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**DÉCLARATION ET CONFÉRENCE DE PRESSE DU PREMIER  
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TR. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Premier ministre du Canada) : Good afternoon, everybody. Premièrement, j'aimerais remercier et féliciter le Président Sarkozy pour avoir organisé cette rencontre importante et historique. Nous nous sommes réunis ici, des leaders et des représentants de l'Amérique du Nord, de l'Europe et de la Ligue arabe parce que la population libyenne durement éprouvée nous a lancé un défi : est-ce que nous croyons en la liberté ou nous ne faisons que dire croire en la liberté? Plus tôt cette semaine, le conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies a donné sa réponse. Jeudi dernier, il a adopté une résolution autorisant des sanctions additionnelles et une zone d'exclusion aérienne afin de prévenir les bombardements du régime contre ses propres citoyens et citoyennes. Pour faire appliquer cette résolution, des avions canadiens et le NCSM Charlottetown ont joint la force internationale qui se rassemble dans la région. Face à la menace d'une intervention militaire, le régime a proclamé un cessez-le-feu, mais le cessez-le-feu était un mensonge, un mensonge évident depuis le début. Les faits sur le terrain changent dans la direction opposée.

Le Canada a dit, et les leaders sont d'accords, que nous devons agir de façon urgente. Nous devons aider le peuple libyen, les aider maintenant; sinon, la menace contre la population et contre la stabilité de toute la région va seulement s'accroître. Nous devons aussi nous assurer que les besoins humanitaires sont satisfaits, et que l'on souscrit entièrement à l'appel humanitaire. Finalement, nous devons tous et toutes reconnaître qu'ultimement seulement la population libyenne peut ou devrait décider de son avenir, mais nous avons tous et toutes un intérêt mutuel dans leur transition pacifique vers un meilleur avenir.

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First I want to thank and to congratulate President Sarkozy for convening this important and historic meeting. We've gathered here, leaders and representatives from North America and Europe and the Arab League because the embattled people of Libya have challenged us: do we believe in freedom, or do we just say we believe in freedom? Earlier this week, the UN Security Council gave its answer. On Thursday it passed a resolution authorising additional sanctions and a no-fly zone to prevent the regime from bombing its own citizens. To enforce this resolution, Canadian aircraft and HMCS Charlottetown have joined an international force assembling in the region. Faced with the threat of military action, the regime proclaimed a ceasefire, but the ceasefire was a lie, an obvious lie from the beginning. Canada has said... I should also note that the facts on the ground are, of course, changing in the opposite direction.

Canada has said and leaders have agreed that we must act urgently. We must help the Libyan people, help them now, or the threat to them and to the stability of the whole region will only increase. We must also ensure humanitarian needs are met and that the humanitarian appeal is fully subscribed. Finally we should all acknowledge that ultimately only the Libyan people can or should decide their future, but we all have a mutual interest in their peaceful transition to a better future.

MODERATOR: (Inaudible) questions, we'll start with Terry Milewski from CBC News.

REPORTER: Thank you. Prime Minister, it'd be appreciated, as always, if you would respond in both languages, particularly on the many questions, many what-ifs about this mission, and the question of what is the end game, what's the exit strategy. Specifically many military

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experts say there's no to get rid of Gadhafi from the air, so what if...what if they're right? What if Gadhafi lets Benghazi go, for example, and keeps the rest of the country, the capital, the oil wealth? Is that acceptable, or if not, are we going to see some mission creep?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: I think the parameters of the UN mission are clear. They are wide-ranging, but they are clear, and they do not include on the ground action. It is our belief, I think it's a belief borne out by the events of the past several weeks, that if Mr. Gadhafi loses his capacity to enforce his will through vastly superior armament, that he simply will not be able to sustain his grip on the country. I think that is the basis on which we are acting, obviously immediately, to prevent his very aggressive actions and the overrunning of the rebels, but as I think we saw before this, that given any kind of quality of force, given any kind of ability for the population to act, that he simply will not last very long. And I think that is the basis on which we're moving forward. I think that's probably, if I'm being frank here, Terry, that's probably more understood than spoken aloud, but I just said it aloud, and I think that's what we're looking at. But obviously we will...these are always...you know, we should not kid ourselves. Whenever you engage in military action, essentially acts of war, these are difficult situations, and we will have to monitor this very closely and be very careful what we do every step of the way.

Pour le répéter, je pense que la preuve est évidente, que c'est seulement les forces supérieures, les forces grandement supérieures du régime Kadhafi qui le gardent au pouvoir. Et évidemment l'action immédiate des Nations Unies va prévenir ces actes agressifs, ces massacres de la rébellion et de la population libyenne, mais je pense que tout le monde pense vraiment

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que si Monsieur Kadhafi manque la capacité de tout à fait imposer sa volonté sur la population, que ses jours seront limités, et c'est mon analyse. Mais comme je viens de dire, nous sommes dans une action militaire, et quand on commence, on doit être franc. Quand on commence une guerre, en effet, c'est une situation difficile, et on doit surveiller avec beaucoup d'attention la situation et les prochaines étapes.

MODERATOR: Continue with Danielle Hamamjen, CTV News.

REPORTER: Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, en français et en anglais s'il est possible. We'd just like to touch on the issue of Mr. Carson. He's found himself in one messy situation here. This is a man who's worked for you for many years, now under investigation. What exactly happened there, and do you feel, Mr. Prime Minister, that you were somehow, somewhere betrayed?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Look, I think the truth is we don't know all the facts. The situation is this: Mr. Carson is now a private citizen, and his actions relate to his activities as a private citizen, but as you know, we have brought in, I have brought in very strong rules in terms of how employees can conduct themselves with the government after they leave employment, and I will just say this: those rules are clear. We passed them. They will be enforced. And if there has been any violation in this or any other case, the individual will face the full consequences of the law.

Encore, c'est un citoyen privé, mais...et on parle de ses actions comme citoyen privé, et je n'ai pas toutes les informations, mais nous avons fait adopté des règles très strictes à cet égard pour des activités des anciens employés comme citoyens privés, et si on a brisé, dans ce cas et dans

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n'importe quel autre cas, ces règles, on va souffrir des conséquences. On va être tenu imputable.

MODERATOR: Continue with Jessica Murphy from Sun Media.

REPORTER: Good afternoon, Mr. Harper. I'd like you, if you could, to clarify specifically what Canada's involvement will be in this mission. I'd also like to know whether there's a potential for an expansion of Canada's role, and we might send in more troops.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Canada's role at this point, I think, is quite clear. There's a naval, there are naval actions taking place, including a naval blockade. HMCS Charlottetown will be involved in naval blockade interdiction activities. In terms of the air force assets that have joined this operation, there will be, as you know, extensive aerial operations coming very soon. Canada will be part of all of those aerial operations, and we will be working under international command in terms of exactly when we will go out or return. That's our involvement. There is, as I said earlier, there's no authorisation for ground troops, and we have no plans to do that. Neither do our allies.

MODERATOR: Continue with Mike Blanchfield. Last question, CP.

REPORTER: Prime Minister, again, if I may ask if you could respond in French at the end as well. As you said, this is serious business. As you say, it is essentially we're heading into a situation where it's war. What are you going to...and we know that air...no-fly zones, aerial campaigns, they're complicated, despite the great technology. What assurances have you sought to ensure that the rules of engagement don't...that minimise

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the Canadian pilots make mistakes, to shoot at innocent civilians inadvertently? It's an unclear situation on the ground. What are you going to do...what steps are you taking to minimise that?

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Well, that certainly has been a subject of discussion with all of our key allies, our American, British and French friends in particular. You know, as you say, these campaigns are complicated, and one cannot promise perfection. One cannot promise there will not be casualties on our side either. But obviously all precautions will be taken to minimise our own casualties and minimise those of innocent civilians, because the purpose of this operation is first and foremost to protect innocent civilians. And we have to be clear what the alternative here is. We're dealing with an individual and with a regime that will not be satisfied with the mere re-imposition of its authority. The nature of this leader and the nature of his regime is they will massacre every single individual they even remotely suspect of disloyalty. This is an intolerable situation. This is what the entire international community understands.

Je peux le répéter. Comme vous venez de mentionner, ces actions sont difficiles, compliquées, et on ne peut jamais...on ne pourra jamais promettre une mission parfaite. Il y a des risques de blessures, des morts, pas seulement des civiles, mais aussi de nos militaires. Mais on est là, et j'ai discuté cette question avec nos alliés, surtout nos alliés américains, britanniques et français, nous avons discuté la nécessité de minimiser l'impact négatif sur la population. La raison pour cette mission est de sauver la population libyenne, parce que la réalité, on a un régime, un chef et un régime qui ne sera...qui ne seront pas satisfaits avec juste l'imposition ou la réimposition de leur autorité. Ils vont insister sur la fidélité complète, et s'il y a

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aucun doute à cet égard, ils vont faire un massacre de n'importe quel individu qui est juste soupçonné d'un manque de fidélité. C'est la nature de cette dictature. C'est intolérable. Tous les chefs, les chefs, pas seulement les chefs occidentaux, mais les chefs arabes comprennent la réalité et l'extrémité de cette situation. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous agissons.

MODERATOR: Thank you very much, everyone. Merci, tout le monde.

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER: Thanks, everyone.

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