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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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To: H
Subject: Fw: Libya's top oil official has defected - TV reports (Reuters)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 06:33 PM
To: NEWS-Libya; NEWS-Mahogany
Cc: SES-O_Shift-III; SES-O_OS
Subject: Libya's top oil official has defected - TV reports (Reuters)

CAIRO, May 16 (Reuters) - Shokri Ghanem, chairman of Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC), has defected from the regime of Muammar Gaddafi, Arab television stations reported on Monday.

It was not possible to immediately verify the reports and Libyan officials in Tripoli were not available for comment.

Al Arabiya television quoted sources in the rebel Transitional National Council as saying that Ghanem had defected and joined rebel ranks.

Al Jazeera also reported that Ghanem had defected and left Libya, but it did not give any details.

Ghanem denied in an interview with Reuters in late March that he had left Libya, after al Jazeera carried a similar report saying he had defected from the Gaddafi regime to Tunisia.

Ghanem, 68, represents Libya at OPEC meetings. The U.S.-educated official has been NOC chairman since 2006.

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