

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2012 12:14 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Arabs, EU on Syria

FYI. Tomorrow could be quite a circus.

-----Original Message-----

From: Feltman, Jeffrey D
Sent: Saturday, February 11, 2012 7:05 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; Wells, Alice G; Dibble, Elizabeth L; Walles, Jacob; Hof, Frederic C; Ryu, Rexon Y; DiCarlo, Rosemary A (USUN); Nuland, Victoria J; Patterson, Anne W; 'Steven_N_Simon([REDACTED]
 Brimmer, Esther D; Gordon, Philip H; Kaidanow, Tina S; 'Samantha_J._Power [REDACTED]
Subject: Arabs, EU on Syria

B6

(U) Hi from Bahrain. This report is based on a number of meetings and phone calls I've had with EU counterparts and Arabs.

(SBU) It's apparent there's a growing split in the Arab ranks on Syria.

Qatar's Hamad bin Jassim and the GCC are on one side (proposing all the things we've been talking about -- the Tunis meeting, envoys, expelling diplomats, sanctions, etc), and Arab League Secretary General Nabil ElAraby is proposing a different approach.

(SBU) ElAraby says that the Arab League initiatives have failed. Syria didn't do what was promised on November 2. The monitors failed. The proposal to go to the UNSC failed. The January 22 transition initiative failed. The Arab attempts to unify the Syrian opposition failed.

(SBU) Therefore, says ElAraby (according to Arabs who spoke to him), the AL should not on Sunday propose new initiatives that will fail.

Instead, the AL should go back to basics -- a ceasefire -- and draft a limited UNSCR focused on a ceasefire that Russia can accept. He is willing to put aside the Arab League transition plan, at least for now.

(SBU) According to my usual Egyptian contact, ElAraby believes that he can get a ceasefire deal with Lavrov -- ElAraby and Lavrov were at the UN together. ElAraby, who was a reluctant partner with HbJ on Syria, is using the double veto to argue that HbJ's approach was reckless and futile. Those Arab states that were never enthusiastic about the Arab League initiative (Egypt, Algeria, Sudan) and those opposed (Iraq and Lebanon) are rallying behind ElAraby.

(SBU) My French, German, and UK counterparts are doing what I'm doing -- calling and demarching the Arabs in support of HbJ's approach. At worst, we could end up with a GCC plus Tunisia and Libya and Morocco call for a conference.

(SBU) HbJ is on a plane right now, from Paris to Cairo. I've got a call in to him to compare notes. I haven't called ElAraby -- the French demarched him in Cairo today -- because I want to understand HbJ's strategy. He may not want us to intervene, or he may. Stay tuned.

Jeffrey Feltman