

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 11:05 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Kabul update 23:00 local / 16:30 EDT

fyi

From: Ricciardone, Francis J
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2009 2:45 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Cc: Eikenberry, Karl W
Subject: Kabul update 23:00 local / 16:30 EDT

Cheryl,

As of this hour of Thursday night there is no deal on an ironclad, substantive, political platform of national solidarity and governance reform, in return for Abdullah's gracious concession which would obviate the constitutional and political need for a problematic 2nd round.

Karl and I remain in close touch with the candidates as they continue their engagement. But short of a miracle, there will be no such deal at least until Friday evening or Saturday morning, if then.

Hence, as we understand the exigencies of our Boss's travel sked, it appears to be time to pull the plug: we won't be recommending before our Friday evening that she make a stop in Kabul on Saturday. The default remains: no Kabul stop.

Nonetheless, Abdullah has now set Saturday as the date for his address to the nation, and Karzai clearly wants both for him to concede, and to attract a visit of the Secretary. The best scenario would have been an announcement in the presence of the Secretary, as a trusted witness to whom the parties would be more or less politically accountable. If we get happy news by Saturday morning and the Boss can't come then, or perhaps a day or two later on route home from the ME, then we'll likely be recommending that she again phone each of the two protagonists, followed by a positive public statement.

Frank

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