

Nato mission in disarray as criticisms mount

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Obama admits "stalemate" on the ground as France seeks fresh UN resolution

By Andrew Grice | Independent

The international mission in Libya appeared to be running out of momentum yesterday as Barack Obama admitted the situation on the ground had reached a military "stalemate" and France conceded a new UN resolution might be necessary to oust Muammar Gaddafi from power.

As the regime's rockets continued to hit the beleaguered rebel town of Misrata and Nato forces struck Colonel Gaddafi's hometown of Sirte, France and Britain were still struggling to persuade other members of the organisation to provide additional warplanes. A meeting of member countries in Berlin yesterday broke up without any guarantee that military leaders would get the new resources they have asked for.

President Obama insisted that Colonel Gaddafi would ultimately be forced from power. But France's call for attacks to begin on strategic logistical targets that have previously been off-limits emphasised that parts of the coalition have become resigned to the idea that the status quo offers no prospect of the rapid victory that had been hoped for.

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