



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on October 20, 2011

Libyan Despot Gadhafi Killed in Final Stand

Former Libyan strongman Col. Moammar Gadhafi was killed by militia groups during a battle to take the loyalist stronghold city of Sirte, National Transitional Council (NTC) officials announced on Thursday. His bloody body was then reportedly dragged through the streets.



Conflicting accounts of what may have happened flooded the press in the early hours of October 20. Most reports suggested, however, that a convoy carrying a fleeing Gadhafi and his top aides was bombed by NATO war planes after revolutionary forces overran most of Sirte.

Citing a variety of rebel fighters and war correspondents, some accounts [claimed](#) the tyrant had been wounded but captured alive. Other narratives [said](#) Gadhafi died from injuries sustained during a battle. And a few reports even [suggested](#) he was alive and well, though several [videos](#) would appear to contradict the notion.

Footage posted online [showed](#) revolutionary fighters shooting bullets into the air and celebrating as a man resembling Gadhafi lay lifeless and covered in blood. Chants of “Allah akbar” [reportedly](#) erupted among revolutionary fighters across Libya.

As speculation about the events continued to mount, Libya’s new interim “Prime Minister” Mahmoud Jibril held a press conference in Tripoli and confirmed that the dictator was dead. “We have been waiting for this moment for a long time,” Jibril said. “Moammar Gadhafi has been killed.”

While confusion about what actually happened ran rampant in the international media, the new Libyan regime’s spokesmen offered more details. “Gadhafi is dead. He is absolutely dead ... he was shot in both legs and in the head,” NTC spokesman Abdullah Berrassali [told](#) Sky News. “The body will be arriving in Misrata soon.”

Another NTC official gave a similar account to Reuters, [saying](#) the fleeing tyrant had been wounded in both legs as his convoy was attacked by NATO fighter jets. “He was also hit in his head,” said Abdel Majid Mlegta. “There was a lot of firing against his group and he died.”

A doctor who reportedly accompanied Gadhafi in the ambulance told the Associated Press that he was killed by bullet wounds to the head and chest. “You can’t imagine my happiness today. I can’t describe my happiness,” the doctor was quoted as saying.

NTC forces began an assault on Gadhafi’s hometown Sirte in mid-September, but loyalist troops put up fierce resistance in one of the embattled regime’s last significant strongholds. As casualties mounted on both sides, revolutionary fighters pulled back briefly. NATO swooped in and pounded the town - with an unknown number of civilians trapped inside - from the air.

Finally, in the early hours of October 20, most of Sirte reportedly fell to the militia groups. Gadhafi and others then attempted to escape, but Western fighter planes struck the convoy as revolutionary forces



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closed in.

A NATO spokesperson [confirmed](#) the strikes and claimed the vehicles “presented a clear threat to civilians,” a reference to the UN Resolution purporting to authorize NATO measures to protect the civilian population. The military alliance could not immediately confirm whether Gadhafi was in the convoy.

[Gruesome video footage](#) of the events broadcasted by Al-Jazeera — a media outlet controlled by the regime ruling Qatar, which played a key role in overthrowing Gadhafi by supplying weapons and money to rebel forces — appeared to show that the ex-Libyan despot was seriously wounded when captured, but still alive. Later videos showed his stripped and bloody corpse being rolled around on the pavement.

Reports claimed the dead dictator was then transported to the city of Misrata, where Libyans dragged his lifeless body through the streets in celebration before putting it on display. Several Gadhafi family members and top regime functionaries were also reportedly captured or killed.

The NTC previously said it would announce Libya’s “liberation” as soon as resistance in Sirte was finally crushed. An interim government is supposed to be in the making, but many Libyans — including numerous armed factions — do not recognize the new regime’s purported authority.

Some analysts have even [hinted that a new civil war](#) could be brewing as militias and other groups jostle to fill the power-vacuum left by the collapse of Gadhafi’s regime. The U.S. government, the United Nations, and other authorities, however, have all pledged to stand by the NTC.

Critics of the new regime, which [includes more than a few Islamic extremists affiliated with al Qaeda among its senior leadership](#), have expressed concern about Libya’s future under the emerging government. Countless weapons belonging to the former Gadhafi regime have ended up in the hands of Muslim militants throughout the region, magnifying worries.

Many of the Western-backed revolutionaries were enemies of the U.S. government as recently as 2009, when a high-level American delegation including Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman visited Tripoli. According to a [diplomatic cable](#) released by WikiLeaks, the U.S. lawmakers praised Gadhafi as an “important ally” in the terror war and promised to seek more military aid for his regime.

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Photo: Revolutionary Libyan fighters inspect a storm drain where they claim Moammar Gadhafi was found wounded in Sirte, Libya, Thursday, Oct. 20, 2011: AP Images



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