

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Anne-Marie Slaughter <[redacted]>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 10:26 AM
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To: Dahlan; Mary Boyd; Mel Blake; Michael Boudin; Miguel Centeno; Miltos Catomeris; Nicolette Cavaleros; Patrizia Chen; Peter Beinart; Philip Bennett; Philip Burling; R. Douglas Bernheim; Rand Beers; Ray Close; Rebecca Brubaker; Renaud Dehousse; Richard A. Clarke; Richard Bilder; Richard Danzig; Robert Bernstein; Rudy De Leon; Samantha Power; Sarah Chayes; Scott Delman; Sean Carberry; sewell [redacted] Shen Dingli; Sidney Drell; Stephen G. Breyer; Steve Bergen; Steve Clemons; Steve Coll; Steven Barnes; Steven Charnovitz; Strother Bunting; Terry Cone; Thomas Carothers; Tim Clark; Tina Brown; Tom Bernstein; Tom Christensen; Tom Craig; Wendy Benchley; Wesley Clark; Wolfgang Danspeckgruber

Subject: Two articles on Iran and Syria

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Dear all,

I published the first of these in the Financial Times and the second for my Atlantic column on line last week. Best, AM

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Diplomacy is the least damaging option with Iran

Anne-Marie Slaughter

When it comes to Iran, the best is consistently the enemy of the good. The International Atomic Energy Agency report issued on Tuesday on Iran's nuclear programme uses strong language relative to earlier reports, but essentially affirms what western governments already know or believe. Parsing the bureaucratese, the IAEA details information that it believes to be "credible", indicating "that Iran has carried out activities to the development of a nuclear explosive device"; that before 2004 "these activities took place under a structured program"; and "that some activities may still be ongoing."

In short, for all the sanctions and diplomacy, Iran continues to make steady progress toward producing a nuclear weapon. We might be able to make a deal that would at least bring some Iranian stocks of low-enriched uranium into the custody of a third country – starting a process of multilateral cooperation to meet Iran's legitimate needs for nuclear fuel, while constraining its illicit activities. This would still leave Iran enough LEU to produce a bomb, and could legitimise its enrichment efforts, allowing them to continue contrary to UN demands. That would be bad. But continuing with a policy of sanctions and pressure that is not working is worse.

The IAEA report documents repeated Iranian violations of UN obligations and IAEA requests. It catalogues Iranian military efforts to obtain nuclear-related and dual-use equipment, to ramp up production of nuclear fuel by "undeclared pathways," to acquire nuclear weapons development information from a "clandestine nuclear supply network," and to design an actual weapon, including testing of components. Harvard Professor Graham Allison, a leading expert on nuclear proliferation, has a more direct approach. He has a chart showing a nuclear football field, with the endzone being the possession of enough highly-enriched uranium to create a bomb. It shows that Iran has enough low-enriched uranium (5 per cent) to create four bombs, but that the time needed to upgrade this

keeps Iran 30 yards from the endzone. In addition, though, Iran is building a large stockpile of medium-enriched uranium (20 per cent), which takes much less effort to convert to bomb-grade material. That puts it on the 10-yard line – a very short distance from its goal.

The Stuxnet worm does appear to have set Iran back by perhaps two years, but that is being overcome. New generations of cyber-viruses may be harder to insert and easier to defend against. Military action will remain an option, but would run counter to the Obama administration's entire strategy of integrating rising powers into a strong international order. It is also not certain to work, and would have deeply counter-productive political effects inside Iran and probably across the Muslim world.

That leaves diplomacy. In late 2009 the US, France and Russia proposed a deal whereby Iran would give up its own stocks of LEU in return for international provision of sufficient nuclear fuel to run a medical research reactor in Tehran. Mahmoud Ahmadi-Nejad originally seemed receptive, but Iran then backed out quickly. In the spring of 2011, Brazil and Turkey reached a weaker version of the same deal, in which Iran would transfer 1,200kg of LEU to Turkey in return for the same quantity of nuclear fuel for the Tehran reactor. That move widely was seen as an Iranian ploy to blunt another round of UN sanctions. The US pointed out, rightly, that Tehran was not committing to stop enrichment, and secured agreement on more and stronger sanctions. Meanwhile, it made its displeasure clear in Ankara and Brasilia; the deal fell through; and Tehran continued its programme. What was lost was any opportunity to establish a precedent of keeping Iranian fuel outside Iran, and working within a cooperative rather than a coercive frame that would allow Iran to save face.

Today, if Barack Obama were to put that deal on the table, he would be hammered by his Republican opponents, in Congress and on the presidential campaign trail, for giving away the store, negotiating from weakness, affirming US decline, and so on. But if we are really as worried about an Iranian bomb as we claim, results should trump political perceptions.

The IAEA report has the dual advantage of expressing global concern over Iranian behavior and of focusing attention on Iran's violation of its international obligations. Western governments should now turn back to Turkey and Brazil. Turkish-Iranian frictions are on the rise, particularly over Syria and Arab uprisings across the region. But Turkey has a direct stake in avoiding an outcome in which Iran upstages it as the region's only nuclear power besides Israel; and Iran has a stake in working with Turkey at least some of the time in the complex triangular politics emerging among Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. Dilma Rousseff, Brazil's new president, has a stake in doing something that Lula was unable to accomplish; Brazil also has a strong incentive as a nation that flirted with developing nuclear weapons but then renounced its programme. Let them initiate a new round of negotiations under UN auspices – with full backing from the US, France, Russia and other powers concerned. At the least, it deprives the Iranian government of its familiar US whipping boy. At most, we might succeed in halting play on the 10-yard line and then changing the game.

President Obama is riding high in national security matters these days, largely as a result of following his own instincts. He can afford a return to his initial policy of pragmatic engagement, particularly on an issue that does not pit the Iranian government against his own people. He may fail, but he has proved himself to be a leader willing to risk failure to get results. Given the price of continuing our current policy, it's time to change course.

The writer is a professor at Princeton University and former director of policy planning at the US State department

How the World Can Peacefully Intervene in Syria

By Anne-Marie Slaughter

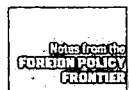
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Preparing for civil war may be the only remaining way to avert it



A protester faces riot police at Khalidia, near Homs / Reuters

U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice tweeted yesterday, "Most immediate civ. protection issue confronting the #UNSC is #Syria. We will not rest until the Council rises to meet its responsibilities." Civilian protection is going to require a buffer zone and safe routes for wounded Syrians and refugees fleeing violence to reach sanctuary either in that buffer zone or in neighboring countries. According to Salam Hafez, an editor at the Institute for War and Peace reporting, the anti-regime Free Syrian Army (FSA) is protecting "some villages in Dera, Jebal Al-Zawya and Idlib and some districts in Hama and Homs," a strategic belt in northwest Syria close to the Turkish border. That is precisely where the Syrian army is intensifying its assault, likely because if the FSA can hold and expand this area it will have a clear base of operations. The Syrian government is massacring soldiers and civilians in Homs to prevent that city from becoming something like a Syrian version of Libya's Benghazi, the stronghold of the opposition and their base of operations in a country-wide conflict. But such a base could and should also become a safe zone for hundreds if not thousands of wounded civilians who can no longer seek medical assistance in Syrian hospitals, numbers that will increase dramatically, accompanied by massive streams of refugees, if civil war breaks out in earnest.



On Saturday, the Arab Leagues will meet again in an emergency session called to review Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad's flagrant violation of his agreement to the League's plan to end the violence, a plan that required the Syrian government to withdraw its military from cities and residential areas, release all political prisoners, and allow Arab League monitors, human rights groups, and foreign journalists into the country, none of which he has done. Instead, the Syrian government has ratcheted up its assault in places like Homs. The opposition predicted immediately and correctly that the Syrian government would never abide by the agreement. Ausama Monajed, an adviser to the president of Syrian National Council, said in an interview that Assad had agreed only because he "has realized that Russia and China will no longer protect him at the United Nations. The only thing saving the regime so far has been that Russia and China were prepared to block any resolution against Syria at the Security Council. But now it has become clear that the Arab League will use its leverage with Russia and China to persuade them to back their position and not use their veto power, and it is clear that neither Russia nor China would compromise their position with the Arab League, particularly Saudi Arabia, just to save Assad."

That's an optimistic view; many other commentators argue that Assad likely believes he has the upper hand and is just playing for time while he steadily increases the level of force and brutality necessary to crush the opposition outright. In cities such as Aleppo, much like in many Libyan cities after Qaddafi struck back, supporters of the opposition are sufficiently cowed that they will not take to the streets and start the cycle of protest, killings, and renewed determination to vindicate those deaths. Thus the balance of power that will determine whether the Syrian government will be forced out of power or a full-fledged civil war will break out lies with two major swing institutions: the Syrian business community and the army, whose calculations must largely rest on their predictions as to whether Assad can hold on or not.

That's where U.S. diplomacy can help, by forcing both the members of the Arab League (particularly Syria's neighbors) and Syrian supporters of the regime to confront and absorb what a civil war would mean. The U.S. should encourage the Arab League to ask the UN for a resolution supporting the creation and defense of a buffer zone on the Turkish-Syrian border and the subsequent creation of safe corridors to that zone from cities where the Syrian government has concentrated its assault. Turkey would have to take the lead, along with the FSA, in implementing this resolution, but NATO could provide logistical support. At the same time, the U.S. should immediately begin organizing a medical and disaster relief response. If a government will not protect its own citizens, the doctrine of responsibility to protect allows the international community to step in, but not necessarily with soldiers.

What is happening in Syria is a humanitarian disaster equivalent to any earthquake or flood. Thousands of battered civilians need help in ways that members of the international community -- governments, NGOs, international organizations, militaries, even corporations -- know how to provide. The U.S. navy should prepare to send hospital ships off the Turkish coast. Indeed, Dave Takaki, a U.S. vet, points out that the Global Logistics Cluster, a center of operations for disaster relief and humanitarian assistance endorsed by a UN-sponsored forum of UN and non-UN partners, includes UNHCR, UNDP, United Nations Department of Peace Keeping Operations, WHO, United Nations Department of Safety and Security, Swedish Rescue Services Agency, NRC, Danish Refugee Council, United Nations Institute for Training and Research/Operational Satellite Applications Programme, RedR Australia, Télécoms Sans Frontières, Ericsson Response, Global VSAT Forum, and NetHope, a consortium of 18 international NGOs. The International Red Cross and Crescent are also connected. These partners are already working through the cluster approach in 11 countries ranging from Panama to Yemen.

Activating an international humanitarian assistance response now will not only put the international community in a far better place to respond to a Syrian civil war faster and better than we responded in Libya, but it will also force all the parties involved to start thinking through the real implications of what is about to happen. Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq will start seeing streams of refugees and active destabilization of their own politics as ethnic and religious groups connected to different factions in a Syrian conflict take sides. Iran is supporting the Syrian government; the Saudi king has called for Assad to step down. The Iraqi government has supported Assad, albeit tepidly; the Iraqi opposition is supporting the Syrian opposition. At worst, Syria could become the site of a proxy war between Turkey and Saudi Arabia on one side with Iran and Iraq on the other. Instead of making predictions and placing bets, it's time for all countries involved to start responding and planning based on worst case scenarios.

Preparing for civil war may be the only remaining way to avert it