



COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS

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Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen
NATO Headquarters
Boulevard Leopold III
1110 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Secretary General Rasmussen:

The Committee to Protect Journalists is writing to request information about the basis for an attack on three transmission dishes in Libya, which was executed by NATO forces on the evening of July 30.

According to a statement on the NATO website, the attack was carried out because the “TV was being used as an integral component of the regime apparatus designed to systematically oppress and threaten civilians and to incite attacks against them. [Libyan leader Muammar] Qaddafi’s increasing practice of inflammatory broadcasts illustrates his regime’s policy to instill hatred amongst Libyans, to mobilize its supporters against civilians, and to trigger bloodshed.”

As an organization of journalists dedicated to the defense of press freedom around the world, we are concerned any time a media facility is the target of a military attack. Such attacks can only be justified under International Humanitarian Law if the media facility is being used for military purposes or to incite violence against the civilian population. For this reason, we believe it is essential for NATO to provide a more detailed explanation as to the basis for the attack on Libyan broadcast facilities.

Specifically:

- Has NATO carried out systematic monitoring of Libyan state television?
- Are there specific broadcasts or programs that were intended to incite violence against civilians? Can NATO describe the content of these programs and note precisely when they were aired?
- Have any broadcasts or programs been linked to actual, specific violence carried out against the civilian population?
- Since the initial strike failed to achieve its intention of knocking Libyan state television off the air, are further strikes being considered, including attacks on broadcast facilities?

We would be grateful for your urgent attention to our concerns. We thank you and await your response.

Sincerely,

Joel Simon
Executive Director

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