

Russia Demands Inquiry Into Gadhafi's Death

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Russia has demanded an investigation into Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's violent death, while politicians of various stripes have described Gadhafi as a hero and his government as an "exemplary model" destroyed by the United States.

At the United Nations, Russia called for an end to a no-fly zone over Libya that allowed NATO forces to weaken Gadhafi — and possibly play a direct role in his death.

Mystery shrouds Gadhafi's death in his hometown of Sirte, but autopsy results showed Sunday that he had died of a bullet wound to the head. It was unclear whether he suffered the fatal injury before or after his capture by anti-Gadhafi soldiers on Thursday. Channel One state television [showed](#) gruesome footage of a captured Gadhafi covered in blood and crying, "Have mercy" in Arabic, on its 9 p.m. news on Friday.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the circumstances surrounding Gadhafi's death raised

a number of questions that required an investigation.

"The footage we saw on television shows that Moammar Gadhafi was captured while he was wounded. And then, as a prisoner, his life was taken," Lavrov said in an interview with three national radio stations, a transcript of which was [published](#) on his ministry's web site Friday.

He also said UN investigators should look into reports that NATO jets had attacked a vehicle convey carrying Gadhafi and his loyalists earlier Thursday, causing the former Libyan leader to seek refuge in a drainage tunnel. The anti-Gadhafi soldiers seized him shortly afterward.

Lavrov reiterated Moscow's position that NATO has overstepped the bounds of its UN mandate, which only allows the enforcement of the no-fly zone. "Attacking targets on the ground has nothing to do with enforcing a no-fly zone ... especially if they are not attacking anyone but trying to escape," he said.

Russia has repeatedly expressed public regret with its decision to abstain from the March vote in the UN Security Council that authorized the no-fly zone.

Russia's ambassador to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, circulated a draft resolution to lift the no-fly zone at a closed-door meeting of the Security Council on Friday. "Crucial changes have taken place in the situation in Libya, we expect a declaration of liberation to be announced. ... So, given all those circumstances, it's time to wrap it up, including the no-fly zone," he said in comments carried by Reuters.

Council members are expected to end the no-fly zone by the end of October, but they have insisted that Libya's new authorities participate in the decision.

In introducing the UN draft resolution, the Russians "admitted that they hadn't actually consulted the Libyan authorities at all, and every member state said of course the Libyan authorities need to be consulted," British Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant told Reuters.

In Moscow, meanwhile, Gadhafi's death drew sharp criticism from a number of politicians.

Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov denounced it as a "shameful NATO operation" that ended in lynch law. "Not even the Nobel Peace Prize-winning U.S. President [Barack] Obama can justify this," Zyuganov [said](#) in televised comments also carried on his party's web site.

Gadhafi's killing is an example of the worst of the 1930s, which resulted in fascism and World War II, he said.

Zyuganov's deputy Ivan Melnikov said Gadhafi's death represented "a symbol of the United States and its allies tearing to pieces an independent country's sovereignty," Interfax reported.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, an ultranationalist and the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, called the killing a barbaric act. "It is clearly barbarianism when a mob destroys the leader of its state," Zhirinovskiy said in televised comments in the State Duma on Friday, adding lavish praise for Gadhafi's welfare state.

"Never will a citizen of any state receive that which the Libyans got during the 40 years of Gadhafi's regime," he said.

Writing in his blog, Zhirinovskiy spared no praise, likening Gadhafi to the founders of Communism and the Italian nation state, Karl Marx and Giuseppe Garibaldi: "He is the wisest of men, an African Karl Marx, a Libyan Garibaldi," he [said](#), adding that Gadhafi's legacy was to offer a third way between socialism and capitalism.

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov said he had personally met Gadhafi in Benghazi, where the Libyan leader had told him that he rejected terrorism in the North Caucasus, and praised him as a patriot.

"Gadhafi kept faith in his country and his people until the end and did not yield to pressure to leave and to become a political fugitive," he [said](#). "But he chose death as a warrior, a leader and patriot of his country."

It was not immediately clear when Kadyrov had visited Libya, but he apparently accompanied his father, former Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov, on trips to Libya and other Arab countries in 2000 and 2003.

Kadyrov, whom human rights groups have accused of brutal tactics against political enemies, said rejoicing in the West was inappropriate "because the woes of the Libyan people will continue" and the country was headed for a "black period" for many years.

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