

**Libya: Civilian deaths from NATO airstrikes must be properly investigated** Amnesty International  
19 March 2012

NATO has so far failed to investigate the killing of scores of civilians in Libya in airstrikes carried out by its forces, Amnesty International said today in a new briefing paper released a year after the first strike sorties took place.

*Libya: The forgotten victims of NATO Strikes* says that scores of Libyan civilians who were not involved in the fighting were killed and many more injured, most in their homes, as a result of NATO airstrikes. Amnesty International said that NATO has not conducted necessary investigations or even tried to establish contact with survivors and relatives of those killed.

The organization said that adequate investigations must be carried out and full reparation provided to victims and their families. (...)

(...) NATO appears to have made significant efforts to minimize the risk of causing civilian casualties, including by using precision guided munitions, and in some cases by issuing prior warnings to inhabitants of the areas targeted. But this does not absolve NATO from adequately investigating the strikes which killed and injured scores of civilians and from providing reparation to the victims and their families.

Investigations must look into whether civilian casualties resulted from violations of international law and if so those responsible must be brought to justice. (...)

(...) Many of the deaths occurred as a result of airstrikes on private homes where Amnesty International and others have found no evidence to indicate that the homes had been used for military purposes at the time they were attacked. (...)

(...) In its latest response to Amnesty International, on 13 March, NATO stated that it "deeply regrets any harm that may have been caused by those air strikes" but "has had no mandate to conduct any activities in Libya following OUP's (Operation Unified Protector) termination on 31 October 2011" and that the "primary responsibility" for investigating rests with the Libyan authorities. (...)

(...) Moreover, NATO did not take any steps to conduct investigations into reports of death and injury of civilians resulting from its strikes in areas which had come under the control of the new Libyan authorities (the National Transitional Council, NTC) prior to 31 October 2011 and which were thus safely accessible. (...)

(...) NATO must ensure that prompt, independent, impartial and thorough investigations are conducted into any allegations of serious violations of international law by participants in Operation Unified Protector and that the findings be publicly disclosed. Wherever there is sufficient admissible evidence, suspects should be prosecuted. **To read the full press release, see [here](#) . To**

read the report, see  
[here](#)

.