

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 7:04 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: UPDATE #4: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

From: Wells, Alice G
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 04:15 PM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Abedin, Huma
Subject: Fw: UPDATE #4: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

AL did not suspend Syrian membership, as hoped.

From: Hallett, Stephanie L
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 04:06 PM
To: Patterson, Anne W; Feltman, Jeffrey D; Walles, Jacob; Ford, Robert S; Hof, Frederic C; Sievers, Marc J; Tachco, Amy N; Howard, Peter M; Grimm, Brian M; NEA-Syria-DL; Ried, Curtis R (USUN); Bondy, Steven C; LaFave, Helen G; Zeya, Uzra S; Sawyer, Julie L; Grantham, Chris W; Wells, Alice G; 'ptalwar [REDACTED]
Cc: Blome, Donald A; O'Dowd, Stephen; Crocker, John W
Subject: UPDATE #4: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

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The Arab League Ministerial on Syria has concluded. A press conference followed. Hundreds of demonstrators remain in front of the Arab League building. They are condemning the statement and continue to demand removing the regime and suspending Syria's membership.

AL SYG Alaraby said the following during the press conference:

- The Arab League reiterated its demand for an immediate and complete end to violence and killings in Syria.
- The Arab League decided to form a ministerial committee led by Qatar and including the foreign ministers of Algeria, Sudan, Oman, Egypt, and the Arab League SYG to communicate with the Syrian leadership to end all acts of violence, remove all forms of military presence, and begin a political process. The committee will also decide on the required next steps.
- The goal from the beginning was to find what could be done to solve the crisis. What is needed now is a comprehensive dialogue. The Arab League has decided to host a dialogue (at the Arab League) between the Syrian opposition and the Syrian government within 15 days in order to answer the demands of the Syrian people. The Arab League will communicate directly with the Syrian opposition. Preparations will begin tomorrow.
- Suspending Syria's membership would have meant cutting relations and losing our connection with the Syrian government. This is not in the interest of the opposition.

Qatari FM HBJ said the following during the press conference:

- The meeting was held today to discuss the sad and tragic situation in Syria. We have to stop the fighting using any means necessary to begin reforms.
- I want to make it clear that we all agreed on the statement. We want a peaceful solution between the leadership and opposition.

- We made decisions based on an Arab desire to keep the Arab solution to this crisis dominant. Arab countries have a responsibility to deal with what is happening in Syria. If the Arab League did not play a role in this issue, then Arabs will no longer believe in this organization.
- Our statement speaks about beginning a dialogue with the opposition, and stopping the killing machine.
- We want the issue to be solved in a civilized way. We hope that change happens with the will of both sides, the government and the people. The Syrian people know best how they want their country to be run.
- Another meeting will be held in 15 days; possibly earlier.
- We consulted today in the Four Seasons Hotel before the ministerial.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Hallett, Stephanie L

Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 9:17 PM

To: Patterson, Anne W; Feltman, Jeffrey D; Walles, Jacob; Ford, Robert S; Hof, Frederic C; Sievers, Marc J; Tachco, Amy N; Howard, Peter M; Grimm, Brian M; NEA-Syria-DL; Ried, Curtis R (USUN)

Cc: Blome, Donald A; O'Dowd, Stephen; Crocker, John W

Subject: UPDATE #3: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

AL SYG Alaraby told Al Jazeera it is not possible to suspend Syria's membership during tonight's meeting, but the Arab League will take serious measures against Syria, which will be announced following the ministerial.

The formal meeting actually started late because various Ministers were still conferring at a local hotel. **According to press, these Ministers drafted a resolution, which will be voted on during this closed session. The draft resolution grants Syria two weeks to implement reforms, remove military presence throughout the country, and begin a dialogue with the Syrian opposition.** After these two weeks, the Arab League will meet to assess the situation and discuss next steps. In addition, they plan to form a Ministerial Committee led by Qatari FM Hamad bin Jassim. The Committee will visit Syria, meet with the opposition, and submit a report to Al-Assad.

Syrian Ambassador Youssef Al-Ahmed delivered the first speech. Here are some highlights:

- Thugs and armed gangs are trying to destabilize the country. They are killing large numbers of army and police personnel (showed statistics from the Syrian ministry of defense). The Syrian army has found Israeli hand grenades and machine guns, which have been used to kill Syrians.
- The principles of Arab cooperation are now detached from Arab interests.
- Syria appreciates China's and Russia's positions in facing some international community members who want the UNSC to work against Syria. It is time for the Arab League to work like China and Russia and to contribute to lessening the tension in Syria, to solving disagreements and to protecting peace without interfering in the internal affairs of countries.
- The Arab League should now focus on issuing a statement that protects internal security, and encourages dialogue and promotes the reforms announced by the Syrian leadership. Syria is confident Arabs are able to do this if they have the will, and respect the Arab League accord that respects ruling regimes.

- Syria calls upon the Arabs to seriously oppose the media campaigns by Arab media under the slogan of independence, but which are unprofessional. The media are playing dirty games to hide sabotage and terrorism by armed gangs, and promote fake stories about demonstrations and people getting killed. All media campaigns are aimed at provoking foreign intervention in Syrian affairs.
- The timing of this ministerial is dubious. Syria hopes this meeting is not because the U.S. failed in its campaign against Syria at the UN.
- Syria officially re-proposes that Arab countries respect human rights and democracy.
- Syria continues on its track for implementing the reforms announced by President Al Assad and will not allow terrorism and radicalism to affect our peaceful coexistence. We thank friendly countries who understand the conspiracy against us and who are against any attempts to intervene in Syrian affairs.
- The Arab League should not be a host for American agendas that work against Arab and Syrian interests.

Qatari FM HBJ then spoke. Here are highlights:

- He denied allegations by the Syrian Ambassador that this ministerial was held according to foreign and U.S. agendas and said the GCC doesn't take orders from anyone. This meeting is only being held to help Syria.
- We hold this meeting in tragic circumstances. The situation is critical given the killing and violence that continue in the absence of any hope to reach a solution for this problem. We must contribute to solving this crisis and take all steps necessary to stop the violence and bloodshed.
- The continuing crisis in Syria threatens the Arab League and its credibility. We will be held responsible – by history, by the Syrian people, and by Arab nations. We must take a clear position, or otherwise the Arab League will lose its credibility forever.

SYG Alaraby spoke next. Here are highlights:

- The consequences of the crisis in Syria affect the entire region and constitute one of the worst crises affecting the Arab world.
- The situation in Syria is dangerous and requires an immediate end to murder and violence. The situation on the ground is still very dangerous.
- I call upon the Arab League council to play a role in helping Syria get out of the current crisis through a purely Arab solution.
- The principles for dealing with this crisis are: silence cannot be our response to killings; the Arab League has enormous responsibility to initiate and move towards achieving a fair solution that addresses the aspirations of the Syrian people, and that protects them and ensures their safety; and there has to be an immediate end to all forms of violence and murder, regardless of their source.
- Given the moral and political responsibilities of the Arab League, I visited Syria to discuss what the Arab League can do to solve the crisis and work on launching a comprehensive national dialogue that leads to a solution.
- I received a phone call from the Grand Sheikh of Al Azhar emphasizing the Azhar hopes for an end to the violence in Syria to preserve the security and stability of the Syrian people.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: Hallett, Stephanie L

Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 7:00 PM

To: Tachco, Amy N; Howard, Peter M; Grimm, Brian M; NEA-Syria-DL

Cc: Blome, Donald A; O'Dowd, Stephen; Crocker, John W
Subject: UPDATE #2: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

- Saudi FM Saud Al Faisal, Sudanese FM Ali Karti, and Kuwaiti U/S Khaled Sulaiman Al-Jarallah arrived in Cairo this evening to attend the ministerial.
- The Syrian ambassador delivered a statement to the FMs (statement's contents still unknown).
- Hundreds of Syrian opposition members are protesting in front of the Arab League. They are calling for an Arab intervention to give Syrians their freedom, for international and Arab protection, and for Al-Assad to be executed.
- In a statement delivered to AL SYG Alaraby, the Syrian opposition in Cairo demanded the Arab League Council take immediate and serious steps to protect the Syrian people from the Al-Assad regime following the increase in violence, the detention of Syrian citizens because of their beliefs, and the displacement of thousands of people. Specifically, they demanded the council freeze Syria's membership in the Arab League and all Arab organizations, per the position taken by the Arab Parliament. They emphasized the need to achieve real political, economic and social reforms in Syria that establish rule of law based on freedom of expression and the protection of human rights.

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From: Hallett, Stephanie L
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2011 5:37 PM
To: Tachco, Amy N; Howard, Peter M; Grimm, Brian M; NEA-Syria-DL
Cc: Blome, Donald A; O'Dowd, Stephen; Crocker, John W
Subject: UPDATE #1: Arab League Ministerial Today on Syria

The AL Ministerial, led by Qatari FM Hamad bin Jassim, began at 1700 local/1100 EDT. Media report HBJ convened several (mostly GCC) Foreign Ministers at a local hotel this afternoon to discuss a joint position prior to the formal meeting. The FMs discussed options other than fully suspending Syria from the AL, including suspending the Syrian delegations' participation in AL meetings (less punitive than a formal suspension).

Foreign Ministers who arrived in Cairo today include:

- **Qatari** FM Hamad Bin Jassim
- **Libyan** NTC Leader Mahmoud Djibril
- **Bahraini** first deputy of foreign affairs Hamad Ahmed Abdel Aziz El Amer
- **Omani** FM Yousef Bin Alawi
- **UAE** State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Anwar Korkash
- **Iraqi** FM Hoshiyar Zebari
- **Palestinian** FM Riyadh El Maliki
- **Jordanian** FM Nasser Judeh
- **Lebanese** FM Adnan Mansour

Lebanese FM Mansour announced prior to departing Beirut for Cairo that Lebanon would support Syria, and said he hoped the Ministers would achieve an Arab consensus that serves the higher interests in Syria and the region.

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