

Libya: black Africans continue to be killed and persecuted by rebel forces

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Libya: black Africans continue to be killed and persecuted by rebel forces

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Modern Tokyo Times



The ongoing civil war in Libya continues with pockets of resistance by Gaddafi loyalists in a few remaining strongholds. It would appear that their future is bleak because NATO will prevent any break-out or major attack against anti-Gaddafi forces. Therefore, Gaddafi loyalists are trapped in all directions and at the same time the military arming and training of anti-Gaddafi forces continues.

However, a major disturbing reality is continuing and this applies to killing and persecuting black Africans by anti-Gaddafi fighters. The BBC is not stepping up its information on this issue after several media outlets raised this fact.

Modern Tokyo Times covered this disturbing reality in an article called **Libya: killing black Africans in the name of the revolution and democracy**. In this article two staff writers commented that *“Reports for many months have stated that Libyan rebels have been killing and persecuting black Africans in Libya once areas came under their control. The number of reports highlighting this continues to grow and many images have been shown which show Africans being mutilated and having their bodies abused and mocked by non-black African Libyans. This disturbing fact mocks the notion of “good” versus “evil” because both sides have committed atrocities but for black Africans it is the rebels who they fear.”*

“Also, reports have stated that African Libyans are also being victimized and suffering persecution. Therefore, since large areas have fell to the National Transitional Council ([NTC](#)) both non-African Libyans and African Libyans fear for their safety.”

Recently the BBC also backed up this disturbing fact after investigating these serious allegations. It is clear that the BBC and other major agencies like Deutsche Welle are alarmed by the reality on the ground whereby fighters loyal to the new interim authorities are involved in mass violations of human rights.

In all civil wars it is abundantly clear that all sides commit atrocities because this is the sad nature of war which is brutal and unforgiving. However, the overwhelming majority of African migrants are workers and they have nothing to do with the bloodshed on either side.

The BBC reports that *“They had been hiding in their tiny slum home in a Tripoli suburb since Col Gaddafi had been swept from power, fearing the knock at the door. Earlier this month 20 rebel fighters came, demanding to be let in, shouting ‘mutasaka (mercenary)’.”*

“The fighters forced their way into the Nigerian family’s home. They beat the couple living there. They stole their possessions and money, abducted the father of the house and turned on his 16-year-old daughter.”

The daughter continued and told the BBC that *“A group of armed men came to our house. They started knocking, they came in saying ‘mutasaka’. They locked my mother inside a toilet. Six of them raped me. They took our belongings and money. My father tried to stop them but they hit him and carried him away.”*

This young lady who suffered such a brutal ordeal continues to be haunted because not only is this nightmare vivid and the scars deep, but she also frets about where her father is and if he is still alive.

It must be remembered that several Arab Islamic regimes in Sudan have been responsible for killing several million Africans. Not only this, slavery was still wide-spread in Sudan in recent times whereby Arabs would either sell or sometimes rape young African girls and then keep them for domestic labor.

Saudi Arabia also only abolished slavery of Africans in the middle of the twentieth century after outside pressure forced this nation to change its policy on slavery. In Mauritania slavery was also a recent reality and despite legal reforms it is clear that Africans are viewed with disdain by many non-black Africans.

Turning back to the BBC investigation the article comments that *“Evidence has emerged in a series of interviews that suggests that some engaged in a violent campaign of abuse and intimidation against the black immigrant community in Tripoli.”*

“Hundreds of men have been arrested with little or no evidence, homes have been pillaged and people beaten up. Most victims are too afraid to be identified but they contacted the BBC to air their grievances.”

“One man showed us around another home that had been ransacked. A thick iron bar in the corner of the dark room had been used to beat the men and the women there as the rebels made off with their money and few possessions.”

Human Rights Watch is alarmed by the ongoing situation and stated that *“arbitrary arrests and abuse of African migrant workers and black Libyans assumed to be mercenaries (and that) ...widespread arbitrary arrests and frequent abuse have created a grave sense of fear among the city’s African population.”*

Karlos Zurutuza who is on the ground and other brave reporters are trying to inform the world about this brutal reality. These reporters initially had focused on the Libyan conflict but with more and more assaults against black Africans happening then suddenly this neglected topic was raised.

Sarah Leah Whitson stated that *“It’s a dangerous time to be dark-skinned in Tripoli.”* Therefore, it is clear that something is badly going wrong and Sarah Leah Whitson who works for Human

Rights Watch is alarmed by events on the ground.

It is essential that the international community demands action and quickly because vast numbers of black Africans are suffering blatant persecution. This applies to people being killed, women being raped, and a community in shock because of the ongoing persecution of people based on color.

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,15366254,00.html> – **Karlos Zurutuza and Racist violence overshadows Libya's revolution**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14758156> – **Plight of sub-Saharan Africans in Libya**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14965062> – **Black Africans being persecuted**

<http://www.unhcr.org/4d7513e49.html> – **UNHCR**

<http://moderntokyotimes.com>