

'There is hope' for Libya, Sweden's PM says

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Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt on Monday said he was hopeful after rebels in Libya entered the capital Tripoli and threatened to topple its leader Moamer Kadhafi, but cautioned the situation was dangerous.

"There is hope, but a lot of things can still go wrong in the days to come," Reinfeldt told Swedish public radio.

Rebels in Libya staged a lightning strike through Tripoli on Sunday, and fighting continued a day later as pockets of resistance from Kadhafi loyalists remained.

Reinfeldt cautioned that "there is a big risk that the violence could escalate," but nonetheless hailed the push into Tripoli as "historic."

"It is possible that the dictator Kadhafi's 40-year era is over thanks to popular pressure that has grown from below with cries for freedom and reforms," he said.

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt called for "an orderly transition and the building of a proper democratic state."

Sweden, which is not a member of NATO, announced in March it would participate in the NATO-led air campaign against Kadhafi's forces with eight fighter jets patrolling the no-fly zone, but said the planes would not carry out ground strikes.

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In June, parliament prolonged its mandate for three more months, but reduced the number of planes to five, and set the maximum number of Swedish soldiers deployed for the mission to 250.