

RELEASE IN FULL

## CONFIDENTIAL

March 19, 2011

For: Hillary  
From: Sid  
Re: The Qaddafi offensive

Note: Unconfirmed, one source: Q is taking bodies from the Tripoli morgue for PR display as victims of the Allied no-fly zone.

Latest:

On Saturday March 19, the forces of Muammar Qaddafi entered into parts of the city of Benghazi from the west. According to advisors to Saif al Islam Qaddafi the Libyan security forces stepped up pressure on Benghazi in an effort to gain control of the rebel stronghold before the Western Allies and UN forces can organize military attacks against the Libyan forces. Saif and his father remain defiant in the face of UN demands for a ceasefire and were pleased by reports that rebel forces were pulling back. Later in the afternoon, the Qaddafis were concerned over the first reports from outside of Benghazi that Libyan tanks and armored vehicles were under attack by the French Air Force. Qaddafi was attempting to obtain confirmation of these reports from commanders on the scene. Saif noted that if the reports are true, Libyan commanders on the scene must pull back to defensive positions outside of Benghazi and prepare for a counterattack by rebel forces under cover of the French assault.

(Source Comment: According to knowledgeable sources with access to the rebel forces, on March 18 Libyan jets attacked targets on the road to Benghazi's airport and elsewhere on the outskirts of the city. These attacks took place as Western and Arab League officials met in Paris to plan for military action in Libya. The rebels believe that Qaddafi's troops will press the attack on Benghazi, attempting to capture the city before the allies can get their forces into place. Libyan Army units continue to shell the western city of Misurata with artillery and tanks.)

On March 19 sources with access to the commanders of the rebel military committee stated in confidence that they hope that the allies also enforce a "no-drive" zone against Libyan tanks, armored cars and motorized guns moving between Ajdabiya, where loyalist forces are already in position, and the rebel capital of Benghazi. In an ideal situation they would like to see this effort move westward to Tobruk, which is the last energy export terminal still in rebel hands. Though located in the far northeastern corner of the country, Tobruk is directly connected by road to

Ajdabiya and is a significant objective as it is major road junction. Also, holding Tobruk will be important in maintaining access from Egypt to the rebel held territory.