

Gadhafi's Ukrainian Nurse Returns Home

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Moammar Gadhafi, center, standing with his nurse Halyna Kolotnytska, center right, in an undated photograph.

KIEV — Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi on Sunday was ditched by yet another close confidant — the Ukrainian nurse thought to have a close relationship with the leader.

Halyna Kolotnytska, 38, joined senior government officials, diplomats and pilots who have deserted Gadhafi after he brutally suppressed anti-government protests.

Kolotnytska arrived in Kiev in the early hours of Sunday on a plane that evacuated 122 Ukrainians and 68 foreign nationals from the violence-torn North African country, according to Channel 5 footage.

Kolotnytska could not be reached for comment Sunday.

A U.S. diplomatic cable released late last year claimed the eccentric 68-year-old leader is deeply attached to Kolotnytska, one of four Ukrainian nurses who take care of him.

The cable published by WikiLeaks described her as a "voluptuous blonde" who always travels

with Gadhafi as only she "knows his routine." It even suggested the two might be romantically involved.

The Segodnya daily cited Kolotnytska's daughter Tetyana as saying that her mother was out of danger and planned to return to Ukraine in the near future.

"She spoke in a calm voice, asked us not to worry, said she would be home soon," Tetyana Kolotnytska said of the phone conversation with her mother Friday, according to the report released Saturday.

No one picked up the phone at the daughter's apartment outside Kiev on Sunday.

The newspaper said Kolotnytska moved to Libya nine years ago. She worked at a hospital before Gadhafi hired her.

"He is employing other Ukrainian women as nurses as well. Mom is one of them," Tetyana said. "For some reason, he doesn't trust Libyan women with that."

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