



CBS NEWS POLL  
For release: March 22, 2011  
7:00 a.m. EDT

**Rating the President on International Events: Libya and Japan**  
March 18-21, 2011

The U.S. and other countries began cruise missile and air strikes in Libya on Saturday to protect civilians from attacks by Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi. Now, half of Americans approve of how President Barack Obama is handling the situation in Libya, and just 29% disapprove. One in five doesn't have an opinion.

**Obama Handling Libya**

Approve	50%
Disapprove	29
Don't know	21

President Obama receives more support from Republicans on this issue than he has on domestic issues such as the economy and the deficit. 43% of Republicans approve of how the President is handling the situation in Libya, and 41% disapprove. 43% of independents approve, as do 66% of Democrats.

On another pressing international issue - the U.S. response to the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis in Japan - President Obama receives a much higher approval rating. More than seven in 10 Americans approve of the President's handling of the U.S. response to the situation in Japan, and just 14% disapprove.

**Obama Handling US Response to Japan**

Approve	73%
Disapprove	14

However, such high marks are not unprecedented; both President Obama and his predecessor received similarly high approval ratings for their handling of other natural disasters overseas. Back in January 2005, 81% approved of President George W. Bush's handling of the tsunami in South Asia. And in January 2010, 80% approved of how President Obama was handling the U.S. response to the earthquake in Haiti.

**Handling US Response to Int'l Disaster**

	Now:	1/2010 (Obama)	1/2005 (G.W. Bush)
	Japan	Haiti	South Asia
Approve	73%	80%	81%
Disapprove	14	8	11

The President's overall job approval rating now stands at 49%, similar to evaluations of him last month. 41% disapprove. The percentage that approves has hovered in the mid to high 40s for the past year.

<b>Obama Job Approval</b>				
	Now	2/2011	1/2011	3/2010
Approve	49%	48%	49%	49%
Disapprove	41	41	39	41

As they have been, views of President Obama are polarized by partisanship. 78% of Democrats approve of the job he is doing, but that drops to 18% among Republicans. Independents are more closely divided; 46% approve, and 39% disapprove.

<b>President Obama's Overall Job Rating</b>		
	Approve	Disapprove
Democrats	78%	14
Republicans	18%	76
Independents	46%	39

For more than half of Americans, the serious problems at a nuclear power plant in Japan caused by the recent earthquake and tsunami have not affected fears about nuclear accidents at home. 53% say the events in Japan have not made them more fearful about a nuclear accident occurring in the U.S. However, 44% say they have become more fearful.

<b>Did Events in Japan Make You More Fearful About a US Nuclear Accident?</b>	
Yes	44%
No	53

Women (51%) are more likely than men (37%) to say they have become more fearful.

---

This poll was conducted by telephone on March 18-21, 2011 among 1,022 adults nationwide. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.