons of blood on his hands.

1747 Frank Gardner says there are credible reports emerging that Col Gaddafi has sacked his right-hand man, information chief Abdullah Senussi.

1745 BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner says some in Libya are crying out for a no-fly zone, whereas others definitely do not want foreign intervention in the country.

1743 "He's paid to take the opposite point of view of course," said Mr Hague. "But I think it's important that they hear it from us and that we really mean it. And that we also reinforce to them that we have referred this to the prosecutors of the International Criminal Court, so that supporters of the regime really do know that if they commit crimes or abuses in the coming days they will be held to account."

1740 UK Foreign Secretary William Hague tells the BBC he has spoken to his Libyan counterpart in the last hour to "reinforce the isolation of the Libyan regime around the world".

1735 Reuters reports that army units which have defected are forming a unified council. Speaking at a military base in Ajdabiyah, Cpt Faris Zwei said the council of "Free Libya" will meet to "plan an attack on Gaddafi security units, militias and mercenaries".

1732 We've also picked up this tweet from in the Iranian city of Shiraz: "Heavy presence of Security forces in Shiraz trying to disperse protestors using violence."

1731 There have also been considerable anti-government protests in Iran today, with

1727 A final interesting comment from former UK PM John Major. He says it's important to look at the "dog that hasn't barked" in Libya and the region - with no cry for Islamist militancy and no burning of Western flags. "This is a revolution of the grass roots who are concerned about autocratic rulers and the bread-and-butter issues of whether their rulers are accountable." As such, he says, the protesters deserves support.

1723 He continued: "Despite the reluctance of some countries, if there were any sign of an humanitarian disaster because Col Gaddafi was using aircraft to murder civilians, then I think attitudes would change very rapidly."

1722 Mr Major said that ideally, a UN resolution would be put in place for a no-fly zone, but this "isn't absolutely necessary" in law and order, and a collection of nations could take the decision themselves.

1715 Former UK PM John Major tells the BBC one of dangers of imposing a no-fly zone over Libya is that "one cannot be absolutely certain [Col Gaddafi] will behave rationally".

1713 Mr Kayal said the UNHCR and the Tunisian authorities were setting up a transit centre to provide shelter for 15-20,000 people.

1711 UNHCR spokesman Firas Kayal at the Tunisian border said the numbers crossing are on the rise, with tens of thousands still waiting to cross. "There needs to be an international effort to help these people go home, it's just so difficult to do that by one country alone."

1710 Mr Guterres is expected to make a formal appeal tomorrow, but told the BBC the situation was rapidly worsening.

1708 The head of the UN refugee agency, Antonio Guterres, is calling for an internationally supported air evacuation of the tens of thousands of refugees gathering on the Tunisian border.

1707 Our correspondent says the city is quiet, but adds: "While we were there a passer-by discreetly - barely stopping and without saying a word - pressed a spent cartridge from an AK47 assault rifle into the hand of one of the BBC team. His message appeared to be 'Don't let appearances deceive you'."

1704 The BBC's Jeremy Bowen in Tripoli says the Gaddafi regime has sent a convoy of food and medicine to Benghazi, clearly doing its best to give the impression it is still in control.

1656 Josette Sheeran, with the World Food Program on the Libyan border, has posted

of herself being interviewed by BBC correspondent Ben Brown on the refugee crisis.

1653 If and when the anti-Gaddafi-ists succeed in ousting the leader they so despise, what comes next? This is not yet clear, says George Joffe of the University of Cambridge. "It is extremely difficult to identify any institutions or ideologies that represent alternatives to the current regime holding on to power in Tripoli,"

1649 Clearly anticipating no immediate end to this crisis, EU Council President Herman Van Rompuy has said EU leaders will meet in Brussel on 11 March to debate their response.

1647 He says a people's committee is now running the city, and he is their media spokesman. "We took all the weapons from the military camps, so we are well-armed. We are guiding every entrance to the city, every road that leads to it. We are also guarding important government buildings. We are protecting the city from outside and from inside."

1645 Ayoob Sufyan is in the town of Zuwarah, about 60km (37 miles) from Zawira. He said it had been "under the control of its people for 11 days now" and hasn't come under attack.

1640 Tajoura has been something of a defiant suburb of the Gaddafi-held capital in recent days but as such, has come under intensive pressure from pro-Gaddafi forces.

1638 That's not to say there are no genuine Gaddafi supporters in the capital, he adds. "This was just a very unsophisticated way to try to make their point. I suspect it didn't last a minute longer after we were gone."

1637 "We drove around in a convoy of mini buses, took the odd wrong turn then pulled into a car park where a group of young men were standing around. Upon our arrival they all leapt up and started chanting and beeping their horns," says our correspondent.

1636 The BBC's Paul Danahar has just returned from what he described as "a quite obviously staged pro-Gaddafi demonstration" in the Tajoura suburb of Tripoli.

1635
tweets: " Massive protests planned tomorrow in all liberated areas of #libya in support of occupied brothers in #tripoli pls spread #feb17."

1633 More from Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's interview with Sky News in which he denied the regime was attacking people. He said Libya was "ready for any fact-finding mission from any country in the world" and that reporters in the country were free to go where they want and to speak to anyone.

1629 Speaking about reports that sub-Saharan Africans are being attacked in Libya on suspicion of being mercenaries, Ms Sirleaf said she "called upon the people of Libya to show restraint when it comes to those peaceful and law-abiding Africans who have gone into their country to work."

1628 Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been speaking to BBC's Focus on Africa. She said her country had "called upon all leaders to make sure people's will are respected and violence is rejected".

1623 Mr Sadique said his family had e-mailed him a ticket from home but that with thousands trying to leave, even having a ticket did not guarantee you would get on a plane.

1621 Mohammed Sadique, a Bangladeshi accountant, has been telling BBC Bengali about his arduous journey home from Libya, where he had been working. After crossing 14 checkpoint to get to the airport, he then had to take three separate flights home.

1619 AFP reports that pro-Gaddafi troops have "beefed up" their numbers on the Tunisian border after leaving several days ago.

1618 "We are extremely concerned, it is an increasingly difficult humanitarian situation so urgent supplies are needed," says Ms Elghady. She adds there is also great concern about the situation within Libya itself.

1615 Penny Elghady of the British Red Cross tells the BBC the organisation is working to bring supplies for people fleeing to Libya's neighbours. "As we speak we're mobilising more teams to go to the border and probably more to cross into Libya when the time is right."

1612 The loyal son has faced some bad news today - the London School of Economics, where he studied from 2003 to 2008, has said it is

1608 Saif al-Islam Gaddafi had been highly regarded in the West in recent years as a possible moderniser of Libya. But he has come out as a defiant support of his father in the international media during this unrest.

1607 Col Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, has been speaking to Sky News, where he challenged journalists and Western powers to find evidence that the regime has been attacking its own people.

1605 We now have a new gallery of pictures from inside Libya, showing the

1601

has meanwhile been asking people if they can tell the difference between recent comments by Col Gaddafi and the American actor, Charlie Sheen. Who said this: "I have defeated this earthworm with my words - imagine what I would have done with my fire-breathing fists."

1551

tweets: "Chance encounter w/ Saif Gadhafi: asked how talks w/opposition are going. "Chaos," he said, meaning opposition divided w/ no clear leaders."

1549 The Jerusalem Post reveals that a music video mocking Col Gaddafi, which is popular among Libyan opposition supporters, was made by an Israeli musician. In the video, a mash-up of a recent speech by the Libyan leader and the hip-hop song, Hey Baby, he "sings" that he will clean Libya "inch by inch, house by house, room by room, and alley by alley". It also features bikini-clad women shaking their hips in time to the music. Nearly 400,000 people have watched it on YouTube.

1542

tweets: "Senior #Libya officials say towns of #Zawiya and #Misrata very important, standoff with rebels can not go on.. say want peaceful resolution."

1540 US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said Libya is facing a decisive moment: "In the years ahead, Libya could become a peaceful democracy or it could face protracted civil war." Mrs Clinton was speaking at a budget meeting of the foreign affairs committee of the US House of Representatives, where she was

urging them not to cut funds to deal with crises abroad, Reuters reports. She told the committee: "The entire [Middle East] region is changing, and a strong and strategic American response will be essential."

1536 The new French foreign minister says there can be no international military action against Libya, including the imposition of a no-fly zone, without a "clear mandate" from the UN Security Council. Alain Juppe tells the National Assembly that Paris is "conducting a co-ordinated policy to obtain the departure" of Col Gaddafi, but "no military intervention is anticipated".

1532 A senior US military official has said establishing a military no-fly zone over Libya to protect protesters would be "challenging". "You would have to remove air defence capability in order to establish a no-fly zone, so no illusions here. It would be a military operation - it wouldn't be just telling people not to fly airplanes," General James Mattis, head of US Central Command, told a Senate hearing.

1529 Malta's government is refusing to return to Libyan Mirage fighter jets that landed on the island last week after their pilots defected. Spokesman Martin Bugelli said it was now abiding by a UN arms embargo imposed on the Libyan leader and his family. On Wednesday, Libya sent a plane carrying two pilots to fly them back, but it was refused permission to land.

1525 The website of the Libyan online newspaper, Quryna, is once more inaccessible, BBC Monitoring reports. Supposedly part of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's al-Ghad media corporation, it had briefly displayed a message complaining about government interference earlier on Tuesday, along with an old Libyan flag - a symbol of the opposition.

1521 The Iranian opposition website, Kaleme, says the protesters in Tehran were chanting: "O Hossein, Mir Hossein" - a reference to the opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi - and "Death to the dictator". The presence of a large number of security personnel on Tehran's streets makes the capital feel like a big "military base", it adds. The Sahamnews website meanwhile says at least two people were arrested.

1514 Omani state television has said that calm has returned to the streets of Sohar, after several days of protests. Witnesses earlier said troops had fired into the air and used tanks to disperse demonstrators blocking access to the northern town's port and industrial zone, as well as the main road to the capital, Muscat. At least one person was killed in Sohar on Saturday, when protests turned violent.

1510 Farid, a Libyan in London, says: "Gaddafi's strategy is to put up a show or an act to the country and to the world to say that everything is normal or almost normal in Libya. Part of this strategy is also to crackdown on protesters by directing bullets in their heads preferably away from the eyes of the country/world. In last night's interview, he also tried to play the 'eccentric and flamboyant leader' card to help diverting the unwanted attention away from his problems."

1509 The International Office for Migration tells the BBC that 1,154 citizens from Niger have returned from Libya in the last week. Another 2,000 people from various sub-Saharan African countries have recently managed to cross the Libyan border at Ghatrone.

1505 The BBC's Jim Muir says: "The scene here at Libya's border with Tunisia is getting increasingly chaotic and desperate. There is a no-man's land between the two border controls. There are thousands and thousands of people crowded crushed in the sunshine, trying frantically to get through to the Tunisian side. Once there, they will join thousands more who have been spending chilly nights sleeping out on the tarmac around the border post waiting for transport to take them away. Transit camps are being set up further down the road, special flights laid on, but the efforts of the local authorities and the international community are being outpaced by the situation on the ground as thousands more pour in across the border."

1503 The United Nations' refugee agency says the situation on the border between Libya and Tunisia - where a growing number of people are trying to escape the unrest in Libya - is a humanitarian crisis. Melissa Fleming, a spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, told the BBC earlier: "Right now our people are telling us on the ground that there are at least 25,000 people stuck on the Libyan side of the border - the Tunisians have had to shut down the border; the capacity is just completely overstretched. We are doing what we can to help, but really when a thousand people an hour are coming across it's becoming a crisis situation."

1456 The Kaleme website says the protesters are chanting: "O Hossein, Mir Hossein" - an apparent reference to the opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi - and "Death to the dictator". The presence of a large number of security personnel on Tehran's streets makes the capital feel like a big "military base", it adds.

1449 The reported clashes come hours after Iran's prosecutor-general, Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejeie,

denied that the two main opposition leaders - Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karoubi - had been imprisoned. An Iranian news agency quoted him as saying that reports they had been taken from their homes were false. On Monday, opposition websites said the two men and their wives were moved to Heshmatiyeh prison in Tehran. They had been under house arrest after calling for rallies to express solidarity with the popular uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia.

1444 The Iranian opposition website, Kaleme, says tear gas is being fired at the anti-government protesters in Tehran to disperse them, according to Reuters. The Sahammnews website earlier said a large number of security personnel had been deployed on the capital's main streets and in some of the main squares to prevent opposition supporters gathering.

1437 Meanwhile in Iran, an opposition website is reporting clashes between opposition supporters and the security forces, according to the Reuters news agency.

1436

tweets: "Any fear left in #Libya is that of #Gaddafi doing something cowardly like use biological weapons or a bomb. We AREN'T afraid of him."

1434 French European Affairs Minister Laurent Wauquiez has said freezing the assets of Col Gaddafi's family and associates would be a more effective way of halting the repression of protesters than a military no-fly zone. "Libya is twice the size of France. So is it even possible to set up a no-fly zone quickly, and would it be effective?" he asked. Instead, he said, the priority should be "cutting off Gaddafi's money because the main risk is that he uses this money to pay an army of mercenaries."

1431 France has said humanitarian aid must be the priority in Libya rather than diplomacy or military action to oust Col Gaddafi. The country has sent to planes with medical equipment and staff to the opposition-controlled city of Benghazi and more will follow. "We are absolutely horrified by what's happening," government spokesman Francois Baroin said. "We are co-ordinating with other members of the European Union on humanitarian aid."

1427 The US permanent representative to the United Nations, Susan Rice, says she is worried about a potential humanitarian disaster in Libya. "It's important that he get off the stage," she tells CBS News. Exile for Col Gaddafi "may be an option that he looks at", but there would be no deal to protect him from possible prosecution "for the crimes that he and those closest to him have committed", Ms Rice adds.

1423 Libya's two state television channels have been broadcasting programmes and phone-ins expressing support and allegiance for Col Gaddafi, BBC Monitoring reports. They have also shown pictures of families receiving the payouts announced by the government recently, and denied a military aircraft crashed near Misrata. The state newspaper al-Jamhariya is meanwhile reporting on a US-led conspiracy against national unity.

1418 Staff Brig Gen Mansour Mohammed Abu Hajar, head of the Libyan army's armoured vehicles and infantry division in Benghazi, has told al-Arabiya that he and the division's personnel have joined the rebels. "[We] announce our joining of this blessed revolution, which we hope God Almighty will grant success and victory. We denounce the killing and the extermination of defenceless youths by the security brigades and hired mercenaries. I and all the division's personnel put ourselves at the disposal of this glorious revolution," he says.

1412 Sir Michael Graydon, a former chief of the air staff in the UK who was involved in the enforcement of no-fly zones over parts of Iraq, tells the BBC that it does not represent an easy option. "Iraq is a very good model for us and it takes a good number of aeroplanes, a good amount of support, and logistic support. And so much depends on how long you expect to be there. We were there in Iraq for about 11 years. I doubt very much whether we could sustain a no-fly zone over Libya for 11 years with current resources. But the most important thing about it is the one that's obviously being debated at the moment is, who the allies will be and what will they bring to the party."

1409 Mr Cameron also says the UK is planning for the humanitarian difficulties there could be. "Let us hope this doesn't happen. Let us hope these events come to an end faster. That is why [department for international development] technical teams are on the borders, looking at what can be done. That is why we are dispatching tents and blankets and other humanitarian goods from Dubai in the coming hours," he adds.

1405 UK Prime Minister David Cameron tells parliament that he has instructed the military to work on plans for a military no-fly zone over Libya. "We will look at each and every way of stepping pressure on this regime. Further isolation of the regime by expelling it from international organisations. Further use of asset

freezes and travel bans to give the clearest possible message to those on the fringes of the regime that now is the time to desert it. And we do not in any way rule out the use of military assets. We must not tolerate this regime using military force against its own people," he says. "It is clear it is an illegitimate regime that has lost the consent of its people and our message to Col Gaddafi is simple: Go now."

1355 Tunisia's state news agency is also now reporting that Regional Development Minister Ahmed Nejib Chebbi has resigned.

1154

tweets: "Tribal leaders being handed fliers from #Gaddafi, telling them to give in to the regime or face more violence #Libya"

1350 The BBC's Imogen Foulkes in Geneva says: "The big fear for the aid agencies is that, now that Europe and the United States have got their nationals out of Libya, they may forget the many vulnerable people who remain. This afternoon in Geneva, aid agencies will make an appeal to donor countries for funding for an operation that could include the evacuation of thousands of people judged to be especially at risk."

1349 ICRC spokeswoman Anna Nelson tells the BBC the organisation has received disturbing reports from hospitals in Libya's west. "We do have credible but unconfirmed reports of patients being executed in hospitals, of ambulances being misused, and of wounded people not being able to reach medical care. So, we do indeed highlight the need for medical workers to be respected and for the wounded and sick to get the help they need."

1348 The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says it wants immediate access to western Libya for its medical staff. It says it has received credible but unconfirmed reports of attacks on Libyan doctors, and of patients in hospitals being executed. Its medical team in the eastern city of Benghazi has reported many patients with bullet wounds to the head and chest.

1344 At least one more cabinet minister has resigned from Tunisia's interim government, following the resignation of Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi and two other ministers. Higher Education Minister Ahmed Brahim has said he has stepped down, while unconfirmed reports say Regional Development Minister Ahmed Nejib Chebbi has resigned as well. Protesters have been demanding the cabinet be free from all allies of ousted President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

1340 EU leaders are to hold an extraordinary summit on 11 March to agree a response to the crisis in Libya, and events across North Africa and the Middle East, an EU diplomat tells the AFP news agency.

1339 The Organisation of the Islamic Conference has spoken out against military intervention in Libya. OIC Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu told the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva that "all options should be utilised for the settlement of disputes through peaceful means and without resorting to the use of force".

1337

tweets: "Source in Misurata says some fighting continues, regime elements hiding and attacking from around the airport #Libya. Source says they're choked, in dire need of humanitarian supplies. Adds 'the regime will fall, we just don't know when' #Libya"

1336 The Libyan online newspaper, Quryana, is reporting that Col Gaddafi has sacked his intelligence chief, Gen Abdullah al-Sanusi al-Migrahi, and appointed in his place Mansour Daw al-Qahsi, one of his personal bodyguards. Quryana reports that Gen Sanusi had a key role in strengthening Col Gaddafi's grip on the country.

1333 The Zawiya resident called on the international community to help the opposition, particularly by creating a military no-fly zone. "The people understand. They have got the spirit to fight this. They need help. No-one wants anymore bloodshed. They have been flying planes all since it started. All the time. This morning is the only day I haven't heard the planes circulating. They were dropping tear gas. I saw it with my own eyes. My son, he came in, he had tear gas in his eyes," she added.

1330 A woman living in Zawiya has just told the BBC World Service that Gaddafi supporters are trying to enter the town today through the west gate. "It has started now, directly in front of me is black smoke. There have been three large explosions. I don't know what this is. I have heard gunfire," she said.

1324

has interviewed Chad's Foreign Minister Moussa Faki. He denied his country is recruiting mercenaries to fight for Col Gaddafi and called for dialogue and restraint in Libya.

1321 More on the previously banned Tunisian Islamist group Ennahda. They've been granted a license to form a political party, Reuters reports.

1318 Also in Sanaa, Yemen, is journalist who tweets: "Bag checks at anti-govt demonstration now stricter than Yemen airport security."

1314 More on those protests in Yemen. The BBC has spoken to Aties, in Sanna, who was at the anti-government protest at Sanaa University. She says there has been a similar pro-government demonstration at Tahrir Square. She adds: "It has remained pretty peaceful. The opposition party members joined the protesters. I think President Ali Abdullah Saleh is making a final attempt to garner support from different sectors of society, including the religious leaders - this is why I think he made it a religious duty to protect order. But it's not going to work."

1310 Tunisia has legalised the Islamist movement Ennahda, AFP news agency reports a spokesman for the group as saying. The organisation was banned under ousted President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

1306 Russia supports the international sanctions against Col Gaddafi and is ready to support them, Interfax news agency reports. "We will join the sanctions because we believe the actions of the Libyan authorities to be unacceptable," a source in the Kremlin told Interfax.

1302 Libyan TV is now reporting that officers from the air force academy in Misrata have arrived in Tripoli after a siege imposed on them by "armed gangs" was broken. The report showed footage of young men in uniform, with green scarves, dancing, chanting and carrying pictures of Col Gaddafi. One of the officers described the attackers as "abnormal people" who were hallucinating.

1258 This tweet from

, which calls itself "a generation of angered and enraged Libyans": "#Libya doesnt want military intervention. Please dont undermine our revolution efforts. We need help, a chance to succeed, not the job done."

1253 Guardian correspondent

is in eastern Libya. He tweets: "In ajdabiya 160km south of Benghazi. Bombs dropped y'day by Ghaddafi jets were armed at large arms dump. They missed. #libya"

1249 The Philippines Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario has returned to Manila after leading a convoy of hundreds of Filipino workers from Tripoli to Tunisia. He says they passed through checkpoints and pro-government demonstrations and heard gunfire along the way. He says he said "a thousand Hail Marys". Nearly 30,000 Filipinos were working in Libya before the crisis.

1244

Feras Killani reports a mixed response from people in Tripoli about Col Gaddafi's regime. Most people he's spoken to, he says, have expressed support for Col Gaddafi. Others have criticised his economic policies and complained of poverty. None were willing to appear on camera and the general mood is fearful. The city is buzzing with speculation that there will be mass protests after Friday's prayers.

1238 In Egypt, where Hosni Mubarak was overthrown as president a couple of weeks ago, protesters are still gathering in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Today, about 2,000 people are calling for the government to resign, state news agency Mena reports, because of Prime Minister Ahmad Shafiq to step down because it still contains several Mubarak-era appointees.

1235

tweets: "How much longer will this carnage continue? #Libya screams for help everyday and the world presses the mute button."

1231 More now on the humanitarian crisis unfolding on Libya's borders as thousands of foreign workers try to flee the conflict. The International Organisation for Migration says it is organising ships and flights to take

people from poorer countries home. "I think that the pressure at the moment is on the Tunisian and the Egyptian sides of the border, and that's why we're organising humanitarian evacuation programme to decongest the border areas - make sure that those who want to return and can return can do so," IOM spokesman Jean-Philippe Chauzy told the BBC.

1228 Saudi Arabia has largely escaped the unrest elsewhere in the region, but King Abdullah is taking no chances. The country is to start delivering increased social benefits from today, its finance minister says. King Abdullah announced the new benefits last week after returning home from a long absence for surgery. The measures are intended to help Saudis start business and buy homes, among other things.

1224 Britain's cabinet discussed the crisis in Libya this morning, including the possibility of a no-fly zone, says the BBC's political correspondent Carole Walker. Prime Minister David Cameron's spokesman said: "The government is looking at this as a contingency measure. It is not a step you would take in any event unless things change on the ground."

1221 If you're just joining us, welcome to the BBC's live coverage of events in Libya, where anti-government demonstrators are attempting to topple their ruler of the past 41 years, Col Muammar Gaddafi. Stay with us for the latest updates - reports from our correspondents on the ground, expert analysis, and your reaction from around the world. You can contact us via email, text or twitter. We'll publish what we can.

1218 An Egyptian Foreign Ministry official tells state television that Egypt plans to send ships to Libyan ports to evacuate its citizens. As many as 13,000 Egyptians have arrived at Cairo's airport in recent days on 55 special flights. However, thousands of Egyptians are stuck on Libya's border with Tunisia. A BBC correspondent says there is huge anger at one crossing, with many saying: "Where is the Egyptian army? Where is the Egyptian embassy?"

1212 Annette Stewart, in Malta, says: "I came out of Libya a week ago and am deeply concerned about the black Africans left who are stuck in their houses, unable to access food, in Tripoli but also in Benghazi, because the pitch is high and activists think they are mercenaries. The governments of Ghana, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Cameroon, Benin, Congo must act swiftly now to arrange rescue for their citizens. What will the UK do to help these suffering people, some of whom are Commonwealth citizens? I have been in touch with my friends in a Christian missionary in Tripoli run by Ghanaians and they are facing this sort of trouble. We need to show that so many different people are affected. ."

1210 Sir Richard Dalton, a former British ambassador to Libya, tells the BBC that it is too early to write off Col Gaddafi. "He's whistling to keep up his courage and to keep up the courage of his supporters, although at the same time we have to admit that the situation is very uncertain," he says. "At least three outcomes in the short term are possible. One is that his support continues to crumble. Another is that he makes a successful counter attack in the west of the country around Tripoli and the third is that the stalemate continues."

1208

tweets: "my opinion: to stop Libyans from killing each other, the truth must be revealed, this will not be possible without stopping LibyanTV's lies"

1205 A Russian government source tells the Interfax news agency that Col Gaddafi is a "living political corpse" and that he should step down.

1202 Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman, Jiang Yu, says dialogue is the way forward in Libya. "We have noted the situation, and showed our concern," she tells reporters in Beijing. "We pay a lot of attention to the situation in Libya, and hope that stability can be restored as soon as possible and the issue can be resolved through dialogue and peaceful means."

1159 But Mr Nyberg warns: "If the fighting inside Libya increases, of course that could mean that we would see more and more Libyans fleeing the country, and that would then become a major refugee crisis, and we would need more resources to deal with that."

1157 A spokesman for the UN refugee agency, Man Nyberg, tells the BBC: "We have an airlift from our central warehouse in Copenhagen, Denmark, bringing in tents, mattresses, blankets, and food. And this is as a temporary assistance to those who are stranded at the border. We have to remember that 95% of these - altogether more than 100,000 people who have fled into Tunisia and into Egypt - are Tunisians and Egyptians, so they will very soon, within a matter of days, continue towards their own homes, so this is in that sense a temporary crisis."

1153 The United Nations refugee agency says the situation on Libya's border with Tunisia is reaching crisis point. The agency says foreigners fleeing the violence in Libya are continuing to converge on the frontier, with 14,000 making it across on Monday - the highest number so far in a single day. An agency spokeswoman, Melissa Fleming, said that figure could be exceeded on Tuesday and that many refugees had been queuing to cross for up to 72 hours. The BBC's Jim Muir saw the body of a young man who had apparently died of cold.

1151 BBC Arabic correspondent Mohammad Ballout says Tunisian soldiers have fired into the air to disperse smugglers targeting people desperate to cross into Tunisia and escape the unrest in Libya.

1146 Germany says it is freezing an account at a German bank held by one of Libyan leader Col Gaddafi's sons, containing 2m euros (\$2.8m).

1142

tweets: "Has Yemen's Salih flipped like Gaddafi? Or did he just have a glass too many of that smuggled whisky?"

1139 At an earlier news conference in Sanaa, President Saleh accused the United States of interfering in the affairs of the Arab world. "The events from Tunisia to Oman are a storm orchestrated from Tel Aviv and under Washington's supervision," he said. "What is taking place on Yemen's streets is just a copy-cat attempt, as Yemen is not Tunisia or Egypt and the Yemeni people are different." On Monday, he offered opposition parties the opportunity to join a unity government but it was quickly rejected.

1138 Meanwhile in Yemen, thousands of protesters have taken to the streets of the capital, Sanaa, to press their demands for the resignation of the President, Ali Abdullah Saleh. They gathered outside the university, chanting slogans against President Saleh and protesting at the deaths of four people during protests in the city of Aden last week. Separatist militants also clashed with troops in the south, killing one officer, according to reports.

1134 India is seeking approval from the Libyan authorities to land aircraft in Sebha, where 1,000 Indian nationals are stranded. Last week, Delhi launched an operation to evacuate the 18,000 Indians resident in Libya. Neighbouring Pakistan says 354 of the 18,000 Pakistanis living in Libya have so far been flown home. Minister for State Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar says "elaborate efforts" are under way to ensure their safe return as well as their safety in Libya.

1126

tweets: "tripoli this morning, the shops opened yesterday are closed today, still feel like the weekend or a public holiday. no gunfire or protesters"

1122

tweets: "Just intrvwd son of Omar alMukhtar, Libya's storied resistance hero. He calls on Gadafy to step down + leave Libya"

1118 The International Organisation for Migration is organising an evacuation programme as part of efforts to cope with the tens of thousands of migrant workers streaming out of Libya. Its spokesman, Jean-Philippe Chauzy, said the aim was to relieve pressure on border areas and prevent the refugee situation from becoming unmanageable. Ships have been chartered to take Egyptians to Alexandria, flights are airlifting Bangladeshi workers back to their homeland, and preparations are being made to receive African migrants crossing into Niger. An estimated 1.5 million foreign migrants were working in Libya before the outbreak of the unrest but the IOM says it believes many may be unable to leave because the situation is so unstable.

1116 Nusaibah Benali, a member of the Libyan British Youth Association, tells the BBC: "The opinions of the people in Libya - Libyans in Libya and Libyans outside of Libya - are absolutely adamant that no military intervention, or no military forces, foreign military forces, should be present on Libyan soil. We don't want another Iraq to occur within Libya."

1112 China has evacuated the "overwhelming majority" of its citizens from Libya, the foreign ministry has told reporters in Beijing. As of 0600 GMT on Tuesday, about 32,000 nationals had left Libya, the Xinhua news agency reported. Some 9,000 were now back in China, roughly 21,000 were in a third country, and the rest were on their way to a third country, it added.

1104 The BBC's Paul Danahar in Tripoli says: "At the capital's Gasr bin Ghashir roundabout, a group of around 100 men surrounded by tanks shouted pro-Gaddafi slogans and carried posters of the colonel. "We are ready to sacrifice our souls and our blood for our leader," they chanted. This was going on just as we

arrived at a facility on a tour organised by the government to see a medical convoy depart for Benghazi, though the men denied being asked to turn up for our benefit. We were told the 18 trucks were heading off to deliver food, blankets and medical supplies. The authorities said the supplies were being sent everyday. I asked Osama, who said he was a dentist, what he thought of the rebels in Benghazi. He told me the people causing the trouble were "spies" and that the real citizens of Benghazi would not have led their country into this mess."

1056 The Zawiya resident said he had this message for Col Gaddafi: "We're not here for power, authority or money. We are here for the cause of freedom and the price we are willing to pay is with our own blood. In the words of Omar al-Mukhtar - it's victory or death." Mukhtar led resistance to the Italian occupation in the early 20th Century. He was hanged in 1931.

1053 Last night there were clashes in the town of Zawiya, west of the capital. A resident told the BBC that there were about 200 militiamen with two tanks, and snipers on the roof of a hotel. He said they were dressed in blue uniforms. An opposition resident dropped a home-made bomb from a roof, and the militiamen scattered. The bodies of eight pro-government troops were later found, but the opposition suffered no fatalities, he added.

1048 Meanwhile, opposition forces holding the town of Misrata, east of Tripoli, are battling forces loyal to Col Gaddafi. One resident, Salah, a lawyer, told the BBC World Service that the opposition was determined to win. "We're still fighting Gaddafi's powers. We got some weapons from his people when we were fighting them before, and we are using them against him now," he said. "His rule will end, by any means."

1045 The BBC's Jose Tembe in Maputo, Mozambique, has spoken to a student who was at university in Tripoli. Mohamed Suel Temah said the Libyan government insisted that people carry on as usual and that nothing was happening. However, he said, panic was spreading and people did not dare leave their houses. "The authorities send messages to everyone to go out and work normally, go to school normally. But the panic was inside each and everyone because the teachers didn't come, and as I could see on my way from the university to the airport, everything was just cool, alright," he says.

1034 A spokesman for the UN World Food Programme, Jonathan Dumont, has told the BBC that it has delivered 80 tonnes of high energy biscuits to the Tunisian border. It is also sending medicine to the Egyptian border with Libya for the World Health Organisation.

1031 The UN refugee agency has said the situation on Libya's border with Tunisia is reaching a "crisis point", the AFP news agency reports. Between 70,000 and 75,000 people have arrived there since 20 February.

1025 Scores of Libyans have flocked to the military base south of Benghazi to receive military training, according to al-Arabiya. A military official told the channel that troops siding with the opposition wanted to help deter any attack on the eastern city and its suburbs by pro-Gaddafi forces. "We are also providing training to people so that they could be ready if our people in Tripoli ask for our help," he added. Scores of young men, elderly people, and even children have signed up to learn about how to use heavy weapons and anti-aircraft guns.

1019 The website of the Libyan online newspaper, Quryna, which was taken down on 28 February, is now accessible again through a new address (

), BBC Monitoring reports. The newspaper is supposedly part of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's al-Ghad media corporation but has recently taken an anti-government line. Its old website now displays the old Libyan flag - used by the rebels - and the following message: "The Gaddafi regime has closed Libyan websites that convey the truth about what is happening in Libya... Therefore we, the youth of the 17 February Revolution, will strike back by restoring control over websites and closing the lying websites of the Gaddafi regime, the first of which is the website of the al-Jamahiriyah News Agency [Jana]."

1013 An African migrant worker tells the BBC on Libya's border with Tunisia that he fled Benghazi because of threats made by opposition supporters after they seized control of the city. "They don't want to see blacks in Benghazi. We were in a room for some days, we could not eat," he says. "They said the president brought some black [mercenaries] to fight against the Libyans, so now they have decided that if they see a black, they will hunt him down and steal his phone and money."

1006 Our correspondent adds: "The mood in Benghazi is getting more nervous as Col Gaddafi continues to maintain and possibly to expand areas under his control in the south and west of Libya. There is no co-ordinated military move to send opposition troops on Tripoli, though some smaller groups of volunteers are

heading west. With reports of an air raid, and reports that more foreign mercenaries are being flown in by Col Gaddafi, most people here would welcome the imposition of a military no-fly zone, though they are divided on whether they want more active foreign military intervention."

1004 Libya's Col Gaddafi has told the BBC that the people on the streets love him, and that true Libyans have not been demonstrating against him. His comments have been met with scorn by people in the eastern city of Benghazi. Our correspondent there, Jon Leyne, has been gauging reaction: "When people in Benghazi hear Col Gaddafi accuse them of being on drugs or supporting al-Qaeda, they just laugh. He himself has violently put down uprisings here in past years and also deliberately weakened his own army because he suspected its loyalty. Even the Libyan leader does not seem to have too much faith in his own people."

0958 US state department spokesman PJ Crowley has said it has been in touch with Oman's government and "encouraged restraint and to resolve differences through dialogue". Protests are rare in the country, where Sultan Qaboos Bin Said exercises absolute power and political parties are banned. In an attempt to ease tensions, he sent delegates to Sohar on Monday to negotiate with the protesters, but the outcome of those meetings remained unclear. He also promised to give more powers to the legislative council, which serves only to advise him.

0955 In Oman, a government official tells the Associated Press that the military has deployed troops north of the capital, Muscat, and near the border with the United Arab Emirates because of the continuing anti-government protests in the northern port town of Sohar.

0953

tweets: "In my own opinion, #Gaddafi's best weapon is rumours, from the first day until now they were spreading all the time, everywhere."

0947 A correspondent tells the BBC that the two bombs dropped by a Libyan military jet on Monday near the central Libyan town of Ajdabiya targeted an arms depot in the desert. The bombs did not hit the depot.

0942 The human rights group Amnesty International has called on the interim government of Tunisia, Libya's western neighbour, to prosecute those responsible for unlawful killings during the protests which toppled President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. The UN estimates that 147 people died during the unrest and a further 78 in related prison incidents. Some protesters were shot in the back, head and chest by snipers, Amnesty alleges.

0936 The UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Lady Amos, tells the BBC that countries near Libya need to do all they can to help. "I think it's important that in asking for the borders of neighbouring countries like Tunisia and Egypt to stay open, it's important that the borders of European Union countries also stay open," she says. "I know that European Union countries are going through a difficult financial time right now... [but] they are still much better off than the people who are fleeing an extremely volatile and difficult security situation in Libya."

0929 There's been no let-up in the flood of people trying to escape the turmoil in Libya. The BBC's Jim Muir, who is on the Tunisian border, says thousands of Egyptians have been demonstrating against their government. "Thousands of them have been spending a cold night out here. Some are now carrying the body of a young man who died during the night. They're saying: 'Where are our authorities, why are they not helping us?' A huge effort has begun to repatriate them, but it is way behind the reality on the ground, where about 2,000 people now are streaming across the border every single hour, adding to those already years. About 14,000 people crossed this border on Monday. Egyptian migrant workers formed the majority, but there were also large numbers of Chinese and Bangladeshis. Since this exodus began a week ago, more than 70,000 people have flooded across here. Tented transit camps are being set up hurriedly a little further along the road."

0918 The US government has said about \$30bn in assets in the United States had been blocked from access by Col Gaddafi and his family.

0913 Austria freezes the assets of Libyan leader Col Muammar Gaddafi, his family and associates, in accordance with EU sanctions. The country's central bank says that about 1.2bn euros (\$1.66bn) of Libyan assets are deposited in Austrian financial institutions. "What part of this relates to people on the sanctions list still needs to be clarified," it adds.

0906 The former British Prime Minister, Sir John Major, tells the BBC that "events" on the ground in Libya will decide how the West responds. "I think the point one is facing with Libya at the moment is that there is a very real danger, if Colonel Gaddafi survives a few more days, that either one of two things will happen -

there will be a long and potentially bloody stand-off between the two opposing forces, or there will be a full scale civil war and an humanitarian disaster," he says. "We're seeing, as we sit here, the world change - and nothing is going to be the same again."

0902 The US permanent representative to the United Nations, Susan Rice, has also stepped up the criticism of Col Gaddafi. She said he came across as "delusional" in his interview with the BBC on Monday. Ms Rice said the fact that he was able to laugh while he was "slaughtering his own people", demonstrated how unfit he was to lead and how disconnected he was from reality.

0859 The international community is increasing diplomatic and military pressure on Libya to end the repression of the protests. The US said it was repositioning naval and air forces near Libya. Several countries, including Britain and the US, are considering the idea of imposing a military no-fly zone over Libya. France has promised to send two planes with humanitarian aid to the eastern city of Benghazi, which is controlled by the opposition.

0855 Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh has now accused the United States and Israel of "orchestrating" the anti-government in the Arab world. Tens of thousands of people are currently demanding the immediate end of Mr Saleh's rule in Sanaa, Taiz and Ibb as part of a "day of rage", according to the al-Masdar newspaper.

0844 On Monday, demonstrators blocked the entrance to the port of Sohar, Oman's main industrial centre, and to an industrial area that includes a refinery and an aluminium factory. They also set a supermarket on fire and clashed with police. Up to six people were reportedly killed in clashes on Sunday. Television stations also showed a small number of protesters gathered in the capital, Muscat, on Monday.

0841 Meanwhile in Oman, one person was wounded when troops fired warning shots in an attempt to disperse a crowd of protesters demanding jobs and political reforms in the northern city of Sohar, witnesses have told the Reuters news agency. "We were about 200 to 300 people in the road. The army started shooting in the air," one said. "Many people ran. The man who was shot came to calm the army down."

0836 There are reports of a large anti-government protest in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa. On Monday, opposition parties rejected an invitation from President Ali Abdullah Saleh to form a national unity government and instead threw their support for the first time behind the demonstrators - mostly young people - who have been demanding he step down immediately. The protests' organisers have called a "day of rage" across Yemen on Tuesday.

0827 UK International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell, tells the BBC that it is sending aid to people fleeing the violence in Libya: "We're very engaged indeed in this, we have officials on both the two borders of Libya and Egypt and Tunisia. We are working closely with the United Nations and a number of leading NGOs; and today we are flying, from our stocks in Dubai, tents and blankets and support in conjunction with the United Nations to help the people, particularly on the Tunisian border."

0818 On Libya's borders with Egypt and Tunisia, refugees continue to arrive in large numbers. Some have been evacuated, but many have had limited access to food and other supplies. The head of the World Food Programme, Josette Sheeran, is expected to visit the Tunisian border on Tuesday to assess the situation and talk to aid officials and the local authorities. The WFP has sent emergency food rations and medicine to the border areas.

0811 Witnesses tell the Associated Press that forces loyal to Col Gaddafi have tried but failed to retake the rebel-held town closest to the capital, Tripoli. They say government troops, supported by tanks and anti-aircraft guns, attacked from several directions on Monday night, but that they were fought off after six hours. "We will not give up Zawiya at any price," one witness said.

0805 The US ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, said the interview showed that Colonel Gaddafi was delusional and unfit to lead. She said the fact that he was able to laugh with international journalists while he was -- in her words -- slaughtering his own people, demonstrated how disconnected he was from reality.

0803 The embattled Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, has told the BBC that the people of Libya love him, and that true Libyans have not demonstrated against him. He repeated his claim that the protestors were under the influence of drugs supplied by al-Qaeda, during an interview which took place at a restaurant overlooking the port in Tripoli. Colonel Gaddafi said the protesters were using stolen weapons, but the Libyan security forces had been ordered not to shoot back.

0800 Welcome to the BBC's live coverage of events in Libya, where anti-government demonstrators are attempting to topple their ruler of the past 41 years, Col Muammar Gaddafi. Stay with us for the latest updates - reports from our correspondents on the ground, expert analysis, and your reaction from around the world. You can contact us via email, text or twitter. We'll publish what we can.

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