

**MIMUN 2011**  
**Human Rights Council**  
**Human Rights Violations in Libya**

**Letter From the Chair:**

Welcome to MIMUN 2011. This year the Human Rights Council will be focusing on the Human Rights Violations in Libya.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Ankit Chowdhary and I am a freshman but have not yet declared my major. I was born in New Delhi, India and then moved overseas to London, UK. I did high school at The Doon School, which is a very famous boarding school in India. I have done Model UN for the last 5 years in various roles, from being a delegate, to an organizer to a chair. I took part in UMMUN 2011 in the International Press Corps, and am looking forward to lively discussions and hearing your views in the HRC this year.

Violation of human rights in Libya is a major contemporary issue today, given the upheaval in the Middle East, and the fall of many dictatorships in the area. The press and media is being curtailed, civilians are being fired upon, mercenaries are working in tandem with the military, the military is defecting, the US has put an embargo on Libya and all sorts of mayhem has ensued in the oil rich North African country.

The Human Rights Council is one of the youngest in the United Nations. The goal is to bring together nations and interested Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), to work for greater human rights in the world. The general guideline for human right is the Declaration of Human Rights, which is a guiding document for the committee. As you read this background guide, please remember what your own country's policies are with human rights. While we are working to solve the issue in Libya, these policies will help give guidance to countries dealing with their own issues with their populations.

Sincerely,

Ankit Chowdhary

## **Background on the Issue:**

On 1 September 1969, a small group of military officers led by then 27-year-old army officer Muammar al-Gaddafi staged a coup d'état against King Idris, launching the Libyan Revolution. At the time, Idris was in Turkey for medical treatment. His nephew, Crown Prince Sayyid Hasan ar-Rida al-Mahdi as-Sanussi, was exercising regal powers at the time as King Idris had sent a signed document indicating his intent to step down as King on 2 September 1969. It was clear however that the revolutionary officers, who had announced the deposition of King Idris, did not want to appoint Crown Prince Hassan over the instruments of state as King, so the Crown Prince never attained that position. Following the coup led by the Libyan army on 1 September 1969 and Idris' subsequent abdication, the Libyan Constitution ceased to have any significance.

In 1977, Libya officially became the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

After popular movements overturned the rulers of Tunisia and Egypt, its immediate neighbours to the west and east, Libya experienced a full-scale revolt beginning in February 2011. By 20 February, the unrest had spread to Tripoli. On 21 February 2011, Saif al-Islam Muammar Al-Gaddafi, oldest son of Muammar al-Gaddafi, spoke on Libyan television of his fears that the country would fragment and be replaced by "15 Islamic fundamentalist emirates" if the uprising engulfed the entire state. He warned that the country's economic wealth and recent prosperity was at risk, and said, "mistakes had been made" in quelling recent protests and announced that a constitutional convention would begin on 23 February. Shortly after this speech, the Libyan Ambassador to India announced on BBC Radio 5 live that he had resigned in protest at the "massacre" of protesters.

Gaddafi appeared on Libyan state TV to deny rumours, stating "I want to show that I'm in Tripoli and not in Venezuela. Do not believe the channels belonging to stray dogs". Two Libyan Air Force colonels flew their Mirage F1 jets to Malta and defected after refusing orders to bomb protesters.

As of late February 2011, much of Libya has tipped out of Gaddafi's control, falling under the aegis of a disparate and informal coalition of protesters. Eastern Libya, centered around the second city and vital port of Benghazi, is said to be firmly in control of the opposition. The rebels are organizing themselves into a functioning government. However, in several public appearances, Gaddafi has threatened to destroy the protest movement, and Al Jazeera and other agencies have reported his government is arming pro-Gaddafi militiamen to kill protesters and defectors against the regime in Tripoli. Organs of the United Nations, including United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the United Nations Human Rights Council, have condemned the crackdown as violating international law, with the latter body expelling Libya outright in an unprecedented action urged by Libya's own delegation to the UN. The United States imposed economic sanctions against Libya, followed shortly by Australia and the United Nations Security Council, which also voted to refer Gaddafi and other government officials to the International Criminal Court for investigation.

On 26 February 2011, a rival government was established under the stewardship of Mustafa Mohamed Abud Al Jeleil, Gaddafi's former justice minister, to administrate the areas of Libya under rebel control. This marked the first serious effort to organize the broad-based opposition to the Gaddafi regime. While the government is presently based in Benghazi, it claims Tripoli as its capital.

**Questions to consider:**

- What is your country's diplomatic, social and cultural relation to Libya?
- How does your country treat its population and protestors?
- What is your country's stance on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
- What are the implications of intervening in Libya's domestic politics for you and the Libyan people?
- How can the local population be helped?
- What is your country's stance on the atrocities of Muammar Gaddafi?
- What can the world's nations do to solve the situation in Libya?
- Is democracy the answer to Libyan problems?