PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BENGHAZI— The National Transitional Council (NTC) reaffirms its position in relation to the laws of armed conflict. At a time of momentous and decisive advances in the Libyan peoples struggle to win their freedom from the oppression and tyranny of Qadhafi, the NTC is reissuing the frontline manual previously issued on 20 May in order to further instruct Libyan civilians who have taken up arms on the fundamental rules which must be adhered to in times of conflict.

Libya is a Party to all four 1949 Geneva Conventions and to both 1977 Additional Protocols. As such, we recognize that in the conduct of hostilities, we are bound by Common Article 3 to the four Geneva Conventions and to the provisions of Additional Protocol II Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, as are the Qadhafi regime’s forces.

We reaffirm our belief that respecting these laws is important, not just as a matter of principle, for the laws of armed conflict aim to ameliorate as much as possible the worst effects of war; but also because adherence to those laws in this conflict will help all Libyans to build peace between themselves when the fighting is over.

We recognize that many of those men and women who have taken up arms in opposition to the Qadhafi regime are not combatants who have been formerly trained in the laws of armed conflict. As such, these guidelines were requested in order to help instruct them, as rapidly as possible, in the fundamental rules which they must respect, in particular those relating to the humane treatment of detainees and targeting in an armed conflict. The rules have been drawn primarily from the 1978 Red Cross Fundamental Rules of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts and the 2006 San Remo Manual on the Law of Non-International Armed Conflict.

The guidelines further demonstrate the NTC’s commitment to do its best to ensure that those fighting in its name, through adherence to the principles of international humanitarian law, minimize the harm to the Libyan people. This will facilitate the effective reconciliation and reconstruction of our nation once the fighting ends.

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