

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2011 10:25 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Stevens update

----- Original Message -----

From: Davis, Timmy T
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2011 07:51 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Abedin, Huma; Wells, Alice G; S_SpecialAssistants
Subject: Stevens update

Security: Today's focus is on the security situation in Benghazi. There is new local reporting that hotels are being targeted. The TNC conducted a raid on a house/storage facility and found and arrested an Egyptian cell reportedly there for the purpose of attacking hotels. It is believed they were connected to the cell arrested last week, and that interrogation of those arrested earlier led to this round of arrests. Ahmed Qadafadam, cousin of Qadhafi who was envoy to Egypt (and was rumored to have defected), is purportedly the funder and organizer of this cell.

CA updated its travel guidance to tell travelers to stay away from the Fadihl Hotel. Stevens will inform the TNC this afternoon. [NOTE: for your reference, I appended the new WM at the end of this email.]

Stevens will be meeting with MFA in one hour and will make a written request for better security at the hotel and for better security-related coordination. He still feels comfortable in the hotel. They are looking into the idea of moving into a villa, but that is some way off. Need to consider resource requirements (would need TDY'er with authority to sign lease, hire local guards, etc.). Based on discussion with DS yesterday, the hotel remains the safest location. Stevens will continue to work to have the TNC post more people outside and beef up security presence. They have a good set back and are way off the ground.

Flights: Stevens checked with head of the airport. There are no regular humanitarian or other flights, however, there are flights coming in, and the airport could support an air bridge if any country wanted to set one up. Stevens will see his European counterparts this afternoon and will ask how they are bringing in their people and whether we can be part of it.

Trip to Rome: Stevens doesn't know yet if Jalil is going to Rome. As of now, he's inclined not to go but he might change his mind. If the Department thinks he ought to go, Stevens can pass that message. As it stands now, Mahmoud Jabril and Ali Tarhouni will be going.

Misrata: Stevens spoke with Brig. Gen. Hassi re Misrata. The general was pretty clear that the ostensible move by Qadhafi forces out of the area is a ruse. They are withdrawing troops so they won't be hit by NATO, but will send them back in in civilian clothing so they can continue killing that way. Hassi said the assertion Qadhafi would leave to the tribes to resolve was ridiculous because there are no armed tribes around.