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**Gaddafi interpreter 'collapsed during UN speech'**

Ali Treki, former Libyan Foreign Minister, shows the strain as Colonel Gaddafi gets into the swing of things Muammar Gaddafi's personal translator broke down towards the end of the Libyan leader's meandering 94-minute UN speech and had to be rescued by a UN Arabic speaker.

The Libyan translator matched the "Brother Leader of the Revolution" word-for-word for 90 minutes before collapsing from exhaustion, just after Mr Gaddafi denounced the popular Ottawa Treaty outlawing landmines.

"A mine is a defensive weapon. If you put it there, you come to it. I put it along the border of my country. If you want to invade me then you may be killed," Mr Gaddafi said.

The translator broke down as the man once denounced by Ronald Reagan as the "mad man" of the desert embarked on a tirade about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an explanation of his call for a single-state solution called "Isratine".

[According to the New York Post](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/international/translator_collapsed_during_khadafy_EAHR9j2jHOt8Y6TFRhrcQM), the Libyan translator shouted: "I just can't take it any more."

Rules specify that UN translators only provide live interpretation for 40 minutes at a time, and they are used to seamless handovers.

But Libya insisted on using its own translators for English and French rather than one of the 25 world-class Arabic translators at the UN. Libyan diplomats said that Colonel Gaddafi would be speaking a dialect on Wednesday that only his staff could understand. In the event, he spoke standard Arabic.

Colonel Gaddafi ended up speaking six times longer than the 15-minute limit set by the UN General Assembly. But he did not even come close to Fidel Castro's 1960 General Assembly record of four and a half hours.

The longest-ever UN speech was delivered by V. K. Krishna Menon, who spent nearly eight hours defending India’s position on Kashmir to the Security Council in January 1957. Nevertheless, President Chávez of Venezuela, himself known for long-winded speeches, paid tribute to the Libyan leader’s loquacity. “I am not going to speak any more than Gaddafi. Gaddafi has said all there is to say,” Mr Chávez told the Assembly.

The Libyan translator was bailed out by the UN’s Arabic section chief, Rasha Ajalyqeen, who stepped in without missing a beat. She provided English translation for the remainder of the speech, but appeared to be chuckling at Mr Gaddafi’s rambling language.

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"I am not going to say any more than Gaddafi. Gaddafi has said all there is to say," Mr Chavez told the General Assembly. "But I won't speak any less than Obama either."

The Libyan translator was bailed out by the UN's Arabic section chief, Rasha Ajalyqeen, who stepped in without missing a beat.

Ms Ajalyqeen provided English translation for the remainder of the speech, but sometimes appeared to be chuckling to herself at Mr Gaddafi's extravagant and rambling language.

Mr Gaddafi's personal translator was not the only Libyan official who found the Brother Leader's speech taxing.

Ali Treki, a former Libyan foreign minister who is this year's General Assembly president, sat on the dais behind Mr Gaddafi holding his head in his hands.

Mr Gaddafi skipped a summit meeting of the UN Security Council the day after his General Assembly speech, provoking sighs of relief that he would not make another exhausting speech.

A White House spokesman noted that Security Council members were alloted just five minutes to speak at the summit, which was chaired by President Obama.

"It would have been interesting to see if all countries would have stayed within their five-minute allotted time period had Mr Gaddafi been there," Robert Gibbs said.

Mr Gaddafi spent an hour calmly and patiently answering questions at the Council on Foreign Relations on Thursday, without embarking on any new tirades.

One council member said: "He was a different human being."