

Sweden warns against travel to Libya, Bahrain

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Sweden on Monday raised its travel warning for Libya, cautioning against all trips to the country and urging its citizens there to leave after a crackdown on anti-regime protests.

"In light of the security situation, the foreign ministry advises for the time being against all travel to Libya," the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry, which just a day earlier had cautioned only against all non-essential travel to Libya, also said it was "urging Swedes with no pressing reason to stay to leave the country if the security situation allows."

The Libyan unrest has spread from the flashpoint second city of Benghazi, where demonstrations began last Tuesday, to the Mediterranean town of Misrata, just 200 kilometres (120 miles) from Tripoli.

Human Rights Watch said Monday at least 233 people have been killed since Thursday in an unprecedented revolt against Moamer Kadhafi's 41-year-old regime.

"We are extremely worried about the situation we are now seeing," Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt wrote on his blog late Sunday.

"A peaceful development of the kind that we largely saw in Tunisia and Egypt appears for different reasons less likely in Libya," he added.

"There is therefore concern for our citizens that might be in the country," he said stressing that Swedes in Libya should leave if at all possible.