

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2011 10:56 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Around 300 Tunisians protest ahead of Clinton visit (Reuters)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker@state.gov <OpsNewsTicker@state.gov>  
**To:** NEWS-NEA; NEWS-Mahogany  
**Cc:** SES-O\_Shift-II; SES-O\_OS; SES-O\_SWO  
**Sent:** Wed Mar 16 10:54:39 2011  
**Subject:** Around 300 Tunisians protest ahead of Clinton visit (Reuters)

TUNIS (Reuters) - Around 300 Tunisians held a protest in the capital on Wednesday against an imminent visit to their country by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, witnesses said.

The demonstrators gathered in Avenue Bourguiba, the tree-lined boulevard in Tunis which was a focal point of the mass protests that ousted president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali on Jan. 14.

Some of them chanted "No to U.S. meddling in Tunisia's affairs" and "Tunisia free, U.S. out".

A military helicopter buzzed overhead as security forces looked on. Clinton was in Egypt her first visit there since long-time U.S. ally Hosni Mubarak was toppled last month, and was due to arrive in Tunis later on Wednesday.

She is expected to meet Tunisia's interim authorities on Thursday to express her support for the transition to democratic rule.

Washington, like other Western governments, is eager to present itself as a partner to the mass protest movements that swept Mubarak and Ben Ali from power, despite its long support for both authoritarian rulers.

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