

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, August 27, 2011 1:54 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Gen. Yunus' Family Dissatisfied with TNC Murder Investigation

Worth a read.

From: Fogarty, Daniel J
Sent: Saturday, August 27, 2011 01:26 PM
To: Wells, Alice G; Sullivan, Jacob J
Cc: S_SpecialAssistants
Subject: Gen. Yunus' Family Dissatisfied with TNC Murder Investigation

Alice and Jake:

Readout below of Rep. Stevens' meeting with the family of slain TNC General Abd al Fattah Yunus. Received via Ops.

Thanks,

Dan

Summary: Relatives of the late TNC General Abd al Fattah Yunus told U.S. Rep and Poloff that they are dissatisfied with the TNC's unwillingness to arrest any suspects in the July 28 murder of the General. They alleged that Islamic radicals were responsible and felt that the TNC Chairman was "afraid" to confront the extremists, who control several armed militias in Benghazi. They said that the tribes of eastern Libya had met in Tobruq and decided that they would soon begin a multi-step process to eliminate the radical Islamic militias and their leadership. **End summary.**

Comment: Despite dramatic events in western Libya, the demand for justice after Yunus' killing is still at the forefront for many Libyans in the east. If the TNC relocates to Tripoli without convincingly addressing the matter, there is a risk that the tribes in the east will take the law into their own hands and confront the militias. Civil strife in the east could undermine Abd al-Jalil's authority as leader of the TNC, as well as the TNC's own legitimacy as the governing authority of Libya. **End comment.**

U.S. Rep and Poloff met with the brother, nephew, and three of the five sons of the assassinated TNC General Abd al-Fattah Yunus. The general's relatives had sought the meeting to express their dissatisfaction with the way the TNC was handling the investigation.

Yunus' Family and Tribes Are Pressing the TNC to Arrest Yunus' Killers Immediately

The general's relatives said they were "hurt" by what they felt was the TNC's "negligence" towards Gen. Yunus' death. They pointed to TNC Chairman Abd al-Jalil's statement last week that even though the criminal investigation into his death had concluded, he would not release the killers' names or arrest the suspects until a time when it would not harm the revolution. Gen. Yunus' relatives said that they did not understand what the TNC Chairman meant – they felt that Abd al-Jalil was "afraid" to arrest Yunus' killers. They and the tribes were pressing the TNC to release the names of the killers and arrest them immediately.

General Yunus' relatives said that they had received death threats from radical Islamists who do not want them to continue to press for the investigation of his death. They said they are seeking political asylum in the United Arab Emirates as a result of these death threats.

The Tribes' Plan to Confront Islamic Armed Groups

Yunus' relatives said there were six Islamic extremist brigades that need to be disbanded, including the Salah al-Din Brigade and the Abu Obeidat Bin Jarrah Brigade (Comment: The latter militia is widely thought to be responsible for murdering Yunus. End comment). In their estimation, these radical brigades amount to 1,500 fighters in total. Most of their members come from Benghazi and Derna but have until recently been at the Brega battlefield. They said the key leaders of the radical Islamic brigades are Fawzi Abu Ktef (commander of the 17 February Brigade), Ismail Sallabi (a top commander in the 17 February Brigade), Mustafa Ruba (commander of the Salah al-Din Brigade), and Abd al-Hakim Bel Haj (former leader of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and currently a top rebel military leader in Tripoli.)

Yunus' relatives said that, in light of their dissatisfaction with the TNC's handling of the Yunus killing, tribal sheikhs from across eastern Libya met in Tobruq last week and took the decision to rein in the militias on their own after Ramadan. Their strategy to confront the militias -- in particular what they consider to be radical Islamic brigades -- is a multi-step process. Tribal leaders intend first to attempt to persuade the radical Islamist leaders and their families to dissolve their militias and integrate them fully into the TNC's national armed forces. Should the radical Islamist leaders refuse to do so, the tribal leaders intend to use their social influence to convince the rank and file of the radical militias to lay down their arms. Should this fail, the tribal leaders intend to take up arms against the militias and kill their leaders.

Yunus' relatives said that the radical Islamists must be eliminated before they become stronger and "turn Libya into Afghanistan."

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.