



PRESS RELEASE

Libya: OMCT condemns killings of demonstrators in Tripoli and calls for investigation and restraint

47 dead in armed clashes, Tripolitans say to militias: "enough is enough"

**For Immediate Release
17 November 2013**

TRIPOLI – The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), the principal global civil society coalition against torture, expresses concern about the aggravated violence in Libya and calls for all armed groups to be brought under effective civilian control, respecting the rights of those under Libyan jurisdiction.

Libya has been thrust ever deeper into violence this weekend as a peaceful demonstration turned awry on Friday afternoon and an armed group opened fire on protestors in Tripoli, killing dozens, injuring hundreds, and sparking armed clashes across and beyond the city. The weekend's death toll is at 47 with over 500 injured, including women, children, the elderly, journalists, students, and displaced persons. OMCT is also concerned over credible reports of the killing of displaced Tawergha in an IDP camp in Tripoli in the aftermath of Friday's bloodshed.

OMCT, the Libyan Organisation for Human Rights Defenders, and the Libyan Legal Aid Network condemn this violence and continue to monitor the situation. We call for the full respect of the rights to peaceable assembly and expression, demand maximal restraint from all parties, and insist on a nonviolent resolution to this crisis.

This weekend's escalation follows continued insecurity about the role of militias operating outside state control, notably in Benghazi and Tripoli; a steady increase in violence and threats against human rights defenders and journalists; and the continuous practice of arbitrary detention, acts of kidnapping, torture and ill-treatment, and instances of extra-judicial killings.

"The latest spate of violence illustrates the urgency of building a professional law enforcement structure that ensures respect for the rights of all citizens without discrimination," said Gerald Staberock, Secretary-General of OMCT. For this to happen, it is vital that all armed groups be brought under effective civilian control as foreseen under Decree 53, passed earlier this year by the General National Congress (GNC). OMCT also calls for the implementation of Decree 27 – passed by the GNC in March, and which mandates that all non-state armed groups vacate Tripoli – and demands that all parties comply with international human rights obligations.

OMCT, the Libyan Organisation for Human Rights Defenders, and the Libyan Legal Aid Network express their condolences to all those who have suffered this weekend. We demand an independent, impartial, and thorough investigation into this weekend's violence and expect the findings to be released promptly to the public.

For further information, please contact OMCT at +41 (0) 22 809 49 39 or omct@omct.org.