

Gadhafi's Nurse 'Denied Asylum' by Norway

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OSLO — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's Ukrainian nurse has tentatively been refused asylum in Norway in a decision that may be reviewed by senior Justice Ministry officials, a local news report said Tuesday.

Immigration authorities declined to comment on whether Galyna Kolotnytska, 38, was in Norway, but under the country's rules applicants rejected for asylum can be permitted to stay "in cases of national interest."

Newspaper VG said Kolotnytska arrived in Norway on May 3, more than two months after fleeing from Libya to her Ukrainian hometown as the popular revolt against Gadhafi mounted. Western military strikes began March 19.

Kolotnytska was described in U.S. diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks as one of Gadhafi's closest confidantes who possibly had a romantic relationship with him.

The Norwegian newspaper quoted neighbors in the nurse's hometown outside Kiev as saying

she felt hounded by the media there and dared not stay.

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration declined to confirm that Kolotnytska had an asylum case pending.

"We consider Ukraine a safe country, so applications by people coming from Ukraine are treated within 48 hours," directorate spokeswoman Kari Anne Kvarving said.

She said Norway has rejected all 17 asylum applications by Ukrainians in 2010 and 2011.

Andreas Furuseth, a legal adviser at the Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers, said rejected Ukrainians are usually deported before an appeal can be heard but that in "exceptional cases" an applicant can stay while appealing.

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