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Al Jazeera

Gaddafi vows to carry on fighting

Deposed leader calls for Libya to be "engulfed in flames" and says nation's tribes will not accept foreign intervention.

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Muammar Gaddafi has issued a defiant audio message, accusing international forces of seeking to occupy Libya for its oil and other resources and warning them to prepare for guerrilla war.

In a message broadcast on a Syria-based television channel on Thursday, the deposed Libyan leader called on NATO and the UN to end their intervention in Libya and said that Libya's tribes would not accept their presence in the country.

The international community has forced Libya into a civil war, he said. "Imperialism is hated by Libyan people, who can accept it? All people will fight against imperialism," he said.

Gaddafi called on NATO to end air strikes.

In another message broadcast earlier during the day, he urged his supporters to keep up their resistance to the uprising in Libya that has forced him into hiding, the Syria-based Arrai television channel said.

He asked his supporters to continue what he called "struggle against foreign aggression" and said those against him were divided.

He vowed again not to surrender, saying he would carry on fighting. "Even if you cannot hear my voice, continue the resistance," Gaddafi said.

"We will not surrender. We are not women and we are going to keep on fighting," the message said.

Gaddafi called on his supporters to set Libya alight, vowed that his backers would not give up, he said in the message.

"Let there be a long fight and let Libya be engulfed in flames." He said the "balance of power is now levelled as all tribes are now armed".

Gaddafi's son Saif al-Islam said on Tuesday that that the Gaddafi camp was still preparing for battle with tens of thousands of troops ready for the onslaught.

Al Jazeera's Sue Turton says rebel fighters find Gaddafi's rhetoric to be "irrelevant".

"The attitude here is really almost that these ramblings are irrelevant," Turton reported from Yifrin, in the western mountains of Libya.

"They just don't see anything that the Gaddafi family says any more, has anything to do with what's going on on the ground, apart from the fact that the fight will continue."

Gaddafi's location

Gaddafi was speaking on the 42nd anniversary of the military coup that toppled King Idris and brought him to power in 1969 when he was a 27-year-old army captain.

There have been conflicting reports about Gaddafi's location since his Tripoli compound was overrun on August 23.

A senior military commander of the Libyan interim leadership said Gaddafi was in a desert town outside Tripoli, along with Saif al-Islam and intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senussi, planning a fightback.

All three men are wanted by the International Criminal Court for alleged crimes against humanity.

Abdel Majid Mlegta, co-ordinator of the Tripoli military operations room, told the Reuters news agency "someone we trust" had said Gaddafi had fled to Bani Walid, 150km southeast of the capital.

He said Ali al-Ahwal, Gaddafi's co-ordinator for tribes, was also in Bani Walid, a stronghold of the powerful Warfalla tribe, Libya's biggest tribe among a population of six million, but many say their loyalty is divided.

"We are capable of ending the crisis but military action is out of the question right now," Mlegta said.

"We cannot attack this tribe because many of our brigades in Benghazi and Zintan are from Bani Walid. The sons of Bani Walid hold the key."

An Algerian newspaper said Gaddafi was in the border town of Ghadamis and had tried to call Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to appeal for refuge.

Bouteflika would not take the call, even though Algeria gave sanctuary to Gaddafi's wife and three of his children when they crossed the border on Monday.