



March 15, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear President Obama:

Regrettably, the international community has yet to take serious action to prevent a moral and humanitarian catastrophe in Libya and the Libyan opposition is now on the defensive. As forces loyal to Muammar Qaddafi push eastward, we are concerned that the brutal and indiscriminate tactics of government forces could lead to additional civilian casualties.

On Saturday, the Arab League endorsed Libyan opposition calls for a no fly zone. We call on you to urgently institute a no fly zone over key Libyan cities and towns in conjunction with U.S. allies. We also call on you to explore the option of targeted strikes against regime assets in an effort to prevent further bloodshed. The United States should also immediately recognize the Libyan National Transitional Council and take all necessary actions to support their efforts to unseat the Qaddafi regime.

In your inaugural address two years ago, you said this: "And so to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: Know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and that we are ready to lead once more."

Today the United States and its allies should stand with the men, women and children of Libya who seek a future of peace and dignity. The situation in Libya in the coming days will not just impact the Libyan people. As protests continue against repressive regimes around the world, the message currently being conveyed by our inaction is that killing and repression will go unpunished and are the best option for despots seeking to postpone reform.

For the sake of our security as well as America's credibility with people who seek freedom everywhere, we ask you to act as quickly as possible to ensure that the people of Libya – and the world – know that we are willing to back up our principles with action.

Sincerely,

Fouad Ajami
Stephen E. Biegun
Max Boot
Ellen Bork
Paul Bremer
Scott Carpenter
Elizabeth Cheney
Eliot Cohen
Seth Cropsey
Thomas Donnelly
Michele Dunne
Eric Edelman
Jamie Fly
Reuel Marc Gerecht
William Inboden
Bruce Pitcairn Jackson

Ash Jain
Ken Jensen
Robert Kagan
Lawrence Kaplan
David Kramer
Irina Krasovskaya
William Kristol
Tod Lindberg
Michael Makovsky
Ann Marlowe
Cliff May
Joshua Muravchik
Michael O'Hanlon
Martin Peretz
Danielle Pletka
John Podhoretz

Randy Scheunemann
Gary J. Schmitt
Dan Senor
Henry Sokolski
Whit Stillman
William Taft
Marc Thiessen
Daniel Twining
Kurt Volker
Peter Wehner
Ken Weinstein
Leon Wieseltier
Rich Williamson
Damon Wilson