



[Human Rights Watch Calls for an Investigation into Abuses Committed by Haftar's LNA Forces](#)

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has called for an immediate investigation after video footage surfaced of fighters allied with renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) committing human rights abuses during the ongoing Libya conflict. Human Rights Watch brought attention to multiple videos posted on social media that show fighters from the Libyan National Army torturing prisoners, desecrating bodies, and harassing civilians. The abuses allegedly occurred during the Libyan National Army's offensive on the Libyan capital of Tripoli, which has since been repulsed by government forces. Human Rights Watch has previously contacted Libyan warlord and commander of the LNA, Khalifa Haftar, regarding human rights abuses committed by his forces, but Haftar has failed to respond.

In one of the videos, fighters allegedly tied to the Libyan National Army are seen beating a man in chains. The fighters then claim that the individual was killed, and refer to him as a "cadaver" and a "dog." In another video, the body of a detained government combatant is desecrated, and LNA fighters warn that the same treatment should be expected for anybody fighting alongside the Government of National Accord (GNA), the internationally-recognized government of Libya. The videos surfaced in early May of this year during a period of retreat for the LNA after successive government victories. Fighters linked to Khalifa Haftar have previously been documented committing grave rights abuses during the Libyan conflict, particularly in Benghazi. The location of the most recent videos could not be determined, but it is thought they were recorded around Ain Zara, in western Libya.

Human Rights Watch is calling on the United Nations Human Rights Council to establish a fact-finding mission during its upcoming session this month. In this mission, the United Nations is called on to investigate instances of human rights abuse in Libya, identify the individuals responsible, publicly report on the human rights situation in Libya, and preserve evidence for future criminal proceedings. Human Rights Watch has also called on the commanders of the Libyan National Army, including Khalifa Haftar, to support investigations into abuses committed by their forces. Otherwise, HRW warns, these commanders could be held responsible for the conduct of their subordinates.

The accusation of war crimes committed by forces allied to Khalifa Haftar is not a new phenomenon. Human Rights Watch reported that the Libyan National Army set landmines indiscriminately while retreating from the capital of Tripoli. These have caused dozens of civilian deaths as they have been planted throughout neighborhoods. Additionally, eight mass graves have been discovered by government forces while retaking areas that were previously under LNA control. The Libyan National Army has also shielded one of their commanders, Mahmoud al-Werfalli, from an International Criminal Court warrant in relation to a series of public killings in Benghazi. Khalifa Haftar has attempted to portray his forces as a serious, national army. However, the widespread war crimes committed by his forces indicate ill-discipline and raise doubt over his ability to lead.