

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: White House, Egypt Discusses Plan for Mubarak's Exit (NY Times)

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Subject: White House, Egypt Discusses Plan for Mubarak's Exit (NY Times)

WASHINGTON (New York Times) - The Obama administration is discussing with Egyptian officials a proposal for President Hosni Mubarak to resign immediately, turning over power to a transitional government headed by Vice President Omar Suleiman with the support of the Egyptian military, administration officials and Arab diplomats said Thursday.

Even though Mr. Mubarak has balked, so far, at leaving now, officials from both governments are continuing talks about a plan in which, Mr. Suleiman, backed by Sami Enan, chief of the Egyptian armed forces, and Field Marshal Mohamed Tantawi, the Defense Minister, would immediately begin a process of constitutional reform.

The proposal also calls for the transitional government to invite members from a broad range of opposition groups, including the banned Muslim Brotherhood, to begin work to open up the country's electoral system in an effort to bring about free and fair elections in September, the officials said.

Senior administration officials said that the proposal is one of several options under discussion with high-level Egyptian officials around Mr. Mubarak, though not him directly, in an effort to convince him to step down now.

The officials cautioned that the outcome depended on several factors, not least of all the mood of the protesters on the streets of Cairo and other Egyptian cities and the dynamics within the Egyptian government. Some officials said there was not yet any indication that either Mr. Suleiman or the military were willing to abandon Mr. Mubarak.

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