



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

May 5, 2016

Case No.: F-2014-06532

Segments: S/ES-S-0001, S/ES-S-0003, S/ES-S-0004

John H. Clarke, Esq.
1629 K Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Clarke:

I refer you to our letter dated December 21, 2015, regarding the release of certain Department of State material under the Freedom of Information Act (the "FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. §552.

Forty two records additional documents responsive to your FOIA request have been retrieved. After reviewing these documents we have determined that 39 may be released in full and 3 must be withheld in full. All released material is enclosed.

Where the information was withheld in full, all was withheld under FOIA Exemption 5, 5 U.S.C. §552(b)(5). An enclosure provides information on the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material.

We will keep you advised as your case progresses. If you have any questions, please contact Trial Attorney Megan Crowley at (202) 305-0754 or at Megan.A.Crowley@usdoj.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric F. Stein for".

Eric F. Stein, Acting Co-Director
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures: As stated

000001

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

- (b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:
- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
 - 1.4(b) Foreign government information
 - 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
 - 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
 - 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
 - 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction
- (b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| ARMSEXP | Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c) |
| CIA PERS/ORG | Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g) |
| EXPORT CONTROL | Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c) |
| FS ACT | Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004 |
| INA | Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f) |
| IRAN | Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505 |
- (b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information
- (b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
- (b)(6) Personal privacy information
- (b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:
- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
 - (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - (D) disclose confidential sources
 - (E) disclose investigation techniques
 - (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
- (b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

- NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

Interview with Michele Kelemen of National Public Radio

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Geneva, Switzerland

February 28, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: (In progress) You have targeted sanctions and an arms embargo. What more did you talk about with your partners here about – specifically how to stop this bloodshed?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we spoke at some length with our European colleagues because they have a much greater connection with Libya than we do. They have many more economic relationships. They have many more of the assets of the Qadhafi family that are being located in Europe. So they're going to be announcing their own sanctions, and I don't want to jump the gun on them. They get to do that for themselves. But I think it will further increase the pressure.

Part of what we're trying to do is to send a message to those around him that the cost is getting intolerable, that if you want to get out and end the bloodshed, you need to move now. And I think that would be a powerfully delivered message by the Europeans. And also, we are looking at all other options. The decision made by NATO at the North Atlantic Council a few days ago was to direct the military command, the supreme commander in Europe, to begin prudent planning. And that runs across a full range of potential options. So there's a lot going on.

QUESTION: A no-fly zone?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that's on the list of things that need to be considered. It is, in the view of some, a very cumbersome, not very effective approach. It is, in the view of others, an effort worth making. But the military planners are the ones who have to really get into the details of what assets there are, whose assets they are, what would be an appropriate mix, and the like. So it's one of the many issues that are being examined.

QUESTION: Sanctions work on, sort of, rational people, but this is Muammar Qadhafi that we're talking about, "the mad dog of the Middle East," as President Reagan once put it. So I mean, what's the end game with him?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, it's uncertain, which is one of the reasons why much of what we are doing now is not focused only on delivering a message to him. He has family members, he has close regime supporters, he has business supporters; they have to know there's a price to pay. The longer this goes on, the more bloodshed and violence there is, the more likely that they are going to be at risk – be at risk physically, be at risk financially, be at risk of not having a place to go. So this is a message not only directed at him – and who knows how receptive he is to it – but it is a clear, unmistakable message, but also to the remaining support system that he has.

QUESTION: The Libyan Government, such as it is, was really built around him. What are you worried about in a post-Qadhafi government or a post-Qadhafi scene?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we're worried that there isn't any institutional support for what comes next. Unfortunately, he did a quite thorough job in destroying and discrediting all the institutions that one would expect to see in a state. Look at the difference between Egypt and Libya. The military in Egypt played a very constructive role in navigating through the protests. It is still managing a government. Qadhafi made sure he didn't have a strong military that had any respect of the people.

So we are very conscious of the uncertainty that lies beyond Qadhafi. If you look at power centers within Libya, you have mostly a tribal base for that. Somebody told me who has studied Libya that if you look at the opposition, there are monarchists, there are tribal leaders, there are Islamists, there are some representatives of a very small civil society. You really don't have anyone emerging. But there is an effort in the east around Benghazi to try to begin putting together what is called an executive council, and we'll be certainly along with others reaching out to them to see how we can help.

QUESTION: Libya is by far the bloodiest of all these changes we've seen in the Middle East. What other countries are you really worried about now?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think that no country is immune, and each country has unique characteristics and is responding in a particular way. As I said in my speech to the Human Rights Council, we see the efforts in Jordan and Bahrain as moving in the right direction. They're trying to open a dialogue. They're trying to make reforms. There still is a lot of work to be done, but we support both the King of Bahrain and the King of Jordan. In Yemen, that was already a very fractured society, and what will happen in the future is extremely hard to predict. One thing the United States knows is that al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula poses a threat to the region, to Europe, to us, and that's where it's headquartered, in Yemen. So we think that this is still evolving, and it's way too soon to predict what the outcomes will be.

QUESTION: Thank you very much for your time.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thanks, Michelle.

###

Remarks to the Press
Remarks
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Palais des Nations
Geneva, Switzerland
February 28, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good afternoon. It's been a very busy and productive day here in Geneva, so let me give you a brief rundown.

I have been holding intensive consultations with friends and allies on developments in Libya, and these have been action-oriented discussions focused on determining the international community's next steps to hold Colonel Qadhafi and his regime accountable for its human rights abuses and violence against its own people, to determine the best way forward after the Security Council resolution to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, and to support the Libyan people as they pursue a transition to democracy.

It has been a remarkable international response, where the international community has been speaking with one voice, saying very clearly that Colonel Qadhafi's brutal attacks on his own people are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Qadhafi has lost the legitimacy to govern and it is time for him to go without further violence or delay.

Saturday's unanimous UN Security Council resolution was a significant beginning. It will impose an arms embargo on Libya, freeze the assets of key human rights violators and other members of the Qadhafi family, and refer the Libyan case to the International Criminal Court. The United States has imposed additional sanctions of our own, and today I discussed with our European allies the specific measures that they will pursue to keep increasing the pressure in further isolating Qadhafi and his regime.

As the violence in Libya continues, we are very concerned about the humanitarian situation, so we are working with the United Nations, partner nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, and other NGOs to launch an effective, robust response. To start, USAID, our American development agency, has set aside an additional \$10 million in emergency assistance to support the efforts of organizations on the ground already to meet the most urgent needs of Libyans and of others who are guest workers or migrants who've been caught up in the violence and dislocation. We are also immediately dispatching two expert humanitarian teams to Libya's borders with Tunisia and Egypt to assist with the displaced people who are fleeing the violence.

Our immediate attention is focused on the need to keep medical supplies in the pipelines well-stocked and intact. We are also concerned that the ongoing violence may disrupt distribution networks and led to food shortages, so we have conducted an inventory of all American food aid resources in the region and are prepared to divert or dispatch other food stocks to Libya as the need arises. Now, as we move forward on these fronts, we will continue to explore all possible

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer**

options for additional actions. As we have said, nothing is off the table so long as the Libyan Government continues to threaten and kill Libyan citizens.

I want to add that today I also had important discussions on a wide range of other key issues, including the progress of democratic transitions in Tunisia and Egypt. In Tunisia, we welcome the interim leadership's efforts to form an inclusive broad-based government and its pledge to hold free and open elections within six months, but we remain concerned about new violence. We were heartened to hear from Tunisia's state secretary for foreign affairs, whom I had a chance to meet with as well, that Tunisia will welcome the opening of a UN Human Rights office and open its doors to all UN special rapporteurs.

In Egypt, we are heartened also by the efforts that are undertaken in order to meet the commitments that have been made. We hope that the military leaders will reach out to broad array of opposition voices and representatives from civil society to ensure that the reform process is transparent and inclusive, that it leads to free and fair elections, and that it respects the rights of women and minorities. Egyptians are asking for concrete steps in the run up to elections, including enacting constitutional reform, releasing political detainees, and lifting the state of emergency. And the United States stands ready to support the Egyptian people in this process as appropriate, including through economic assistance that does help promote jobs and create more opportunities.

We also discussed Iran. I conferred with our P-5+1 colleagues about our concerns regarding Iran's nuclear ambitions, and at the Human Rights Council I worked to support Sweden's efforts to pass a resolution establishing a special rapporteur on Iran to investigate and report on Tehran's human rights abuses. The Iranian Government should allow freedom of speech and freedom of assembly without fear and should immediately end its organized intimidation campaign.

And finally, I took the opportunity to address the conference on disarmament on the need to end the dedicated production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons and to start negotiations on the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty without further delay.

So there is a lot that we have been working on here in Geneva today, and I'd be happy to take some of your questions.

MODERATOR: First question is from Viola Gienger of Bloomberg News.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary -- can you hear on this microphone? -- wanted to ask you what kind of discussions you had with your counterparts today related to a no-fly zone and the potential for that? And also, what sort of next steps, in terms of sanctions, are you considering? For example, any kind of restrictions on oil and gas imports from Libya, exports from Libya?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, as we've said, a no-fly zone is an option we are actively considering. I discussed it today with allies and partners, and we will proceed with this active consideration. When I said in my remarks that all options are on the table, or another way of saying it, no option is off the table, that, of course, includes a no-fly zone.

With respect to additional measures, the discussions that I had today focused on how we can keep the pressure on the Qadhafi regime without harming the Libyan people. And we believe there are steps we can take that will do that. We are very aware of the need to block access to resources and assets that the Libyan Government, particularly Qadhafi and his family, could get a hold of to continue his reign of violence against the Libyan people. At the same time, we are well aware of the need to keep resources flowing into Libya so that the people themselves can use them to meet their specific needs, to be able to organize themselves.

So we explored a number of potential actions, many of which are more in the European theater than actions that we could take. But I think in the coming days you will see the EU take additional steps to try to prevent the Qadhafi regime from having access to resources going forward.

MODERATOR: Our next question is from Hadat al-Denabi from Al-Ahram.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, may I start by thanking President Obama on behalf of the Egyptian people for his stand and your pronouncements today on Libya and Tunisia. My question is is that there is a deploying – redeployment of naval forces, American U.S. forces, close to the Libyan shores. Is this a sign of an imminent military response?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. No. First of all, we have, as you know, naval assets in the Mediterranean. We have bases that are NATO bases and that are host country bases that we have used on an ongoing basis over the course of many years. We do believe that there will be the need for support for humanitarian intervention. We also know that there will probably, unfortunately, be the need for rescue missions, because, as I'm sure you're aware, thousands of Tunisians have already left Tunisia heading for Europe. We expect to see Libyans and others who are trapped in Libya, which presents a great danger on the high seas. But there is not any pending military action involving U.S. Naval vessels.

MODERATOR: And our final question is from Brad Klapper, Associated Press.

QUESTION: Yes, Madam Secretary. I'm over here. Are you considering giving aid to the eastern Libyans defending themselves?

SECRETARY CLINTON: You know what, I cannot hear you.

QUESTION: I'm sorry. I will speak louder.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Okay. Sorry.

QUESTION: Are you considering giving aid to east – to the eastern Libyans defending themselves against the Qadhafi regime, whether this be military aid or some sort of civilian assistance? And lastly, would you welcome any of Qadhafi's few remaining friends to offer him asylum? Would the U.S. react – would it welcome, let's say, an offer from Mugabe, for example, to offer him a soft landing to end the crisis?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, as you know, there is a considerable amount of instability at the moment in Libya, and we are just at the beginning of knowing what will follow from the regime in eastern Libya and in other parts of the country. Our focus is on ending the abuses by the Qadhafi regime and supporting, in a humanitarian effort, those who are suffering because of the violence. And I think it's important to recognize that, just as in Egypt and in Tunisia before, what is happening in Libya is coming from the people of Libya themselves. And we deeply respect that. I appreciate the Egyptian journalist's kind words for President Obama, which I will certainly convey.

We understand how challenging this transition is, even in a country as strong in institutions as Egypt is. So imagine how difficult it will be in a country like Libya, which has been denuded of institutions. Qadhafi ruled for 42 years by basically destroying all institutions and never even creating an army, so that it could not be used against him. So the situation in Libya is so much more challenging than what's happening in Egypt. So our goal is to get the humanitarian relief in on the borders with Egypt and Tunisia, because both the Egyptian and the Tunisian efforts to assist in the humanitarian flow of refugees is very commendable, but they need some help. They can't be expected to manage all of this on their own. And then we will be reaching out to recognized voices in the opposition who are assuming responsibility and doing what we can appropriately to assist them. So we will definitely be following up on that.

With respect to your question about Colonel Qadhafi finding refuge somewhere – and, I mean, I was almost rendered speechless with the idea of he and Mugabe together. (Laughter.) I think that – we want the violence to end. And if the violence could be ended by his leaving and ending the killing of so many people who are trying to assert their rights, that might be a good step. But, of course, we believe accountability has to be obtained for what he has done. And certainly, I don't think that the international community, given the unanimity with the Security Council resolution, would just drop all of its concerns were he to leave, although leaving would be a positive in terms of ending the violence, which we would like to see.

MODERATOR: Thank you all.

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: What?

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we're going to wait to see how things develop, but we are looking at many different kinds of actions.

QUESTION: One question –

MODERATOR: Thank you all. Thank you.

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Oh, two state solution, soon as possible. That's what we're for.

Interview With Bob Schieffer of CBS's Face the Nation

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

Washington, DC

March 27, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Good morning again. And we are joined in the studio by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense.

Madam Secretary, let me start with you. Tens of thousands of people have turned out protesting in Syria, which has been under the iron grip of the Assad for so many years now, one of the most repressive regimes in the world, I suppose. And when the demonstrators turned out, the regime opened fire and killed a number of civilians. Can we expect the United States to enter the conflict in the way we have entered the conflict in Libya?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. Each of these situations is unique, Bob. Certainly, we deplore the violence in Syria. We call, as we have on all of these governments during this period of the Arab Awakening, as some have called it, to be responding to their people's needs, not to engage in violence, permit peaceful protests, and begin a process of economic and political reform.

The situation in Libya, which engendered so much concern from around the international community, had a leader who used military force against the protestors from one end of his country to the other, who publically said things like, "We'll show no mercy. We'll go house to house." And the international community moved with great speed, in part because there's a history here. This is someone who has behaved in a way that caused grave concern in the past 40 plus years in the Arab world, the African world, Europe, and the United States.

QUESTION: But, I mean, how can that be worse than what has happened in Syria over the years, where Bashar Assad's father killed 25,000 people at a lick? I mean, they open fire with live ammunition on these civilians. Why is that different from Libya?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I –

QUESTION: This is a friend of Iran, an enemy of Israel.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, if there were a coalition of the international community, if there were the passage of Security Council resolution, if there were a call by the Arab League, if there was a condemnation that was universal – but that is not going to happen, because I don't think that it's yet clear what will occur, what will unfold.

There's a different leader in Syria now. Many of the members of Congress of both parties who have gone to Syria in recent months have said they believe he's a reformer. What's been happening there the last few weeks is deeply concerning, but there's a difference between calling

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

1

out aircraft and indiscriminately strafing and bombing your own cities and then police actions, which, frankly, have exceeded the use of force that any of us would want to see.

QUESTION: Secretary Gates, you have strongly condemned Bashar Asad and said he must learn from Egypt. I think it's fair to say he didn't pay much attention to you.

SECRETARY GATES: Well, that's not a surprise. (Laughter.) No, what I –

QUESTION: Should he step down?

SECRETARY GATES: What I said in – when I was in the Middle East was that the lesson should be – that should be taken from Egypt was where a military stood aside and allowed peaceful protests and allowed political events to take their course. That's basically the lesson that I was talking about with respect to Asad. In terms of whether he should stand down or not, these kinds of things are up to the Syrians, up to the Libyans themselves.

QUESTION: This whole region is in turmoil now, trouble in Bahrain, in Yemen, whose governments have been allies of ours in the fight against terrorism. Now there are demonstrations in Jordan, one of our closest allies in the Arab world. How do we decide which of these countries we're going to help and which ones we're not?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Bob, we're trying to help them all. I mean, there's a lot of different ways of helping. We have certainly offered advice and counsel. I think the role that the United States played in Egypt, for example, particularly between our military, between Secretary Gates, Field Marshal Tantawi, between Admiral Mullen and his counterpart, was only possibly because of 30 years of close cooperation.

So we have to look at each situation as we find it. We don't have that kind of relationship with a country like Syria. We just sent back an ambassador for the first time after some years. And as you recall, the Administration decided we needed to do that because we wanted somebody on the inside. The Congress was not so convinced that it would make a difference. Each of these we are looking at and analyzing carefully. But we can't draw some general sweeping conclusions about the entire region.

QUESTION: Well, let's talk about Libya a little then. We have – the UN resolution is in place. It's established the no-fly zone. NATO is going to take over the operations there. But it does not call for regime change, and the President has said that Mr. Qadhafi has to go. That seems a bit contradictory.

SECRETARY GATES: I don't think so. I think what you're seeing is the difference between a military mission and a policy objective. The military mission is very limited and restricted to the establishment of the no-fly zone and for humanitarian purposes, to prevent Qadhafi from being able to use his armed forces to slaughter his own people. That's it. And one of the things that I think is central is you don't in a military campaign set as a mission or a goal something you're not sure you can achieve. And if we've learned anything over the past number of years, regime change is very complicated and can be very expensive and can take a long time. And so I think

the key here was establishing a military mission that was achievable. It was achievable on a limited period of time and it could be sustained.

QUESTION: There are some people in the Pentagon quoted in various newspapers as saying this no-fly zone may last for three months or so. How long do you think this is going to be in place?

SECRETARY GATES: I don't think anybody has any idea.

SECRETARY CLINTON: But Bob, I think it's important to take a step back and put this into context. When the Libyan people rose up, as their neighbors across the region were doing, and said look, we want to see a transition, it was after 42 years of erratic and brutal rule. Qadhafi's response was to basically not just ignore but to threaten and then to act on those threats. Our country, along with many other countries, were watching this unfold.

The United States Senate passed a resolution calling for a no-fly zone on March the 1st. As Bob reminded everybody, there's a difference between calling for it and actually enforcing it. When the Security Council, in a really stunning vote of 10 to 5, 10-4, 5 abstentions, said look, take all necessary measures to fulfill this mission of protecting the Libyan people, it was a mission that the United States, of course, was going to be in the forefront of because of our unique capabilities. But look at the coalition of European, Canadian, Arab countries that have come together to say we're going to make sure that we protect these civilians.

The military mission is not the only part of what we're doing. We have very tough sanctions that are ferreting out and freezing Qadhafi and Qadhafi family assets. We have a lot of diplomats and military leaders in Libya who are flipping, changing sides, defecting because they see the handwriting on the wall. We have an ongoing political effort that is really picking up steam to see if we can't persuade --

QUESTION: So --

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- others to convince Qadhafi to leave. So, we see the planes going up, but that is just a piece of an overall strategy.

QUESTION: Well, do you think it's going well then? I mean, would you give it good marks so far?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Oh, I think it's going very well.

SECRETARY GATES: I think the military mission has gone quite well. I think we have been successful a lot. There was never any doubt in my mind that we could quickly establish the no-fly zone and suppress his air defenses. But I think what has been extraordinary is seeing a number of different countries using their combat aircraft in a way to destroy some of his ground forces. That really involves an extraordinary discrimination of targets.

And I pushed back when I was in Russia last week against the comments that both Prime Minister Putin and President Medvedev had made about civilian casualties. The truth of the matter is we have trouble coming up with proof of any civilian casualties that we have been responsible for, but we do have a lot of intelligence reporting about Qadhafi taking the bodies of people he's killed and putting them at the sites where we've attacked. We have been extremely careful in this military effort. And not just our pilots but the pilots of the other coalition air forces have really done an extraordinary job.

QUESTION: He is taking bodies and putting them in places –

SECRETARY GATES: We have a number of reports of that.

QUESTION: In more than one place, or –

SECRETARY GATES: Yes.

QUESTION: How many places?

SECRETARY GATES: We just get various reports on that.

QUESTION: Well, let me ask you this. There are reports that we may arm the rebels. Is that, in fact, going to happen?

SECRETARY CLINTON: There's been no decision about that. We are in contact with the rebels. I've met with one of the leaders. We have ongoing discussions with them. We've sent both the ambassador that was assigned to Libya plus a young diplomat to have this ongoing dialogue with the opposition. But there's a lot of ways that we can assist them, and we're trying to discuss that with our allies in this effort. And we will be when I go to London on Tuesday.

QUESTION: Let me just ask you this. Under this arms embargo and the resolution and so forth, could you, if you decided you needed to do that and wanted to do it, could you do it under the current –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: -- resolution?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: You believe you could?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes, and the reason is because there is an arms embargo against the Qadhafi regime that was established in the first resolution, Resolution 1970, which applied to the entire country. In the follow-on resolution, 1973, there is an exception if countries or organizations were to choose to use that.

QUESTION: Let me ask you this, Mr. Secretary. We say it's time for Qadhafi to go. You say that the military part of this, the no-fly zone, is going well. But I don't think anybody really believes that this rag-tag group of resistance fighters, as brave as they are, could actually topple this man, who has these tanks and artillery and that.

SECRETARY CLINTON: He has a lot fewer now than he did a week ago.

QUESTION: Well, exactly. But how's the thing going on the ground? And do you really think that these people could topple him without some kind of help from the outside?

SECRETARY GATES: Well, first of all, we prevented him from moving on toward Benghazi. Those forces were destroyed. We have evidence that he is withdrawing from Ajdabiyah and back further to the west. Because we're not only striking his armor, we're striking his logistics and supplies and things like that.

And just to Secretary Clinton's point, we have things in our toolbox in addition to hammers. And so there are a lot of things that can go on here. His military can turn. We can see -- we could see elements of his military turning, deciding this is a no-win proposition. The family is splitting. Any number of possibilities are out there, particularly as long as the international pressure continues and those around him see no future in staying with him.

QUESTION: Well, having said all of that, do you think that's what is going to happen here? I mean can he -- can these people really do this with just some help from up in the sky?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Bob, I know how concerned people are. And obviously, the President will speak to the country Monday night, answer, I think, a lot of those concerns. This -- the Security Council acted a week ago Thursday. The effort to enforce a Security Council resolution is barely a week old. We've already seen quite significant progress on the ground. And Bob just said, we believe, based on the intelligence and what our military is seeing, the Qadhafi forces are withdrawing, moving to the west.

Yes, this is not a well-organized fighting force that the opposition has. But they are getting more support from defectors, from the former Libyan Government military, and they are, as Bob said, very brave, moving forward, and beginning to regain --

QUESTION: Well --

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- ground that they lost when Qadhafi was brutalizing them by moving toward Benghazi.

So, this is a really short period of time in any kind of military effort, but I think the results on the ground are pretty significant.

SECRETARY GATES: I would just underscore the military attacks began, essentially, a week ago, last Saturday night. And don't underestimate the potential for elements of the regime themselves to crack.

QUESTION: All right.

SECRETARY GATES: And to turn. I mean it isn't just the opposition in Benghazi –

QUESTION: So you think his days are limited?

SECRETARY GATES: I wouldn't be hanging any new pictures if I were him. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: What would be an acceptable outcome? You want him out, but would you be satisfied if the country wound up partitioned or something of that nature?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think it's too soon to predict that. One of the reasons why we are forming a political contact group in London this coming week is because we want to get a unified political approach, just as we have forged a unified military approach.

And as both Bob and I have said, there are many ways that this could move toward the end state. If you think about what happened in the 90s, it took a while for Milosevic to leave, but you could see his days were numbered, even though he wasn't yet out of office. And so there is a lot of ways that this could unfold.

What is clear is that Qadhafi himself is losing ground. He has already lost legitimacy. And the people around him, based on all of the intelligence and all of the outreach that we ourselves are getting from some of those very same people, demonstrate an enormous amount of anxiety. And that will play itself out over time.

SECRETARY GATES: Could I just make a broader point, Bob? We get so focused on these individual countries. I think we have lost sight of the extraordinary story that is going on in the Middle East. In the space of about two months, we've probably seen the most widespread dramatic change in the tectonic plates, if you will, politically, in that region since, certainly, the drive for independence in the 50s, and perhaps since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire nearly a century ago. In virtually every country in the region there is turbulence. And we are in dark territory.

I mean, even the changes in Eastern Europe in 1989 took place from a period from February to December – to November. And so when you think back of what has happened in just two months, this is really an extraordinary challenge for the Administration and, frankly, for other governments around the world in terms of how do we react to this, how do we deal with this. And I think the key, and where the President has tried to establish the principle, is here are our principles, here's what we believe in, but then we'll deal with each country one at a time, because we have to deal with the specific circumstances. But we can't lose sight of the historic and dramatic nature of what's going on and the fact there are no predetermined outcomes.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And there are no perfect options. We are choosing among competing imperfect options. I mean if we were sitting here, and Benghazi had been taken, and tens of thousands of people had been slaughtered, and hundreds of thousands had fled, some of

them over the border to Egypt, destabilizing Egypt during its particularly delicate transition, we would be sitting here, and people in the Congress and elsewhere would be saying, "Well, why didn't we do something?"

So the problem is we are trying to, within the broader context of this extraordinary movement toward aspirations that are universal that people in the Middle East and North Africa are demanding for themselves, to support the broader goals but to be very clear about how we deal with individual countries as we stand for our values and our principles but have to take each one as it stands and where it is headed.

QUESTION: Well, I want to thank both of you for your insights.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

QUESTION: We really appreciate it.

SECRETARY GATES: Thank you.

###

Press Availability in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Press Availability

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Emirates Palace Hotel

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

June 9, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, this is the end of a very productive day here in Abu Dhabi. I want to thank the United Arab Emirates for hosting us and to the UAE and Italy for co-chairing this meeting of the Libya Contact Group. The UAE's leadership on full display here in Abu Dhabi has been critical to this mission from the very beginning.

Today's successful Contact Group meeting was a powerful statement that our coalition remains united and committed. We reaffirmed there is only one way forward for Libya, attacks against civilians must stop, Qadhafi must go, and the Libyan people deserve to determine their own future.

We continued our ongoing dialogue about steps we can take to protect the Libyan people, pressure Qadhafi to hasten his departure, and lay the groundwork for a successful transition to a unified, democratic, Libya. On each of these goals, we are making progress and we have increased the pressure on Qadhafi. But as long as he continues his attacks on his own people, our military mission to protect them will continue.

We are pleased that NATO extended the mandate of Operation Unified Protector for another 90 days. We have stepped up the pace of our strikes and added British and French attack helicopters to our arsenal. With coalition backing, the people of Misrata have expelled Qadhafi's forces from their city and they are bravely standing against those forces which, unfortunately, are renewing an assault.

We are escalating the political, diplomatic, and financial pressure on Qadhafi, and his isolation is deepening. The list of former officials who have now abandoned him is growing. He's lost two foreign ministers, an interior minister, ambassadors to the United States and UN, an oil minister, and five generals, and just this week his labor minister defected as well. The prosecutor for the International Criminal Court has sought arrest warrants for Qadhafi, his son Saif, and the intelligence chief Senussi. And we've again begun to see brave protestors taking to the streets of Tripoli.

We have very good reason to believe that time is on our side, so long as we sustain the pressure. Since our last Contact Group meeting in Rome, Russia and many others have joined the chorus of nations working to achieve Qadhafi's departure from power. We recognize the important role that the African Union and African states are playing, and we are consulting closely with them and welcome the recent statements from South Africa, Gabon, Mauritania, and others. The old tactics of divide and rule that Qadhafi mastered in Libya will not work with the international community.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Our support for Libya's Transitional National Council is also deepening. The United States views the Transitional National Council as the legitimate interlocutor for the Libyan people during this interim period. We expect to see Libyans coming together to plan their own future and a permanent, inclusive, constitutional system that will protect the rights of all Libyans. This is in stark contrast to the Qadhafi regime, which has lost all legitimacy to rule. The TNC is the institution through which we are engaging the Libyan people alongside our work with civil society.

We are all working to put the TNC on firmer financial footing. We've taken steps in the United States to license oil sales by the TNC, and we're pleased that an American company was able to make a purchase, which was delivered yesterday. To help the TNC secure credit, we embrace the idea that a future Libyan government should honor any financial obligations that the TNC assumes on behalf of the Libyan people. We welcome today's announcement that the temporary financial mechanism has been activated for this purpose. Already, Kuwait announced it will transfer about \$180 million, and Qatar will transfer 100 million through this mechanism. We are also continuing to provide non-lethal supplies and working to deepen all of our relationships. Finally, we will continue to work to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the Libyan people, including those who have fled the violence into neighboring countries. And yesterday, a group of bipartisan United States senators announced they had agreed on a framework to use Libyan assets frozen by the United States to provide humanitarian aid to the Libyan people, and we look forward to the Congress passing that legislation so we can begin to implement it. And also today, we announced \$26.5 million of new funds to help all victims of this conflict, bringing the American total to nearly \$81 million.

We're optimistic also about the Libyan information exchange mechanism, which will serve as a clearinghouse to match in-kind contributions of non-lethal assistance with the most urgent needs of the TNC. We welcome Italy's announcement that the mechanism is now in operation.

This is a moment to reaffirm our commitment to our common purpose and continue our progress together, and that is exactly what we did today in Abu Dhabi. Libya is not, however, the only country in the region in the midst of extraordinary changes, and I took the opportunity today to consult closely with a number of our partners on the full range of regional challenges. We spoke about how more we can pull together to support the historic transitions underway in Tunisia and Egypt, which remain critical priorities for the United States. Our European and regional partners are sustaining their focus on supporting Tunisians and Egyptians.

We also talked about the rapidly evolving situation in Yemen. We continue to urge all sides to honor the ceasefire, and we support an immediate, orderly, and peaceful transition consistent with Yemen's constitution. Violence is not the way forward, and Yemen's instability is a challenge for us all. The Yemeni people need a government that addresses their needs and aspirations.

And finally, we discussed ways to support the Syrian people and sharpen the choices facing the Assad regime. Syrians took to the streets to demonstrate peacefully for a government that respects their rights, reflects their aspirations, and is accountable. What they have received instead has

shocked not only Syrians but people around the world. We are working with our partners in the international community to bring an end to the violence and to support political and economic reforms. President Asad may try to delay the changes underway in Syria, but he cannot reverse them.

This is a remarkable and very busy time. In each of these and other countries, there is simply no going back to the way things were, and yet the full story of each of these transitions remains to be written. All of us are humbled by the risks and the rewards of this moment. A great deal of hard work lies ahead and we must get it right. So speaking for the United States, we will continue to work closely with our partners to help the people of Libya and throughout the entire region navigate this season of change and arrive at a better future destination.

And I'd be happy to take some questions.

MODERATOR: First question goes to AFP, Lachlan Carmichael.

QUESTION: Hello, Madam Secretary.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Hi, Lachlan.

QUESTION: You said that Qadhafi's days are numbered. It sounds that he could leave much more imminently than we even thought a few weeks ago. So do you think that the Libyan people, through the Transitional National Council, could fill a void very quickly, that they'd be capable to establish order? And the other question is: Have you heard and can you confirm reports that the Qadhafi family is reaching out to Senegal and South Africa to find an exit for Muammar Qadhafi?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Lachlan, to the second question, let me say this. There have been numerous and continuing discussions by people close to Qadhafi. And we are aware that those discussions include, among other matters, the potential for a transition. There is not any clear way forward yet, but we will be focusing between now and the next Contact Group in Istanbul in July on making sure that all of those contacts are understood and evaluated because they occur with many different interlocutors, and that we begin the very difficult but necessary work with both the TNC and the Qadhafi regime to try to bring about the kind of transition from power in the first instance that is necessary to see from Qadhafi, and then in the second, going to your first question, the necessary work that lies ahead so that if Qadhafi were to leave tomorrow, there would be a receptivity by the international community to redouble our efforts to help the TNC and others throughout the country who wish to be part of an inclusive process that establishes the necessary institutions, such as a constitution, that can begin to guide the democratic reform that is sought.

We have seen a great deal of improvement in the efforts of the TNC. We are obviously doing all we can to assist them in better organizing themselves and building those institutions that any state needs. But they know and we know there's a long road ahead. However, we all stand ready to assist them and have begun discussions with them about what more they would need once the transition occurs.

MODERATOR: Al Jazeera, please. Mahmoud Hamdan.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Hi.

QUESTION: Hi. Excuse me. Do you believe that the Council now qualified to use this financial aid and – or is – do you think that they still – are you still thinking that they have to go in some procedures to be able to use this aid?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, actually, we are ready, through the establishment of the financial mechanism, to begin money flowing to them through this mechanism but also through bilateral efforts. So we do think that they are prepared. As you may know, there was a lot of work done, led by the Qataris and the Emiratis and the Kuwaitis and many of the rest of us, to establish this mechanism with sufficient transparency and accountability, because the last thing we want is to put to the TNC in a position where the money flows but they are not – they don't have the systems in place to actually put it to good use. We think that they do now, and we're working to assist them. So the money is being deposited in the financial mechanism that we announced today.

MODERATOR: Next question, Reuters. Andy Quinn.

QUESTION: Hi, Madam Secretary. If I could just turn briefly to Syria and Yemen, on Yemen there are reports today that the U.S. is stepping up air strikes on suspected militants to keep them from exploiting a power vacuum while President Saleh is undergoing treatment. How concerned are you that al-Qaida is gaining ground while the situation tips further out of control in Yemen? Do you have any position now on whether or not he should return? And what are you and the Saudis doing to try to breathe new life into the GCC roadmap?

On Syria, please, Russia said today it will veto any UN Security Council resolution on Syria. How can the international community increase pressure on President Asad if he has such powerful protectors at the United Nations?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, I'm not going to comment on the first part of your question regarding any operations. I think it's clear that we have worked very closely with our partners in the Gulf and others to try to bring about a peaceful transition. On several opportunities, President Saleh did not go forward with what we thought had been agreed to. He remains now in Saudi Arabia receiving medical treatment. The vice president, in accordance with the Yemeni constitution, is now currently serving as the acting president.

Our ambassador and other ambassadors continue to meet with a cross section of the Yemeni population, including senior Yemeni Government officials as well as members of the opposition because, obviously, we are committed to doing what we can to create a stable base for Yemen to make the changes that are necessary. We don't think that the instability can be fully addressed until those changes commence. And so we're going to continue to consult closely with our friends in the region to determine the best way forward.

I can't speculate on what President Ali Abdullah Saleh will decide to do. That's obviously up to him. But Yemen has a strong constitution, and we believe if their constitution were actually implemented, Yemen would be moving in the right direction. So whatever happens in Yemen needs to be in line with their own constitution, and we've been urging that, and we will continue to do so.

With respect to Syria, everyone that I spoke with here today is deeply concerned about events in Syria. We are seeing a continuing use of violence by the government against their own people, and we're seeing violent responses by elements of the Syrian population against security forces. And we know that, repeatedly, that President Assad has said over the last several years that he wanted to make changes, and, as President Obama said, he either needs to make them or get out of the way.

We believe that Syria can play a positive and leading role in the region as a pluralistic democracy contributing to regional stability. But sadly, under President Assad, it is becoming a source of instability in the region, exporting its problems. People are fleeing their country, seeking safety beyond their borders, and therefore, we think the international community has an important role to play, and I don't think anyone looking at the situation can conclude that this is going to end well unless there is a change in the behavior of the government. So we're going to continue to press for changes and do everything we can to try to bring international pressure to bear on the government to take action immediately and to cease the violence.

MODERATOR: Last question, Al Arabiya, Abdullah Mataran (ph).

QUESTION: (Via interpreter) (Inaudible) the countries in this group – they – we say that the legislative council has not been recognized, although, it is the only council that represents the Libyan people. So what does the U.S. think about this?

SECRETARY CLINTON: You're talking about the Transitional National Council? Yeah. I think that it is important to look at how far the Transitional National Council has come. It is a very young institution, and it is trying to represent the entire nation, which is a challenge given that the opposition controls a significant part of the east and is fighting in the west. But I think that the progress that the TNC has made should be encouraging. But as I said, it's important to be clear about how much more needs to be done.

There is a lot of work ahead of the TNC – work to expand its reach, to be more inclusive, to build institutions, and we've had very open conversations with the representatives of the TNC about that. But I think that they have issued statements of their intent, of the kind of Libya they would like to see in the future, which are very impressive. So what we hope to be able to do, along with all of our international partners, is to help them improve their capacity to serve as the transition leader of Libya.

What we seek are open, fair, legitimate elections, as Tunisia is facing, as Egypt is facing, that will determine what the makeup of the next Government of Libya will be. But we think that the Transitional National Council is in a position to guide and lead that process. And that's why

what happened today was so important in ensuring that they got additional financial support and validation from the Contact Group.

MODERATOR: Thank you all very much.

###

Press Availability on Libya
Press Availability
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Chief of Mission Residence
Paris, France
September 1, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, this is my ninth trip to discuss the current crisis in Libya, and each time I have urged that our partners stay focused on the ultimate objective of helping the Libyan people chart their way to a better future. And today, that future is within their reach. All of us are inspired by what is happening in Libya.

Six months ago, Libyans stood up to demand fundamental rights and freedom. And when Qadhafi met their peaceful protest with violence, the Libyan people refused to back down. While their struggle is not over, the Libyan people are taking back their country. Libya's transformation is the – largely the result of their own courage and their resilience in the face of very difficult days. The sacrifice that the Libyan people have been willing to make in order to obtain freedom and dignity has been extraordinary.

But the United States and our international partners are also proud of our own contributions. When Qadhafi threatened Benghazi, we assembled an unprecedented coalition that included NATO and Arab countries, and acted quickly to prevent a massacre. We sought and won local, regional, and international support, including the backing of the UN and the Arab League. And after deploying our unique military capabilities at the outset, the United States played a key role in a genuinely shared effort as our allies stepped up. As time went on, our coalition grew even stronger.

Today, the international community must maintain the same sense of resolve and shared responsibility. We know from experience that winning a war is no guarantee of winning the peace that follows. That is why even as we sought to protect civilians and pressured Qadhafi to step down, we have supported the Libyans as they laid the groundwork for a transition to democracy that is just, inclusive, and sustainable.

What happens in the coming days will be critical, and the international community has to help the Libyan people get it right. First, as I told my counterparts earlier today, we need to continue NATO's military mission as long as civilians remain under threat of attack. For the sake of the Libyan people, we have called on Qadhafi and those around him to recognize that their time is over and lay down their arms. And as the new Libyan authorities consolidate power, we will support their efforts to demobilize and integrate fighters into a single security force. Second, we need to welcome Libya back into the community of nations. Nearly 70 countries so far have recognized the TNC, including 18 African nations, the Arab League, and now Russia. It is time for others to follow suit.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Third, we must continue to support the interim Libyan authority's efforts to meet the needs of the Libyan people. The United States and our partners have worked through the United Nations to unfreeze billions of dollars in order for Libya to get access to their state assets to meet critical needs. I am pleased to announce that by the end of today, the United States expects to have delivered \$700 million to help the TNC pay for fuel and civilian operating costs and salaries, with another 800 million on the way. We are working with the TNC to ensure that these funds are disbursed in a transparent, accountable manner. It must be clear to Libyans and to the world that this money is being used to serve the Libyan people.

Fourth, the international community, led by the United Nations, needs to help the Libyan people and their leaders pave a path to peaceful, inclusive democracy – one that banishes violence as a political tool and promotes tolerance and pluralism. After 42 years of Qadhafi's rule, it is going to take time to build institutions, strengthen civil society, write a constitution, hold free and fair elections, and put in place an elected, legitimate Libyan government. We encourage the world's democracies to offer expertise and technical assistance along the way.

As Libya's leaders have emphasized repeatedly, Libya's transition must proceed in a spirit of reconciliation and justice, not retribution or reprisal. Libyans must continue to stand against violence extremism and work with us to ensure that weapons from Qadhafi's stockpiles do not threaten Libya or Libya's neighbors or the world.

In fact, the international community will be watching and supporting Libya's leaders as they keep their commitments to conduct an inclusive transition, act under the rule of law, and protect vulnerable populations. And that should include enshrining the rights of women as well as men in their new constitution.

A great deal of work lies ahead to build a stable, unified, and free Libya – a Libya that has never before existed in its modern history. The challenges may be formidable, but so is the progress we have already seen. We have stood with the Libyan people in their moment of need and we must continue to stand with them for the foreseeable future.

Finally, I want to say a few words about Syria. President Asad's brutality against unarmed citizens has outraged the region, the world, and most importantly the Syrian people themselves. The Arab League, the GCC, the Jordanian and Egyptian governments have all condemned his abuses. And after repeated warnings, Turkey's president announced that he too has lost confidence in Asad.

The violence must stop, and he needs to step aside. Syria must be allowed to move forward. Those who have joined us in this call must now translate our rhetoric into concrete actions to escalate the pressure on Asad and those around him, including strong new sanctions targeting Syria's energy sector to deny the regime the revenues that fund its campaign of violence. The EU has already taken important steps, and I'm pleased to hear that more are on the way.

Just as we have done in Libya, we are also encouraging the Syrian opposition to set forth their own roadmap for a tolerant, inclusive, and democratic path forward, one that can bring together all Syrians, Christians, and Alawites. Everyone who lives in Syria today must be part of the new

Syria that should be developed in the months ahead. The people of Syria, like people everywhere, deserve a government that respects their rights equally and without discrimination. Syria's transition to democracy has already begun. It is time for President Asad to acknowledge that and step aside so the Syrian people themselves can decide their own future.

It is very heartening that this year, Tunisian, Egyptian, and Libyan families will celebrate Eid at a moment of promise. May this be a year when the tide of freedom and progress rises around the world. And I want to wish Muslims everywhere an Eid Mubarak.

And with that, I will take your questions.

MS. NULAND: We have time for (inaudible). The first question, CNN, Elise Labott.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. I was wondering if you could speak a little bit about what the Libyans spoke to you about what it is that they need, how the international community can help. And how do you envision a UN mission working towards this end? How quickly do you think one could get on the ground? And how do you see the UN working as a coordinator of international response?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Elise, I was very encouraged by the meeting today. I want to again commend President Sarkozy and Prime Minister Cameron for bringing us all together, along with Chairman Jalil and Prime Minister Jibril. I think that what we heard today was very promising, in that the TNC has specific requests that they wish to make to the international community. They did so in my bilateral meeting with them, and of course, they did so in the larger meeting as well.

What they are looking for is, number one, continuing support to ensure that the violence ends, that there can be no credible effort by Qadhafi and those still supporting him to continue wreaking violence against Libyans. And they were very clear in their request that the NATO role continue, and NATO, in turn, was very clear that it will maintain its presence over Libya until there is no longer a need to protect civilians from attacks or the threat of attacks.

And of course, NATO is also focused on trying to do all we can to protect Libya from Qadhafi and those troops that are still under his command. Secondly, the TNC was very clear that they need to have the funds that are Libyan state funds unfrozen and released to them as soon as possible. I'm very pleased that the United States was able to persuade the United Nations to lift the sanctions and to approve the release of \$1.5 billion. That is being matched by hundreds of millions of dollars coming from others who have frozen assets within their borders. And now, we've got to do everything possible to make sure that the TNC has the resources it needs. There are a lot of humanitarian urgent needs that have to be met.

Thirdly, we want what they want – more recognition. As I said in my opening remarks, more than 70 nations have recognized the TNC, but we want to seat the TNC, representing Libya, in every international organization, including the United Nations. We're pleased that the Arab League had introduced that resolution and that the TNC now represents Libya in the Arab League.

Fourth, I think it's important that they requested assistance in all kinds of areas where they need expertise, whether it is ensuring that the financial mechanism they're setting up has the level of accountability and transparency that is required, to helping them put together an impartial, independent police force, to helping them find ways to provide housing for Libyans who have been bombed out or had their homes destroyed or who will be coming back from having sought refuge elsewhere.

And I guess, finally, the Libyans were very responsive to the long list of ideas that were presented throughout the day. And I was impressed by their openness. And they still have a huge hill to climb here. They don't yet have their whole country secure. But they are working with the international community to secure both chemical weapon stockpiles as well as conventional weapons. They are taking action against extremism wherever they find it.

So I guess in general, I would have to say that today's meeting validated the confidence that all the other nations around the table had placed in the TNC. And they were realistic about how much they have to do and how much they still face in the days ahead. But it was an excellent transition from the Contact Group, which dealt primarily with protecting civilians and ending the terror of the Qadhafi regime, to the reconstruction, rebuilding, transition period.

QUESTION: What about our UN mission, Madam Secretary?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think the UN mission is going to be put together in an expeditious manner. Ban Ki-moon met with the TNC leadership at the larger meeting. He spoke about the kinds of assets the UN could bring. All of us support the UN taking the lead in the reconstruction and transition period ahead, so they're going to be working through all the details of that. And importantly, countries are reopening embassies. The Italians reopened their embassy in Tripoli today and have a new ambassador named. I'm sending a team to Tripoli to check out our Embassy building and see what we need to do to be able to get our diplomatic presence at the highest level again.

So there was so much discussed and so many decisions that we ticked down. It was a worthwhile and productive day.

MS. NULAND: Last question (inaudible).

QUESTION: Hi, Madam Secretary. There's a lot of anger on Capitol Hill and in the U.S. at large about Abdel Basset al-Megrahi, the fact that he's still at large in Libya. We understand you brought the issue up with Libya's new leaders. Could you tell us what you asked of them and how they responded?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Nicole, first I want to underscore the fact that I share the anger. As you know, I represented New York for eight years. A lot of the people who were killed came from either Syracuse University or nearby in upstate New York. And as I have said many times, the United States categorically disagrees with the decision that was made two years ago by the Scottish executive to release al-Megrahi and return him to Libya. We have never wavered

from our disagreement and condemnation of that decision. He should be behind bars. We have consistently extended our deepest sympathies to those families who have to live every day with the knowledge that they lost their loved ones, and they wanted justice to prevail, and we think justice was aborted.

So we will continue to pursue justice on behalf of the victims of this terrorist attack. The United States has kept open the case concerning the Lockerbie bombing. We have raised the investigation with the TNC. We've conveyed the importance that the United States places on this issue. We want more information, and we want to have access to those who might have been somehow involved in the planning or execution of the bombing.

We recognize the magnitude of all of the issues that the TNC is facing, and we know that they have to establish security, the rule of law, good governance. But at the same time, they've assured us that they understand the sensitivities surrounding this case, and they will give the matter the consideration it richly deserves at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you all.

Democratic Transitions in the Maghreb**Remarks****Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Secretary of State

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)**RELEASE IN FULL****Washington, DC****October 12, 2012**

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you all. Thank you very much. And a special word of thanks to a friend and someone whom I admire greatly, General Scowcroft. His many years of distinguished service to our country is a great tribute in every respect.

Thanks also to Jon Alterman and CSIS for hosting this conference on "The Maghreb in Transition: Seeking Stability in an Era of Uncertainty." I also wish to acknowledge Dr. Terrab for his strong support of this important conference and members of the diplomatic corps as well.

Now, why are we here? And why is this conference so timely? Well, to start with, what happens in this dynamic region has far-reaching consequences for our own security and prosperity. And we know very well that it is most important to the people of this region, whose aspirations and ambitions deserve to be met. But recent events have raised questions about what lies ahead – what lies ahead for the region, what lies ahead for the rest of us who have watched with great hope, as General Scowcroft said, the events that have unfolded in the Maghreb. A terrorist attack in Benghazi, the burning of an American school in Tunis – these and other scenes of anger and violence have understandably led Americans to ask what is happening. What is happening to the promise of the Arab Spring? And what does this mean for the United States?

Well, I certainly think it's important to ask these questions and to seek answers, as you are doing today. And let me, on a personal note, start with what happened in Benghazi. No one wants to find out exactly what happened more than I do. I've appointed an Accountability Review Board that has already started examining whether our security procedures were appropriate, whether they were properly implemented, and what lessons we can and must learn for the future. And we are working as thoroughly and expeditiously as possible, knowing that we cannot afford to sacrifice accuracy to speed. And of course, our government is sparing no effort in tracking down the terrorists who perpetrated this attack.

And we are focused, as we must, on what more needs to be done right now to protect our people and our facilities. We had another terrible attack yesterday. I strongly condemn the killing of a longtime Yemeni employee at our Embassy in Sana'a. And we are working with Yemeni authorities to investigate this attack and to bring those responsible to justice as well. But throughout all of this, we must not only focus on the headlines. We have to keep in mind the trend lines. We have to remain focused on the broader strategic questions posed by these democratic transitions and their impact on American interests and values.

Let me start by stating the obvious: Nobody should have ever thought this would be an easy road. I certainly didn't. However, it is important to look at the full picture – to weigh the violent

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer**

1

acts of a small number of extremists against the aspirations and actions of the region's people and governments. That broader view supports rather than discredits the promise of the Arab revolutions. It reaffirms that, instead of letting mobs and extremists speak for entire countries, we should listen to what the elected governments and free citizens are saying. They want more freedom, more justice, more opportunity – not more violence. And they want better relations not only with the United States, but with the world – not worse.

I have no illusions about how complicated this is. After all, American foreign policy has long been shaped by debates over how to balance our interests in security and stability with our values in supporting freedom and democracy. Recent revolutions have intensified these debates by creating a new birth of freedom, but also by unseating old partners and unleashing unpredictable new forces.

As I said last fall at the National Democratic Institute, we have to be honest that America's policies in the region will always reflect the full range of our interests and values – promoting democracy and human rights, and defeating al-Qaida; defending our allies and partners, and also ensuring a secure supply of energy.

And there will be times when not all of our interests and values align. We work to align them, but we do so acknowledging reality. And it's true that we tailor our tactics for promoting democratic change to the conditions on the ground in each country. After all, it would be foolish to take a one-size-fits-all approach regardless of circumstances or historical trends.

But in the long run, the enduring cooperation we seek – and that our interests and our values demand – is difficult to sustain without democratic legitimacy and public consent.

Weeks before the revolution in Egypt began, I told Arab leaders gathered in Doha that the region's foundations were sinking into the sand. It was clear even then that the status quo was unsustainable, that refusal to change was itself becoming a threat to stability.

So for the United States, supporting democratic transitions is not a matter of idealism. It is a strategic necessity.

And we will not return to the false choice between freedom and stability. And we will not pull back our support for emerging democracies when the going gets rough. That would be a costly strategic mistake that would, I believe, undermine both our interests and our values.

Now, we recognize that these transitions are not America's to manage, and certainly not ours to win or lose. But we have to stand with those who are working every day to strengthen democratic institutions, defend universal rights, and drive inclusive economic growth. That will produce more capable partners and more durable security over the long term.

Today, these transitions are entering a phase that must be marked more by compromise than by confrontation, by politics more than protests. Politics that deliver economic reforms and jobs so that people can pursue their livelihoods and provide for their families. Politics that will be competitive and even heated, but rooted in democratic rules and norms that apply to everyone –

Islamists and secularists, Muslims and Christians, conservatives and liberals, parties and candidates of every stripe. Everyone must reject violence, terrorism, and extremism; abide by the rule of law; support independent judiciaries; and uphold fundamental freedoms. Upholding the rights and dignity of all citizens, regardless of faith, ethnicity, or gender, should be expected. And then, of course, we look to governments to let go of power when their time comes – just as the revolutionary Libyan Transitional National Council did this past August, transferring authority to the newly elected legislature in a ceremony that Ambassador Chris Stevens cited as the highlight of his time in the country.

Achieving genuine democracy and broad-based growth will be a long and difficult process. We know that from our own history. More than 235 years after our own revolution, we are still working toward that more perfect union. So one should expect setbacks along the way, times when some will surely ask if it was all worth it. But going back to the way things were in December 2010 isn't just undesirable; it is impossible.

So this is the context in which we have to view recent events and shape our approach going forward. And let me explain where that leads us.

Now, since this is a conference on the Maghreb, that's where I'll focus. Because after all, that's where the Arab revolutions started, and where an international coalition helped stop a dictator from slaughtering his people, and where, just last month, we saw such disturbing violence. But let's look at what's actually happening on the ground, especially in light of recent events. We have to, as always, be clear-eyed about the threat of violent extremism. A year of democratic transition was never going to drain away reservoirs of radicalism built up through decades of dictatorship, nor was that enough time to stand up fully effective and responsible security forces to replace the repressive ones of the past.

As we've warned from the beginning, there are extremists who seek to exploit periods of instability and hijack these democratic transitions. All the while, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups are trying to expand their reach from a new stronghold in northern Mali.

But that is not the full story. Far from it.

The terrorists who attacked our mission in Benghazi did not represent the millions of Libyan people who want peace and deplore violence. And in the days that followed, tens of thousands of Libyans poured into the streets to mourn Ambassador Stevens, who had been a steadfast champion of their revolution. You saw the signs. One read, "Thugs and killers don't represent Benghazi or Islam." And on their own initiative, the people of Benghazi overran extremist bases and insisted that militias disarm and accept the rule of law. That was as inspiring a sight as any we saw in the revolutions. And it points to the undimmed promise of the Arab Spring – by starting down the path of democratic politics, Libyans and Arabs across the region have firmly rejected the extremists' argument that violence and death are the only way to reclaim dignity and achieve justice.

In Tripoli, the country's transitional leaders condemned the attack. They fired the top security officials responsible for Benghazi. Then, the government issued an ultimatum to militias across the country: Disarm and disband in 48 hours or face the consequences. As many as 10 major armed groups complied. Now, militias and extremists remain a significant problem in Libya, but there is an effort to address it that has now taken hold throughout the country. As Libya grapples with the challenges of forming a government, the international community needs to support its efforts to bring these militias to heel and provide security for all of its citizens.

Consider Tunisia, the birthplace of the Arab revolutions. Last year, an Islamist party won a plurality of the votes in an open, competitive election. I know some in Washington took this as an omen of doom. But these new leaders formed a coalition with secular parties and promised to uphold universal rights and freedoms, including for women. And the United States made it clear that we would be watching closely and would assess the new government by its actions, not its words.

This past February in Tunis, students and civil society activists shared with me their fears about extremists seeking to derail their transition to lasting democracy, but also their hopes that responsible leaders and accountable institutions would be strong enough and willing enough to turn back that challenge.

And, indeed, we have seen an intense debate play out in Tunisian society. For example, early drafts of the new constitution labeled women as "complementary to men," but Tunisia's active civil society raised strong objections, and eventually the National Constituent Assembly amended the text to recognize women's equality.

Civil society is wise to remain vigilant, and to exercise their hard-earned rights to safeguard their new democracy. Like the hundreds of Tunisian women who recently took to the streets to protest on behalf of a woman charged with indecency after she was raped by police officers. These competing visions of Tunisia's future were put to the test when violent extremists attacked the U.S. Embassy in Tunis and burned the American school nearby. How did the Tunisian people and government respond?

First, the government increased security around our Embassy and promised to assist with repairs to the school, which they have done. Then they publicly committed to confront violent groups and prevent Tunisia from becoming a safe haven for international terrorism. Following through on these pledges is essential. Those responsible for the attacks must be brought to justice. The government must provide security for diplomatic missions and create a secure environment for foreign residents and visitors. And the rule of law must extend to everyone throughout the country.

The country's leaders also took to the airwaves, to newspaper pages, even Facebook and Twitter, to denounce both the attacks and the extremist ideology behind them, putting their own political capital on the line. The Foreign Minister flew to Washington to stand with me and publicly condemn the violence. And so we continue to support those changes that are occurring in Libya and in Tunisia and those leaders and citizens who understand what is expected of them if they are to fulfill their own hopes.

Now, the situation in the rest of the Maghreb is different. Morocco and Algeria have not experienced revolutions, but recent events have also tested their values and resolve. Last year, when citizens of Morocco called for change, Moroccan society under King Mohammed VI answered with major constitutional reforms followed by early elections and expanded authorities for parliament. An Islamist party leads the new ruling coalition along with a variety of other parties after thirteen years in the opposition. And we've been encouraged that its leaders have sought to engage all Moroccans and have focused on creating jobs and fighting corruption. And we continue to urge them to follow through on all of their commitments for political and economic reform.

Last month, with anti-American protestors in the streets across the cities of Morocco, the Foreign Minister traveled to Washington for our first-ever Strategic Dialogue. He could have avoided the cameras, but instead, he strongly condemned the attack in Benghazi, embraced a broader partnership with the United States, and pledged that his country would continue working toward democracy and the rule of law.

Algeria also has much to gain by embracing the changes that are taking place around it, and we have seen some progress. The government held parliamentary elections in May and invited international observers to monitor them for the first time. And it moved quickly last month to protect diplomatic missions, including the U.S. Embassy, and to defuse tensions in the streets. But still, Algeria has a lot of work to do to uphold universal rights and create space for civil society, a message I delivered at the highest levels in person in February.

Now, what do these snapshots and stories from across the region tell us? On the one hand, last month's violence revealed strains of extremism that threaten those nations, as well as the broader region and even the United States. On the other hand, we've seen actions that would have been hard to imagine a few years ago, democratically-elected leaders and free people in Arab countries standing up for a peaceful, pluralist future.

It is way too soon to say how these transitions will play out. But what's not in doubt is that America has a big stake in the outcome.

Last month at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, I met with leaders from across the region, and I told each of them that the United States will continue to pursue a strategy to support emerging democracies as they work to provide effective security grounded in the rule of law to spur economic growth and bolster democratic institutions. We've made those three priorities the hallmark of America's involvement in the region. We've convened donor conferences to coordinate assistance, leverage new partnerships through the G-8, the Community of Democracies, the OECD; and we have stepped up our engagement with the Arab League, signing the first ever memorandum of understanding for a strategic dialogue between us. But we recognize that words, whether they come from us or others, are cheap. When we talk about investing in responsible leaders and accountable democratic institutions, it has to be followed by actual investments.

So we have mobilized more than \$1 billion in targeted assistance since the start of the revolutions. And the Obama Administration has requested from Congress a new \$770 million fund that would be tied to concrete benchmarks for political and economic reforms. And I again urge Congress to move forward on this priority.

But let me briefly just address the three parts of our strategy, starting with security. The recent riots and lawlessness underscore the challenges of safeguarding public safety in free societies and reforming security forces. For decades, those forces protected regimes. Now their job is to protect citizens, especially against the threat from violent extremists. For some time, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other terrorist groups have launched attacks and kidnappings from northern Mali into neighboring countries. Now, with the chaos and ethnic conflict there allowing these groups to carve out a larger safe haven, they are seeking to extend their reach and their networks in multiple directions.

So we are using every tool we can to help our partners fight terrorism and meet their security challenges. We recently embedded additional Foreign Service Officers with regional expertise into the U.S. Africa Command to better integrate our approach. Across the region, diplomats, development experts, and military personnel are working hand in hand.

Across the region also, we're partnering with security officials of these new governments who are moving away from the repressive approaches that helped fuel radicalization in the past and we're trying to help them develop strategies grounded in the rule of law and human rights.

We're helping border guards upgrade their equipment and tighten their patrols so that weapons don't flood the region even more than they already have. We're helping train prosecutors and build forensic labs that can produce evidence that stands up in courts. And last month, just days after the riots in Tunisia, we launched a new partnership with Tunisia to train police and other justice officials. And we were very pleased that Tunisia also agreed to host a new international training center that will help officials from across the region develop means to protect their citizens' security and their liberty.

Now the nations of the Maghreb are not the first to struggle with the challenge of protecting a new democracy. And one of the lessons we've learned around the world is that training, funding, and equipment will only go so far. It takes political will to make the hard choices and demand the accountability that is necessary for strong institutions and lasting security. And it takes changes in mindsets to make those reforms stick.

In all my conversations with high-ranking officials in these countries, I recognize that particularly in Tunisia and Libya, the people I'm talking to were often victims of security forces, imprisoned, seeking exile, beaten, in some cases, tortured. And for them all of the sudden to find themselves on the side of security forces, even ones that are of the new regime, takes a mental change, and they have admitted that it is a responsibility that they now understand they must assume.

The United States is also stepping up our counterterrorism efforts, helping the countries of North Africa target the support structure of the extremist groups, particularly al-Qaida and its affiliates – closing safe havens, cutting off financing, countering their ideology, denying them recruits. Our Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership is building the capacity of ten countries, providing training and support so that they can better work together to disrupt terrorist networks, and prevent attacks.

And we are expanding our work with civil society organizations in specific terrorist hotspots, particular villages, prisons, and schools. Now, the Maghreb's economic and social challenges fueled the revolutions and the calls for reform. And in order to succeed, these emerging democratic governments need to show they can deliver concrete results.

So that is the second area we're focused on: Working with small- and medium-sized enterprises, which create jobs and alternatives to radicalism, bringing women and young people into the formal economy, providing capital and training for entrepreneurs, helping emerging democracies update their economic regulations, their investment laws, their trade policies so their private sectors can actually flourish.

We're establishing a Tunisian-American Enterprise Fund with an initial capitalization of \$20 million to stimulate investment in the private sector and provide businesses with needed capital. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation, OPIC, is offering \$50 million in loans and guarantees, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation is helping address long-term constraints to economic growth. We've provided export training for small business owners and job training to hundreds of young Tunisians. And I'm particularly proud of the new \$10 million scholarship fund, which we launched in August to help Tunisian students study at American universities and colleges.

We also look forward to working on economic issues with the new Libyan Government once it's formed. One of our top priorities is helping nations trade more with each other. That, after all, will create new jobs for their citizens and markets for their products. But today, North Africa is one of the least integrated regions in the world. It doesn't have to be that way. And opening the border between Algeria and Morocco would be an important step in moving toward that integration.

The third key area in our strategy is strengthening democratic institutions and advancing political reforms – not an easy process, as we can see from the difficulty in forming a government in Libya. And political progress has to grow from the inside, not imposed from the outside or abroad. But there are ways we can and are helping. In Libya, for example, the United States has trained hundreds of lawyers and civil society activists on election laws and offered tutorials to campaign managers and candidates in the run-up to the recent elections. Now we're encouraging civil society to be fully engaged in drafting a new constitution that will protect the equal rights of all Libyan citizens.

Similar efforts are underway across the Maghreb, tailored to local needs and conditions. And none of this is happening in a vacuum. The transitions occurring in the Maghreb are linked, as you well know, with developments across the wider Middle East.

Egypt, of course, the largest Arab nation, cornerstone of the region, we've seen its new elected leadership say that the success of Egypt's democratic transition depends on building consensus and speaking to the needs and concerns of all Egyptians, men and women, of all faiths and communities. Now, we stand with the Egyptian people in their quest for universal freedoms and protections. And we've made the point that Egypt's international standing depends both on peaceful relations with its neighbors and also on the choices it makes at home and whether or not it fulfills its own promises to its own people.

In Syria, the Assad regime continues to wage brutal war against its own people, even as territory slips from its grasp. I recently announced major new contributions of humanitarian aid and assistance for the civilian opposition, and we remain committed with our like-minded partners to increase pressure on the regime.

And in Yemen, where we supported negotiations that eventually achieved a peaceful transition, we are working to prevent al-Qaida and other extremists from threatening these emerging, fragile democratic institutions and prevent them also from finding a safe haven from which to stage new attacks.

And when I met with King Abdullah of Jordan last month, we discussed the importance of continuing reforms to move his country toward more democracy and prosperity.

So in all of these places and many others, the United States is helping the people of those nations chart their own destinies and realize the full measure of their own human dignity.

Dignity is a word that means many things to different people and cultures, but it does speak to something universal in all of us. As one Egyptian observed in the wake of that country's revolution, freedom and dignity are "more important than food and water. When you eat in humiliation, you can't taste the food."

But dignity does not come from avenging perceived insults, especially with violence that can never be justified. It comes from taking responsibility for one's self and one's community. And if you look around the world today, those countries focused on fostering growth rather than fomenting grievance are pulling ahead – building schools instead of burning them; investing in their people's creativity, not encouraging their rage; empowering women, not excluding them; opening their economies and societies to more connections with the wider world, not shutting off the internet or attacking embassies.

I remain convinced that the people of the Arab world do not want to trade the tyranny of a dictator for the tyranny of a mob. There is no dignity in that. The people of Benghazi told this world loudly and clearly when they rejected the extremists in their midst what they hoped for. And so did the leaders of Libya when they challenged the militias. And so did the Tunisians who spoke out against violence and hatred. That is the message we should take from the events of the last month.

Now, I want to add and close with one more thought about what happened in Benghazi. Because, as you might expect, that is for me and for all the men and women at the State Department very personal.

Diplomacy, by its nature has to be often practiced in dangerous places. We send people to diplomatic posts in 170 countries around the world. And yes, some of those are in war and conflict zones. Others are in unstable countries with complex threats and no U.S. military presence. That is the reality of the world we live in.

And we will never prevent every act of violence or terrorism or achieve perfect security. Our people cannot live in bunkers and do their jobs. But it is our solemn responsibility to constantly improve, to reduce the risks our people face, and make sure they have the resources they need to do those jobs we expect from them. And of course, nobody takes that more seriously than I and the security professionals at the State Department do.

Chris Stevens understood that diplomats must operate in many places where soldiers do not or cannot, where there are no other boots on the ground, and security is far from guaranteed. And like so many of our brave colleagues and those who served in our armed forces as well, he volunteered for his assignments.

Last year, our Ambassador to Syria, Robert Ford, was assaulted in Damascus by pro-regime thugs. But he insisted on continuing to meet with peaceful protesters and serving as a living manifestation of America's support. And when he drove to the battered city of Hama, the people there covered his car with flowers.

People like Chris and Robert represent diplomacy and America at its and our best. They know that when America is absent, especially from the dangerous places, there are consequences. Extremism takes root, our interests suffer, and our security at home is threatened. So we will continue sending our diplomats and development experts to dangerous places. The United States will not retreat. We will keep leading and we will stay engaged in the Maghreb and everywhere in the world, including in those hard places where America's interests and values are at stake. That's who we are. And that's the best way to honor those whom we have lost. And that's also how we ensure our country's global leadership for decades to come.

Thank you all very much. (Applause.)

Remarks After the International Conference on the Libyan Crisis

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

RELEASE IN FULL

London, United Kingdom

March 29, 2011

SECRETARY CLINTON: All set? I apologize for my voice.

Good afternoon and I want to begin by expressing certainly our gratitude to the prime minister and the foreign secretary and the entire government for hosting this important conference. I've just concluded a very full day of business covering an array of issues with a broad range of counterparts.

I began the day with a meeting with Dr. Jibril and two other representatives of the Libyan Transitional National Council to hear their perspective on the situation in Libya. We talked about our efforts to protect civilians and to meet humanitarian needs and about the ongoing coalition military action in support of Resolution 1973. We also discussed the need for a political solution and transition in Libya, and I reiterated the support of the United States on behalf of President Obama for the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people, and our commitment to helping them achieve those aspirations.

I also had the opportunity to meet with both Prime Minister Cameron and with Foreign Minister Hague. I expressed the United States' gratitude for the critical leadership that the United Kingdom has shown in building an effective international response to the crisis in Libya. We consulted on the way forward, the military, political, and humanitarian dimensions. And we also discussed events and broader trends across the Middle East and North Africa and our joint efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I had the opportunity also to consult with a number of other counterparts about Libya because today's conference is taking place at a moment of transition, as NATO takes over as leader of the coalition mission, a mission in which the United States will continue to play an active, supporting role. Some of our coalition partners announced additional support and contributions today, which we welcomed.

In addition to our joint military efforts, we discussed the need for progress in Libya along the three nonmilitary tracks: First, delivering humanitarian assistance; second, pressuring and isolating the Qadhafi regime through robust sanctions and other measures; and third, supporting efforts by Libyans to achieve the political changes that they are seeking.

We also agreed on a structure for decision making going forward on both the military and political tracks. On the military side, we agreed that the North Atlantic Council with coalition partners fully at the table will be the sole provider of executive direction for NATO operations, similar to the ISAF approach for Afghanistan. On the political side, we agreed to establish a

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer 1

contact group to offer a systematic coordination mechanism and broad political guidance on the full range of efforts under Resolutions 1970 and 1973. And as I'm sure you just heard from the prime minister of Qatar, Qatar has agreed to host the first meeting of the contact group, along with the UK.

In a series of side meetings, I also had the chance to discuss a number of issues, including Syria. I expressed our strong condemnation of the Syrian Government's brutal repression of demonstrators, in particular the violence and killing of civilians in the hands of security forces. I also discussed efforts that are undertaken by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, particularly our joint effort to pass a resolution at the Human Rights Council that promotes tolerance and respect as well as free expression. And we greatly appreciate the OIC hosting a meeting of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan and Pakistan in Jeddah. I was also able to consult on a number of regional matters, including, of course, Libya with Foreign Minister Davutoglu of Turkey.

So it was a full day for all of us. We came to London to speak with one voice in support of a transition that leads to a brighter future for the Libyan people. I'm very pleased with the progress that we have made both today and in the days preceding it, and grateful for everyone who participated in the conference and in the broader effort in Libya. I think we are making a lot of progress together, and we could not do it unless we were representing the international community as we are.

So with that, I'd be happy to take your questions.

MODERATOR: Our first question is from Andy Quinn of Reuters.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, in your meeting today with Dr. Jibril, I was wondering, were you able to make any concrete offers of assistance to them, either through turning over the \$33 billion in Libyan funds that have been frozen in the United States, or in discussing possible arms transfers?

And Admiral Stavridis told the Senate today that intelligence shows flickers – he called – he used the word “flickers” of al-Qaida in the Libyan opposition. How great a concern is that? And is that part of the U.S. debate over any potential arms transfers to the transitional council?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Andy, first of all, we have not made any decision about arming the rebels or providing any arms transfers, so there has not been any need to discuss that at this point. We did discuss nonlethal assistance. We discussed ways of trying to enable the Transition National Council to meet a lot of their financial needs and how we could do that through the international community given the challenges that sanctions pose but recognizing that they obviously are going to need funds to keep themselves going. We discussed a broad range of matters and certainly their presentation, which some of you may have seen earlier today, as to what kind of civil society and political structure they are trying to build in Libya are exactly in line with what they have consistently said were their goals. Their commitment to democracy and to a very robust engagement with people from across the spectrum of Libyans is, I think, appropriate. We do not have any specific information about specific individuals from any

organization who are part of this, but of course, we're still getting to know those who are leading the Transitional National Council. And that will be a process that continues.

MODERATOR: Our next question is from Sam Coates of the *Times of London*.

QUESTION: Two things. First of all, is it your understanding that the UN Resolution 1973 makes it illegal to supply arms to the Libyan rebels, or do you think there could be some room for maneuver of that should it get to that?

And secondly, it's quite striking when the rebels were talking earlier today, none of their names are public apart from three or four of the 30-odd of them, and they clearly have access – they have quite a lot of power and access to a lot of funds through oil money. Do you think that they should be more transparent in terms of declaring who they are, where they're from, what kind of groupings they come from, and how they're using the money?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, as to the first question, it is our interpretation that 1973 amended or overrode the absolute prohibition of arms to anyone in Libya so that there could be legitimate transfer of arms if a country were to choose to do that. As I said, we have not made that decision at this time.

Secondly, I do think that greater transparency will, of course, be expected and will be delivered. But I think you have to put this into context. I mean, this is a very fast-evolving, but by no means settled, structure that they are trying to build. They also claim to have a number of people who are willing to work with them from central and western Libya who, for security reasons, cannot yet be named.

So I do think that this is a work in progress. And just as with respect to Andy's question, we don't know as much as we would like to know and as much as we expect we will know. We're picking up information. A lot of contact is going on, not only by our government but many governments that are part of the coalition. So we're building an understanding, but at this time, obviously, it is, as I say, a work in progress.

MODERATOR: Jay Solomon of the *Wall Street Journal*.

QUESTION: Thank you. I have a question regarding Syria. Over the weekend, you gave an interview where you said how many members of Congress viewed President Asad as a reformer. Is that your position? Because you know there's been well-documented cases of Syrian support for terrorist groups, allegations it's pursued atomic weapons, and some in Congress said that Syria actually poses a greater threat to the United States – its national security – than Libya does. Is it the Obama Administration's position now that it can work with President Asad to instigate or initiate some of the reforms that its people are clearly calling for? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, Jay, as you rightly pointed out, I referenced opinions of others. That was not speaking either for myself or for the Administration. We deplore the crackdown that is occurring in Syria and we call on Syria, as we have throughout the last

months, to respect the rights of its citizens, to allow people to protest peacefully, to work toward political and economic reform that would be to the benefit of the Syrian people.

So there is no difference in how we view this than how we have viewed the other incredible sequence of actions that we've seen in North Africa and in the Middle East. And we hope that there is an opportunity for reform. We hope there's an opportunity for reform in all of these countries. We want to see peaceful transitions. We want to see democracies that represent the will of the people.

So I think that we're, like the Syrian people, waiting and watching to see what comes from the Syrian Government. They dismissed the cabinet today, which resigned en masse. And as we have said so many times before, we support the timely implementation of reforms that meet the demands that Syrians are presenting to their government, such as immediately eliminating Syria's state of emergency laws, which has been in effect for a long time.

It is up to the Syrian Government, it is up to the leadership, starting with President Bashar Asad, to prove that it can be responsive to the needs of its own people. So we're troubled by what we hear, but we're also going to continue to urge that the promise of reform, which has been made over and over again and which you reported on just a few months ago – I'm a reformer, I'm going to reform, and I've talked to members of Congress and others about that, that we hear from the highest levels of leadership in Syria – will actually be turned into reality. That's what we're waiting and watching for.

MODERATOR: And the final question from Duncan Gardham of the *Daily Telegraph*.

QUESTION: Hi, I wondered how you view the situation in Libya at the moment. There seems to be a bit of almost ping-pong going on. The rebels seem to be withdrawing from some areas today. How do you see the situation evolving in Libya? How long do you see it lasting? And if you're talking to Qadhafi, what are his options? He can obviously try and stay or he can face the ICC, but is there a third option where he could travel to another country?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, I think that what we are seeing in Libya is a strengthening of the opposition, a consistent and very persistent effort by the opposition to try to hold ground which they have had and to regain ground which they have lost. Unfortunately, we are also seeing with Qadhafi a continuing pressure on the rebels, on his people, a willingness to use force. We had reports today of continuing military action by Qadhafi's forces in Misrata and elsewhere. So this is a volatile, dynamic situation that is unfolding.

We accomplished a lot in a very short period of time. We clearly believe, as President Obama said last night, that we prevented a massacre in Benghazi, that we were able to stop the military advance that was moving rapidly from west to east, and that we sent a clear message through the international community's willingness to enforce a no-fly zone and protect civilians that that kind of ruthless behavior by a leader toward his own people would not be tolerated. This has happened so quickly that we're now facing questions like the ones you ask, but I'm not sure that we know exactly when we will get to any change in attitude by Qadhafi and those around him.

As you know, there's a lot of reaching out that is occurring, a lot of conversations that are going on, and as the Arab League has said, it's also obvious to everyone that Qadhafi has lost the legitimacy to lead. So we believe he must go. We're working with the international community to try to achieve that outcome. He will have to make a decision. And that decision, so far as we're aware, has not yet been made.

You probably know that the secretary general's special envoy will be going to Tripoli and Benghazi, once again to urge Qadhafi to implement a real ceasefire that is not going to be immediately breached by his own forces, to withdraw from those areas that he has taken by force, and to look for a political resolution, which could include his leaving the country. So, I mean, all of this is in play. And many of the nations that were here in London today are working together to try to gather information, to share the impressions each has with the conversations that are coming from Tripoli and from those close to Qadhafi about what is or isn't being considered.

So I expect to see things continue to move in a positive direction. But I can't by any means give you any sort of timeline. That is just not sensible at this point. We don't have enough information to do that.

MODERATOR: Thank you all very much.

Remarks at Press Availability
Press Availability
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Embassy Berlin
Berlin, Germany
April 15, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Goodness. First, let me thank you for being patient with my schedule and giving us a chance to postpone this so that I could talk to you.

First, I want to thank Chancellor Merkel and Foreign Minister Westerwelle for hosting us here in Berlin. It was excellent accommodations, and everyone felt extremely well taken care of. And I want to commend Secretary General Rasmussen for running his usual tight ship and producing a very productive ministerial.

Over the last two days, we have tackled a full and formidable agenda. On Libya, we built on the momentum created by Wednesday's Contact Group meeting in Doha. We put out a strong statement that clarified the military aims of our mission and carried forward the unified message of Doha. Our European and Arab allies and partners all agree: Attacks on and threats of attacks against the Libyan people must stop; Qadhafi's forces must withdraw from the cities they have forcibly entered and occupied; humanitarian supplies must be allowed to reach civilians, especially those in cities under siege.

The statement also reinforced our agreement on a set of political and diplomatic objectives. It strongly endorsed the Contact Group's call that Qadhafi must leave power and a democratic transition must take place that reflects the will of the Libyan people.

I think the bottom line is that here at NATO we achieved a solid and sustainable consensus on our objectives and what it will take to achieve them. I spoke at length with many of my counterparts about the practical steps we all have to take to pressure and isolate Qadhafi and advance our efforts to protect the Libyan people.

On Afghanistan, I took the opportunity to consult with my colleagues on our three surges – the military, civilian, and diplomatic surge – all of which reinforce the transition process that is now underway. To do this once, we have to do it right. We need to underscore that we are transitioning, not leaving, and that we are building an enduring partnership with Afghanistan that will last well beyond 2014.

I also had a very productive bilateral meeting with Afghan Foreign Minister Rassoul on the Strategic Partnership Declaration and Afghan-led reconciliation.

Our missions in Libya and Afghanistan show that NATO plays a vital role in protecting our security and interests around the world. We are seeing that new challenges will often drive us to

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

develop new capabilities and work with partners outside the alliance when shared interests and values are at stake.

One of NATO's most important partners is Russia. Last year at Lisbon, we made historic progress together. Today, we worked to translate the promise of that moment into practical steps that strengthen our collective security. We also discussed NATO's partnerships with Ukraine and Georgia, and we looked for more effective ways for NATO to reach beyond the confines of the alliance and work effectively with all of our partners. Those nations willing to sacrifice for our common goals deserve a greater voice in decision making.

We also launched a NATO Defense and Deterrence Posture Review process to determine what mix of conventional, nuclear, and missile defense forces NATO will need going forward. I outlined the core principles that will guide the U.S. approach to this process, and completing this review will be a priority when the United States hosts next year's NATO summit in 2012.

On the margins of the ministerial, I had the chance to consult with a number of my counterparts on a wide range of regional and global issues, including developments in the Middle East, missile defense, and Iran's nuclear ambitions. So needless to say, this was another very full set of meetings, because we do have a full plate of issues. I am pleased with the progress that we have made this week and certainly ready for the work ahead.

And with that, I'd be happy to take your questions.

MODERATOR: Steve Myers, *New York Times*.

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Cough.) Excuse me.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Yesterday, you described a desire to see increased support for the opposition in Libya. And I wondered if you could tell us, have you developed a clearer sense of who exactly the opposition is and what exactly they need, including the question of arms? And related to that, are you aware that Libyan forces, in Misrata at least, are using heavy weapons that include cluster munitions that were made in Spain as recently as 2007?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Steven, I wasn't aware of the last point. I'd have to say I'm not surprised at anything that Colonel Qadhafi and his forces do, but that is worrying information and it's one of the reasons why the fight in Misrata is so difficult, because it's at close quarters, it's in amongst urban areas, and it poses a lot of challenges to both NATO and to the opposition. With respect to the opposition, we are learning more all the time. We are pooling our information. There are a number of countries that have significant ties to members of the opposition, who have a presence in Benghazi that enables them to collect information. Our envoy is still in Benghazi and meeting with a broad cross-section of people. The opposition needs a lot of assistance on the civilian organizational side, on the humanitarian side, and on the military side. There have been a number of discussions about how best to provide that assistance, who is willing to do what.

We're also searching for ways to provide funding to the opposition so that they can take care of some of these needs themselves. In addition to looking at how we can free up assets that could be used by the opposition, we're also looking at how the opposition could sell oil from sites that are under their control.

So there is a full comprehensive assessment occurring, and one of the decisions that we made in talking to a lot of our partners was that we need, in effect, a clearinghouse for such information. We need to have a way of conveying necessary information to NATO that they can use in the ongoing military efforts. And we need to share this information so that we can best determine how the international community can respond to them.

MODERATOR: The next question is from Earl Deckendorf of ARD.

QUESTION: After these two days you are in Berlin, there's a (inaudible) case on all the hardest test for the NATO alliance is a long time for itself?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think each situation is different. Certainly, NATO has faced a lot of challenges. The ongoing challenge in Afghanistan is among the most difficult and has certainly exacted the biggest toll in the loss of life and the cost to all of us. We remain committed there because we believe it is in our interests and is absolutely tied to our security.

The Libyan military commitment by NATO is a very important one, but it is in response to a United Nations Security Council resolution asking that nations work to protect civilians, impose an arms embargo, provide humanitarian assistance, establish a no-fly zone. And so NATO is not acting alone. We are, as you're aware, acting with others who are not in the NATO alliance but who are willing to work with us to meet the UN's request.

So I think at this juncture, certainly we're very aware that we have not lost any lives of participating NATO nations. We are working to try to protect the Libyan people who are the ones who are really facing a tough time. And as I said yesterday in my statement, I think we all need to be a little patient. These are complex situations. We recognize as such. We're still in the process of trying to identify, target, attack, and destroy key elements of Qadhafi's arsenal, his air defense system, his command and control.

But as Secretary General Rasmussen said in our meeting and said again in his press conference, we're making progress. So I, for one, feel very positive about what we have accomplished so far.

MODERATOR: And Michel Ghandour, Al Hurra.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. The Human Rights Watch has said that Syrian security and intelligence agencies have detained and tortured hundreds of protestors during a march (inaudible) demonstration. How do you view that? And how Iran is helping Syria crack down on protestors?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, Michel, as President Obama stated on Friday, we call upon the Syrian authorities once again to refrain from any further violence against their own

people. The arbitrary arrests, the detentions, the reports of torture of prisoners must end now. The free flow of information must be permitted once again. We have to allow journalists and human rights monitors the opportunity to enter Syria, to be free to report, to independently verify what's happening on the ground, because, as you know, it's very difficult to get accurate information as to what is going on.

And to this point, the Syrian Government has not addressed the legitimate demands of the Syrian people, and it is time for the Syrian Government to stop repressing their citizens and start responding to their aspirations. There is an opportunity for meaningful political and economic reform, and it needs to start now.

We are watching very closely what Iran is doing in the region. We hear Iran praising the uprisings in the Middle East and in North Africa, except it doesn't praise what happens inside Iran and it doesn't praise what is happening in Syria. It is a further example of the hypocrisy of the Iranian regime. It is attempting to, through propaganda, through information campaigns, to ally itself with the aspirations of the Arab awakening, but we do not see any evidence yet that Iran instigated such protests.

But we do see activities by Iran to try to take advantage of these uprisings. They are trying to exploit unrest. They are trying to advance their agenda in neighboring countries. They continue to try to undermine peace and stability to provoke further conflict.

And we want people in the region to understand that the Iranian Government's motive here is to destabilize countries, not to assist them in their democratic transitions; because after all, their 1979 revolution was derailed and it has unfortunately evolved into a totalitarian state where the government is trying to control the thoughts, the speech, the actions of the citizens on every front.

So we're very watchful. We invite Iran to change its tactics, including its treatment of its own citizens, to act on its rhetoric about what it is seeking, to play a constructive role, to cease exacerbating sectarian tensions, which it is attempting to do. And I think that everyone is aware of their efforts to exploit and even hijack what are legitimate protests. But certainly, in an era of instant communication, we hope that people will not be fooled by their tactics.

MODERATOR: Thank you all.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you all.

###

Remarks With Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Rome, Italy

May 5, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI: (Via interpreter) Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to once again renew my warm welcome to the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who is a dear friend as well as a colleague. It is, for us, a true pleasure to host her here in Rome for this second meeting of the Contact Group on Libya, which I'll be co-chairing starting from 11 o'clock with His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, crown prince of Qatar.

This is an opportunity for us to once again reiterate that the United States is, by Italy, considered as a friend and a very close ally when it comes to international policies. I would like to point out that we always, as a country, discuss these policies and approaches with all of our partners, and obviously, with the United States. This is how we have acted as far as the mission in Libya is concerned. This is what we have been discussing. We have also been looking at the importance of seeking a political solution, whereby military pressure is employed as a means of convincing the regime to bring to an end the attacks against Libyan civilians and put an end to violence.

And this obviously is going to be one of the focal points of the meeting which we'll be opening shortly of the Contact Group on Libya. We discussed the Middle Eastern question, the situation in Syria, the implications for Lebanon, and we both agree that it is necessary to convince the Syrian Government to bring to an end the violence and to establish a dialogue with those calling for reform, as President Assad had promised, given that unfortunately, this has not as yet occurred.

We also discussed the decisions that the United States has already adopted and that Europe is shortly to adopt with regard to sanctions. When it comes to Syria, sanctions must obviously include the suspension of the EU agreement with Syria for framework agreement and association and cooperation. Obviously, this will also involve restrictions to the movement of individuals who are directly involved in the violence that has been committed over the past few weeks.

Obviously, the impact of the Syrian crisis is severe for the entire region. In particular, we discussed the situation in Lebanon and the importance of guaranteeing stability in Lebanon, given that, as we know, the government has not as yet been formed. And we also expressed concern on account of the growing Iranian presence in the region, and we know that this has taken a very visible form with actions and measures targeting important countries such as Saudi Arabia in the Gulf area, and we have seen recent instances of this. And this testifies to a very active Iranian presence which shows that Iran is exploiting the crisis underway, and of course, this is a reason for concern.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

I have summarized the key points that we have discussed. I would like to once again renew my thanks to the Secretary of State, Hillary, over to you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good morning, and it is a great delight to be here in Rome, and especially to have this opportunity to consult with my colleague and my friend, the foreign minister.

As Foreign Minister Frattini just reported we have discussed a broad range of issues.

But it is all premised on the strong friendship and partnership between the United States and Italy. This is a great source of pride to our country, because Italy is not only our NATO ally, but our partner in the G-8 and the G-20, a close collaborator on a range of critical issues from counterterrorism to peacekeeping, and a nation that shares our democratic ideals and our commitment to prosperity, peace, and progress. So we are delighted to be working so closely with your government, and we thank you, Franco, for hosting this Contact Group meeting about Libya.

As Franco said, we discussed at length where we are and where we're going with respect to Libya. The United States and Italy have stood shoulder to shoulder along with NATO and our regional partners. Today, we will be discussing in depth how better to increase the pressure on Qadhafi and those around him diplomatically, politically, economically, how we can bring about the outcome that the people of Libya and the international community seek – an end to the violence against civilians, and the beginning of a democratic transition to a better future.

We also discussed our deep concern about the alarming situation in Syria. Our nations have called for an immediate end to the use of violence by the Syrian Government against its own people, and we've joined the chorus of the international community. Just last week, the Human Rights Council condemned the violence and is dispatching a mission to Syria to investigate. The United States has announced targeted sanctions against key individuals and entities that have engaged in grave abuses in Syria. And I appreciate very much the foreign minister's call for EU sanctions that should be pursued. Together, we have to show the Syrian Government that there are consequences for this brutal crackdown that has been imposed on the Syrian people.

I also want to express our deep appreciation for Italy's important participation in the mission in Afghanistan. Four thousand Italian troops stand with us in doing the difficult work of securing Afghanistan and paving the way for its more effective transition to a better future. We're very grateful for that commitment.

With respect to the ongoing efforts in Afghanistan, Usama bin Ladin's death sent an unmistakable message about the strength of the resolve of the international community to stand against extremism and those who perpetuate it. But let us not forget that the battle to stop al-Qaida and its affiliates does not end with one death. We have to renew our resolve and redouble our efforts not only in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but around the world, because it is especially important that there be no doubt that those who pursue a terrorist agenda, the criminals who indiscriminately murder innocent people will be brought to justice.

Now there are so many other areas where Italy and the United States are intertwined – certainly, our trading and commercial ties, our educational and cultural ties, and our very important family ties. And we join in congratulating Italy on this important milestone year of your independence. You may know that Vice President Biden will be leading a distinguished delegation for the formal recognition of independence on June 2nd, and we could not be more excited.

I am very grateful to the close collaboration that I have developed over my time at the State Department with Franco, and we look forward to continuing to work on a range of important and critical issues between our two countries as well as regionally and globally.

MODERATOR: (Via interpreter) Thank you very much. There's time for four questions. Elise Labott, CNN.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, on Libya, the TNC has said that they need about 2 to 3 billion to avoid a complete breakdown of their operations. Do you expect that today, you'll be able to make that type of commitment? And what about the arms that the rebels are requesting?

And on Usama bin Ladin, do you believe Pakistan's military intelligence knew that he was hiding in this garrison town, and do you think that the Pakistani military and ISI can be trusted going forward, that there aren't more terrorists in the country? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, with respect to Libya and the TNC's request, Franco and I discussed those. He's been meeting with representatives of the TNC. We both will be meeting with them today along with the other Contact Group members. Clearly on our agenda is looking for the most effective ways to deliver financial assistance and other means of supporting and helping the TNC opposition.

I think it's fair to say that there's been an enormously effective effort that has been led by the Contact Group. Individual nations have certainly made their contributions. The United Nations, which will be represented here, is working very hard on the humanitarian relief side. I think that we have made a number of important commitments.

Now, everyone is always impatient. We expect things to be done immediately in our very fast world. But we'll be discussing a financial mechanism. We'll be discussing other forms of aid. I will be announcing formally our nonlethal assistance. So I think that there is an effort with urgency to meet the requests that the TNC is making.

With respect to your questions about Pakistan, I have said before, I said it the day after our successful operation, that we have cooperated with Pakistan in the war against terror. They've been an important partner in our counterterrorism efforts. They have helped us put unprecedented pressure on al-Qaida and its leadership. Bin Ladin is not the only high leader in al-Qaida who has been removed from the scene thanks to the partnership between the United States and Pakistan. And we are committed to supporting the people and the democracy that Pakistan is representing now.

It is not always an easy relationship. You know that. But on the other hand, it is a productive one for both of our countries, and we are going to continue to cooperate between our governments, our militaries, our law enforcement agencies, but most importantly, between the American and Pakistani people, where we have made a commitment to helping them meet their needs and trying to establish a firmer foundation for their democracy.

QUESTION: (Via interpreter) I have a question for Minister Frattini and one for Secretary of State Clinton.

A question for Mr. Frattini: Wars costs money. Hillary Clinton mentioned Afghanistan, and some believe that the exit strategy in Afghanistan could be stepped up following the death of Usama bin Ladin, and this could mean that both Italy and the United States might have to spend a bit less on the current operations. And of course, this also applies to Libya. It is naturally impossible to establish how long the operation in Libya is going to last. It is clear that there are some costs involved, and I was just wondering whether Minister Frattini could say something about the cost of these operations.

And a question for Secretary of State Clinton: Televisions, the internet, the papers showed a picture that we will never forget, the picture of the Situation Room where you are with President Obama, with Vice President Biden. And in that picture, you covered your mouth with your hand and you looked concerned, frightened. I'm wondering whether you could tell us what you were looking at at that particular moment when the picture was taken, and what were you thinking?

FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI: (Via interpreter) Well, with regard to the first question that you put to me, there can be no doubt that the more we are successful in the fight against terror, the greater security and the lower the costs that have to be incurred in order to ensure that we have in place adequate protective measures. Italy and our friends in the United States have always stated firmly that the fight against terror is waged to ensure the security of our respective countries, Europe and the United States.

So the more successful we are in this fight against terror, the most likely it is that we can reduce, let's say, the extent of our commitment. So the more successful we are in the fight against terrorism, the more likely it is, for instance, that in Afghanistan, we will be able to focus more on the transition strategy. The more successful we are in Libya, in other words, the more successful we are in putting pressure on Qadhafi's regime and making it quite clear to him that he has no future, the more likely it is that we will be able to successfully continue putting pressure on the current regime, to ease the pressure on the current, let's say, movements, protests, and the more likely it is that we'll be able to rapidly move on and ensure that there can be a peaceful political transition. So that's why I would say that protecting civilians is instrumental in ensuring that we can rapidly achieve a political solution, and this is one of the topics that we will be discussing today.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I just want to reiterate what Franco said about Afghanistan. We are very committed to begin a drawdown of our forces in Afghanistan beginning in July, but the scope and pace of that drawdown has not been determined yet. And I think that the death of bin Ladin deals a significant strategic blow to al-Qaida and to their Taliban allies, and reinforces

that the United States, Italy, and all of our partners in Afghanistan are going to track down and, where necessary, kill or capture those who are on the battlefield or directing the actions against our troops and against Afghanistan, with the goal of trying to help Afghanistan be able to defend itself.

That is what we are working toward and that is what the NATO strategic goal is, that we achieve this by 2014, which is the same goal that Afghanistan has announced. So I think our resolve is even stronger following bin Ladin's death, because we know that it will have an impact on those who are on the battlefield in Afghanistan. And we are also committed, as I have said numerous times previously, to reconciliation, to working with Afghanistan in the lead, on attempting to reach a political solution that will remove insurgents from waging war to participating in a political system within Afghanistan in accord with the laws and constitution of Afghanistan. Now with respect to your second question, those were 38 of the most intense minutes. I have no idea what any of us were looking at at that particular millisecond when the picture was taken. I'm somewhat sheepishly concerned that it was my preventing one of my early spring allergic coughs, so it may have no great meaning whatsoever.

MODERATOR: Steve Myers, *New York Times*, please.

QUESTION: Thank you. Mr. Minister, Madam Secretary, does the agreement that was announced yesterday in Cairo between Hamas and Fatah, does that close the door on the prospect of peace talks continuing with the Israelis? And in the case perhaps of the EU and as well as Congress in Washington, at what point do you reconsider the aid that you now provide to the Palestinian Authority? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Steve, speaking for the United States, we are waiting to see the details. We obviously are aware of the announcement in Cairo yesterday. There are many steps that have yet to be undertaken in order to implement the agreement. And we are going to be carefully assessing what this actually means, because there are a number of different potential meanings to it, both on paper and in practice.

We've made it very clear that we cannot support any government that consists of Hamas unless and until Hamas adopts the Quartet principles. And the Quartet principles have been well known to everyone for a number of years. So we're going to wait and make our assessment as we actually see what unfolds from this moment on.

FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI: (Via interpreter) Italy shares exactly the same view, as was pointed out by Hillary. Obviously, we are waiting to receive more detailed information on these developments, but there is no doubt that complying with the principles of the Quartet is a prerequisite before Hamas can be considered by Italy as a potential interlocutor. As you will recall, in the past, an attempt was made to give Hamas a very clear message. Nothing has come of this. We are waiting to see which of the two options will be adopted by this new government.

MODERATOR: (Via interpreter) Last question from (inaudible).

QUESTION: (Via interpreter) Madam Secretary, we know that the U.S. Government had taken into consideration the possibility of taking into custody Usama bin Ladin in order to interrogate him. Given that, what happened? Was his death a mistake? That was my first question.

The second question is on Libya and on Qadhafi. We know that the National Transition Council considers Qadhafi a legitimate target, so would it be imaginable that an operation such as the one conducted in Pakistan could take place in Tripoli, for instance?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, with respect to bin Ladin, he was a sworn enemy of the United States and a danger to all of humanity. The crimes that he committed not only in our country, but throughout the world, from London to Madrid, from Istanbul to Bali, left thousands of people dead and maimed. And the majority of the people that he directed the killing of were actually Muslims. And I think that his ideology of hatred and violence is thankfully being rejected in what we see going on in the Middle East and North Africa as people are protesting, largely peacefully, for a better future for themselves and their children.

But our view has been that bin Ladin was a clear target for the United States and our allies since, now, nearly 10 years. The operation was conducted in the highest professional standards, and in a very clear, unmistakable effort to bring an end to his leadership over terror. I'm not going to comment on any operational details whatsoever. I have the highest regard for everyone in our government who planned and executed this operation. And there is no doubt in my mind that his death is going to make not only our country, but the world safer, and empower those around the world who are builders, not destroyers. But as I also said, and as Franco said, this is not the end. There is still a lot of work that has to be done and a lot of vigilance that has to be maintained.

And with respect to Qadhafi, we are implementing United Nations security resolution with respect to protecting civilians. We have made it abundantly clear that the best way to protect civilians is for Qadhafi to cease his ruthless, brutal attacks on civilians from the West to the East, to withdraw from the cities that he is sieging and attacking, and to leave power. So that is the outcome we are seeking.

FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI: (Via interpreter) Thank you. That is all.

Remarks With Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere After Their Meeting

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

August 12, 2011

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good morning, and I apologize for the delay, but we had a long agenda, as I always do when I meet with my colleague. I want to welcome the foreign minister once again to the State Department. And this has been a very productive and wide-ranging discussion.

Before I begin about the matters that we were discussing, I want once again to offer our deepest sympathies on behalf of the American people to our friends in Norway, especially the families of those who lost loved ones. In the days since those terrible events, the whole world has once again witnessed the resilience and dignity of the Norwegian people as they have comforted the bereaved, healed the wounded, and pulled together on behalf of a nation whose values we so greatly admire.

Once again, we see Norway setting an example for the world as a strong, generous, far-sighted member of the international community. But that is not a surprise because we see it on a regular basis. As food shortages, for example, threaten millions of lives in the Horn of Africa, we see Norway's global leadership in development assistance and disaster relief. Norway has already contributed nearly \$50 million in this crisis. In fact, every year Norway dedicates a full 1 percent of its GDP to promote sustainable development around the world, and that is a remarkably generous amount.

Norway's commitment to this work is rooted in the understanding that it is not just the right thing to do, but as I said in my speech yesterday, it is the smart thing as well because of the direct impact that development has on global stability, security, and opportunity. This is an insight we should remember here in Washington as we have our own discussions about how best to allocate our budgetary resources. And today, the foreign minister and I discussed development priorities, and in particular the situation in the Horn of Africa.

Norway is rightly respected as a peacemaker and a peacekeeper, and I thanked the foreign minister in particular for Norway's strong support of the people of Afghanistan, its commitment to achieving a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, its contributions to the NATO mission to protect civilians in Libya. And we discussed the importance of supporting the Libyan people as they plan for a post-Qadhafi reconstruction and stabilization period.

In addition, we discussed Syria, where we both remain acutely concerned about the Assad regime's campaign of violence against their own citizens. Norway and our other European allies have been strong, consistent voices on behalf of the Syrian people, and I commend them for their

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

advocacy. The Asad regime's continued brutality is galvanizing international opinion. There has been a crescendo of condemnation not only from the world but in particular from the region. After the Security Council statement, we've seen movement in rapid succession from the Arab League, the GCC, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and others. The United States will continue to work with our partners to turn this growing consensus into increased pressure and isolation for the Asad regime. In particular, we urge those countries still buying Syrian oil and gas, those countries still sending Asad weapons, those countries whose political and economic support give him comfort in his brutality, to get on the right side of history. President Asad has lost the legitimacy to lead, and it is clear that Syria would be better off without him.

Yesterday, the United States imposed new sanctions and Ambassador Ford delivered a clear message to the Syrian Government: Immediately stop the violence, withdraw your security forces, respond to the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people for a democratic transition in concrete and meaningful ways. Now, it is something that we are watching closely and we are consulting closely with partners around the world, and we expect to see action.

So whether it's promoting sustainable development or standing up for universal rights in the face of political violence, the United States and Norway are working together on so many important issues. And I thank the foreign minister for his partnership and his friendship and this visit, and I look forward to our continuing work together.

FOREIGN MINISTER STOERE: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Let me say on behalf of all Norwegians that the messages of comfort we have received from the President and the Vice President, yourself, on behalf of the American people and from American friends all over the United States, has been heartening. I can tell you as a foreign minister, I have seen it as my task to transmit these warm words to the families, and I have been going from funeral to funeral to follow young teenagers who ended their lives because they went to a political summer camp. So this is a very dramatic moment when Norwegians are coming together, and we feel that the support we get, which is heartfelt, is strong and important. So I thank you for that.

You gave an excellent summary of our discussions. I'd just like to say how much I appreciate these regular opportunities we have to compare notes. It happens almost monthly when we meet somewhere out traveling, but I appreciate these opportunities here at the State Department to do a systematic rundown.

We met in Greenland last time for the Arctic foreign minister meeting, illustrating that that is a new part of the world where we need good political stewardship to manage resources, look after the environment, and keep security and low tension. And we are succeeding in that. I think it's an area where we will see a lot more attention in the future. It's a priority in our foreign policy because it's close to us as Norway in the north.

But as you said, we also have a partnership with the U.S. on a number of other issues and agendas, and the strength of that partnership is that open dialogue and the trust that you also have been showing as Secretary, and I thank you for that.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, Jonas.

MS. NULAND: Okay. We have time for two questions from the American side and two questions from the Norwegian side today. The first question to Arshad Mohammed from Reuters.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, yesterday in your interview with CBS, you said that what really needs to be done to bring pressure to bear on Syria is to sanction its oil and gas industry. What progress, if any, are you making in persuading European nations or India or China to curtail their significant investments in the oil and gas industry, and what countries in particular are still buying their oil and gas that you'd like to see them stop?

And then also on Syria, you talked about – it seemed as if yesterday you really are not leaning toward explicitly calling for Assad to go. It's as if you want there to be a greater consensus among your allies to do that. What is the sort of hesitation on that? Are some of your partners like Turkey urging you not to do this, to give Assad a little more time, despite the acceleration of violence in the last week, ten days? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Arshad, I think it is fair to say that we have been engaging in intensive outreach and international diplomacy with many countries in the region and beyond to encourage and persuade them to speak out, number one, and then to join us in taking action, number two.

You're aware that it took an intense effort to get the presidential statement, which we did finally see issued just about two weeks ago. And that statement was the first international statement that really captured what has become a growing consensus about Assad's brutality and his refusal to follow up on any of the reforms that he has claimed to be supporting. Then, as I said, we saw in quick succession the Arab League, which reversed its position, the Gulf Coordinating Council, which made a very strong statement led by an important and welcome statement from King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

So we are watching the growing crescendo of condemnation that I referenced, and I don't think you should assume anything other than we're trying and succeeding at putting together an international effort so that there will not be any temptation on the part of anyone inside the Assad regime to claim that it's only the United States or maybe it's only the West. Indeed, it's the entire world.

And we're making the case to our international partners to intensify the financial and political pressure to get the Syrian Government to cease its brutality against its own citizens and to make way for positive change. At the same time, we and others are reaching out to members of the opposition inside and outside of Syria to encourage them to create a unified vision of what an inclusive, participatory, democratic system in Syria could look like. So there's a lot of work going on, and I think that that work is paying off.

QUESTION: Are you making progress on the oil and gas (inaudible)?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Stay tuned.

QUESTION: Have you –

MS. NULAND: Next question –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Stay tuned.

MS. NULAND: Next question on the Norwegian side to Anders Tvegard of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you for your ongoing and continued support after the terrorist attacks in Norway. Norway, your ally in the Middle East, will not add her voice to Syrian President Asad to step down at this moment because there are no clear alternative. How helpful is this in your ongoing diplomatic effort – the Norwegian position?

And if I may, in Afghanistan, U.S. is about to pull out a certain number of troops and Norway is concerned that the troop withdrawal will have an effect on the Norwegian forces on the ground. In what respect will Norway's concern be taken into consideration when you decide from which areas to pull your troops? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I will let Jonas address your first question because that is a matter for Norway to respond to.

On the second question, I can assure you there will be intensive consultations at all levels, bilaterally and through NATO ISAF, as the withdrawal occurs. We have been not only grateful for, but very impressed by the Norwegian presence in Norway, and we are well aware of the sacrifice and commitment that Norway has provided to the coalition efforts in Afghanistan, and there will be a very clear path forward that we will all travel together.

FOREIGN MINISTER STOERE: If I may just on Syria say that I think we are part of that broad and emerging international voice sending clear message to the regime in Damascus. The Secretary and I attended the Human Rights Council in Geneva in early March when Libya was emerging as a real problem. And I think we both used – coined this version that a regime which is turning its army on its people is losing legitimacy to represent that people. That is, to me, a lead-up to expressing a clear view on that leadership. And I think we see a similar process in terms of sending a very strong, normative message, which is follow-up that presidential statements, a number of sanctions.

And I would in particular salute the regional organization's clear message. We have been missing that, but it is starting to come from Syria's neighbors and from Syria's own organizations, and that is of great importance to – building that alliance is part of the work which is needed now.

MS. NULAND: Next question, Kirit Radia, ABC.

QUESTION: Hi. Good morning to you both. Question for the both of you, but particularly for the Secretary, if you don't mind answering, on the Middle East peace process. Can you tell us how much progress has been made among the Quartet in developing the document that could provide some way forward in hopes of staving off the Palestinian vote at the United Nations in September?

And if I may ask, Madam Secretary, about reports that the talks with the Taliban have collapsed, what can you tell us about that? What – how serious were these efforts and how far did they get, and where do you go from here? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, with respect to Middle East peace, Jonas and I had a very good discussion of all the issues concerning the Middle East today. I applaud Norway's continued leadership and commitment to the peace process and also its chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, which has been the principal international support for a lot of the work that's been done on the ground by the Palestinian Authority to improve the lives, the security, the well-being of the Palestinian people.

President Abbas has said on numerous occasions that substantive negotiations are his preferred course, and we take him at his word. That is why we're working very hard with our Quartet partners to come up with a platform for the resumption of negotiations. And we're doing so based on President Obama's May remarks, which very clearly set out parameters for the two major issues that have to be addressed: on the one hand, territory, on the other hand, security. We have continued to support strongly a two-state solution and the negotiations are absolutely imperative for us to reach that two-state solution. We believe that UN resolutions, no matter what they say, are no substitute for the difficult but necessary give and take that can occur only in a negotiating process. So we are going to oppose that approach and strongly support every effort to resume negotiations.

QUESTION: And on the Taliban talks?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I have no comment on that.

FOREIGN MINISTER STOERE: Well, I – I'll just like to rally my voice to the Secretary. When it comes to a two-state solution, that should come about through negotiations. Norway has been associated with Oslo, and Oslo was all about negotiating the painful way to that two-state solution so they could leave side by side in peace. One should not ignore the steps which have been taken on that road, but a lot still remains to be done. And we as an international community must do whatever we can to support that road.

That being said, we will have to wait and see what the Palestinians will present for September, and it is Norway's view that we have to view their plans in detail when they are ready to come up with it. We support any initiative from the Quartet that may bring negotiations forward. It is not Norway's view that it is illegitimate to turn to the UN to get an expression. That has been regular in the Middle East peace process since the creation of a state of Israel.

But no matter how many resolutions you pass, negotiations will be needed to solve the tricky

issues. That I understand is also the view of the Palestinian president, who, in my – to my knowledge, has shown every readiness to engage in that negotiation. It takes two to make this, and we will have to work on both sides to make that difficult task possible.

MS. NULAND: And the last question is from Vegard Kvaale of the Dagbladet.

QUESTION: Thank you. Once again, Madam Secretary, thank you for your support after the terrorist attacks. I was just wondering, what do you think of the response from the Norwegian Government and Norwegian people to the attacks? And how has American authorities assisted Norwegian authorities after the attacks? And last, how should the international community deal with these kinds sort of homegrown terrorism threats in the future? Are there, for instance, any lessons that we can take from the Oklahoma bombings in '95? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I deeply admire the resilience of the Norwegian people, and we saw it once again in the aftermath of this terrible terrorist attack of July 22nd. It is almost hard for me as a mother to imagine. And when Jonas told me about going to funerals, it was a terrible flashback to having gone to Oklahoma City following the attack there, going to funerals and events after 9/11, where it is a – just a terrible human tragedy that you are part of as a member of the human family, and particularly of countries like ours that really cherish our values of openness and believe strongly in the opportunity that exists for people of different backgrounds, different beliefs to live and work together, to compete in the arena of ideas.

And I think though hearts are certainly broken in Norway, the response that we have seen to hatred and to the viciousness of the terrorist's message that was posted on the internet has been in keeping with the strength of the Norwegian people and the values that you exhibit around the world. And these values of tolerance and solidarity and democracy and openness are the very values that these young people were believing in because they had chosen to become involved in the political process of your country. And it's a terrible loss for Norway, but it is a loss for all of us as we think about those young lives that were cut short.

So we stand with you now and always. We have offered our continuing support. Members of our law enforcement community have been in touch with counterparts in Norway. And where we've been asked to provide information, we've been more than willing to do so. We stand ready to offer any assistance that you may require.

This is a reminder that, in our democracies, we have to be balancing liberty and security all the time. That is not an easy balance. We made some changes after Oklahoma City, we made other changes after 9/11, but in our democracy we have to keep balancing those apparently contradictory values, but in my view, you cannot have one without the other. And so how do we define each in ways that maximize the potential for the people of our countries to realize their own dreams and aspirations. So we are looking to deepen our discussion about these challenges going forward.

Thank you all very much.

Remarks With European Union High Representative Catherine Ashton After Their Meeting

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

February 17, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good morning everyone. It's always a pleasure to welcome my friend and colleague, the high representative of the European Union, here to Washington. We always have a lot to discuss and we are always relying on each other, because, as I said in Munich a few weeks ago, Europe remains America's partner of first resort on all of the global challenges we are confronting together.

I know that Cathy understands the significance of our cooperation, because she and I have had the opportunity to meet on many occasions in the last several years, and we, again today, had a very comprehensive discussion. Let me just quickly run over a few of the issues.

I will turn first to Iran. We're very grateful to Lady Ashton for her leadership on the P-5+1. The international community has been looking to Iran to demonstrate it is prepared to come to the table in a serious and constructive way. We have been reviewing Iran's proposal to resume talks on its nuclear activities and consulting closely between us and with our other P-5+1 partners. This response from the Iranian Government is one we've been waiting for, and if we do proceed, it will have to be a sustained effort that can produce results.

Turning to Syria, I know that the high representative joins me in, once again, condemning in the strongest possible terms the ongoing violence against the Syrian people perpetrated by the Assad regime. I also want to extend on behalf of myself and our government our sympathies to the family of Anthony Shadid and to the *New York Times* for his untimely death. He was somebody I always turned to and read very carefully, and if I didn't have the time when I got to the press reporting, I would put it aside and read it because he had his pulse on what was happening.

Yesterday's UN General Assembly vote demonstrated an overwhelming international consensus that the bloody assaults must end. In the face of this global condemnation, the regime in Damascus, however, appears to be escalating its assaults on civilians, and those who are suffering cannot get access to the humanitarian assistance they need and deserve. So we will keep working to pressure and isolate the regime, to support the opposition, and to provide relief to the people of Syria. I will be attending the Friends of Syria conference in Tunisia next week, where a number of nations will work to intensify pressure on the regime and to mobilize the humanitarian relief that is needed. We also hope to coordinate efforts to enable a Syrian-led transition before the regime's actions tear the country apart. We're looking for an inclusive democratic process.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Ultimately, our shared values between the U.S. and the EU are the bedrock of our cooperation, and we are promoting those values together. We also discussed the situation in the Balkans. We share the view that the future of both Serbia and Kosovo lies with the European Union, and the United States strongly supports the dialogue that the EU is leading to try to advance Euro-integration for both Serbia and Kosovo. Deputy Secretary Burns is encouraging both sides to remain flexible and open to compromise.

We have a – we have a very long list of what we discussed, but I'll just end it there and turn it over to Lady Ashton with my appreciation for her leadership and the great partnership we have.

MS. ASHTON: Well first of all, can I say what a pleasure it is to be back here and to be meeting and working as closely as I do with you. It is extremely significant that we're meeting today, because we meet on the back of having received a letter from Dr. Jalili from Iran in response to my letter from October. As you said, we are consulting colleagues and analyzing closely what this letter would mean. Let me say that I think it's good to see that the letter has arrived and that there is a potential possibility that Iran may be ready to start talks. We'll continue to discuss and make sure that what we're looking at is substantive, but I'm cautious and I'm optimistic at the same time for this. It also demonstrates the importance of the twin-track approach, that the pressure that we have put on together, the sanctions that have been put there because that's the responsibility of the international community, I believe, they're having an effect. But we, of course, want to resolve this through talks.

And as you've said, Hillary, the situation in Syria is a cause for enormous concern, and we feel extremely worried about the level of violence and terror that is happening within that country. We've been very clear that President Assad should stand aside and should enable a process that would bring the people of Syria together, all of them. An inclusive process that can take the country forward. I want to commend the work of Nabil Elaraby, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, who has shown great leadership in bringing together the Arab community, but in coordination, working closely with the international community, to demonstrate that inclusivity and to demonstrate the leadership on the ground. I hope that the meeting next week will give us a chance to consider how we can support humanitarian efforts especially. And I will be working with the UN, the OIC, and the Arab League, as we did through the situation in Libya, on the humanitarian side of the challenges that we face. I hope it will also show, too, the international consensus to try and see the situation in Syria end.

As you said, there are hundreds of things on our agendas at all times, and we keep in constant touch, so we can deal with only some of them at every meeting. The situation in Serbia-Kosovo, of course, is very important to the European Union because we do believe, as you rightly say, the future for both lies within the European Union. The team that we've got there at the moment are working closely together to try and support both into their future. I hope that both will be able to work on the plan that we've put to them that will enable Serbia to become a candidate, will enable Kosovo to move forward with visas, with trade, with economic support, and eventually to see its future as well with the European Union. Thank you.

MS. NULAND: We have time for two today. We'll start with *The New York Times*, Steve Myers.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, Lady Ashton, thank you. The Iranian letter refers to a readiness for dialogue, talks at the earliest possibility, and also, significantly, no preconditions in it for those talks. And yet you seem somewhat hesitant to embrace this. Is that that you think the letter is not sincere? And what more do you need to see before you could begin, or what next steps could you see for those talks to begin? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, as I think we both have said, we are evaluating the response. And our unity within the P-5+1 has been absolutely critical in dealing with Iran in the past. It remains so going forward. It takes time to consult and to do so in a thorough manner. So we need to give time to our partners in the P-5+1 process to do their own evaluation.

But we've been clear about two things that I want to stress. First, as outlined in Cathy's October letter to Iran, any conversation with Iran has to begin with a discussion of its nuclear program. And Iran's response to Cathy's letter does appear to acknowledge and accept that. And second, we must be assured that if we make a decision to go forward, we see a sustained effort by Iran to come to the table, to work until we have reached an outcome that has Iran coming back into compliance with their international obligations.

So we're evaluating all of these factors. But I think it's fair to say – and of course, I'll let Cathy speak for herself – that we think this is an important step, and we welcome the letter.

MS. ASHTON: Yeah. I mean, exactly. We see the things that you've seen in the letter – no preconditions and a recognition of what we'll be talking about. The next question, really, is to look at then where we left off in Istanbul. And you'll recall that we put out in Istanbul a series of options for confidence-building measures, things that Iran could do that would help us move forward with the talks, things that the inspectors would be allowed to do, for example. We also said at that time they could come forward with their own ideas about what they wanted to do, so that this was a genuine open process.

So for us, the evaluation now is also about thinking through okay, where did we leave off, where do we need to go next? If we start the talks, we want to sustain them. Therefore, we need to set in train the process whereby we can be clear what it is we mean to achieve and what we're expecting from the Iranians. And that's what we're in the process of doing right now.

QUESTION: Is the TRR still on the table?

MS. ASHTON: Well, when we were talking in Istanbul, there were two sets of issues: one, the confidence-building measures I've described; the other was support for the TRR and for, of course, a civil nuclear program. And that's been – as I've acknowledged to the Iranians recently, that's always been part of what we were offering, was to support them on civil nuclear power.

MS. NULAND: And last question, ITN (inaudible).

QUESTION: Yeah. Robert Moore with the British network ITN. Good morning. A question to you both, if I may. I wonder what your message is today to the embattled residents of Homs and other Syrian cities. Would it not be more honest and therefore more honorable to say you're on

your own, the UN Security Council is paralyzed, there are no good Western diplomatic options, don't expect our help?

MS. ASHTON: I'm not sure that would be an honest response. I think the honest response is to say this: We are absolutely clear that President Assad should stand aside; you cannot kill your own people, you cannot be a leader, and call this leadership. Secondly, that we want to try and work as close as we can with everyone who's willing to engage in support of the humanitarian needs of people. And we've supported the Arab League in its quest to try and put people on the ground to try and monitor the situation. And as you know, there are discussions going on between the UN and the Arab League about how to take that forward in the future. The honest response is we need to do everything that we possibly can to help.

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think that's absolutely right. We have marshaled the great weight of international opinion against the Assad regime. The vote yesterday in the General Assembly was overwhelming. So I do want the people of Syria to understand and believe that there are tens of millions of people around the world who are seized with the terrible situation they find themselves in.

And we have not been deterred by the vetoes in the Security Council. We are moving forward with the Friends of Syria. They are not being abandoned. We are doing all we can to determine ways forward to strengthen the opposition, to help them convey to the entire Syrian population that they are seeking an inclusive, peaceful, democratic transition, and that those who are fearful of the future, which is understandable, whether they be Alawites, Sunni, Christian, Druze, Kurd or any Syrian, have to come together to establish a credible opposition that can then serve as their voice in dealing with the regime and dealing with the outside.

So, I think we have to be humble. I mean, this takes a large dose of humility to say we don't have all the answers and we cannot even imagine the terrible experiences that people are going through with their children and their grandparents under such assault, but we're doing whatever we can to try to help pave the way toward a better future for Syria.

Thank you all very much. Have a good weekend.

###

Press Availability Following the G20 Ministerial Meetings
Press Availability
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Los Cabos, Mexico
February 20, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good afternoon. And let me begin by thanking our hosts. It was an absolute pleasure to be here, and I want to express my appreciation to President Calderon, to Secretary Espinosa, and to the entire Mexican team for putting together what has been a quite informative and important gathering. And now that I've seen this beautiful place for myself, I can understand why so many whales come here to visit. It is, however, less clear to me why they ever leave, but that's up to them I suppose.

This has been, for our team coming from the U.S., a great opportunity to discuss matters of important – importance to the bilateral relationship with Mexico, but also to catch up on the full range of regional and global issues that concern us with our – with my colleagues. And I think it's fair to say, as I made the point in the first working session yesterday, Mexico is emerging as a leader in bringing nations together to solve problems that none of us can solve on our own. And this meeting of foreign ministers from G-20 and beyond is yet another example of that. Now more than ever, foreign policy and economic policy are inseparable. Prosperity has to be a core foreign policy goal for all of us, and economic forces virtually impact every aspect of how our nations engage. And what's more, we are increasingly seeing strong connections between traditional G-20 financial issues and questions about economic development, the environment, and good governance. In an age when more people in more places can participate in the global economy, we have to expand the range of partners working to take on our most pressing shared challenges and to work together to take advantage of these new opportunities.

So this has been a very excellent and all too rare chance to connect informally. It was, for me, a great opportunity to kick-off yesterday's first session on breaking deadlocks in the multilateral system. I discussed some of the challenges to open, free, fair, transparent – transparency in the system of competition that we need if we're going to continue to expand prosperity and include everyone in it.

Today's sessions focused on all kinds of issues of great importance. I'll just mention a few. The role that green growth can and should play – and again, I commend President Calderon, Secretary Espinosa, and the Mexican Government, because they have been leaders in this. The work that came out of Cancun was absolutely essential to what was then the follow-on work in Durban. The very creative idea that President Calderon put on the table back in '09 for a green growth fund was given more specificity. So across the board, whether it was talking about how we grow our economies, how we create both energy security and a market for renewable energy, how we include more women across the world as full participants in the economy, we covered a lot of important matters.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Ultimately, our shared values between the U.S. and the EU are the bedrock of our cooperation, and we are promoting those values together. We also discussed the situation in the Balkans. We share the view that the future of both Serbia and Kosovo lies with the European Union, and the United States strongly supports the dialogue that the EU is leading to try to advance Euro-integration for both Serbia and Kosovo. Deputy Secretary Burns is encouraging both sides to remain flexible and open to compromise.

We have a – we have a very long list of what we discussed, but I'll just end it there and turn it over to Lady Ashton with my appreciation for her leadership and the great partnership we have.

MS. ASHTON: Well first of all, can I say what a pleasure it is to be back here and to be meeting and working as closely as I do with you. It is extremely significant that we're meeting today, because we meet on the back of having received a letter from Dr. Jalili from Iran in response to my letter from October. As you said, we are consulting colleagues and analyzing closely what this letter would mean. Let me say that I think it's good to see that the letter has arrived and that there is a potential possibility that Iran may be ready to start talks. We'll continue to discuss and make sure that what we're looking at is substantive, but I'm cautious and I'm optimistic at the same time for this. It also demonstrates the importance of the twin-track approach, that the pressure that we have put on together, the sanctions that have been put there because that's the responsibility of the international community, I believe, they're having an effect. But we, of course, want to resolve this through talks.

And as you've said, Hillary, the situation in Syria is a cause for enormous concern, and we feel extremely worried about the level of violence and terror that is happening within that country. We've been very clear that President Assad should stand aside and should enable a process that would bring the people of Syria together, all of them. An inclusive process that can take the country forward. I want to commend the work of Nabil Elaraby, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, who has shown great leadership in bringing together the Arab community, but in coordination, working closely with the international community, to demonstrate that inclusivity and to demonstrate the leadership on the ground. I hope that the meeting next week will give us a chance to consider how we can support humanitarian efforts especially. And I will be working with the UN, the OIC, and the Arab League, as we did through the situation in Libya, on the humanitarian side of the challenges that we face. I hope it will also show, too, the international consensus to try and see the situation in Syria end.

As you said, there are hundreds of things on our agendas at all times, and we keep in constant touch, so we can deal with only some of them at every meeting. The situation in Serbia-Kosovo, of course, is very important to the European Union because we do believe, as you rightly say, the future for both lies within the European Union. The team that we've got there at the moment are working closely together to try and support both into their future. I hope that both will be able to work on the plan that we've put to them that will enable Serbia to become a candidate, will enable Kosovo to move forward with visas, with trade, with economic support, and eventually to see its future as well with the European Union. Thank you.

MS. NULAND: We have time for two today. We'll start with *The New York Times*, Steve Myers.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, Lady Ashton, thank you. The Iranian letter refers to a readiness for dialogue, talks at the earliest possibility, and also, significantly, no preconditions in it for those talks. And yet you seem somewhat hesitant to embrace this. Is that that you think the letter is not sincere? And what more do you need to see before you could begin, or what next steps could you see for those talks to begin? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, as I think we both have said, we are evaluating the response. And our unity within the P-5+1 has been absolutely critical in dealing with Iran in the past. It remains so going forward. It takes time to consult and to do so in a thorough manner. So we need to give time to our partners in the P-5+1 process to do their own evaluation.

But we've been clear about two things that I want to stress. First, as outlined in Cathy's October letter to Iran, any conversation with Iran has to begin with a discussion of its nuclear program. And Iran's response to Cathy's letter does appear to acknowledge and accept that. And second, we must be assured that if we make a decision to go forward, we see a sustained effort by Iran to come to the table, to work until we have reached an outcome that has Iran coming back into compliance with their international obligations.

So we're evaluating all of these factors. But I think it's fair to say – and of course, I'll let Cathy speak for herself – that we think this is an important step, and we welcome the letter.

MS. ASHTON: Yeah. I mean, exactly. We see the things that you've seen in the letter – no preconditions and a recognition of what we'll be talking about. The next question, really, is to look at then where we left off in Istanbul. And you'll recall that we put out in Istanbul a series of options for confidence-building measures, things that Iran could do that would help us move forward with the talks, things that the inspectors would be allowed to do, for example. We also said at that time they could come forward with their own ideas about what they wanted to do, so that this was a genuine open process.

So for us, the evaluation now is also about thinking through okay, where did we leave off, where do we need to go next? If we start the talks, we want to sustain them. Therefore, we need to set in train the process whereby we can be clear what it is we mean to achieve and what we're expecting from the Iranians. And that's what we're in the process of doing right now.

QUESTION: Is the TRR still on the table?

MS. ASHTON: Well, when we were talking in Istanbul, there were two sets of issues: one, the confidence-building measures I've described; the other was support for the TRR and for, of course, a civil nuclear program. And that's been – as I've acknowledged to the Iranians recently, that's always been part of what we were offering, was to support them on civil nuclear power.

MS. NULAND: And last question, ITN (inaudible).

QUESTION: Yeah. Robert Moore with the British network ITN. Good morning. A question to you both, if I may. I wonder what your message is today to the embattled residents of Homs and other Syrian cities. Would it not be more honest and therefore more honorable to say you're on

your own, the UN Security Council is paralyzed, there are no good Western diplomatic options, don't expect our help?

MS. ASHTON: I'm not sure that would be an honest response. I think the honest response is to say this: We are absolutely clear that President Assad should stand aside; you cannot kill your own people, you cannot be a leader, and call this leadership. Secondly, that we want to try and work as close as we can with everyone who's willing to engage in support of the humanitarian needs of people. And we've supported the Arab League in its quest to try and put people on the ground to try and monitor the situation. And as you know, there are discussions going on between the UN and the Arab League about how to take that forward in the future. The honest response is we need to do everything that we possibly can to help.

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think that's absolutely right. We have marshaled the great weight of international opinion against the Assad regime. The vote yesterday in the General Assembly was overwhelming. So I do want the people of Syria to understand and believe that there are tens of millions of people around the world who are seized with the terrible situation they find themselves in.

And we have not been deterred by the vetoes in the Security Council. We are moving forward with the Friends of Syria. They are not being abandoned. We are doing all we can to determine ways forward to strengthen the opposition, to help them convey to the entire Syrian population that they are seeking an inclusive, peaceful, democratic transition, and that those who are fearful of the future, which is understandable, whether they be Alawites, Sunni, Christian, Druze, Kurd or any Syrian, have to come together to establish a credible opposition that can then serve as their voice in dealing with the regime and dealing with the outside.

So, I think we have to be humble. I mean, this takes a large dose of humility to say we don't have all the answers and we cannot even imagine the terrible experiences that people are going through with their children and their grandparents under such assault, but we're doing whatever we can to try to help pave the way toward a better future for Syria.

Thank you all very much. Have a good weekend.

###

Press Availability Following the G20 Ministerial Meetings

Press Availability

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Los Cabos, Mexico

February 20, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good afternoon. And let me begin by thanking our hosts. It was an absolute pleasure to be here, and I want to express my appreciation to President Calderon, to Secretary Espinosa, and to the entire Mexican team for putting together what has been a quite informative and important gathering. And now that I've seen this beautiful place for myself, I can understand why so many whales come here to visit. It is, however, less clear to me why they ever leave, but that's up to them I suppose.

This has been, for our team coming from the U.S., a great opportunity to discuss matters of important – importance to the bilateral relationship with Mexico, but also to catch up on the full range of regional and global issues that concern us with our – with my colleagues. And I think it's fair to say, as I made the point in the first working session yesterday, Mexico is emerging as a leader in bringing nations together to solve problems that none of us can solve on our own. And this meeting of foreign ministers from G-20 and beyond is yet another example of that. Now more than ever, foreign policy and economic policy are inseparable. Prosperity has to be a core foreign policy goal for all of us, and economic forces virtually impact every aspect of how our nations engage. And what's more, we are increasingly seeing strong connections between traditional G-20 financial issues and questions about economic development, the environment, and good governance. In an age when more people in more places can participate in the global economy, we have to expand the range of partners working to take on our most pressing shared challenges and to work together to take advantage of these new opportunities.

So this has been a very excellent and all too rare chance to connect informally. It was, for me, a great opportunity to kick-off yesterday's first session on breaking deadlocks in the multilateral system. I discussed some of the challenges to open, free, fair, transparent – transparency in the system of competition that we need if we're going to continue to expand prosperity and include everyone in it.

Today's sessions focused on all kinds of issues of great importance. I'll just mention a few. The role that green growth can and should play – and again, I commend President Calderon, Secretary Espinosa, and the Mexican Government, because they have been leaders in this. The work that came out of Cancun was absolutely essential to what was then the follow-on work in Durban. The very creative idea that President Calderon put on the table back in '09 for a green growth fund was given more specificity. So across the board, whether it was talking about how we grow our economies, how we create both energy security and a market for renewable energy, how we include more women across the world as full participants in the economy, we covered a lot of important matters.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

And then finally, this morning, Secretary Salazar and I were proud to represent the United States as we signed a groundbreaking agreement with Mexico regarding oil and gas reserves in the Gulf of Mexico. For too long, uncertainty in this area about the reservoirs of oil and gas has impeded our progress and created grounds for dispute instead of cooperation.

Today, the agreement we signed will remove the uncertainty. It will make exploration and production safer, more efficient, more equitable for companies in both countries. It will advance energy security in our hemisphere and help us handle our energy resources more responsibly. And for the first time, American energy firms will be able to collaborate with PEMEX, their Mexican counterpart. That's a welcome benefit for both Mexico and the United States in these challenging economic times.

So it's a great pleasure to be here and to renew friendships with a lot of my Mexican contacts and counterparts. I particularly appreciate working with both the president and the secretary, but what is most important is that both of us are intent upon delivering concrete, positive results for the American and Mexican people.

So with that, I'd be happy to take your questions.

MS. NULAND: We'll take two today. First one from Indira Lakshmanan of Bloomberg.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. We wanted to ask, if the Arab League or others were determined that they had to arm the Syrian opposition to stop the government violence being inflicted upon the people, would the U.S. accept that?

And in Egypt, American NGO workers have been charged and a trial date has been set. Are you confident the situation can be resolved before a trial and avoid a cutoff of U.S. aid to Egypt?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Indira, first with respect to Syria, I had the opportunity over the last two days to discuss Syria with a number of my colleagues. And we are all working toward the planned Friends of Syria meeting at the end of this week, which we think will give us a chance to come together and chart a way forward.

I think, like the UN General Assembly resolution that passed overwhelmingly last week, the upcoming meeting will demonstrate that Assad's regime is increasingly isolated and that the brave Syrian people need our support and solidarity. Their suffering has to be addressed, so we have to focus on humanitarian issues and think of the best ways to deliver the necessary humanitarian aid. We have to work toward an inclusive, democratic process to lead a transition. Every group of Syrians needs to feel that they are represented, that their interests will be respected. We have to prepare for the likelihood that the Syrian regime is going to be under increasing pressure, which will create perhaps more space for all of us to push hard on a transition. And we will intensify our diplomatic outreach to those countries that are still supporting the Assad regime.

This is a challenging process, but mostly for the people of Syria, who every day are living with the results of this brutal crackdown that they are suffering under. So I don't want to get ahead of

the meeting that will be a very large gathering that will demonstrate, once again, the international unity in the face of the Assad regime. We'll send a clear message to Russia, China, and others, who are still unsure about how to handle the increasing violence, but are, up until now, unfortunately, making the wrong choices. And I think we'll have more to say as we go through this week and after the meeting.

With respect to Egypt and the NGO situation, I'm not going to speculate on the next steps based on press reports. I want you to understand clearly that we are not only deeply concerned about the situation as it affects not only Americans who are working in NGOs in Egypt, but other nationalities and even Egyptians who have been charged in this case. We've had a senior team in Cairo in recent days trying to work through the issues so that they can be resolved as soon as possible. And I think it's probably better just to continue the hard work of our engagement and hope that we'll see a resolution soon.

MS. NULAND: Last question, Silva Garduno of *Reforma*.

QUESTION: Hello.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Hi.

QUESTION: Good afternoon. My questions are related to organized crime. How do you think a forum like this, like G-20, should address transnational organized crime? In this sense, well, last week President Calderon sent a very graphic message about stopping the traffic of arms from the U.S. The sign actually read, "No more weapons in the border." What is your answer to that message?

And finally, and very briefly, what do you think about organized crime infiltrating the highest levels of government in Mexico? And by this, I mean Mexican former governors of border states with the U.S. currently being investigated. Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, those are very important questions. And I want to begin by underscoring our support for the courage that President Calderon, the Mexican Government, law enforcement officials, and others have shown in their struggle against these criminal cartels. This is an important struggle, and we are doing all we can to support the Mexican Government as they, slowly but surely, gain ground against transnational crime.

We also believe strongly that transnational crime is a global threat. It's not just a threat in Mexico or – name any other country. These gangs certainly operate across national boundaries. They pose a serious danger to law-abiding people and governments everywhere. So we are determined to assist the Mexican Government in their very courageous struggle against the cartels. And that means helping to stop the flow of illegal drugs and weapons to and from the cartels that fuel the violence here and elsewhere.

We've certainly increased our cooperation, and I would argue we've improved our assistance to be responsive to what Mexican Government officials tell us is needed. We are in much more close contact and really following the lead of our Mexican counterparts. We have an aggressive

pursuit of illegal gunrunners who operate in the United States. Our goal is to end all illegal movement of guns across our border.

And in fact, President Obama has placed and increased emphasis on stemming the outbound flows of weapons and the flow of criminal proceeds from both weapons and, more significantly, the drug trade. Specials Customs – special Customs and Border Protection teams at the U.S. border are screening outbound rail and vehicle traffic for weapons and bulk currency. We are using cutting-edge technology to screen 100 percent of rail traffic headed into Mexico, and we've placed Border Enforcement Security teams along the border to investigate the organizations that are involved in cross-border smuggling.

The United States and Mexico share responsibility for our common border. Most of the times, it's a border that a billion dollars a day in trade passes across, literally millions of contacts between people, and we want to keep it a vibrant, dynamic border while we work continuously to eliminate the threats that pass back and forth into both of our countries.

So I think we've made a lot of progress, but we have a long way to go, because these are violent, vicious gangs. It's heartbreaking what they are willing to do to fellow human beings. There has been a lot of progress because of the Mexican Government's leadership in bringing down a lot of the leadership of these gangs.

But we have no illusions about the necessity for the United States to be a strong partner with Mexico. And that includes, certainly on our side of the border, seeking out and arresting corrupt officials and supporting Mexican officials to do the same. Because it is just totally unacceptable that any officials would be profiting from this kind of violence and the terrible results that it has had for so many people in Mexico.

But I just want to end by saying that I think – I have a lot of confidence in the Mexican people and I have no reason to doubt that, as we've seen in other countries, Mexico will be successful.

MS. NULAND: Thank you very much.

Remarks on Syria: Questions and Answers Session

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul, Turkey

August 11, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, for you, can you tell us a little bit more in detail about your meeting with the opposition activists? Did you get a better sense of whether they are really prepared to be able to be involved in leading a transition? What kind of questions did you ask them about who is actually doing the fighting on the ground? And what kind of answers did you get?

And then, for both of you, there has been a lot of talk about this common operational picture. What exactly is that common operational picture? Does it involve the potential of this corridor from Aleppo, north to the border here, turning into some kind of safe haven? And does it include anything on how to deal with the chemical weapons that everyone has expressed concern about? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, with respect to the activists with whom I met, I listened carefully to their descriptions of what each was doing. One young man had just come out of Aleppo, and was intending to return. They, to a person -- there were both men and women there -- are committed to a pluralistic, democratic, inclusive Syria. And each is doing his or her part. There is work going on about telling the story. There is no free media inside Syria, as there is, very evidently, here in Turkey. So how does the story get out in an authoritative way?

And another talking about the work being done on justice and accountability, documenting the abuses that are occurring so that there will be no impunity when there finally is a new government and a new opportunity for the Syrian people to hold those who perpetrated these abuses accountable.

A lot of attention, particularly from the women, to what is happening to women inside Syria, the abuses that they are subjected to by the regime, the need for women to be partners in a new Syria, to be heard and to participate as they try to form the basis for a transition.

We heard from the representatives of the students who are still peacefully protesting on university campuses and trying to organize and support the opposition. There was concern expressed about the apparent lack of unity among the outside opposition and a hope that, as one young man said, the opposition will rise to the occasion and be able to present a unified front, both inside and outside of Syria, going forward.

We heard firsthand, as I said, from the young man who had just been in Aleppo about the tremendous courage of those who are withstanding the assaults from tanks and aircraft, and how important it is to work for ways to support those on the ground without making the suffering

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

worse. There is a very clear understanding about the need to end this conflict quickly, but not doing it in a way that produces even more deaths, injuries, and destruction.

So, I came away very impressed by these young activists, and very committed to increasing the assistance we are already providing. Several of those present have already received support from the United States. As you know, we are providing \$25 million in nonlethal aid, mostly communications, to civil society and activists. And I don't want to go into any further details as to how we are helping people, at the risk of endangering them at this time.

Regarding the planning, what the minister and I agreed to today was to have very intensive operational planning. We have been closely coordinating over the course of this conflict. But now we need to get into the real details of such operational planning. And it needs to be across both of our governments. Certainly our two ministries are coordinating much of it, but our intelligence services, our military, have very important responsibilities and roles to play. So we are going to be setting up a working group to do exactly that.

And both the minister and I saw eye-to-eye on the many tasks that are ahead of us, and the kinds of contingencies that we have to plan for, including the one you mentioned in the horrible event that chemical weapons were used. And everyone has made it clear to the Syrian regime that is a red line for the world -- what would that mean in terms of response and humanitarian and medical emergency assistance, and of course, what needs to be done to secure those stocks from every being used, or from falling into the wrong hands.

QUESTION: Hi. (Inaudible.) Madam Secretary, you mentioned you met Syrians this morning. But Syrians I have spoken to inside or outside Syria are extremely frustrated with international -- what they see as the international community's lack of response. And they basically feel left alone at this point.

You talked about non-lethal aid. You talked about post -- day-after planning. You talked about helping refugees. But in terms of given that Aleppo is being bombarded, and given that there is a huge suffering inside major cities and about roughly over 100 people die every day, have you also discussed actionable, tangible steps, whether it is safety zones, no-fly zones, Security Council resolutions, or other forms of assistance that could impact their day-to-day life?

And quickly, I wanted to follow up, if you don't mind, just -- there is a good deal of anxiety in Turkish public about the Kurdish presence and potential PKK presence in the northern parts of Syria. In your assessment, is this something that concerns you? And, you know, have you looked into the PKK presence or power? And what is your assessment on that? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you. As to your first question, the issues you posed within your question are exactly the ones that the minister and I have agreed need greater in-depth analysis. It is one thing to talk about all kinds of potential actions. But you cannot make reasoned decisions without doing intense analysis and operational planning. And we share not only the frustration, but the anger and outrage of the Syrian people at what this regime continues to do. But we also are well aware that its brutality seems to know no bounds. And there is no -- you

know, there is no doubt in the minds of the minister or myself that anything we do should be to hasten and lessen bloodshed, not to catalyze even greater and more horrible kinds of assaults. So, really doing contingency planning, sorting this out, is what we have agreed to do. We have a very long list that we have gone through this morning on all kinds of issues, both before the inevitable fall of Assad and after. But we have to be very careful, and we have to do it in a way that always keeps in mind our goal, number one, is to hasten the end of the bloodshed and the Assad regime. That is our strategic goal. And we have to analyze everything against that goal. And then, of course, we want to be good partners in helping the Syrian people build the kind of democratic, pluralistic society and government that will respect human rights and restore a better future. So, this is how we are proceeding.

Regarding the PKK, let me just underscore that the United States remains strongly committed to the defense of our Turkish ally. Together we are working to root out violent extremism and to address the many regional security issues we face. And amongst those we stand firmly with Turkey against the PKK.

Now, your question was is there reason to worry about enhanced PKK activity arising out of the vacuum created by violence and the brutality of the regime within Syria, and the answer is yes. We worry about terrorists, PKK, al-Qaeda, and others taking advantage of the legitimate fight of the Syrian people for their freedom to use Syria to promote their own agendas, and even to perhaps find footholds to launch attacks against others.

So, we are absolutely committed to supporting Turkey against the PKK, and we will do so in any way that protects Turkey and the people of this nation from this kind of terrorism.

**Remarks at the Ad Hoc Friends of the Syrian People Ministerial
Remarks**

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Waldorf Astoria Hotel

New York City

September 28, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good afternoon, and let me once again welcome all of you to New York. We are pleased to be hosting this meeting on Syria.

But I must begin by acknowledging that conditions in Syria continue to deteriorate as the Assad regime relentlessly wages war on its own people. And we see more bodies filling hospitals and morgues, and more refugees leaving their homeland and flooding into neighboring countries. As President Obama told the General Assembly this week, the regime of Bashar al-Assad must come to an end so that the suffering of the Syrian people can stop and a new dawn can begin. Now, it is no secret that our attempts to move forward at the UN Security Council have been blocked repeatedly. On Tuesday, I met with Joint Special Representative Brahimi to discuss alternative strategies, and I look forward to hearing all of your views today. But the United States is not waiting. We are taking new steps to meet the growing humanitarian needs of the Syrian people, to support the opposition as it moves toward an inclusive, democratic transition, and to further pressure and isolate the regime.

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer**

First, today I am announcing an additional \$30 million to help get food, water, blankets, and critical medical services to people suffering under the relentless assaults, based on need, regardless of political affiliation. This brings the total U.S. humanitarian aid during this crisis to more than \$130 million. As the need continues to grow, so must the emergency response. The UN appeal remains woefully underfunded. All of us in the international community have to step up, and I repeat our urgent call for all parties to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches those in need, to uphold international law, and particularly to protect medical facilities and personnel. Second, today I am also announcing an additional \$15 million to support Syrian civilian opposition groups, bringing our total support to the unarmed opposition to almost \$45 million. That translates into more than 1,100 sets of communications equipment, including satellite-linked computers, telephones, and cameras, as well as training for more than 1,000 activists, students, and independent journalists. We are working to help them strengthen their networks, avoid regime persecution, and document human rights abuses.

As more parts of Syria's control slip from the regime to the opposition, we're supporting civilian opposition groups as they begin providing essential services – reopening schools, rebuilding homes, and the other necessities of life. Dedicated civil servants are working to preserve the institutions of the Syrian state while freeing them from the regime's corrupt influence. In these places, we are seeing the emergence of a free Syria, and the United States is directing our efforts to support those brave Syrians who are laying the groundwork for a democratic transition from the ground up.

Over recent weeks, we have seen how important it is for people and leaders in nations transitioning to democracy to reject extremists who incite division, conflict, and violence. In Syria, a country that is home to a variety of religious and ethnic communities, this is especially important. We know the regime will do everything it can to pit communities against each other and that extremists will be eager to exploit tensions and impose their own brutal ideology. So the opposition and civil society will have to be especially vigilant against this threat and reassure minorities they will be safe in a post-Assad Syria.

It is encouraging to see some progress toward greater opposition unity, but we all know there is more work to be done. The United States supports the efforts of the opposition follow-up committee to build consensus around the transition plan agreed to in Cairo this summer. I understand there will be a meeting in Doha to continue the work of making the opposition stronger and more cohesive. And we look forward to hearing from representatives of several of the opposition groups about how they are moving forward.

The United States is also ratcheting up pressure on the Assad regime and deepening its isolation. Two weeks ago in Morocco, the United States joined with many of you to pledge more than \$3 million in new support for the Syria Justice and Accountability Center and its efforts to document human rights violations inside Syria. And let me be clear: Human rights abuses cannot be tolerated, no matter who commits them.

At the recent meeting of the sanctions working group in The Hague, we reiterated our call for governments, private financial institutions, and businesses to do more to cut off the Assad regime from assets and income that fund its war machines. Those who continue doing business with entities and individuals associated with the regime risk being connected to sanctions violations, damaging their reputations, and exposing them to other potential consequences.

Our government also continues to expand sanctions against individuals and entities who help the regime procure weapons and communications equipment used in waging its war. Our most recent measures target Hezbollah leaders, an arms company in Belarus that is supplying fuses for aerial bombs used against civilians, and senior figures in Syria's military.

But let's be very frank here: The regime's most important lifeline is Iran. Last week, a senior Iranian official publicly acknowledged that members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps are operating inside Syria. There is no longer any doubt that Tehran will do whatever it takes to protect its proxy and crony in Damascus. Iran will do everything it can to evade international sanctions. For example, last year Turkish inspectors found a shipment of assault rifles, machine guns, and mortar shells labeled as "auto spare parts" aboard an Iranian airliner bound for Syria. So we are encouraged to hear that Iraq has announced it will begin random searches of Iranian aircraft en route to Syria, and we urge all of Syria's neighbors to take steps to prevent their territory or airspace from being used to fuel Assad's war.

The United States is moving forward on all these fronts: providing humanitarian aid, supporting the civilian opposition, and increasing pressure on the regime. As President Obama said, "the future must not belong to a dictator who massacres his people." Together, we must stand with those Syrians who believe in a different vision. So there will be difficult days ahead, but our

unity and resolve must not waver as we continue to do what we can to end the violence and bloodshed, and bring about a better day for the Syrian people.

Interview With Margaret Brennan of CBS

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Vladivostok, Russia

September 9, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you for making time at the end of a very long trip. Rebuilding the relationship with Russia has been a prime focus of the Obama Administration's foreign policy. Russia continues to oppose sanctions on Iran, intervention in Syria, and they've armed Bashar al-Assad's regime. What has this relationship achieved?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, a New START Treaty to reduce nuclear weapons and make the world safer; getting Russia into WTO, which provides an opportunity for Russia's economy to function in accordance with a rules-based system, which is good for American business, good for American jobs; cooperating on Afghanistan, Russia opening its territory, both ground and air, to our troops and our supplies going in and out of Afghanistan through the Northern Distribution Network; working together on the Iran sanctions, which was not easy to do, but which they have been very supportive of; and working with us in the P-5+1.

So, I mean, I could go on and on. But the point, Margaret, is that if you ask me any country in the world, I can give you the pluses and the minuses. We don't get everything we want with any country that we are involved with, even our very best friends. Countries have their own interests. They see the world in their own way. But I do believe that in the last three and a half plus years, we have helped to stabilize the relationship with Russia. And we have a very frank exchange of views in areas where we don't agree, like Syria.

QUESTION: And on that point, it's become a little politicized. Mitt Romney, in his acceptance speech, said he would show less flexibility and more backbone towards Russia. In your conversation with President Putin, did you see any room for movement on Syria?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I had a very long conversation with Foreign Minister Lavrov. I had a shorter but a pointed conversation with President Putin. And we're going to try again to see whether there is some way forward through the Security Council. They know our redlines, which is that we're not going to vote for something that has no consequences; we've already done that. We've accepted Kofi Annan's six-point plan, we've called for humanitarian aid. But we haven't gotten to the main issue, which is putting some consequences on Assad and his regime that could begin to change his behavior and stop him from killing his own people. And that's our condition, but we're going to see whether we can come to some understanding with the Russians.

QUESTION: Three times, Russia has opposed those efforts of the Security Council to have any kind of resolution that has sanctions or real consequence. So what alternatives are open? When you talk about "bite," what do you mean?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, the Russians have consistently said they did not want to open the door to military intervention. And my response has been, well, then, work with us to draft language that would make it clear this is not about military intervention; this is about very tough sanctions, this represents the opinion of the international community, so the message to Assad is abundantly clear he can't hide behind you or anybody else.

And in my conversation with the Foreign Minister, I challenged him. I said, "You keep saying you don't want to do Chapter 7, which the Arab League has called for, which the Europeans and we have called for, because you don't want to open the door." I said, "We are smart enough to figure out how to structure that, how to make it clear that we're not talking about military intervention." Because, to be fair, military intervention is still something that is viewed as contentious, even among the Syrian opposition. Many of them are on the record saying they don't want any military intervention.

So we're going to continue to try to pursue that with the Russians, the Chinese, and others. But at the same time, we're not just standing idly by, waiting to see whether we can reach such an agreement. We are trying to shift the balance of power on the ground. We're working with likeminded nations to support the opposition. We're not providing arms, but we're providing a lot of assistance that can enable them to be better organized to try to hasten the day when the violence finally ends. Because either Assad will stop, or there will be enough of a presence on the ground that he will be forced to stop.

QUESTION: While this diplomacy has been happening, a hundred thousand Syrians fled in August, 20,000 have died so far. So when you talk to some in the opposition, they say this is running out the clock while civilians are getting killed.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well –

QUESTION: Is there a situation where you would support a coalition of the willing to create a no-fly zone?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, there's nobody in that coalition, because everyone is worried that some kind of military action would cause more death and destruction. The first order of business in trying to deal with this terrible situation is first, do no harm. And in all of our very intense conversations with the neighbors in the region and others, this is a very difficult set of logistics, if you will; technical kinds of decisions. And nobody's willing to say, okay, we're going to come in with military force, try to do a no-fly zone, which means you've got to bomb a lot of sites. And the Syrians have proven that they are not only ruthless, but they are totally shameless in placing defensive materiel in places that are in civilian areas and the like.

So, look, I am as heartsick as anybody about what has happened in Syria. It just beggars the imagination that you would have a leader who is so willing to slaughter his own people without regard, drive them into refugee status, destroy ancient cities like Damascus and Aleppo. I mean, that's just terrible. But at the same time, the international community does not want to make it worse. So we are doing what we think are the best options available to us right now.

QUESTION: So the conversation coming from Turkey, this proposal of a safe zone, you see that as a nonstarter?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. We're engaged in discussions with the Turks. When I was there about a month ago, we set up a mechanism for very intensive discussions because there's a difference between calling for something rhetorically, and then sitting down with military planners and saying, "Okay, how do you actually implement something?" And again, it's a lot harder than perhaps it sounds to some ears.

But we are having intensive discussions with the Turks, with the Jordanians, with others in the region and beyond. So this is something that we spend an enormous amount of time on every single day. In fact, we just had a team here consulting with the Russians because we're looking for any way forward that helps the situation – not makes it worse, not causes more death and destruction, but brings about the end of the Assad regime, saves as many lives as possible, and begins a political transition.

QUESTION: Is Russia still sending arms to Bashar al-Assad?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, they had preexisting contracts, some of which they fulfilled, some of which they held back on. They will not commit to stopping sending arms, because they claim, "You have people in the region who are arming the opposition, so we're not going to stop helping Assad." That's their rationale. But we follow this pretty closely, and we think it has slowed down. But Syria already had so many arms. I mean, it was the fourth largest army in the world for a country that size. So they have, unfortunately, a lot of military equipment that they had stockpiled.

We are especially concerned about their chemical weapons. We've made that as abundantly clear as we could.

QUESTION: Would Russia help to secure some of those stockpiles?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Russia is worried about the chemical weapons. They don't think that they have yet been falling into the wrong hands, or being used. But we've made it clear, as has other governments around the world, including the Russians, to the Syrians that we will hold them accountable if these chemical weapons are used. But it's not so much whether Syria uses them – because right now they claim they won't, and we are watching it very closely – but we worry about them getting into the wrong hands, whether it's some existing terrorist group or some new group that comes out of nowhere and gets a hold of them. So we're very watchful about this, and working with other countries on it.

QUESTION: So there is a plan to secure those?

SECRETARY CLINTON: There is a lot of work going on.

QUESTION: You told us in July that you would be willing to speak with Bashar al-Assad. Does that offer still stand?

SECRETARY CLINTON: If he will step down, I'll meet him anywhere outside of Syria.
(Laughter.)

QUESTION: What would you say?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I would say – I don't know. I have no idea. I've never met him. But I would hope that it would not be too late to end this, but I see no indication that he's willing to.

QUESTION: Do you see any open path towards a negotiated exit for him?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that is certainly an issue we have all discussed. And in the so-called Geneva communique that we worked on all day, which the Russians have gone back to in saying that it's a good framework for moving toward a transition, as – and we're in agreement as long as it has consequences if the parties – if the Assad regime doesn't perform – that was left open. And we would certainly encourage he and his family to leave. It's not likely that that will happen, from all of the information we have.

QUESTION: You think he'd come here, to Russia?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I don't know. I don't know. That was certainly an issue we discussed early on in this conflict. And the Russians kept saying they didn't want him. And I said, "Well, you basically own him; you better take him." But I don't believe that he's going to leave Syria. I think he's of the mindset that this is an existential struggle for him, his regime, his family. And it's just terrible; it's a tragic, historic setback for Syria.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your time.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, Margaret. Good to see you again.

Conversations on Diplomacy Moderated by Charlie Rose

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Former Secretary of State James A. Baker III

Benjamin Franklin Room

Washington, DC

June 20, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

MR. ROSE: I'm Charlie Rose. Thank you very much for coming this afternoon. This is, as many of you know, a second in a series of conversations with Secretary Clinton and previous secretaries of State. We hope that we will have a chance to do as many secretaries as we can here. And the point of this series is to look at foreign policy in the context of present challenges and options, but also historical lessons and experiences. Our intent is not to create some huge fight. However crafty I am, I am not that good. (Laughter.) But I do believe that two heads are better than one, and especially these two heads.

Secretary Clinton, it has been said that this Administration looks at the Bush 41 model in terms of some of their foreign policy. I think the President has said that publicly, and certainly, I've heard him say that. I think that Secretary Baker has said to me that he has found much to admire in this Administration's foreign policy. He has some quarrels with economic policy, but this is about foreign policy. I hope that we will be able to be – to talk about the idea of diplomacy today. Clearly, we will because I'll ask the questions. (Laughter.) A little bit like Churchill saying, "Yes, you'll be good to him because he'll write that history."

But this is an interesting time, clearly, for diplomacy. And it is worth noting that there are 337 museums for the military and none for diplomacy. And it is time that we understand – and these two people understand it well and practice it brilliantly – the power and the need for diplomacy. It is soft power, but it is also powerful policy and powerful power that can be used. We have seen this most recently with Secretary Clinton in China, the possibilities in a very difficult and challenging time of diplomacy.

I want to begin with this notion: You both came to this building, to State Department, from politics. Is that a good background?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I certainly think so. That may not be surprising for Jim to hear, but it might be for some. There are lots of different routes to this job. And we can look back at our predecessors, the 66 that came before me, and see such accomplished men and then finally women. But I think bringing a political experience to the job, particularly in recent times, has been very beneficial, because everybody has politics. Even authoritarian regimes have their own brand of politics. And understanding what motivates people, what moves them, how to create coalitions, especially in the time that I find myself serving, has been extremely helpful.

MR. ROSE: Now, Secretary Baker, as I say, you were chief of staff, you ran political campaigns, but you also served in a number of positions, including Secretary of Treasury. But you know politics. Is that beneficial?

SECRETARY BAKER: Politics, you say?

MR. ROSE: Yes, sir.

SECRETARY BAKER: Yeah. It's very beneficial. I agree wholeheartedly with what the Secretary said. In fact, I entitled my memoirs about my three and a half years as Secretary of State – I called it the "Politics of Diplomacy." And in there, I said my experience, both as a lawyer, yes, but then in politics, I found grounded me very well for this job, because the job of Secretary of State is quite political. It's very substantive. And I don't mean to suggest that there's a difference there, but it's international politics. It's politics, but it's international politics.

MR. ROSE: You both also – it should be said, you had a very close relationship with President Bush. You had been his campaign manager; you'd been his friend from Texas. You couldn't be closer than the two of you. Your relationship with President Obama was different. They use the term "team of rivals" to describe it. Talk about the notion of the relationship between the Secretary of State and the President.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Jim has eloquently written about this. You have to have the President's confidence. You have to have a sense of a shared mission, an understanding of what's important to the President and the principles and values that he – or someday she – is fighting for. So it is in a different context where someone like Secretary Baker had a very long, close relationship with the first President Bush.

I was a Senate colleague of President Obama's. We ran against each other. I was very surprised when he asked me to be Secretary of State. But it was interesting that the last time this happened, team of rivals, was a senator from New York by the name of Seward who President Lincoln asked to be Secretary of State. And I've spent a lot of time reading about Secretary Seward. And there was a meeting of the minds and a melding of purpose and vision that I feel very comfortable in representing this President and his foreign policy agenda.

SECRETARY BAKER: I agree with all of that. To succeed, I think, as Secretary of State, you need a President that will support you and protect you and defend you, even when you're wrong. (Laughter.) And I had such a President. And it's very important, because everybody in Washington wants a little piece of the foreign policy turf – everybody. And you need a President, when the stories come out in *The Washington Post* that the NSC is running foreign policy, who will pick up the phone and phone you and say, "Hey, Bake. I want you and Susan to come up to Camp David tonight, and we're going to spend the weekend up there." That ends all that kind of stuff. And you need that.

MR. ROSE: Yes. It's (inaudible).

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. That's exactly right.

SECRETARY BAKER: And so it's very – that relationship is critical in my view to the success of a Secretary of State.

SECRETARY CLINTON: In listening to Jim talk, I mean, the more things change, the more they remain the same. There are story themes, there is an appetite for conflict. Henry Kissinger, as he and I discussed when you interviewed us, said he couldn't get over the fact that I wasn't fighting with the National Security Advisor or the Secretary of Defense or you name it. And so you do have to not only work hard to make sure that the relationship with the President is positive and strong and perceived as such, but also to make sure that the whole team functions because you don't want a lot of wasted time and energy.

I mean, the world is moving too fast. There is so much going on, and you have to be given the level of trust and confidence that enable you to go out there and make these decision. We were talking before we came out about what I had to do in China a month ago with negotiating once, negotiating twice, on the blind lawyer dissident. And you have to have people back in Washington who, when the inevitable second guessing and all the rest of it goes on, can say, "Look, we're going to see this through, and it's going to be okay. We're just going to make sure that we're on the same path together." And that happens in every Administration, and the quality of that relationship is determined whether you stay focused and effective or not.

SECRETARY BAKER: And the President can stop all that sniping and second guessing. And that's, of course, what you want. I'm reminded of the fact that in the first few months of our administration way back in 1989, we had a Chinese dissident who came to the U.S. Embassy and sought refuge and asylum, and we had to deal with a guy named Fang Lizhi. And it was almost the same kind of experience that Secretary Clinton had.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And every President says, "Oh, I don't need this." (Laughter.)

SECRETARY BAKER: That's right.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And you just have to navigate through it and make it turn out okay.

SECRETARY BAKER: That's right. (Laughter.)

MR. ROSE: How was it that it turned out okay?

SECRETARY CLINTON: On that particular – well, I think in the case of Chen Guangcheng it was in part because we did the right thing. I mean, it always helps if you believe you're doing the right thing. We did the right thing by giving refuge and medical care to this man who had escaped from a brutal house arrest after an unjust imprisonment. It was something that was in accordance with our values, even though we knew that it was going to be a difficult diplomatic follow-through with the Chinese.

The fact that we have this Strategic and Economic Dialogue that had become very important to us both, both the United States and China, that I was on my way there for our fourth meeting,

had everybody invested in trying to work through whatever the difficulties were. And I had also worked very well and on a lot of challenging issues, not all of which we agreed on, with my counterparts in the Chinese Government, most particularly State Councilor Dai Bingguo. And so we were very frank. I mean, they didn't like it that this man ended up in our Embassy. We stood our ground and said, "Look, this is who we are as Americans. We have a chance to make this better than it would be otherwise; let's work together," which we had to do not once but twice. But at the end, I think it showed a level of confidence and even trust in the good faith of each side that enabled us to work it through.

MR. ROSE: What ought to be our policy towards China today?

SECRETARY BAKER: I think the policy that we should be pursuing is pretty much the policy we are pursuing. I come, of course – I came over here with a Treasury hat on. I'd been Secretary of the Treasury for four years, interrupted by a political campaign. (Laughter.) But one of our big gripes today with China is that they manipulate their currency, and they do. Now, should we call them a manipulator or not? Or would we be better off trying to get over that hurdle quietly through quiet diplomacy and serious diplomacy and strength – strong diplomacy? That's my view of the way we ought to be approaching that.

But with respect to China generally, Charlie, we've – we have a big interest in having the best possible relationship we can with China, and they have a big interest in having the best possible relationship they can with us. There are many areas of common interest: trade, regional security, energy, you name it, a lot of areas where our interests converge. And we should seek to magnify those and emphasize those. But we have areas of differences, too. We got Tibet. We got Taiwan. We got the currency problem. We got some – we got the Iranian –

MR. ROSE: (Inaudible) as opposed to China.

SECRETARY BAKER: -- nuclear issue.

MR. ROSE: Right.

SECRETARY BAKER: No, where we differ, we have to manage those differences and – but continue to work with them. And that's what diplomacy is all about, frankly. I mean, you don't – you have to find a way to manage the differences and magnify the common areas of agreement.

MR. ROSE: Are you hopeful that you'll be able to get them on board with respect to Iran and with respect to Syria?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, with respect to Iran, they are on board. One of the real successes of our diplomatic strategy toward Iran, which was to be willing to engage with them but to keep a very clear pressure track going, is that the Chinese and the Russians are part of a unified negotiating stance that we have presented to the Iranians, most recently in Moscow. I think the Iranians have been surprised. They have expended a certain amount of effort to try to break apart this so-called P-5+1, and they haven't been successful. The Russians and the Chinese have been absolutely clear they don't want to see Iran with a nuclear weapon. They have to see

concrete steps taken by Iran that are in line with Iran's international obligations. And we have said we'll do action for action, but we have to see some willingness on the part of the Iranians to act first.

So I think it took three-plus years, because one of the efforts that we've been engaged in is to make the case that as difficult as it is to put these sanctions on Iran, and particularly to ask countries like China to decrease their crude oil purchases from Iran, the alternatives are much worse. And we've seen China slowly but surely take actions, along with some other countries for whom it was quite difficult – Japan, South Korea, India, et cetera. So on Iran, they are very much with us in the international arena.

MR. ROSE: Will they support an oil embargo?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, absent some action by Iran between now and July 1st, the oil embargo is going into effect. And that's been very clear from the beginning, that we were on this track. I have to certify under American laws whether or not countries are reducing their purchases of crude oil from Iran, and I was able to certify that India was, Japan was, South Korea was. And we think, based on the latest data, that China is also moving in that direction. And thankfully, there's been enough supply in the market that countries have been able to change suppliers.

On Syria, so far they've taken Russia's lead on Syria. But we're working on that every single day as well.

MR. ROSE: Why did they do that? Why do they take Russia's lead?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think both Russia and China have a very strong aversion to interference in internal affairs.

MR. ROSE: Sovereignty issue.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

SECRETARY BAKER: Yeah.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And so for the Russians, we – I was with President Obama in Mexico two days ago. We had a two-hour meeting with President Putin. They're just – they don't want anything to do with it. They find it quite threatening, and basically they reject it out of hand. So anything that smacks of interference for the Russians and for the Chinese, they presume against. There are other reasons, but that's the principal objection that they make.

MR. ROSE: Would coming – both different countries and different points, but they somehow come together on these issues – Syria and with respect to Russia and the role they are playing.

SECRETARY BAKER: Yeah, yeah.

MR. ROSE: And the role that the United States is playing and the role that the region can play. What should we be doing and what is the risk of not doing?

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I'll answer that in just a minute. But first let me say if we're going to have differences with Russia – and we do have some differences with Russia – it seems to me the most important difference we might have is with respect to Iran. And we don't have that now, and that's really important. And I don't think we ought to create a problem with Russia vis-a-vis what we want to do in Iran about their nuclear ambitions as a result of something we might do in Syria. I just think the Iranian issue there is far more important really than how we resolve the Syrian issue.

How should we resolve the Syrian issue? I think we should continue to support a political transition in the government in Syria. But I don't – but I think we ought to support it diplomatically, politically, and economically in every way that we can, but we should be very leery, extremely leery, about being drawn in to any kind of a military confrontation or exercise.

MR. ROSE: Does that include supplying them with arms?

SECRETARY BAKER: That – well, that's a slippery slope. The fact of the matter is a lot of our allies are already supplying them with arms. Okay? It's not something –

MR. ROSE: And our friends in the region.

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I say our allies in the region. Yeah, they're doing it. And it's not something we have to do. I look at Syria and I think why are we not calling for something that we – this is – it may not be the right comparison, but in 1989, when we came into office, the wars in Central America were the holy grail of the left, political left in this country, and the holy grail of the political right in this country. We said if we can take these wars out of domestic politics, we can cure the foreign policy problem, and we did.

How did we do it? We put it to both parties – Daniel Ortega, the hardline, authoritarian dictator, if you will, in Nicaragua, and to Violeta Chamorro, the opposition candidate. We said if you'll hold an election and both agree to abide by the results, that's the way we'll get out of this conundrum. That's what happened. And both of them did agree, finally, to abide by the results. Ortega lost. President Carter was very instrumental in getting him to leave office. Why don't we try something like that in Syria, I mean, and say look, political transition is what we're looking for. Everybody – even the Russians, I think – would have difficulty saying no, we're not going to go for an election, particularly if you let Bashar run. Let him run. Make sure you have a lot of observers in there. Make sure they can't fix the election. Why not try that?

MR. ROSE: Why not try that?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, actually, that is the path that we are trying. And I spoke with Kofi Annan again today. He is working on a political transition roadmap. We are somewhat disadvantaged by the fact that I think Assad still believes he can crush what he considers to be an illegitimate rebellion against his authority and characterizes everyone who opposes him as a

terrorist who is supported by foreign interests. He's not yet at the point where he understands his legitimacy is gone and he is on a downward slope.

The other problem we have is that the opposition has not yet congealed around a figure or even a group that can command the respect and attention internally within Syria as well as internationally. So what we're doing is, number one, putting more economic pressure, because that is important, and the sanctions and trying to cut off the Syrian regime, and send a message to the Syrian business class, which so far has stuck with Assad.

We're also working very hard to try to prop up and better organize the opposition. We've spent a lot of time on that. It still is a work in progress. We are also pushing hard on having Kofi Annan lay down a political transition roadmap and then getting a group of nations, that would include Russia, in a working group to try to sell that to both the Assad regime and to the opposition.

So, I mean, the path forward is exactly as Jim has described it. Getting the people and the interests on that path has been what we've been working on now for several months.

MR. ROSE: Who would be in that group other than the United States, Russia? Who else?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, you would have to have the Arab League because Kofi Annan is a joint envoy of both the UN and the Arab League. You would have to have the permanent members of the Security Council because that's who he represents in his UN role. And you'd have to have the neighbors. You've got to have Turkey involved because of their long border and their very clear interests. But when I spoke with him today, he's going to be making another proposal to the Russians, the Turks, and other interested groups to try to get them to agree on this roadmap and then a meeting, in effect to go public with it, so that we can increase the pressure not only on the Assad regime but on the opposition as well.

MR. ROSE: Is there a role for Iran?

SECRETARY CLINTON: At this point, it would be very difficult for Iran to be initially involved. I mean, I'm a big believer in talking to people when you can and trying to solve problems when you can. But right now, we're focused on dealing with Iran and the nuclear portfolio. That has to be our focus. Iran's always trying to get us to talk about anything else except their nuclear program.

And then we also have the added problem that Iran is not just supporting Assad, they are helping him to devise and execute the very plans that he is following to suppress, oppress the opposition.

SECRETARY BAKER: If you get the – you're going to get the attention of the Russians and the Chinese, in my view, in the Security Council if you come with some sort of a proposal for a political transition that might involve an election, if you're willing to say anybody and everybody can run. That means, of course, you got to make sure that the election is not fixed. But that would put a lot of pressure – the only reason I mention this, it seems to be that would put a lot of pressure on the Russians to support this idea.

With respect to Iran, I agree with the Secretary. This is not the place to involve them. However, I would think there might be a place for them in a group with respect to Afghanistan. They helped us when we first went in there. We talked to them. They were helpful. I've never understood myself why we are doing all the laboring, pulling all the – doing all the labor in Iran, treasure, blood –

MR. ROSE: In Afghanistan.

SECRETARY BAKER: I'm sorry – in Afghanistan – treasure, blood. And yet, every country who's surrounding Afghanistan has a huge interest in a stable Afghanistan. Why don't we see if we – everyone needs to – we're leaving now, and we've said that, and I agree with that. So why don't we say, "Hey, look it here. You all want a stable Afghanistan? Come on in here and help us. Everybody contribute." In that instance, I think we ought to have Iran at the table.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And we agree with that. We are part of a large group of nations, as well as a smaller segment of that. Just last week, my deputy, Bill Burns, was in Kabul. Iran was there. Other countries in the region and further afield were there. Because Jim is absolutely right. I mean, part of what the problem, as we look forward in Central and South Asia, is that, once again, Afghanistan is so strategically located. And in the neighborhood in which it finds itself, there's a lot of interest at work that have to be in some way brought to the table in order to try to have as much stability going forward.

And Iran is at the table. Now, Iran oftentimes is not a constructive player, but we're going to keep them at the table and try to do what we can on behalf of Afghanistan for them to be a more positive force.

MR. ROSE: This question about Iran: My understanding of the Administration's position on containment is that dog will not hunt. Right?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

MR. ROSE: Do you agree with that?

SECRETARY BAKER: I agree with that.

MR. ROSE: Containment will not work.

SECRETARY BAKER: I agree with that. My personal position on that is this: We ought to try every possible avenue we can to see if we can get them to correct their desire and goal of acquiring a nuclear weapon, but we cannot let them acquire that weapon. We are the only country in the world that can stop that. The Israelis, in my opinion, do not have the capability of stopping it. They can delay it. There will also be many, many side effects, all of them adverse, from an Israeli strike. But at the end of the day, if we don't get it done the way the Administration's working on it now – which I totally agree with – then we ought to take them out.

MR. ROSE: Secretary Clinton. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we're working hard. We're working hard.

SECRETARY BAKER: And that's a Republican, I said at the end of the day. The end of the day may be next year. (Laughter.) It will be next year.

MR. ROSE: I'm waiting.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. Look, I think the President has been very clear on this. He has always said all options are on the table. And he means it. He addressed this when he spoke to it earlier in the year.

MR. ROSE: Meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes. And also in public speeches that he's given. Look, I mean, I think Jim and I both would agree that everybody needs to know – most particularly the Iranians – that we are serious that they cannot be allowed to have a nuclear weapon. It's not only about Iran and about Iran's intentions, however once tries to discern them. It's about the arms race that would take place in the region with such unforeseen consequences. Because you name any country with the means, anywhere near Iran that is an Arab country, if Iran has a nuclear weapon – I can absolutely bet on it and know I will win – they will be in the market within hours. And that is going to create a cascade of difficult challenges for us and for Israel and for all of our friends and partners.

So this has such broad consequences. And that's why we've invested an enormous amount in trying to persuade Iran that if – as the Supreme Leader says and issued a fatwa about – it is un-Islamic to have a nuclear weapon, then act upon that edict and demonstrate clearly that Iran will not pursue a nuclear weapon. And we are pushing them in these negotiations to do just that.

MR. ROSE: But as you know, the question is not whether they will have a nuclear weapon, but whether they will have the capacity to quickly have a nuclear weapon.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that is obviously the question, and that is why Jim said at the end of the day, maybe a year. I mean, these kinds of calculations are –

SECRETARY BAKER: It may be more than that.

SECRETARY CLINTON: It may be more than that. They are difficult to make. A lot of countries around the world have what's called breakout capacity.

MR. ROSE: Right.

SECRETARY CLINTON: They have stopped short of it. They have not pursued it. They have found it not to be in their interests or in the interests of regional stability.

MR. ROSE: But do you think that's what they mean and that's what they intend?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that's what we're testing. That's what every meeting with them is about, to try to really probe and see what kinds of commitments we can get out of them. Now, at this point we don't have them, so I can't speak to what they might be if they are ever to be presented. But that's why we have to take this meeting by meeting and pursue it as hard as we can.

SECRETARY BAKER: And the problem is not so much the threat they would represent to us or to Israel or to our allies somewhere in the region. It's the proliferation problem, because it would really then be out of control. And that's the real thing you have to guard, and that's why I would say at the end of the day you just cannot let them have the weapon.

Now, what is – is that breakout time or is that after they make one or after they make three or four, or after you're convinced they have the delivery vehicles? That's all for the military to decide. But at some point you have to say that's simply not going to happen.

MR. ROSE: I think I heard that loud and clear. But you've also suggested that the United States should do it rather than Israel.

SECRETARY BAKER: Absolutely. And the reason I say that is if you look at what Martin Dempsey said not long ago, he said if Israel –

MR. ROSE: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of –

SECRETARY BAKER: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said if Israel hits the Iranian nuclear facilities, we're going to lose a lot of American lives in the region. Many people in the Israeli national security establishment have come out publicly now and questioned their leadership's view that maybe Israel ought to do it. And they say no, Israel shouldn't do it. There are a lot of unanticipated consequences that could follow from that, not least of which is strengthening the hand of the hardliners in Iran. I mean, you don't want to do that. They're having troubles now. The sanctions are not complete yet. We want to squeeze them down more. But they're having an effect. And the government is having some problems, and you don't want to lose all that.

SECRETARY CLINTON: In fact, I mean, what Jim is saying is a really important point, because we know that there is a vigorous debate going on within the leadership decision-making group in Iran. There are those who say look, these sanctions are really biting, we're not making the kind of economic progress we should be making, we don't give up that much by saying we're not going to do a nuclear weapon and having a verifiable regime to demonstrate that.

And then frankly, there are those who are saying the best thing that could happen to us is be attacked by somebody, just bring it on, because that would unify us, it would legitimize the regime. You feel sometimes when you hear analysts and knowledgeable people talking about Iran that they fear so much about the survival of the regime, because deep down it's not a legitimate regime, it doesn't represent the will of the people, it's kind of morphed into kind of a

military theocracy. And therefore an argument is made constantly on the hardline side of the Iranian Government that we're not going to give anything up, and in fact we're going to provoke an attack because then we will be in power for as long as anyone can imagine.

SECRETARY BAKER: And Charlie, let me just explain why I said I don't think the Israelis can do it but we can. The reason I say that is the Israeli Government came to the prior administration, the Bush 43 Administration, and then they asked for overflight rights, they asked for bunker-busting bombs, they asked for in-flight refueling capabilities. And the administration said no, that's not in the national interest of the United States today for you to strike Iran's nuclear facility. My understanding is they made the same request of this Administration. I don't know the answer to that for sure. The Secretary would. But whether they did or not, that's the reason I say if anybody's going to do it, we ought to do it because we have the capability of doing it.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And hopefully we won't get to that. (Laughter.) I mean, that would be, I think –

MR. ROSE: Because you believe there'll be a change of behavior or a change of regime?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No, there's – I'm not going to talk about a change of regime. I see no evidence of that. I think the Iranian people deserve better, but that's for them to try to determine.

MR. ROSE: But there is this question too about Iran, and I want to move to some other issues. Looking back at the time of the protest over the election, do you wish you'd done more? Do you wish you'd been more public, more supportive?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, look, at the time there was a very strong, consistent message coming from within Iran that anything we said would undermine the legitimacy of their opposition. Now –

MR. ROSE: This is from the opposition?

SECRETARY CLINTON: This is from the opposition coming out to us. And one can argue, were they right, were they not right, but at the time it seemed like they had some momentum, they did not want to look like they were acting on behalf of the United States or anybody else. This was indigenous to Iran and to Iranians' discontents. And that made a lot of sense at the time, because the last thing anybody wanted was to give the regime the excuse that they didn't have to respond to the legitimate concerns arising out of that election.

And what we did do, which I think was very value-added, was to work overtime to keep lines of communication open. We found out that social media tools, one in particular, was going to shut down for a long-scheduled rebooting of some sort, and we intervened and said no, because the opposition uses you to communicate, to say where they're going to have demonstrations, to warn people. So we were deeply involved in a lot of public messaging that we thought did not cross the line that the opposition didn't want us to cross. That was our assessment.

MR. ROSE: Let me move to Egypt and I'll come back to some of these other points. What's happening there today, and what is your understanding – and I'll begin with Secretary Baker and then come back – of what's the risk for the United States and what's the risk for the Middle East in terms of where the army is, where the people who created the Arab Spring is, and where the Muslim Brotherhood is?

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I think the risks are quite large, because for some time we've been looking at Egypt as perhaps a textbook success case of how –

MR. ROSE: Of the Arab Spring?

SECRETARY BAKER: Of the Arab Spring. Yeah. Now, people say not an Arab Spring, it's also an Arab Winter, because of what's happening. And there's some, in my view, potential for that to happen.

It is not, as we sit here today, not an unalloyed success, because the military have come in, they've taken power back, and it looks like they're going to keep it. And then we have a question of whether the results of the election are going to be confirmed or observed. There are all these questions coming forward within the last, frankly, last week – week or ten days. So it's a real problem, because if Egypt goes the wrong way, if we lose the Arab – if we lose the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty – and that's possible if the more radical elements in Egypt end up on top after all that's happening now – that would be a very destructive and destabilizing event.

MR. ROSE: That's not, by definition, what necessarily will happen if Morsi becomes the president.

SECRETARY BAKER: No. Not just – not Morsi, but there could be – we don't know who's going – and we don't know whether the president's going to have power or whether the military is going to keep the power.

MR. ROSE: Well, the military suggested it might very well keep it, haven't they?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I mean, Jim is right. We are concerned and we have expressed those concerns. We think that it is imperative that the military fulfill its promise to the Egyptian people to turn power over to the legitimate winner. We don't know yet who's going to be named the winner of the election, but we think that the military has to proceed with its commitments to do so.

And so the actions that they've taken in the last week are clearly troubling. And it's been a fast-moving situation, because we've had Mubarak's serious illness intervene; we don't yet have vote totals coming out; we don't yet know what the military really has meant by these statements and decrees. They've said one set of things publicly, then they've been backtracking to a certain extent.

But our message has been very consistent, that, look, we think, number one, they have to follow through on the democratic process. And by that, we mean, yes, elections that are free and fair and legitimate, whose winner gets to assume the position of authority in the country, but who recognizes that democracy is not about one election, one time. And we have very clear expectations about what we are looking to see from whoever is declared the winner, that it has to be an inclusive democratic process, the rights of all Egyptians – women and men, Muslim and Christian, everyone – has to be respected. They have to have a stake in the future of the democratic experiment in Egypt. The military has to assume an appropriate role, which is not to try to interfere with, dominate, or subvert the constitutional authority. They have to get a constitution written. There's a lot of work ahead of them.

We also believe it is very much in Egypt's interest, while they're facing political turmoil and economic difficulties, to honor the peace treaty with Israel. The last thing they need is to make a decision that would undermine their stability. And furthermore, we think it's important that they reassert law and order over the Sinai, which is becoming a large, lawless area, and that they take seriously the internal threats from extremists and terrorists. So they have a lot ahead of them.

SECRETARY BAKER: Plus, the dissolution of the parliament.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah.

SECRETARY BAKER: I mean, they've just come in and dissolved the elected parliament. How do you put that humpty dumpty back together?

MR. ROSE: But the impression – (laughter) – hard. The impression is that during the time of the revolution that was taking place that the lines between the American and the military was very good and very strong. And does that still exist?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, there certainly is a continuing effort to reach out. And in fact, I know that there are ongoing conversations between our military leaders and their counterparts in Egypt. But the message is the one that I just said. We expect you to support the democratic transition, to recede by turning over authority. And we are watching this unfold, but with some really clear redlines about what we think should occur, based on what the people of Egypt thought they were getting.

One of the stories that will emerge even more in the months ahead is that the people who started the revolution in Tahrir Square decided they wouldn't really get involved in politics. And I remember being there – and this kind of goes back to your very first question – going to Cairo shortly after the success of the revolution, meeting with a large group of these mostly young people. And when I said, "So are you going to form a political party? Are you going to be working on behalf of political change?" They said, "Oh no. We're revolutionaries. We don't do politics."

And I –

MR. ROSE: Exactly.

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- I sat there and I thought that's how revolutions get totally derailed, taken over, undermined. And they now are expressing all kinds of disappointment at the choices they had and the results. But the energy that went in to creating this participatory revolution, giving people a sense of being citizens in a modern Egypt, has to be rekindled because this -- as hard as this has been, this is just the beginning. They are facing so many problems that we could list for an hour that they're going to have deal with. And they have to somehow paint a picture for the Egyptian people about what it's going to take to get the result of this hard-fought change that they've experienced.

MR. ROSE: That's true about every country, isn't it? Whether it's Libya --

SECRETARY CLINTON: It is. Absolutely.

MR. ROSE: -- or Tunisia or Egypt or whatever happens in Syria.

SECRETARY BAKER: Absolutely. We do not know.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Absolutely.

MR. ROSE: We will not know how it shakes out and who the leaders that will come to power will be --

SECRETARY CLINTON: No.

MR. ROSE: -- and what they're ambitions will be to play what role in the world scene.

SECRETARY CLINTON: That's right.

SECRETARY BAKER: That's correct.

SECRETARY CLINTON: In fact, Charlie, we have here what's called the A-100 class. These are our new, up and coming, rising Foreign Service officers who are here taking stock of Jim and me. (Laughter.) And probably a lot of the work that --

MR. ROSE: Those are the ones that look like teenagers?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. They do, don't they? (Laughter.) They do.

SECRETARY BAKER: They're the ones that are teenagers. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. But a lot of the work that is going to have to happen -- because this is a generational project. This is not something that's going to be done in a year or one American administration. This is a generational project. And preparing these young Foreign Service officers for the aftermath of these revolutions, how we manage it, how we try to exercise

influence, as hard as it is because we have to be so sensitive about it, that's really what diplomacy is about. And we're going to be doing that for a long time.

MR. ROSE: I once read where you said it'll take 25 years before we will really know how this thing will shake out and the influence it'll have over the long term.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right. But we shouldn't be surprised by that. I do think it's important, as Americans, that we kind of remember our own beginnings. And shaping our country did not happen overnight. We had a constitution written that didn't include me, didn't include African American slaves. It didn't include men – white men who didn't own property. I mean, we had a lot of changes that we had to do for ourselves to realize the vision of our founders. But we had a vision. And that is what is so often lacking in a lot of these countries. They know what they're against, but they can't quite agree on what they're for.

And so part of the challenge that they face, which we try to set an example for, is what does democracy really mean? How do you really institutionalize it? How do you protect human rights? How do you build an independent judiciary? All of those pieces which, frankly, took us a while. So we need a little humility as we approach this.

MR. ROSE: How would you like to see the United States over the next decade or two play a role in the region? And how can it play a role that will be positive, leading to the kinds of governments that we would hope would be –

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I would hope that the United States –

MR. ROSE: -- new but different?

SECRETARY BAKER: -- would continue to play a leadership role not just in that region but in the world as a whole because I believe that when the United States is involved abroad, we are involved for good. We don't look – we're not looking to get into anybody's sandbox or take anybody's stuff. We have been – when we involve ourselves internationally, for the most part we have been a force for good. So I think the United States needs to lead. We need to be involved. I totally agree with the Secretary, we're not going to know how these things turn out in the Arab Spring for a long time. And some of them may turn out very badly, actually. It's possible. You might get militant, radical Islamists taking over in some of these countries. On the other hand, you may – some of them may very well succeed. And I hope they will, and think they will. But I think it's really important that the United States be involved in the world. And part of that involvement is diplomacy. We're here today to support the Diplomacy Center because, as you said in your opening, we've got a military museums and centers; we don't have but – we only have one diplomacy. Diplomacy is a very important part of our international relationship.

MR. ROSE: But some – two things. Number one, first on the idea of diplomacy versus military, I mean, some people – and the late Richard Holbrooke used to make this point; he worried that the military was shaping the world, especially in Afghanistan, and to the exclusion of diplomacy. Do you have some concerns about that?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I wouldn't say to the exclusion, but certainly –

MR. ROSE: An imbalance, perhaps.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think that by most definitions, the power, the presence, the resources of the military are quite disproportionate to what we can field through the State Department and USAID. But what has happened in the last decade in Iraq and in Afghanistan has been quite important. The growing appreciation and cooperation between our military, our diplomats, and our development experts – I call it the three Ds of foreign policy – and both Bob Gates and Leon Panetta were real champions of this because they recognized that if we weren't working as an American team, we were going to get out of balance. And it's not been an easy relationship because there are different cultures, different expectations, about what we're working for, what kind of result we're seeking. But we've learned to not just coexist but cooperate in the field, on the ground.

I give out heroism awards. I've given out about 30 of them the last three and a half years. They've gone to diplomats who've saved soldiers' lives in PRTs in Iraq, diplomats and development experts who literally have been on the front lines in Afghanistan. So we're shaping an expeditionary diplomacy for the 21st century that has to work hand-in-hand with the military.

SECRETARY BAKER: Your foreign policy has got to be supported strongly by the military, but it's got to have a diplomatic component, a very important diplomatic component. I've always said that diplomacy is best practiced with a male fist. That's where the military comes in. But you said something about the last 10 years. Well, the last 10 years we've fought two very long and expensive wars. So it's natural, I think, that the military side of the equation would be emphasized.

I happen to believe – maybe I'm wearing my Treasury hat now – I happen to believe the American people are tired of wars. I know one thing: We're broke. We can't afford them anymore. We can't afford a lot of things. And the biggest threat facing this country today is not some threat from outside. It's not Iran. It's not nuclear weapons or anything else. It's our economic –

MR. ROSE: We've got to get our economic house in order.

SECRETARY BAKER: We'd better damn well get our economic house in order because the strength of our nation has always depended upon our economy. You can't be strong politically, militarily, or diplomatically if you're not strong economically.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, amen to that because – (laughter) – I've had to go around the world the last three and a half years reassuring many leaders, both in the governments and business sectors of a lot of countries, that the United States was moving forward economically, that we were not ceding our leadership position; we were as present and as powerful as ever, but we recognized that we had to put our economic house in order.

I was in Hong Kong during the debt ceiling debate, and all of these billionaire moguls were at this event lining up and with real anxiety in their faces, asking me whether the United States of America was going to default on its debt. And I said oh, no. Then – (laughter) – had to hope that people were listening.

So yes, I mean, if we don't get our economic house in order – and obviously, there are perhaps some differences about how to do it. But when Secretary Baker was Secretary of the Treasury, when President Bush 41 were in office, when my husband was in office, we actually compromised. I know that some believe that's a word that has been banished from the Washington vocabulary, but I'm also spending a lot of time explaining to people in new democracies that democracy is about compromise. By definition, you don't think you have all the truth all the time. And people of good faith of different perspectives or different parties have to come together and hammer out these compromises. And so, of course we've got to get back into the political work of rolling our sleeves up and solving these problems.

MR. ROSE: She's singing your hymn.

SECRETARY BAKER: I don't disagree with that at all. (Laughter.) No, you know that. No, siree.

MR. ROSE: Go ahead.

SECRETARY BAKER: On the other hand, I hate to tell you this, but based on my political experience and my public service experience, it ain't going to happen till after November. (Laughter.)

MR. ROSE: All right.

SECRETARY BAKER: Why haven't you asked us about Pakistan?

MR. ROSE: I'm coming to Pakistan. (Laughter.) As fast as I can.

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, you ask her. Ask her that. (Laughter.)

MR. ROSE: Let me ask, before I get to Pakistan, this point. She has said before that America cannot solve all the world's problems.

SECRETARY BAKER: Absolutely.

MR. ROSE: But no problem can be solved without American involvement. Do you share that?

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I think – I said a minute ago I think America has to lead, because when we lead, we usually see good results. And we're a force for good when we're out there leading. I wouldn't say that no problem can be solved without American participation, but it's hard to think of one. (Laughter.) It really is.

MR. ROSE: All right. So how do you assess what the state of our relationship with Pakistan, before I come back to the Secretary?

SECRETARY BAKER: I think it's terrible. And I think it's really sad, because for the duration of the Cold War they were our ally, and India was the ally of the Soviet Union, and now all of that is changed. But the relationship is very problematic in my view. It's a tough job. I'm glad I'm not sitting there trying to deal with the Pakistani relationship. And I think we need to maintain a relationship with them. A lot of people are saying cut off all their aid, fire them and so forth. I think we need to maintain a relationship with them because they're a nuclear power and because it's really important that we not see nuclear conflagration in the subcontinent. And we don't want to see any more proliferation than we've seen from Pakistan.

MR. ROSE: A lot of bad people –

SECRETARY BAKER: But guess what? They've been a very problematic ally. They really have. And we need to –

MR. ROSE: You mean by things like ISI and their activities?

SECRETARY BAKER: Yeah. And the proliferation that took place under Khan and the fact the Obama – Osama was living there in Abbottabad for all that time. And don't tell me they didn't know that. And the fact that they've now thrown this doctor in jail for 33 years who helped us find him. All of these – and they want to charge us \$5,000 per truck. I mean, come on –

MR. ROSE: I'll make this easy for you. What would a President Jim Baker do?

SECRETARY BAKER: I think I might do what I did when I was Secretary of State sitting in this office one floor down. The first month I was here, one of the assistant secretaries came in and said, "Mr. Secretary, you need to sign this." I said, "What is it?" He said, "It's a certification that Pakistan is not developing a nuclear weapon." I said, "Well, they are, aren't they?" And they said, "Yes." (Laughter.) And like the greenhorn I was, I signed it. (Laughter.)

And the next year, at the same week, same guy came in. "Mr. Secretary, you need to sign this." I said, "What is it?" "It's the certification required under the Pressler Amendment that Pakistan is not developing a nuclear weapon." I said, "Well, they are, aren't they?" He said, "Yes, they are." And I said, "Well, why do I have to sign it?" He said, "Because the White House wants it." And I said, "Well, you take it over to the White House and tell them to sign it." (Laughter.) And I didn't sign it. And guess what, we cut off our aid.

Okay. Now, at some point we need to seriously think about doing that. We need to get their attention.

MR. ROSE: But I thought you just said you would not cut off their aid. Are you now saying that we –

SECRETARY BAKER: I said we need to maintain a relationship with them, but we need to get their attention. Okay? We shouldn't break the relationship right now and sever the relationship totally, but we need to get their attention. And I'm very sympathetic to the people on the Hill who are saying wait a minute, we're funneling – we're broke, we're giving taxpayer money to this country which is not treating us right.

MR. ROSE: So there. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well –

SECRETARY BAKER: That's not fair to ask her that. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: No, look, I think that our relationship with Pakistan has been challenging for a long time. Some of it is of our own making. There's a lot of concern looking back. We did a great job in getting rid of the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan. But I think a lot of us – and Bob Gates has said this – looking back now, perhaps we should have been more involved in the aftermath of what was going to happen to the Pakistanis. They had embraced a kind of jihadi mentality in part to stimulate fighters both from the outside and within Afghanistan.

So we are living with a country that has a lot of difficult issues both for themselves and then for us and others. But here's what I would say. First of all, I completely agree it is not in our interests to cut off our relationship. It is in our interest to try to better direct and manage that relationship, and there are several things that we're asking the Pakistanis to do more of and better. Number one, they've got to do more about the safe havens inside their own country. I mean, everybody knows that the Taliban's momentum has been reversed, territory has been taken back, the Afghan Security Forces are performing much better, but the extremists have an ace in the hole. They just cross the border; they get direction and funding and fighters, and they go back across the border.

And what we've said to the Pakistanis is look, if there were ever an argument in the past for your policy of hedging against Afghanistan by supporting the Haqqani Network or the Afghan Taliban or the LET against India, those days are over. Because that's like the guy who keeps poisonous snakes in his backyard convinced they'll only attack his neighbors. That is not what is happening inside Pakistan. They are losing sovereignty. They have large areas that are ungoverned. They've had a rash of terrible attacks. More than 30,000 Pakistanis have been killed in the last decade. They talk a lot about sovereignty. Well, the first job of any sovereign nation is to protect your own people and secure your own borders. And therefore that's what they should be doing, and by doing so they would help themselves first and foremost, help the Afghans, help us, and others.

Secondly, they have to be willing to recognize that as we withdraw from Afghanistan, it is in their interest to have a strong, stable Afghan Government that only can come from being part of the solution, being at that table, as we were discussing earlier, to try to help with Afghanistan's economic and political and security development, rather than doing everything possible to try to undermine it.

So these are big issues that they have to come to grips with, and that's not even mentioning the need to prevent nuclear proliferation or a nuclear incident that could occur because of the problems within their own system.

MR. ROSE: For the historical record, you believe they knew that Usama bin Ladin was there?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We have never been able to prove that anyone at the upper levels knew that. I said when I first went to Pakistan as Secretary in 2009 that I found it impossible to believe that somebody in their government didn't know where he was – I still believe that – and that he took up residence and built this huge compound in a military garrison town. But we – to be fair, we have no evidence that anybody at the upper levels – and certainly if you talk about the civilian government, because the other goal that we have is to try to strengthen democracy and a civilian government inside Pakistan. And I have no reason to believe that the civilian

government knew anything. So whether – who was in what level of responsibility in the military or the ISI, whether they were active or retired, because we do know that there are links to retired members, we've never been able to close that loop.

SECRETARY BAKER: And at the very least, they ought to stop double-dealing us.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah, at the very least. And –

MR. ROSE: And you ought to threaten them with removing aid in order to use that leverage to get them to stop?

SECRETARY BAKER: Well, I'm not sure we give them enough that that's going to make them stop. But they need to know that we're upset about this. They ought to stop double-dealing.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. And they should release Dr. Afridi.

SECRETARY BAKER: Absolutely, they ought to release him.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Which is something that is so unnecessary and gratuitous on their part. This man was an international terrorist. The Pakistanis for years claimed he was their enemy as well as ours. And my argument to them is that this man contributed to ending the al-Qaida leadership that was in their country, and they shouldn't treat him like a criminal.

MR. ROSE: There are so many issues that we could have talked about – international terrorism and how it's moving, where it's moving, whether it's Yemen or other kinds of places. It just suggests that the role of Secretary of State in this country continues to be one in which you are just juggling a thousand balls all at the same time.

I want to thank Secretary Baker for coming up from Texas and sharing your ideas and your opinions with us, as we have done today.

SECRETARY BAKER: Thank you.

MR. ROSE: We hope that other Secretaries will be here, and to hear people at the top of American Government who've had important roles and to take advantage of their own experience, their history, and to funnel that through a consideration of the challenge that faces Secretary Clinton every day. So thank both of you for this time. (Applause.)

Interview With Margaret Brennan of CBS

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Jerusalem

July 16, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you for making time on a busy day. It seems Bashar al-Assad has the reserves to go on fighting. What is the end game?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think, Margaret, the end game is starting, because with the increasing pace of defections, both military and civilian, with the fighting moving into and around Damascus, with the violence increasing, with the pressure mounting on the Assad regime, it's only a matter of time. I wish it were sooner instead of later, because every day that goes by more innocent people are killed. But there's no doubt in my mind that this regime is at the beginning of what will be a painful end, unless they cooperate with the international community to assist in a managed transition that keeps the institutions of the Syrian state intact, which ceases the violence, saves lives, and moves to a transition that will lead to elections and a new future for the Syrian people.

QUESTION: Would you meet with Bashar al-Assad?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, certainly we are prepared to do anything to assist the transition, but we're strongly supporting Kofi Annan, who, as you know, is the Joint Envoy of both the UN and the Arab League. He's in Moscow today. So we're giving him our full support. But I have attended every meeting that was held at my level to do as much as we could to move the international community and to send a clear, unmistakable message to Assad and to the opposition that we expect the opposition to put the interests of the Syrian people first and be prepared to participate in a transition.

QUESTION: Is there a group within the opposition that's emerging that you would feel confident in taking over if Bashar exits?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, the real core of the opposition is not outside Syria, which are the people that we largely meet with, but the people inside Syria. So at this point, we cannot tell you with any certainty who the people inside Syria would select to be their representatives. But if it were to come such a moment, we'd be prepared to back those choices, assuming they truly represent the will of the Syrian people.

QUESTION: Well, how is the U.S. supplying the rebels at this point?

SECRETARY CLINTON: With nonlethal assistance, which is what we said we would do, communications, medical supplies, the kinds of things that were in such desperate short supply to help people organize and protect themselves from the onslaught of the government's full barrage against them.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

QUESTION: What would make you change the type of support?

SECRETARY CLINTON: At this point, nothing. We are focused on doing what we think is appropriate for us to do. We don't want to further militarize the conflict. We don't want to support, either directly or indirectly, the arming of people who could perhaps not use those weapons in a way we would prefer. They seem to be getting their hands on enough weapons. It's not weapons, it's will that we're trying to engender between both the government and the opposition to cease the violence and work toward a transition that leads to a democratic future.

QUESTION: Now, you mentioned Kofi Annan is in Moscow. By his own admission, his plan thus far has not been successful in holding a ceasefire and really moving anything forward. At what point do you change strategy?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think he is very committed to pushing forward on this track for two reasons. First, the mission of observers that has been in Syria, which by all accounts has provided at least reliable reporting about what was happening in various of the conflict zones, is coming up for renewal on July 18th, and he's looking to give his best advice to the Security Council.

Secondly, we do believe that we've moved the international consensus to the document that we produced out of Geneva under his leadership, calling for a transition governing body with full governing authority to manage the government and the transition to democracy. What we haven't been able to do with the Russians and the Chinese is to get agreement on how exactly that would happen. That's what he's trying to do inside Moscow. We believe additional pressure through a Security Council resolution, a Chapter 7 resolution, imposing very tough sanctions on Assad and the people around him would give us more leverage to accomplish that.

QUESTION: When you leave office in January, if Assad is still in power, will you walk away believing that this was the right strategy, to stay the course with this?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I don't know what other strategy anybody is suggesting, because unless you have Security Council support for any other action, I don't think any country believes that it should act unilaterally in such a complex, dangerous situation. Certainly the countries along the border of Syria that stand to be affected by any spillover of violence are extremely worried about any unilateral kind of action.

So I know people share my deep frustration and outrage at what's going on inside Syria, but my job is not just to express outrage. My job is to try to figure out what can be done that would be effective. And sometimes a situation does not lend itself to an answer that is immediately satisfying. That's just the way diplomacy and life happen to be. So I'm very confident we've done everything we can do and will continue to do everything possible to try to bring this terrible situation to as early an end as possible.

QUESTION: Can you give me a sense of what the effect of what's going on in Syria has been on the surrounding countries? I mean, how much is it shaking stability here? And what is Iran's role?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Iran is playing a major role. We often talk about wanting to get Russia and China on board because they're permanent members of the Security Council. But the real player supporting Syria is Iran and their proxy, Hezbollah. They're the ones who are, day in and day out, providing cover, support, financing, weapons, military advice to Assad, to the army, to the regime. And it's just another example of the malicious role that Iran plays in the world, promoting terrorism, destabilizing its neighbors, pursuing nuclear enrichment, with the likelihood that it could be moved to have a nuclear weapon unless they are stopped. So Iran plays a very malign role. There's no doubt about that.

And that, of course, adds to the effects of the violence. We've seen Turkey have some difficult situations on their border. They have received thousands of refugees. Jordan has received tens of thousands of refugees. So has Lebanon. You look at the region and beyond, it could be quite destabilizing. So far, the effects have been somewhat contained, but it's another reason why you don't want to spread the violence and the conflict, because there's no way to keep it contained within the borders of Syria.

QUESTION: And lastly, how did you feel when you were in Egypt and you saw the protests that were attacks in many ways on America, personal? What did you think?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'm pretty used to this by now. I've been in politics and around my own country and the world for many, many years. And protest is part of people expressing themselves. They had a point of view. I happen to think they were wrong in their assumptions and their conclusions, but they have a right to express themselves.

QUESTION: All right, Madam Secretary, thank you so much for your time.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, Margaret.

QUESTION: I appreciate it.

###

Remarks With Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe After Their Meeting

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

July 24, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good morning. It's a great personal pleasure for me to have this opportunity to welcome the Prime Minister of Haiti. Prime Minister Lamothe is someone who comes to this job on behalf of his country with a lot of private sector experience, a lot of commitment. And we are delighted to be working with you.

As some of you know, when I came into office as Secretary, I made Haiti a foreign policy priority and committed to working to change the way that we partnered with Haiti, moving from working in Haiti to working with Haiti. And in the 30 months – actually, more than that, because we started before the earthquake. And then once the earthquake happened, we scrambled to make sure we were being a good partner in helping Haiti recover from such devastation, but at the same time, working with them to help build a firm foundation for more prosperity and stability.

So today, the Prime Minister and I had a chance to take stock of what we have accomplished together, along with Haiti's other international supporters, and to discuss the way forward. Haiti is working very hard to overcome extreme poverty, very, very high unemployment, the devastating natural disaster, and so much more. Some of these challenges existed before the earthquake, but they were exacerbated by the disaster. And while we want to highlight the progress we've made together, we cannot ignore what more lies ahead in terms of the challenges facing Haiti and its leaders. We have focused our work in four critical areas: agriculture, healthcare, infrastructure, and the rule of law.

Through our Feed the Future Initiative, we've helped nearly 10,000 farmers access improved seeds, fertilizer, and introduce new techniques for better productivity. And for those farmers, production has already increased. Rice yields have more than doubled; corn yields have more than quadrupled. Our goal is to help 100,000 farmers over the next few years.

Working with Haiti and its partners in the health sector, we have had to work hard and have succeeded in greatly reducing the fatality rate of the cholera epidemic from 9 percent to just over 1 percent. But we know that the only way to stop cholera long term is through improved water and sanitation. So we're working with the Inter-American Development Bank and other donors on water, sanitation, and hygiene programs. And we're working to upgrade health clinics in Haiti and to renovate the general hospital in Port-au-Prince in partnership with France.

In the infrastructure sector, we've removed more than two million cubic meters of rubble. We've worked with the Haitian Government to help return more than one million internally displaced persons to temporary shelters and safer homes. We're also working hard with our Haitian

partners to build up Haiti's economy, building infrastructure that will expand and diversify the economic base.

In northern Haiti, the new Caracol Industrial Park is a landmark project that captures an integrated, sustainable approach to economic development. The park is drawing companies and will create more than 20,000 new jobs for Haitians. The first factory in the park has already begun operations; a second tenant has just signed up. Construction is underway on a new settlement in the area with more than 1,200 homes designed to withstand hurricanes and earthquakes, each with electricity, potable water, and flush sanitation.

And finally, in the rule of law sector the international community has provided critical support during Haiti's elections for president and parliament – and we have the president of the senate here with us today – to ensure that the votes of the people of Haiti are counted. President Martelly and the Prime Minister and the parliament are demonstrating real leadership in making these reforms. The government has successfully stood up the superior judiciary council, making this government the first with all three branches functioning since 1987.

And today, the Prime Minister and I discussed the importance of the upcoming elections for local officials and the senate. And we talked about the continued need for police reform, border security, judicial reform, and the other important elements of stability that Haiti is committed to. Haitians have been in the lead at each step. This is something I believe in very strongly, that in the 21st century, country ownership, country priorities, country agenda setting, is absolutely essential. The United States can be helpful, but what's really important is building the capacity of the Haitian Government and the Haitian society so they can have the means and the experience and the expertise to solve their own problems.

As I said to the Prime Minister, as I've said many times, Haitians are among the most creative, most vital, most hardworking people in the world. We have benefited so greatly from Haitian Americans in our country as many other countries have as well. Haiti has also, unfortunately, been the leading country in the world for brain drain. More Haitian college graduates have left Haiti, per capita, than any other country in the world. When you think of the talent that Haiti has produced that benefits us and others, what we want to do is make it possible for any bright, young, ambitious Haitian to stay home and to build his or her country. And we are excited by the progress we're making. We are clear-eyed about the challenges we face, but we look forward to a future where every single Haitian has a chance to live up to his or her God-given potential in the country they are from and love.

So Prime Minister, personally, I want to thank you for what you are doing with your leadership to bring that day closer.

PRIME MINISTER LAMOTHE: Thank you very much, Madam Secretary. And I want to thank you for your leadership, the leadership that you've shown into promoting Haiti, and not only for the leadership, but for the love also that you've shown toward the Haitian people, the compassion that the United States is showing toward Haiti, and the support that the U.S. is giving to Haiti is greatly appreciated.

My office, my – the Prime Minister's office, the President is deeply touched also by the appreciation. The respect that you give to Haitians is very important to us. The respect that we get from you, from your government, will go a long way and has. Of course, we're celebrating 150 years of relationship when President Abraham Lincoln recognized the independence of Haiti and Haitians, and we just celebrated on the 12th of July, and we're very happy about that and very proud of that.

The U.S. is doing a lot of good things in Haiti. The Northern Industrial Park is a development model that we want to replicate and that we want to support. The unemployment rate, as you well said, Madam Secretary, is at 52 percent. Fifty-two percent of the Haitian people are looking for jobs and are not finding the opportunities for the job, and when Haitians are given the opportunities, they succeed. The Northern Industrial Park will give, as you said, 20,000 jobs, direct jobs. But out of the direct jobs in Haiti, you get a (inaudible) of 10 to 20 percent. That means over 1 to 200,000 people will benefit from that park. That's why it's important to not only promote the park, but seek additional tenants and improve the capacity of that park to make it a big success. And once it's inaugurated in October – and we're looking forward to your visit – we assure that the rest of the world will see what us Haitians see, which is a success story.

We have – we've committed – the Haitian Government – the new Haitian Government is committed to improving the fight against corruption, which we've made as our number one priority – education, fight against extreme poverty. Too many Haitians are living in difficult circumstances with less than a dollar a day. We're thinking about them, and we're coming up with programs – social protection programs to assist them in the plight of a better life.

So I want to take this opportunity and the platform to thank also President Clinton for all the dedication and hard work and visits, and tripping in helicopters into the different parts to showcase what Haiti has that's good, and to show that Haiti can be in the headlines for good things, not only bad things. And President Clinton has been a champion for that, and you, Madam Secretary, have also been on the forefront of promoting Haiti, and we thank you for that.

MS. NULAND: We'll take three today. We'll start with CBS, Cami McCormick.

QUESTION: Good morning, Madam Secretary. I wanted to ask you about the violence today in Aleppo in Syria. It's been described as combat, fierce fighting. This no longer seems to be just a case of the regime oppressing civilians. It seems to be all-out war. What realistically can be done at this moment to stop the fighting and bring about a political solution? Is that even possible right now considering the conditions there?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, we are well aware that the pace of events is accelerating inside Syria. Over the weekend, one of the opposition's military leaders announced that they would be engaged in all out – an all-out effort to take over Aleppo, which, as you know, is the second largest city in Syria.

So what we are trying to do with our likeminded friends is to continue pressuring the regime, continue pushing for humanitarian relief, because the flow of refugees is increasing. We obviously would have preferred doing all of this under a UN umbrella. Unfortunately, those who

are still supporting Assad undermined Security Council action. Russia and China exercised their third double veto. And so we are working outside of the UN Security Council to send a clear message of support for the opposition. We are, as I've announced before, providing nonlethal assistance. We have every reason to believe this will be important in terms of communication, principally, but also medical support. We are also sending a very clear message about the international community's rejection of any effort by the Assad regime to use chemical weapons or other weapons of mass destruction.

And we have to work closely with the opposition because more and more territory is being taken, and it will eventually result in a safe haven inside Syria, which will then provide a base for further actions by the opposition. And so the opposition has to be prepared. They have to start working on interim governing entities. They have to commit to protecting the rights of all Syrians – every group of Syrians. They have to set up humanitarian response efforts that we can also support. They've got to safeguard the chemical and biological weapons that we know the Syrian regime has.

And there's a lot to be done, so we're working across many of these important pillars of a transition that is inevitable. It would be better if it happened sooner – both because fewer people would die or be injured, but also because it would perhaps prevent sectarian retribution and other kinds of breakdown in stability.

So I think it's important to look at these day-after issues, and that's what we are trying to do. And we want to see a democratic, peaceful, pluralistic Syria and have that country demonstrate a commitment to that kind of future, but we know we have some hard times ahead of us.

MS. NULAND: Next question from the Haitian side. Flory Anne Isaac, TNH.

QUESTION: (Via interpreter) Good morning, Madam Secretary, Mr. Prime Minister. My question is mainly directed to my fellow citizens. My question is regarding a very important issue for them, namely the temporary protection status – TPS. I was wondering if you have any good news to announce in that regard. Do you have any good news to announce to my fellow citizens on this measure taken by the Obama Administration?

And secondly, Madam Secretary, I have question for you. You have visited more than 100 countries in the course of your time as Secretary of State. Does that make you a new person, and what lessons have you drawn from all that travel?

PRIME MINISTER LAMOTHE: In that – the TP –

SECRETARY CLINTON: The TPS. Yeah, yeah.

PRIME MINISTER LAMOTHE: The TPS.

SECRETARY CLINTON: As you know, we granted TPS; we are watching this very closely. It is a matter that the Obama Administration takes very seriously. There's no new news to report, but there is a very vigorous effort that we are engaged in to ensure that the Haitian people are not

put at a disadvantage going forward. But that is still in the process of being worked through. As you know, I don't get the final decision on this. That's elsewhere in our government. But we are well-aware of the burdens that any other decision at this time would pose.

With respect to your question, which is really an intriguing one that I haven't been able to think enough about, I have been very honored to represent the United States now in so many places around the world. And what I see and what I hope to convey is how in many ways there is an opportunity for progress for people that has not been readily available before. We know so much more about what works, and we have learned many lessons.

I was telling the Prime Minister that there are countries that have been through terrible experiences – Rwanda, for example – that are now making good domestic decisions to help their people. And the fight against corruption is a universal fight. The fight for greater employment and economic opportunity is a universal fight. The fight to improve government and services and to have the revenues obtained in an honest way is a universal challenge.

So much of what Haiti is doing now I know can work, because I have seen that. And as the Prime Minister kindly said, my husband and I have a very big place in our hearts for Haiti and we want to see Haiti succeed. But what it comes down to is good leadership and responsible citizenship. First, you have to have good leaders who are leading in the right way, who represent the will of their people, who are prepared to make difficult decisions. But then you also have to have responsible citizens who understand change is hard – it does not happen overnight – and who are prepared to do their part.

So I've seen successes and failures, and I am very optimistic that Haiti is in the success category. Do you want to add anything, Prime Minister?

PRIME MINISTER LAMOTHE: We are committed to doing the right thing. Haiti's government in the past have made a lot of bad decisions as well about governance that created a situation where Haiti depends on international assistance for just about everything. Today, we're making decisions away from that. We are building our capacity to collect our own revenues, increase the tax revenues, increase the custom duty revenue, decrease spending on energy subsidies to increase, again, government revenues. So we are focusing on the revenue side, and the government is putting together a comprehensive energy policy that will give electricity throughout the island and distribution of the electricity to everybody, just like what happened in the phone system, where 20 years ago it was very difficult to get a telephone line. Today, over 5 million Haitians have a phone. Businesses have increased, and doing business has been easier because of that. Today is the same case for the energy. We are dedicated and we are committed to providing electricity all over the country and prepaid meters so that everybody has access to the electricity.

And of course, we are thinking of the voiceless, those that don't have the opportunity to ever speak, the most vulnerable ones, in a very aggressive anti-poverty strategy that currently we have a program that's called Dear Little Mother that affects 100,000 – that positively impacts 100,000 moms in Haiti in a conditional cash transfer, so they get a cash transfer every month so long as their child is and remains in school. And after six months, the child graduates but the child has to

be vaccinated to stay in the program. So it (inaudible) good behavior and child attendance in school.

We are also working on social protection programs like school canteens. We are trying to increase working with AID to increase the number of children that are getting a meal every day. So basic policies but that go a long way into assisting those who need it the most.

MS. NULAND: Last one today. Arshad Mohammed from Reuters.

QUESTION: Secretary Clinton, another question on Syria. In your remarks at the Holocaust Museum this morning, you said that the Administration is now doing more to assist the opposition. You mentioned just now communications and medical assistance. What exactly additionally are you doing? Does it include the provision of intelligence? Does it include helping them mount attacks or defend themselves?

Secondly, you said that it would be unfortunate if Assad and his circle were to conclude that this is an existential struggle. From the outside, it certainly does look like a life-and-death struggle. What exactly did you mean by that? I suppose one possibility might be that you want to send a signal to the Sunni majority that if they prevail, they should not engage in sectarian violence afterwards; there shouldn't be score settling. I suppose another possibility is you're trying to signal to Assad and his inner circle there's still a way out of this for them. But what exactly were you thinking of with that remark?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, those are two good options, Arshad. I would associate myself with your comments. I think that we do believe that it is not too late for the Assad regime to commence with planning for a transition, to find a way that ends the violence by beginning the kind of serious discussions that have not occurred to date. We think it's very important that the opposition fighters, as they get better organized and expand their presence more broadly, send a message that this is for the benefit of all Syrians, not for any group, not engage in any reprisals and retribution that could lead to even greater violence than currently is taking place.

We think it's important to better coordinate the work that is going on in the region, especially with the increasing refugee flows, and we are intently focused on that, working with Jordan and Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq; making it clear to all of those who are helping to see an end to this conflict that everybody needs to express the same views about what we want to see next; that no one should be seeking advantage to the detriment of anyone else inside of Syria.

So when I say that – we obviously spent a good amount of time working to find a way that Russia and China could move forward with us in the Security Council. That is on the far backburner right now. So when I say we are doing more, we have moved our efforts into other arenas and with other partners. We still would like to see the Security Council act because we think it would be to the – certainly, to the benefit of the people of Syria, but also to the credit of the Security Council. But if that's not in the cards for the foreseeable future, then we will intensify our efforts with the Arab League, with the neighbors, with the Friends of Syria, with the justice and accountability unit we're starting, with the UN Commission of Inquiry, with the

Sanctions Working Group, with all the other elements that are not affected by the failure to act in the Security Council, and that's what we're doing.

QUESTION: Does that include intelligence or military assistance of any sort, even if nonlethal?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we are certainly providing communications that we know is going to people within Syria so that they can be better organized to protect themselves against the continuing assault of their own government.

Thank you all.

Press Availability on the London Conference

Press Availability

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Foreign Commonwealth Office

London, United Kingdom

February 23, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good evening. And I want to begin by thanking the prime minister and the foreign secretary for hosting us. This has been a busy and quite substantive day, and I highly congratulate the government for making this conference one that we all felt at the end of it had been worthwhile and hopeful that we're going to be able to continue our efforts successfully. Before taking your questions, I want to touch briefly on a few highlights, both from the conference and from other meetings that I have been holding up until about 10 minutes ago. I'll begin with Somalia. Today's conference coincided with the halfway point of the roadmap to end the transition in Somalia, which spells out the steps for building a stable government after decades of erratic rule. On August 20th of 2012, the Transitional Federal Government's mandate expires, and the international community has been clear that we do not support another extension. It is time to move forward to a more stable and unified era for the Somali people.

Today, the international community and Somali political leaders discussed what needs to happen next, in particular, the steps Somalis themselves agreed to in December: convening an assembly to approve a constitution, forming a new parliament, and electing a president and speaker. We also addressed the security dimension, from piracy to al-Shabaab. As the AU mission and the Somali national security force expand control of territory – and just yesterday, as you know, al-Shabaab lost control of a key southwestern city – we must all keep al-Shabaab on the run. That means making additional financial and training contributions to AMISOM as the United States continues to do, and implementing the Security Council's ban on imports of Somali charcoal. Al-Shabaab's announcement recently that it has joined al-Qaida proves yet again it is not on the side of peace, stability, or the Somali people. Negotiating with al-Shabaab would be the wrong path. But the United States will engage with Somalis who denounce al-Shabaab's leadership and embrace the political roadmap and the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Somalis.

Today, I announced the United States is providing an additional \$64 million in humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa, bringing our total emergency assistance, since 2011, up to more than \$934 million, including more than 211 million for Somalia alone. And looking ahead, as the security and political situation improves in Somalia, the United States will consider a more permanent, diplomatic presence there.

Now turning to Syria, first let me say that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Marie Colvin and Remy Ochlik, the two journalists killed this week, and with the thousands of families of Syrians who have been killed and wounded in the brutal onslaught that the Assad regime continues to rain down on their own people.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Today, I had a chance to meet with a number of key partners and allies in preparation for tomorrow's Friends of Syria conference in Tunis. This meeting comes on the heels of the overwhelming vote in the UN General Assembly, which condemned the Assad regime's widespread and systematic violations of human rights and backed the Arab League's plan for a negotiated, peaceful, political transition to solve this crisis.

Tunis will be an important opportunity to begin turning international consensus into action. We look forward to concrete progress on three fronts: providing humanitarian relief, increasing pressure on the regime, and preparing for a democratic transition. To that end, we hope to see new pledges of emergency assistance for Syrians caught in Assad's stranglehold and international coordination and diplomatic pressure on Damascus to convince it to allow humanitarian aid to those who need it most. We also expect additional nations to impose effective sanctions against the regime, and we look to all countries to aggressively implement the measures they have already adopted.

Finally, we hope to hear from the Syrian opposition about their vision for a post-Assad Syria that is governed by the rule of law and respects and protects the universal rights of every citizen regardless of religion, ethnicity, sect, or gender, because, after all, we must never lose sight of what this is about: a regime making war on its own people, families suffering in cities under siege, a nation brought to the brink of chaos. We cannot allow the obstruction of a few countries to stop the world community from coming to the aid of the Syrian people. And that is what we will discuss tomorrow.

Next, Pakistan. Foreign Minister Khar and I had a constructive discussion of our common concerns, from confronting violent extremism, to supporting Afghan-led reconciliation, to improving our bilateral relationship. Building and sustaining a relationship based on mutual interest and mutual respect takes constant care and work from both sides, from the daily engagements of our embassies to high-level meetings like the one we had today. Now, I am sure we will continue to have our ups and downs, but this relationship is simply too important to turn our back on it for both nations. And we both, therefore, remain committed to continue working to improve understanding and cooperation.

Finally, I also consulted with allies and partners about a range of other issues, particularly Iran's continued refusal to address international concerns about its nuclear program.

So it's been a full day, and I think it's a testament to the leadership of our hosts on so many critical issues that so many leaders gathered and not only attended the conference but worked diligently all day to try to translate the words of the conference into future actions that we are all committed to taking.

I'm very grateful, once again, to the prime minister and the foreign secretary for their hospitality and their partnership. We look forward to welcoming the prime minister to Washington in a few weeks to continue the discussions that we have had on a regular basis that are so important to us both.

I'd now be happy to take your questions.

MODERATOR: We'll take four today, the first one from Reuters. Arshad Mohammed.

QUESTION: Secretary Clinton, a U.S. official said that the Friends of Syria are going to challenge Assad to provide humanitarian access to besieged civilian populations within days. What are you going to do if Assad does not provide access within days?

Second, you said you had a constructive discussion with Foreign Minister Khar. What, if any, commitments did she give you to try to improve the relationship, work together on Afghanistan and on counterterrorism?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, look, as I've said, Arshad, the efforts that we are undertaking with the international community, continuing with the first Friends of Syria meeting in Tunis tomorrow, are intended to demonstrate the Assad regime's deepening isolation and the resolve of a vast majority of nations to support the Syrian people in their demand that the violence end, that the suffering be addressed, that the democratic transition begin.

So tomorrow, we will be discussing a range of options, from tightening sanctions to increasing humanitarian relief to helping the opposition, which will be represented in Tunis, in its efforts to represent all Syrians – Sunni, Allawi, Christian, Druze, Kurd, minorities, women – to be able to strengthen their position as the voice of so many Syrians whose voices cannot be heard right now from Syria.

Our immediate focus is on increasing the pressure. We've got to find ways to get food, medicine, and other humanitarian assistance into those affected by violence. We have begun to explore ways with our partners as to how that might be done.

But this takes time and it takes a lot of diplomacy, old-fashioned outreach, dialogue, planning that we've been doing now for several weeks which we continued in meetings today. But I think there is a great resolve and commitment and there is an openness to exploring what can work. So I can't prejudge the outcome of Tunis tomorrow other than to say there will be a very broad cross-section of nations and organizations represented. We believe that the Syrian National Council, which will be there sitting at the table, will show that there is an alternative to the Assad regime, one that respects the rights of all Syrians. And we're going to take this day by day, but I am encouraged by the progress we are making together.

Now, regarding Pakistan, as you know, the Pakistani Government is in the midst of a process that includes their parliament being able to speak on issues concerning our bilateral relationship. And when the government, including the parliament, has completed this process, we will consult on the way forward. But as always, today's conversation gave us a very important opportunity to keep the lines of communication open, because there's always, in difficult times, which I admit we are in with respect to our relationship with Pakistan, a lot of swirling in the air of who said what, when, et cetera, that does not accurately reflect the state of the relationship.

And we're continuing to do a lot of work together. The work hasn't stopped. And I value these regular consultations, and we will be proceeding based on the broad discussion we had of about an hour and a half today.

MODERATOR: Next question, Ali Dahir, Shabelle Media Network.

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Here comes the microphone, sir.

QUESTION: Sorry. Thank you. Secretary of State, thank you very much. You just indicated in your speech that Somalia will inform their own parliament and choose president as well as the speaker of parliament and they will be appointed by prime minister. And Somalis are sick and tired of a political representative that has been selected rather than by – elected by Somali people. So would that mean business as usual, another years of anarchy and chaos in Somalia? Because there will be a government that does not have the trust and confidence and support of people.

Second things: U.S. policy toward Somalia was a dual-track policy which most of Somalis see this another way of dividing the country and undermining the TFG or maybe American Government. Would – that policy will be still in place after post August 2012?

And my final question is: Will you support air strike in al-Shabaab-controlled area, and will you please guarantee that there will not be a civilian casualty in Somalia? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, the roadmap calls for elections, it calls for a new parliament to be formed that is much smaller but more representative than the large, unwieldy body that exists now. But legitimacy comes through elections, so it is our intention to support very strongly the drafting of a constitution that takes into account the interests of all Somalis – not from one region, one clan, one subclan, but all Somalis; that it also is our intention to see this constitution adopted through a vote of the representatives of the people.

And I made very clear in my remarks this morning that speaking for the United States, there will be no more delays. We think the Somali people have waited long enough. And there is every reason to believe that given the right political environment, the Somalis – people of all parts of Somalia – can govern themselves very well. They do a lot of that today on their own with no help from a government in Mogadishu or any outside help.

So we have no doubt that, structured properly, the right kind of constitution, the right set of elections, the right people being elected, will put Somalia on a much more secure path forward. We also believe in a unified Somalia. Now, how Somalis themselves determine what that means is up to you. Our country has 50 states; we are a federal system. So that may be something that you would look at. Or take another example of a state that is arranged differently but takes into account the legitimate constituencies that exist throughout the country.

What was so important about this conference and why we are grateful to the Government of the UK is that it comes at the halfway point. The roadmap is six months in, six months to go.

Now regarding your last question, I think that the AMISOM forces, the TFG forces, the Ethiopian forces, others, the Kenyans who will be integrated into the AMISOM forces, are doing a very good job. We see a lot of progress on the ground. I am not a military strategist, but I think I know enough to say airstrikes would not be a good idea. And we have absolutely no reason to believe anyone – certainly not the United States – anyone is considering that. The progress that is being made on the ground by the forces who are trying to free Somalia from the grip of al-Shabaab has to continue. But it is, I think, encouraging to see how much has been accomplished.

MODERATOR: Next one, Wyatt Andrews, CBS News.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, going back to the humanitarian aid, this is a long time coming. I mean, what makes you or the members of this alliance believe that Assad will simply allow in the humanitarian aid where he hasn't done so before? And following up on the previous question, is there a plan if he simply refuses to allow the aid in?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well –

QUESTION: Secondly, if I might, do I understand you correctly on the SNC? Does the United States now consider the Syrian National Council to be a credible alternative to Assad? Because that sounds new.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, they will be at the conference tomorrow. They will have a seat at the table as a representative of the Syrian people. And we think it's important to have Syrians represented. And the consensus opinion by the Arab League and all the others who are working and planning this conference is that the SNC is a credible representative, and therefore they will be present.

It's also true, Wyatt, that I cannot, standing here today, predict exactly how this will unfold. But we are seeing increasing defections. We are seeing a lot of pressure on the inner regime. There is growing evidence that some of the officials in the Syrian Government are beginning to hedge their bets – moving assets, moving family members, looking for a possible exit strategy. We see a lot of developments that we think are pointing to pressure on Assad. We hope it will pressure him to make the right decision regarding humanitarian assistance. But in the event that he continues to refuse, we think that the pressure will continue to build.

So it's a fluid situation. But if I were a betting person for the medium term and certainly the long term, I would be betting against Assad.

MODERATOR: Last one today, Glen Oglaza, Sky News.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. I just wanted to pick up on the airstrikes in Somalia, first of all, because about an hour or so ago in this room, the prime minister of Somalia said that he

would welcome airstrikes against al-Shabaab. So I just wondered if the Americans would contain that or possibly even participate in it.

SECRETARY CLINTON: I have to – I wasn't here to hear what the prime minister said, but I have no military rationale for airstrikes in this kind of conflict. If there is some argument to be made, I would certainly be interested in it, but I don't know who would do it.

QUESTION: On Syria, isn't the reality that Assad is intent on annihilating the opposition, as his father did before him; and without the Russians and the Chinese, and short of military intervention, there's frankly nothing anyone can do about it?

And I wondered if I could ask you about Christopher Tappin, who is a 65-year-old British man who's being extradited to the States tomorrow. He's accused of supplying missile parts to the Iranians. He says he's innocent and that he should be tried in British courts, not extradited to the United States. Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, as to the last question, we have an extradition treaty, as you know, between us, and there are certain laws and procedures to be followed. They have been followed in this case. The gravamen of the complaint is based in U.S. law, and that's where he will be tried.

Regarding Syria, I think the – the fact is that when Assad's father conducted his horrific attacks back in the early '80s, there was no internet, there was no Twitter, there were no social communication sites. There was no satellite television. There were no on-the-ground witnesses. It's much harder, and thankfully so, to have that level of brutality, shelling with artillery your own people, not be known by everyone, most particularly your own people, not after the fact but in real time. Therefore, I think that the strategy followed by the Syrians and their allies is one that can't stand the test of legitimacy or even brutality for any length of time.

There will be increasingly capable opposition forces. They will, from somewhere, somehow, find the means to defend themselves as well as begin offensive measures. And the pressure will build on countries like Russia and China, because world opinion is not going to stand idly by. Arab opinion is not going to be satisfied, watching two nations – one for commercial reasons, one for commercial and ideological reasons – bolster a regime that is defying every rule of modern international norms.

So I know it's not a satisfying answer to say we have to take this day by day, but that's my answer: We have to take this day by day. But it is clear to me that there will be a breaking point. I wish it would be sooner, so that more lives would be saved, than later. But I have absolutely no doubt there will be such a breaking point. And I want the Syrian people who are suffering so mightily to know that the international community has not underestimated either their suffering or their impatience, and we are moving in an expeditious but deliberate manner. And I also want those Syrians who are still uncertain about what would come after Assad – and there are so many of them with understandable reasons who fear what would happen to them because of who they are or what – how they worship, or what their political beliefs are – I want them to understand that we also appreciate their concerns and fears. But we think that – there is no doubt in our mind

that a political transition that respects the rights of every Syrian and puts in place a democratic process will be, by far, the best outcome for them and their children.

So thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you all very much.

Press Availability on the Meeting of the Friends of the Syrian People

Press Availability

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Tunis, Tunisia

February 24, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, good evening, everyone. Good evening. It's been a very, very, long and productive day. And I want to commend, once again, the Government of Tunisia, in particular the foreign minister, for executing this conference on such short notice, bringing together more than 70 countries, being able to reach consensus on an important chairman statement. I am very grateful to him and to his government.

I think today the Friends of the Syrian People sent a strong and unified message that the Assad regime's escalating violence is an affront to the international community, a threat to regional security, and a grave violation of universal human rights. And the work that has been done by the Arab League to bring us to this point, where we put together a strong international consensus has been extremely important. The violence must end and a democratic transition begin. I applaud the selection of Kofi Annan as a special envoy for both the United Nations and the Arab League. He will seek to advance the positions reflected in the Arab League transition plan and the UN General Assembly's resolution.

Let's remind ourselves what was accomplished today. The international community agreed to take a number of concrete steps that will help begin providing humanitarian relief to the Syrian people, increase the pressure on Assad and those around him, and prepare for the democratic transition.

First, with respect to the humanitarian relief, we know that conditions are dire and getting worse, and that emergency assistance is desperately needed. But I want to underscore that the people who bear responsibility for this humanitarian catastrophe are Assad and his security forces. The regime is doing everything it can to prevent aid from reaching those who are suffering the most. Today, I announced that the United States is providing \$10 million to quickly scale up humanitarian efforts, including support for the thousands of refugees who are being displaced from their homes. These funds will support makeshift medical facilities, help train more emergency medical staff, provide clean water, food, blankets, heaters, and hygiene kits to Syrian civilians.

This is not the end. The United States will provide more humanitarian support in the coming days. We have already been working with trusted humanitarian organizations who have prepositioned supplies at hubs in the region, and they are already on the ground poised to distribute this aid if safe access can be arranged. If the Assad regime refuses to allow this lifesaving aid to reach people in need, it will have even more blood on its hands, and so too will those nations that continue to protect and arm the regime. And we call on those states that are supplying weapons to kill civilians to halt immediately.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
1 Reviewer

Second, we resolve today to ratchet up the pressure on the regime and increase its isolation. Now you know that until now, the Assad regime has ignored every warning, squandered every opportunity, and broken every agreement. But today, we heard specific additional commitments to more sanctions, new measures, including travel bans on senior officials in the regime, freezing their assets, boycotting Syrian oil, suspending new investments, and beginning the closure of embassies and consulates. In short, there must be accountability for the regime and a heavy cost for ignoring the will of the world and violating the human rights of its own people.

Third, we heard directly from members of the Syrian opposition in person and on the video screen. We do view the Syrian National Council as a leading legitimate representative of Syrians seeking peaceful democratic change, and as an effective representative for the Syrian people with governments and international organizations. It's very important that in the coming days, the full range of opposition groups and individuals inside Syria, including representatives of all ethnic and religious minorities, come together and make their voices heard outside of Syria and inside around a shared vision for the future.

Only a genuine democratic transition will solve this crisis. As the Arab League has said, the goal should be the formation of a national unity government followed by transparent and free elections under Arab and international supervision, and Assad's departure must be part of this. Looking ahead, there should be no doubt the United States will support a managed transition that leads to a new Syria so that just like in Tunisia today, the rights of every citizen are respected and protected.

As I told the assembled nations here today, the people of Syria are looking to us in their hour of need, and we cannot let them down. But of course, it is a difficult dilemma to face a government that is intent upon killing in the most brutal, terrible fashion, as many of their citizens as possible. Now, the world has seen terrible conflicts before, and one cannot become discouraged or impatient in trying to resolve what are often intractable, violent confrontations.

In fact, today, we had very good news from an old conflict that has been resolving itself over time – that between Kosovo and Serbia. I well remember the ethnic cleansing, the violence, the bombings, the terrible events of that time. And I thank the European Union for bringing those two countries closer together so that Kosovo can be an equal partner in regional multilateral settings, moving toward integration in Europe, that Serbia can see a chance for it, too, to be part of the European Union. Serbia's progress toward European integration is good for Serbia, good for Kosovo, and good for the future of the entire region.

And it reminds us that we must stay on the path of peace. We must stand against those leaders, whoever they are and wherever they are, who use violence instead of negotiation. And I am convinced that Assad's days are numbered. I just regret deeply that there will be more killing before he finally goes. But I hope that we will see soon the Syrian people having the opportunity that the Tunisian people now enjoy.

And thanks again to our Tunisian friends who are making this possible, and I would be happy to take some questions.

MS. NULAND: We'll take three tonight. The first one is CNN. Elise Labott, please.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you very much. Several countries at this conference, particularly the Saudi foreign minister, said well, good commitment doesn't go nearly far enough and they feel that it's time to arm the opposition to help them defend themselves. And you heard from Burhan Ghalioun today asking for the means for the Syrians to defend themselves. Why is this group not advocating – I understand that you don't want a military intervention, but why not advocate giving this group the means to defend themselves?

And last week, top military intelligence officials in the U.S. spoke a lot about their concerns about the opposition, saying it fractured, even some groups possibly infiltrated by extremists. So does that not give the U.S. concern when considering backing this group?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, Elise, let me say that I think it was quite remarkable, especially on such short notice – and thanks to Tunisian leadership and Arab League leadership – that all of us gathered here today reached consensus. Now, that doesn't mean that every one of us don't have other ideas and other recommendations, because we are all quite diverse from all over the world. But I want to stay focused on what we agreed on. We agreed on increasing the pressure on Assad, getting humanitarian aid in as quickly as possible, and preparing for a democratic transition. That was my message and that was the message of the chairman's statement that reflected the consensus reached here.

We want a political solution. We know that's what's best for the Syrian people, their future of the region, and indeed for international peace and security. I don't think anyone wants to see a bloody, protracted civil war. We would like to see the kind of transition to democracy and peace that happened here in Tunisia.

Our goal is to bring as much pressure to bear as we can, not only on Assad but on those around him. I said in my statement – I spoke directly to those who are supporting Assad, including members of his security forces – they're continuing to kill their brothers and sisters is a stain on their honor. Their refusal to continue this slaughter will make them heroes in the eyes of not only Syrians but people of conscience everywhere. They can help the guns fall silent.

We also know from many sources there are people around Assad now who are beginning to hedge their bets. They didn't sign up to slaughter people and they are looking for ways out. We saw this happen in other settings in the last years. I think it is going to begin happening in Syria. Assad can still make the choice to end the violence, save lives, and spare his country from descending further into ruin. But if he continues to reject that choice, we and the Syrian people will keep pressure on him until his deadly regime cracks and collapses – because it will. I am absolutely confident of that.

So let's stay focused on what we accomplish today. I've been to a lot of meetings over many, many years – rarely one that was put together with such intense effort on such a short timetable that produced so much consensus. So let's stay on the path we have begun on. We will obviously be taking into account at every turn everything else that we are aware of, but let's work toward the democratic, unified, peaceful future that Syria deserves.

MS. NULAND: Next one, Al Jazeera Arabic, please.

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: I'm going to answer the same way that I have answered. I think we ought to take this from where we end it today. This was a productive, constructive consensus. I think that we ought to continue on the path we're on. We will constantly be evaluating what is happening inside Syria. And let us remember that Syrians themselves, including those at the highest reaches of the Assad government, are seeing the same images that we're seeing.

And I believe that we will begin to hear more about internal conflict within the regime, because this is absolutely unforgiveable behavior and I do not believe that every Syrian serving the Assad regime agrees with this policy. So I would caution us to let us not move beyond where we are today until we've had a chance to fully implement what we agreed to.

MS. NULAND: Last one this evening, from Assabah here in Tunisia.

QUESTION: After this international conference, do you expect that you will ask the UN and mainly Security Council to discuss again, negotiate and to ask mainly Russia and China to (inaudible) make pressure for Syrian regime? And for the public (inaudible) I mean, we are divided and we have hundreds of people involved (inaudible). A lot of people are scared that many (inaudible) of the Syrian regime, one million Palestinians, and all Palestinian (inaudible).

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I don't agree with the second question. I don't see any connection there, so I don't agree with that. I think that is a separate, very important issue that we have to continue to deal with. But I think there will be refugees. We are seeing refugees in Jordan, in Lebanon, in Syria – out of Syria into Turkey, I mean. So there will be refugees, but I think that that's a problem that we have to take into account as we deal with Syria.

With respect to your first question though, it's a very good question. Look, I think every one of us would like to see Security Council action. The United States worked very hard to obtain a resolution from the Security Council that was vetoed by Russia and China, although it received support from every other member of the Security Council from Latin America to Africa to Europe to Asia. The entire world, other than Russia and China, were willing to recognize that we must take international action against the Syrian regime.

I would be willing to go back to the Security Council again and again and again, but we need to change the attitude of the Russian and Chinese governments. They must understand they are setting themselves against the aspirations not only of the Syrian people but of the entire Arab Spring, the Arab Awakening. They are basically saying to Tunisians, to Libyans, to others throughout the region, well, we don't agree that you have a right to have elections, to choose your leaders. I think that is absolutely contrary to history. And it is not a position that is sustainable. So the sooner the Russians and the Chinese move toward supporting action in the Security Council, the sooner we can get a resolution that would permit us to take the kind of steps that we all know need to be taken.

So thank you for asking that, because it's quite distressing to see two permanent members of the Security Council using their veto when people are being murdered – women, children, brave young men – houses are being destroyed. It is just despicable. And I ask, whose side are they on? They are clearly not on the side of the Syrian people, and they need to ask themselves some very hard questions about what that means for them as well as the rest of us.

Thank you.

Interview With Elise Labott of CNN

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Sofitel Hotel

Rabat, Morocco

February 26, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thanks so much for joining us. We're here in North Africa a year after the Arab Spring. It's a new region. Most – Islamists are in power in many of these countries. And when you were speaking in Tunis yesterday, you kind of suggested that you have concerns that maybe some of these transitions are faltering and risk being hijacked by extremists.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that is certainly not my concern. It should be the concern of anyone who is watching these transitions. Let's take a step back. On the one hand, the elections have gone well. People have been empowered and enfranchised. But democracies don't equal elections. A lot more must be done to ensure that people's rights are protected, women's rights are protected, there's no discrimination of the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and all the freedoms that really go with a democracy. So as I've said, we're going to listen to what these new governments say and we're going to watch what they do.

QUESTION: Let's talk about Egypt, these 16 Americans working for NGOs expected to go to trial today. You're having talks with them. Where do they stand?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Elise, we are having intense talks at the highest levels of the Egyptian Government because, obviously, we'd like to see this resolved. Our relationship with Egypt is, I think, very important to both countries, and we have a lot of work to do together. We want to support the new Egyptian Government, we want to support the aspirations of the Egyptian people, and we have to resolve this matter.

QUESTION: Are you going to surrender them for trial if you can't resolve it?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I'm not going to go into any of the legal issues. We're just trying to get it resolved.

QUESTION: But this is a country – I mean, how do you feel about this? Thirty years, you've been supporting the Egyptians, and this is what they do to the Americans?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I don't want to go making this a dramatic confrontation. It's a problem. We have problems with a lot of our friends around the world. We're trying to resolve it.

QUESTION: Okay. On Syria, you're really making an effort to peel away Assad's inner circle. Are you hearing from anybody? Is anybody contacting you?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: We have a lot of contacts, as do other countries, a lot of sources within the Syrian Government and the business community and the minority communities. And our very clear message is the same to all of them. You cannot continue to support this illegitimate regime, because it's going to fall, so be part of an opposition that can try to have a path forward that will protect the rights of all Syrians.

QUESTION: But what about the message that the Syrian National Council is sending to those inside Syria? Do you think they're sending the right message?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think it's very difficult to form an opposition when you have no place to operate out of inside the country you're trying to change. In Libya, we had a very effective operation in Benghazi that gave us an address. We could deal with people. It represented Libyans across the country. We don't have that in Syria. And the Syrian National Council is doing the best it can, but obviously it's not yet a united opposition.

QUESTION: What are you – how far are you prepared to go to get this aid in? I mean, the shame tactic, it doesn't seem to be working. And today – and Russian state paper *Pravda* is calling you the despicable one. I mean, how are you going to get that aid in if they won't – if President Assad won't do it and the Russians won't pressure him to do it?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think that that speaks for itself. I think that the Syrian people themselves need to start acting on behalf of their fellow Syrians. Where are the people inside Syria who are going to demand that men, women, and children cannot be assaulted and left to die, given no medical care, no food, no water. And look, I think that Russia has a commercial relationship, ideological relationship with Syria. It's made its decision to stand on their side.

QUESTION: Well, are there going to be – are there consequences to the relationship with Russia if they're not willing to at least help, use their influence to provide the aid?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I mean, I think we've already seen some very clear disagreements played out in public between us, but at this point, we're doing everything we can to marshal public opinion internationally and work with neighbors in the region to try to get that humanitarian aid in.

QUESTION: Let's talk about Afghanistan. The Embassy's in lockdown right now?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: And employees not allowed to go anywhere?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No.

QUESTION: Okay. Listen, President Obama's apology has become very controversial. I mean, obviously Newt Gingrich and others have made this apology part of the campaign, but other experts in Afghanistan are saying this apology sends the wrong message, it gives the Taliban the excuse to go against us, to help use our enemies against us. And also, a lot of these attacks that

are happening against Americans, these horrible attacks, seem to be in retaliation for something the U.S. is taking responsibility for.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I find it somewhat troubling that our politics would enflame such a dangerous situation in Afghanistan. I well remember during the eight years of President Bush's administration, when something happened that was regrettable, unintentional, as this incident was, President Bush was quick to say, look, we're sorry about this, this is something that we obviously did not mean to do. That's all that President Obama was doing, and it was the right thing to do, to have our President on record as saying this was not intentional, we deeply regret it. And now we are hoping that voices inside Afghanistan will join that of President Karzai and others in speaking out to try to calm the situation. It's deeply regrettable, but now it is out of hand and it needs to stop.

QUESTION: On Iran and the IAEA report, damning evidence that Iran is continuing to build these underground sites. What do you think is going on at these sites, and are they playing for time? If you're going to have these talks, is it really that they're playing for time and those talks would lead to Iran further constituting their program?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we want to know what's going on in those sites. And the fact that they are secret, heavily protected sites seems to suggest something's going on the Iranians don't want the IAEA or the world to know about. That can only raise suspicions even higher than they already are. We have said that we would engage with the P-5+1 to meet with the Iranians if they came to the table prepared to talk about their nuclear program.

QUESTION: Do you think talks will happen?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we'll – we're moving toward them. Cathy Ashton has been empowered to negotiate on our behalf, but these latest actions by the Iranian Government, not permitting the IAEA inspectors to see what they wanted to see, are certainly troubling.

QUESTION: Your envoy for North Korea, Glyn Davies, had talks in Beijing.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: Any glimmers of progress there?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think modest progress. We've always said that we are willing to talk. This is the first time that, under this new leader, we've had this opportunity, and we'll follow through.

QUESTION: Did you learn anything – the way they're negotiating about Kim Jong Un, is there – do you think there'll a consistent approach from the North Koreans?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we'll see, Elise. We are – yeah, there's a lot of experience in negotiating with previous North Korean leaders, and it's usually a challenging process, but we have some of our best, most experienced diplomats on the front lines.

QUESTION: You said yesterday that President Obama will be reelected. It's not – it raised a lot of eyebrows. It's not really the Secretary of State to say anything about an election, and it seemed to be kind of a campaign statement.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, remember the context of it. I was asked whether the comments in the primary campaign, some of which have been quite inflammatory, represented America. And I represent America, and I know what happens in campaigns. I've been there, done that. And I know that things are said that are not going to be put into practice or policy. But I did think I needed to point that out to the audience. And probably, my enthusiasm for the President got a little out of hand. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: Well – no political juices flowing there?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'm trying to dampen them down. I've tried to have them taken out in a blood transfusion, but occasionally they rear their heads.

QUESTION: Does that suggest maybe going back in at some point?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. No. It just suggests that I want what's best for my country.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, you have a year left. Last year was a crazy year – (laughter) – with the Arab Spring and so much other things going on – Iran, North Korea. What, this year, do you hope you'll accomplish? And moving towards thinking about your legacy, where do you hope to have your priorities?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'll talk about legacy when I'm done because I don't like looking back, I like looking forward, and we have an incredibly active year ahead of us. We are looking to consolidate a lot of the work we've done the prior three years – in Asia, in Latin America, in Africa, you name it. So there's just an enormous agenda ahead of us, but we'll stay focused on what keeps America safe, what promotes America's values and furthers our interests. And that's our – those are our three north stars, and we're following them.

QUESTION: Just to wrap up, I mean, what were the – what are the key things you'd like to see happen by the end of this year?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Peace, prosperity, happiness everywhere. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: I think we all would. Thank you so much for joining us.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

Interview With Kim Ghattas of BBC

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Sofitel Hotel

Rabat, Morocco

February 26, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you very much for speaking to the BBC. Just over a year ago, I asked you a question about Libya, and I know that Libya and Syria are very different, but in essence the question kind of remains the same. With no sign of rapid tangible action to stop the violence in Syria, if we wake up tomorrow and President Assad has leveled Homs to the ground, history will not judge the Obama Administration very kindly.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I just disagree with that premise, Kim. I think that if you look at what's happening in Syria, and it's very different from Libya – and you're right, a year ago we were cautiously assessing what was possible, and what became possible, because the opposition controlled territory, had a united national presence that was quite prepared to not only engage diplomatically but organize against the Qadhafi regime is not present yet in Syria. And certainly that is a condition precedent for anyone who is trying to figure out how to help these defenseless people against this absolutely relentless assault.

I wish that people inside Syria were responding as people inside Libya responded. They are not, at this point, perhaps because of the firepower and the absolute intent that we've seen by the Assad regime to kill whomever. But the fact is we are moving to do everything possible with the international community.

QUESTION: But if the people inside Syria can't get organized, and the rebels don't have the territory to organize properly, what is the responsibility of the international community to make sure that we don't end up with a large-scale massacre?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Kim, we still have a very strong opposition to foreign intervention from inside Syria, from outside Syria. We don't have the United States Security Council approval, legitimacy, credibility that comes with the international community making a decision. We have a very dangerous set of actors in the region, al-Qaida, Hamas, and those who are on our terrorist list, to be sure, supporting – claiming to support the opposition. You have many Syrians more worried about what could come next. So I don't want to say that nothing can be done, because I don't believe that and I feel like we are moving to the best of everyone's ability who is concerned as we are about this.

But I want to make clear that for anyone watching this horrible massacre that is going on to ask yourself: Okay. What do you do? If you bring in automatic weapons, which you can maybe smuggle across the border, okay, what do they do against tanks and heavy artillery? So there's such a much more complex set of factors. But I want to assure you part of the reason for the Tunis meeting was to see whose side who was on.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

QUESTION: At the Tunis meeting, the Saudi foreign minister said it was an excellent idea to arm the rebels. Others are perhaps already doing that. Are you discouraging them or encouraging them?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We are doing neither. We are only speaking on behalf of the United States.

QUESTION: But aren't you worried that arms flowing into in the country will feed into the conflict?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, but that contradicts the point you were making earlier, and understandably, because it's a very difficult set of considerations. I have no doubt that people are already trying, to the best of their ability, to get arms into those who are defending themselves. What I can't understand is why the Syrian army is doing Assad's bidding and taking these actions against defenseless people, staining their honor, undermining one of the institutional pillars of their country. I don't understand that.

QUESTION: It's starting to look like this is going to be a long conflict. Are you worried about that? Are you worried about years of conflict in Syria, perhaps something like a Lebanon scenario with regional pairs and different groupings and armies splintering?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I am worried about it. I think that there's every possibility of a civil war. Outside intervention would not prevent that; it would probably expedite it. So I think that as you try to play out every possible scenario, there are a lot of bad ones that we are trying to assess while keeping our eye on the need to get humanitarian aid in, to try to do everything we possibly can to support the Syrian opposition, to make it credible, to have it be both inside the country and outside the country speaking on behalf of the Syrian people, inclusive, representative. And we're trying to help push a democratic transition. It took more than a year in Yemen, but finally there was a new president inaugurated. People kept being killed all the time.

So these are very painful situations. There's no getting around it. I feel like everyone else watching the video, and I also have the additional information that comes from all kinds of intelligence sources, so I know how terrible things are in parts of Syria. Other parts are totally unaffected. So this is a difficult but necessary engagement for the world to stay focused on.

QUESTION: In Tunis, you called the Chinese and Russian actions despicable on Syria. Is that wise? Aren't you cutting them out of the solution? You may need them to negotiate a possible exit for President Assad.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, they're free to negotiate anytime they want to try to bring this to an end. The best I can see is their negotiation is only to reinforce Assad's existing tendencies and actions. And their actions are very distressing, because they could be part of the solution. If you look at the Security Council resolution that they vetoed, there were no arms going into Syria under it, no foreign intervention of any kind, no basis for foreign military action, not even sanctions. What we were trying to do is to have the international community behind the Arab League's leadership, which was to negotiate that kind of handover that proved successful with

Yemen. And that is something that the Russians wouldn't go for, so we, of course, would invite, welcome, encourage Russian and Chinese intervention that could lead to the end of the bloodshed.

QUESTION: But some argue that the United States and all the Friends of Syria are hiding behind Chinese and Russian obstructions. Because the reality is no one, as you said, is really ready to deal with the consequences that any sort of intervention to halt the violence would actually entail when it comes to Syria. This is a very complicated country. So in a way, the Russians and the Chinese are also making it easier for you to step back and see how this plays out.

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. If they had joined us in the Security Council, I think it would have sent a really strong message to Assad that he needed to start planning his exit, and the people around him, who are already hedging their bets, would have been doing the same. Because they know they've got Iran actively supporting them, Russia selling them arms and diplomatically protecting them, and China not wanting anybody to interfere with anybody's internal affairs. So that gives them a lot of comfort. Those are three consequential countries, one right on their border, one nearby, and one that has a lot of influence.

So I think that we have to take the facts as we find them. I wish I could wave my magic wand and change them, but that's not possible. So therefore, we are waiting for the Russians to play a constructive role, as they have continued to promise us. Unfortunately, that's not been forthcoming.

And I would not be doing my job if I were not looking at the complexity. I mean, I could come on and I could do an interview with you and I could say, "Oh, we're all for them. Let's go get them." But what would that mean? Because clearly I know how complex this is, and anybody who is thinking about it and having to actually consider what could happen next understands it. So what I'm trying to do is work through this with likeminded countries that so we can get to a point where there is sufficient pressure so that the people around Assad – the business community is still supporting him, the minorities, which you know so well from Lebanon, don't know which way to jump and are scared about what might come after, the opposition, which doesn't have any place that can really be a base of operations. I mean, there's just so many features of what it takes to run an effective campaign against such a brutal regime that are still not in place.

QUESTION: I'm going to squeeze in a last question about Egypt. Regardless of the outcome with the issue of American NGO workers who are detained and others as well, because there aren't only Americans who are facing charges – regardless of the outcome, it seems to show that the current political establishment, which is a result of the popular revolution, is just as opposed to the work of civil society as the government of President Mubarak was. That's not a great result for a popular uprising.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Kim, I'm not sure what it shows, because there isn't a government yet. I mean, that's one of the problems, is that they're still in transition. They finished elections for the parliament. They don't have an executive that would have such

authority to be able to determine what is and is not the policy of the new Egyptian Government. So we're in a transition. And I think that's one of the reasons why these difficulties flare up.

QUESTION: Would you trust the judicial system in Egypt?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think we are working with the highest levels of the existing Egyptian authorities and we're hoping to get this resolved.

QUESTION: Thank you very much.

Interview With Michele Kelemen of NPR

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Sofitel Hotel

Rabat, Morocco

February 26, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: You got a busy day here and there's a lot to talk about. (Laughter.) I'd like, first of all, to ask you what did you tell the Egyptian foreign minister about these cases against democracy promoters? Would you ever let these Americans appear in a courtroom in Cairo?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Michele, obviously we've been working on this ever since December, when we learned of the actions against not only American NGOs but NGOs from other countries as well. And we have been engaging at the highest levels of the Egyptian Government.

Our two concerns were, number one, to try to understand what the issues were, since both we and the Egyptian Government believed that our NGOs had been invited to help assist in ensuring that the elections were done in a credible way, which they were. But then also, we know that, ever since the Mubarak regime, there are a wealth of laws that are difficult to follow, even if you are intending to do so, which, of course, we were. And our NGOs kept trying to register so they could be viewed as legally entitled to operate within Egypt. So there was a lot of confusion, and the confusion was at all levels of the Egyptian Government as to what this all meant. So we have been engaging persistently and we hope that this matter will be resolved.

QUESTION: And how many Americans are now sheltering at the Embassy?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I – the exact account, maybe, I think, 16, 17.

QUESTION: Turning to Syria, Syrian tanks have been battering Homs. There's no sign of aid getting in. What do you and the Friends of Syria do now?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think, as I've said, we have to continue to consult with those who truly are Friends of the Syrian People, which of course, includes the United States and the many governments and organizations that gathered in Tunis on Friday. We are doing everything we can to facilitate humanitarian aid. It was distressing to hear that the Syrian Red Crescent and the ICRC, after many hours of negotiation just yesterday, were not permitted to go back into Homs. We are looking to set up and stage areas for getting humanitarian aid in. Secondly, we continue to ratchet up the pressure. It is an increasingly isolated regime. And third, we push for a democratic transition by working with and trying to build up the opposition so they can be an alternative.

QUESTION: But activists say you need, really, humanitarian corridors. You need to get aid in and people out. How do you do that without some sort of outside intervention?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, as you know, Michele, many of the people in the Syrian opposition have been quite vocal in their objection to any outside interference. And many of the countries that gathered on Friday are also quite vocal. What we tried to do in the Security Council was to get international support and legitimacy for the Arab League peace plan in order to have some leverage with the Assad regime. And unfortunately, Russia and China vetoed it. So it's a distressing and difficult situation. It's not the first that the world has seen, unfortunately, but we remain engaged at every possible opening to accomplish our three objectives.

QUESTION: But there's – there was a lot of talk about – and controversy about whether you arm the opposition, help them get arms. Is there anything the U.S. can do short of that, I mean, logistical support for the Free Syrian Army, satellite images to help them set up these humanitarian corridors?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, they don't have tanks and they don't have artillery. So I know there's a lot of frustration, and I share it. This is a deeply, deeply distressing set of events. But you have one of the most highly militarized, best-defended countries on earth, because, of course, they spent an enormous amount of money with their Iranian and Russian friends so equipping themselves. And even if you were to somehow smuggle in automatic weapons of some kind, you're not going to be very successful against tanks. And so the dilemma is how do we try to help people defend themselves? How do we push the Russians, Chinese, and others, who are, in effect, defending and deflecting for the Assad regime, to realize that this is undermining not only Assad's legitimacy but theirs as well?

QUESTION: You, in fact, called the Russians despicable on this trip.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, not personally, but in terms of actions, I think continuing to arm a government that is turning its heavy weapons against their own citizens – I mean, there are a lot of words to describe that.

QUESTION: I want you to take a step back a bit and just to look at this political earthquake in the Arab world, as your Turkish counterpart likes to call it. How have you been adjusting to this new environment, and particularly the rise of political Islam, Islamist groups?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, look, I believe in freedom, and I believe in democracy, and I believe in self-determination, and I also believe in human rights and freedom and speech and freedom of religion. And so what we are supporting are – in countries that have every right to have self-determination and to set up their own democracies – the path that they're on, and at the same time reminding Egyptians and Libyans and Tunisians and others that democracy is not one election one time. It is building institutions. It is carefully nurturing and tending the attitudes, what we call the habits of the heart, from our own early experience, a phrase of de Tocqueville. And that's difficult. It's difficult for any political party or leadership. Everybody wants to believe that they're best for their country and their people. But it's important that the United States, which supports the aspirations of all people everywhere, also stand up for the values and principles that make democracy workable over the long term.

QUESTION: You spoke in Tunisia and Algeria about the need for moderate voices. And I wonder if you worry – if you're worried that they're being drowned out, that this – these changes across the region are becoming particularly violent. And what does that mean for U.S. interests?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Actually, I am not worried about where we are speaking today, here in the Maghreb. I mean, we're in Morocco, which has had a very good election that led to new leadership taking place. I'm looking forward to working with them. I was just in Algeria, where they are planning for elections in May. And of course, you were with me in Tunis, where an Islamic-based party was elected but is in government in a coalition with parties representing other parts of view. That's the way it should be in a democracy, because no matter who you are or where you live, there's not unanimity of thought or feeling or political philosophy.

So I'm not expressing concern so much as speaking out about what we hope to see, because we're judging these new governments not only what they say but what they do. And certainly in Tunisia, they are saying all the rights things. They are saying that they will protect women's rights, that – they are saying that they will protect human rights. And now we want to see that actually take place.

But there is one element, which I am concerned about, and that is how people who were oppressed for so long – and particularly those who are of Islamic persuasion – are so well organized, because they had to be, it was a matter of survival, whereas many other voices in the society, the voices of business leaders, the voices of academia, the voices of young people are not politically organized. So wherever I go, I encourage those who are also hoping to reap the benefits of freedom and democracy to get involved in politics. I mean, politics is no easy game, as I know as well as anyone. But if you're not at the table, then how can you blame people for pursuing certain programs that you may not agree with?

QUESTION: And you said you're getting off the high wire of American politics after this job – (laughter) – so is there one thing that you really want to get done in this region before you leave office? You have a few months left. (Laughter.) Or is it just going to be putting out fires?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I've always said from the very beginning that we do the emergencies, which are the responding to the fires right now; we do the important, which are trying to make sure that the fires don't get out of control; and then we are looking at the long term. So it's a constant panoply of all of these challenges.

But in particular, with respect to the Arab Spring, the coming of democracy of the Arab world, I want to see it take root. And, of course, I want to see it understand that elections are not the end, they're the beginning, that you have to build institutions, you have to have an independent judiciary, you have to have a free press, you have to protect the rights of all minorities, religious, ethnic, you have to certainly empower and protect the rights of women. And this is at the beginning. We're watching something unfold that is probably a generational enterprise.

So I'm encouraged in many regards by what I've seen in Tunisia, what I see in Morocco. The jury is out on Egypt. We're waiting to see how that will actually be implemented. But the United States will help those who are truly invested in democracy that is not based on elevating some

voices over others, imposing philosophical or religious beliefs on others, but truly having the free flow of ideas within a political culture that takes hold in these countries.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your time.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, Michele.

Interview With Samira Sitail of 2M

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Sofitel Hotel

Rabat, Morocco

February 26, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, good evening.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good evening to you.

QUESTION: And thank you for accepting our invitation.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

QUESTION: You've been in Morocco several times.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: It's a country you are familiar with.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And a country I love. Yes. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: You came the first time, I think, as a first lady.

SECRETARY CLINTON: That's right.

QUESTION: And then as a U.S. chief diplomat.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

QUESTION: Geostrategically speaking, where does Morocco stand in the U.S. foreign policy today?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We have a strategic partnership with Morocco that we highly value. As I think you may remember, Morocco was the very first country to recognize our young republic, back in 1777. So ever since then, all these years, we've had a close relationship, and we cooperate on a full range of issues – economic issues, security issues, a lot of people to people and cultural exchanges. We have a very high regard for Morocco.

QUESTION: Your last visit dates back, I think, two years ago, in 2009. In the meantime, many changes have taken place. Maybe we can say that the most of which the constitutional reform.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

QUESTION: That was initiated by His Majesty King Mohammed VI. As soon as it was introduced, you held the reform, referring to it as a model. What definition would you give that Moroccan model?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think the way that His Majesty the King and the people of Morocco responded showed great political maturity, and it was a successful transition to a new constitution, to elections that were held and hailed as successful, and now to a new government that is very much in keeping with the democratic trends but within a stable, functioning society and country. So we look at that and we compare it to what is happening elsewhere in the region and around the world, and it is quite admired in the United States.

QUESTION: Speaking of which, there is, of course, a very strong relationship between the two countries, but over and beyond that, do you think we can really boost further especially economic relationship between the two countries? There is, of course, the free trade agreement, the Millennium Challenge Account, but what else?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think we are building some additional relationships. We started a program called Partnerships for a New Beginning, where we reached out to countries in the Maghreb, and beyond all the way to Indonesia, Muslim majority countries, and we said, "What more can we do to help create a culture of entrepreneurship and small businesses?"

QUESTION: That's it.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And the group that was formed here in Morocco of leading businessmen and women has been among our most successful in the world. They just hosted a big conference in Marrakech last month. More than 400 businesspeople and young entrepreneurs came from elsewhere in the region. And Morocco is showing the way, looking at how we incentivize, particularly, young people because there's what's called this youth bulge of so many people under 30. And we want to make sure they're educated and that they have employment opportunities. And I know that's a particular emphasis of His Majesty the King, of the new elected government, and of the business community here. And we want to be partners.

QUESTION: I remember the – President Obama memorably formulated a new agenda, let's talk about Africa. He formulated a new agenda for Africa, in light of which do you think the U.S. policy in Africa is about to bring once again economic and human development, or is your concern – your primary concern – to achieve security for the region?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think it has to be both because it's very hard to develop an economy, to attract investors, to start businesses, if you don't have security. You have to have security that is going to create an environment where people are free to send their children to school, start businesses, do what we would like to see them do. The Millennium Challenge Account, which you mentioned, is a very competitive effort. Morocco competed and won, and I have to tell you many of your neighbors are constantly saying, "We want one." I said, "Well, we didn't give it to Morocco. Morocco earned it." And so what we've been doing in the entire continent is setting forth that agenda that President Obama set forth to help stimulate economic

growth and more trade and investment. Everybody wants a free trade agreement, and they say, well, Morocco has one. I say they earned it.

QUESTION: Who's the next?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yeah. That's right. So I think we look to Morocco quite often as an example of how you create a climate in which businesses are welcomed, investors are attracted, people have jobs because of that. And that's what we're trying to do in other countries throughout the continent.

QUESTION: Still on the same theme of security, the American Administration aims to very well that no security is possible or achievable in the region unless there is a final settlement to the Sahara countries. In this regard, Morocco put forward a proposal for autonomy which was very soon – which the international community very soon (inaudible) by U.S. Administration. So where does the U.S. State Department stand today on this issue?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, where we've always stood.

QUESTION: In that particular moment?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes. And where we have always stood. We continue to support the UN process. We believe that is the appropriate vehicle. We continue to believe the autonomy proposal is credible. So we encourage the parties to make progress together, and that's been my consistent position for many years.

QUESTION: But you know, Madam Secretary, Algeria was – through its dealings, is standing in the way of building an economically and politically strong Maghreb in the region. You were yesterday in Algeria. You think we can today believe in the sincerity of Algerian Government in that moment?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I was impressed by the conviction expressed to me that Algeria wants to find a way to move beyond the present situation. There will still be negotiations in the UN over the Western Sahara. But Algeria and Morocco, I hope will open their border, I hope will encourage trade, commerce, exchanges, cooperate on security, because both countries face some common threats coming from the south. So I was strongly urging that. I will be reporting that to the Moroccan Government as well because I would like to see – where there are areas of disagreement – the United States has areas of disagreement with many of our friends, partners, allies around the world. So we work on that area of disagreement, but then we try to expand the area of agreement so that it doesn't become the only issue, the disagreement, that we're worried about.

QUESTION: You were just talking about the security and terrorism in this part of the world. Coming back – so coming back to security, and the Sahara region particularly, it turns out today that al-Qaida in the region is posing serious threats to stability. To what extent does U.S. Administration take seriously those threats on the stability of this region?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We take them very seriously because we think that terrorists and extremists are spoilers. They disrupt economies, they destroy lives, they destabilize communities, countries, and regions, if they are permitted to do so. So we have worked very closely with the countries of the Maghreb to establish a security relationship, to share information, to cooperate wherever possible, because we are well aware that our friends such as our Moroccan friends are successful. And that, unfortunately, is often a target for the terrorists because they don't want people to live lives that are of their own making, having a successful woman like you sitting in this chair –

QUESTION: Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- in front of the camera. And so we want to help you preserve your way of life, your economic progress, your constitutional changes. And therefore, we have to work against the terrorist threat.

QUESTION: But in concrete terms, how can you encourage, how can you help build this Maghreb which is now necessary for this region?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, one is encourage Morocco and Algeria –

QUESTION: Yes.

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- to cooperate more, because you two have so much that you have to do together against the terrorist threat. And the other is what we continue to do. We have joint programs, we have all kinds of cooperation that we offer, and we're going to do whatever we can to help protect you and the Maghreb.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, let's talk about the Palestinian issue. Two questions: Is a cause for grave concern to arrive public opinions, and perception around your support, the support of the United States to Israel, is, I would say, (inaudible) bad. If you were to be persuasive, what would you say on that issue?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think we should be judged by the very consistent, strong actions we have taken to try to create a two-state solution. It's something that started with my husband, and I was deeply involved. I was the first high-level American who called for a Palestinian state back in the 1990s. It certainly has continued on both the Republican and the Democratic side in our country. It's frustrating. I have every reason to understand how frustrating it is because I am often sitting across from a Palestinian leader or an Israeli leader or an Arab leader or a European leader, all of us trying to figure out how we're going to accomplish it. But I want people here in Morocco to know we are absolutely committed. We believe in the aspirations of the Palestinian people and their right to have a state of their own.

QUESTION: I said earlier that you were in Nigeria, but before that, you were in Tunisia for – you took part in the meeting of the Friends of Syria. You stated that the Syrian regime will pay the price, the higher price, if it continues to ignore the voice of international community. In concrete terms, what do you mean by pay the higher price?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think the regime will fall. I think that – I am not a fortuneteller. I cannot tell you when that will happen. But the Syrian army, which is largely a conscript army, is not going to continue to carry out these brutal assaults on the Syrian people. At some point, the defections will build, there will finally be created enough momentum against the regime from not only the security forces but business leaders, minorities who are worried about what's happening. So it will happen. It's just a question of when, and I wish it would happen sooner instead of later so that the killing could stop.

QUESTION: But how do you think you can lead (inaudible) to give up while Moscow and Beijing continue to (inaudible)?

SECRETARY CLINTON: It's a very unfortunate situation because Moscow in particular, with its long history with Assad, the family, and the regime, it's got an opportunity to try to help resolve the crisis. And instead, they stood in the way of the international consensus to do so. But I think even they are starting to get worried. I mean, these terrible pictures coming out of Homs are just heartbreaking, and people all over the world, including inside Russia and elsewhere, are seeing them.

So I do think that the pressure is building, the sanctions are beginning to really affect the economy within Syria, whether people can get what they need in the market. So I wish that this would end as soon as possible to stop the suffering, but the international community is resolved to keep the pressure on, to try to get humanitarian assistance in, and to keep helping the Syrian opposition build itself up so that it has credibility to be able to stand against Assad.

QUESTION: Mrs. Clinton, my last question, maybe you will answer – this is the issue that you are most sensitive, but I'm going to ask you – my last question is not intended for the Secretary of State, of course, but for the American citizen, for the woman you are, for the – Chelsea's mother. You are – such qualities you enjoy once you go back home, relieved from – of your official obligations, responsibilities. Out of the crises and conflicts going on all around the world, which is the most sensitive to you at that precise moment? Which one?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, right now, Syria. That just is heartbreaking to see the deaths and the brutality. But that's happening in many other places in the world; it's just not on a television set.

QUESTION: Yes.

SECRETARY CLINTON: If you go to the Eastern Congo and you meet, as I have, women and children who have been brutalized by militias, or you visit with the survivors of terrible terrorist attacks in Spain or Indonesia, I mean, as a mother – you're a mother – you ask yourself – all you want is for the world to be more peaceful and your children to grow up and become what God meant them to be, to use their talents to make the world a better place. And it's distressing and somewhat troubling that here we are in the 21st century, and instead of sitting down and resolving disputes peacefully, people are still using guns or machetes or bombs, and so it's the

level of violence, it's the unfortunate consequences of that, that really undermine the human community that I remain focused on and will continue to work to try to prevent.

QUESTION: What is, for you, the biggest change in United States before and after September 11? You lived the two periods, as a first lady –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right.

QUESTION: -- and then as Secretary of State. What is the biggest change in United States?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think the understanding that the United States was attacked. We've never been attacked like that, at least since the War of 1812 when the British attacked us. That was a long time ago. But this was such a terrible event in the consciousness of Americans. And I think it's made Americans more vigilant, more careful about the dangers that exist in the world.

QUESTION: To finish on a cheerful note, Madam Secretary, you are best remembered in Morocco's mind as a first lady dressed in Moroccan gown, kaftan, while greeting His Majesty King Mohammed VI in the White House. In my memory, the kaftan was red. I don't know if I'm right, but I think it was red. My question is: Have you bought any more Moroccan gown or kaftans since then?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I certainly do. White and gold –

QUESTION: How many do you have (inaudible)?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I have probably three fancy ones –

QUESTION: Yes.

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- and I have about five plain everyday ones. I find them so comfortable to wear, and the fancy ones are so beautiful that I really delight in wearing them.

QUESTION: Well, thank you, Madam Secretary, to have taken the time to enlighten us on those issues, all important. Thank you and good evening.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good evening. Thank you.

###

Interview With Wyatt Andrews of CBS

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Sofitel Hotel

Rabat, Morocco

February 26, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, good morning.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good morning.

QUESTION: Thank you for doing this. Let's get right to Syria, please. I know and respect that you think the Friends of Syria Conference on Friday was a success. But the shelling continues. I don't think we have any evidence that humanitarian aid is going in as the conference demanded. So on what level exactly was the conference a success?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Wyatt, perhaps I take a longer view than some in looking at the way that, again, the Arab League has led, which has been one of the most remarkable developments in the last year that they would take positions against fellow Arab nations on behalf of the aspirations that we all hold for the Arab Spring. The fact that so many other countries were present and all speaking with one voice – this is not to be, I think, diminished in terms of its importance. It doesn't mean that we aren't deeply distressed by what has continued.

QUESTION: But the world is united. I take your point, but what does that do?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, except that – well –

QUESTION: What does that do?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think it does several things. Sometimes, overturning brutal regimes takes time and costs lives. I wish it weren't so. I really, really do. I wish that those around Assad would realize that it may not be tomorrow, may not be next week, but they're done. I wish the military that serves that regime would quit staining their own honor and stand up for the rights of the Syrian people. I wish the businesspeople who are still sitting on the fence would realize that they're going to be so tightly sanctioned that it's going to be a big price for them to pay and so on. Because it's not just one man; it is a regime. And we think that we're putting a lot of pressure on that regime, and that there will be a breaking point. And we think that the regime itself is dishonoring who they are and what they stand for. They don't represent the Syrian people anymore; they represent a family, maybe the Ba'ath Party, a small group of insiders.

And so we're – we are pushing this day by day. But they also have very, very strong friends, if you look at Russia, China, and Iran, who are in there determined to keep Assad because he does

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer 1

their bidding, he buys their arms, he sells them oil. This is as clear a contrast between the values that the world now is embracing and the past.

QUESTION: But on the point of the pressure and the pressure you're trying to apply, our correspondent in Syria yesterday was interviewing some of the people still being shelled in Homs, and there was a poignant moment in this interview where this man says, who is under the shelling, says, "Where are you, Friends of Syria?"

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right.

QUESTION: He specifically mentions the conflict. He says Baba Amr – that's the suburb of Homs –

SECRETARY CLINTON: The – right.

QUESTION: -- is being shelled as if you did not exist, that – meaning the Friends of Syria Conference.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right.

QUESTION: Does he have a point?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Of course he has a point, and I am deeply, deeply distressed for the people that he represents who are trapped under this artillery bombardment. But the problem for everyone is you have a ruthless regime using heavy artillery and tanks that are war weapons of the greatest impact against defenseless people. So there will be – and I've said this before – there will be those who are going to find ways to arm these Syrians who are under attack. But even if they are given automatic weapons against tanks, against heavy artillery, the slaughter will go on. And what I'm at – I'm wondering is what about the people in Damascus, what about the people in Aleppo? Don't they know that their fellow Syrian men, women, and children are being slaughtered by their government? What are they going to do about it? When are they going to start pulling the props out from under this illegitimate regime?

QUESTION: You're sending a message to them?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Yes, I am.

QUESTION: The Administration made a point this week of suggesting that if Assad does not step down, does not stop the violence, that the U.S. would consider additional measures. Talk to me. What are the additional measures?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'm not going to go into that, Wyatt. I think we did signal that this kind of wanton violence is just unacceptable. There are countries that are much closer with a much greater stake in the neighborhood who are looking at what they might do. Obviously, we are talking with them to see whether they intend to take action and whether they need any kind of logistical or other support, but no decisions have been made.

QUESTION: You're suggesting nonlethal support? Or are you suggesting that the United States may support the closet backchannel arming of the rebels that's going on now?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We have made no decisions to do any of the above. We are in consultations with others who are watching this as we are watching it, and trying to determine what more can be done.

QUESTION: When I go back to the plight of the folks being shelled and who are very plaintive in their requests of the international community to be stronger, the question is: How long does the killing go on before the additional measures you're talking about kick in?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think, Wyatt, if you take just a moment to imagine all the terrible conflicts that go on in the world, we have seen in the last 15 years millions of people killed in the Eastern Congo in the most brutal, terrible, despicable ways. It wasn't on TV. There were no Skype-ing from the jungles that were the killing fields. And I could point to many other places where governments oppress people, where governments are turning against their own people. And you have to be very clear-eyed about what is possible and what the consequences of anything you might wish to do could be.

I am incredibly sympathetic to the calls that somebody do something. But it is also important to stop and ask what that is and who's going to do it and how capable anybody is of doing it. And I like to get to the second, third, and fourth order questions, and those are very difficult ones.

QUESTION: The U.S. has repeatedly said that it's reluctant to support the direct arming of the dissidents. The U.S. has been reluctant to arm the dissidents. Why?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first of all, we really don't know who it is that would be armed. We have met some of the people from the Syrian National Council. They're not inside Syria. This is not Libya, where you had a base of operations in Benghazi, where you had people who were representing the entire opposition to Libya, who were on the road meeting with me rather constantly, meeting with others. You could get your arms around what it is you were being asked to do and with whom. We don't have any clarity on that. We -

QUESTION: But what's the - Madam Secretary, what's the fear?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well -

QUESTION: On the ground, what is the fear -

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first -

QUESTION: -- of arming the rebels?

SECRETARY CLINTON: First of all, as I just said, what are we going to arm them with, and against what? You're not going to bring tanks over the borders of Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. That's not going to happen.

So maybe at the best, you can smuggle in automatic weapons, maybe some other weapons that you could get in. To whom, where do you go? You can't get into Homs. Where do you go? And to whom are you delivering them? We know al-Qaida. Zawahiri is supporting the opposition in Syria. Are we supporting al-Qaida in Syria? Hamas is now supporting the opposition. Are we supporting Hamas in Syria?

So I think, Wyatt, despite the great pleas that we hear from those people who are being ruthlessly assaulted by Assad, you don't see uprisings across Syria the way you did in Libya. You don't see militias forming in places where the Syrian military is not trying to get to Homs. You don't see that, Wyatt. So if you're a military planner or if you're a Secretary of State and you're trying to figure out, do you have the elements of an opposition that is actually viable, we don't see that. We see immense human suffering that is heartbreaking and a stain on the honor of those security forces who are doing it.

QUESTION: We're out of time, but thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

Remarks With Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Zalmay Rassoul After Their Meeting

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

March 21, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good morning, everyone. I am very pleased to welcome back to the State Department Foreign Minister Rassoul. He and I have worked closely together for several years. We have developed a very constructive, productive relationship, which I greatly appreciate.

Before I discuss the serious and important business that the minister and I are doing together, I want to commend the United Nations Security Council for its strong statement on Syria this morning in support of the six-point plan put forward by the UN and Arab League Joint Special Envoy Kofi Annan. This is a positive step. The Council has now spoken with one voice. It has demanded a UN-supervised cessation of violence in all its forms, beginning with a pullback from population centers by the Syrian Government forces, humanitarian access to all areas in need, and the beginning of a Syrian-led political process to address the legitimate aspirations of all the Syrian people that will lead to a democratic transition.

We call on all Syrians who love their country and respect its history and understand the tremendous potential that working together provides for the kind of peaceful and prosperous future in freedom and democracy that Syrians deserve to call for and work for the immediate implementation of the Annan plan. And to President Assad and his regime, we say, along with the international community: Take this path, commit to it, or face increasing pressure and isolation.

And now with respect to Afghanistan, I know this has been a difficult period. And as I have publicly stated, as President Obama has also, we deeply regretted the unfortunate incidents regarding the Qu'ran and the recent killings of innocent Afghan men, women, and children. This has been very personally painful to me and to the President. It does not represent who the United States is, who the American people are, and we appreciate the understanding and response of the Afghan Government and the Afghan people.

Foreign Minister Rassoul has come to Washington today to participate in the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council. I will be joining Laura Bush and others for this anniversary commemoration, and I want to thank the minister for being with us.

In the past decade, the women of Afghanistan have made strong progress by many measures. Life expectancy has increased dramatically. Fewer women are dying in childbirth. More children are surviving. The numbers of girls in school and women in universities has increased significantly. Maternal, infant, and under-five mortality for children have dropped. And on the political front, the 2004 constitution enshrines equal rights for all Afghan women, who are

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

serving in the government, in the parliament, important positions in business, academia, and so much else. And as I will emphasize at the anniversary celebration, our goal must be to secure and build upon this progress, not only for the women of Afghanistan but for the men and children, who represent the future.

We've entered a critical period of transition. There is no question we have a lot of work to do. But over the past decade, our two countries have built a relationship that is both tough and resilient. We cooperate every single day in so many ways to work toward a future of security, peace, and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan.

These fundamentals are what guides us. We've invested a great deal in the relationship, and the United States is committed to a strong, stable, secure Afghanistan and committed to working through together the very difficult issues we face together in a way that reinforces Afghan sovereignty. We're working toward turning over full responsibility for security nationwide to Afghan forces by the end of 2014, in accordance with the commitment we made, along with our allies and partners, at the Lisbon summit. As the Afghans take the lead on security, we will be moving into a supporting role, and we will be discussing this in more detail at the upcoming NATO summit in Chicago and then at follow-on meetings in Kabul and in Tokyo.

At the same time, we are committed to supporting Afghan reconciliation. Our only goal is to open the door for Afghans to sit down with other Afghans and to work out the future for their country. Our position has been consistent; we have been clear about the necessary outcomes. Any negotiation must require the Taliban to break ties with al-Qaida, to renounce violence, and to abide by Afghanistan's constitution, including the protections of women's and minority rights. We've also made clear that the steps the Taliban must now take to advance the process. They must make unambiguous statements distancing themselves from international terrorism and committing to a process that includes all Afghans.

So the Taliban have their own choice to make, but let there be no doubt that the United States is prepared to work with all Afghans who are committed to an inclusive reconciliation process that leads toward lasting security. And we will continue to support economic and educational opportunities so all the Afghan people have the chance to build better futures for themselves and their nation. And of course, we will continue to defend the rights of Afghan women.

We are committed to a long-term, productive, and mutually beneficial partnership with the government and people of Afghanistan. And again, I thank my colleague and friend, the foreign minister, for the many contributions he has made and is making to the future of your country.

FOREIGN MINISTER RASSOUL: Thank you very much, Honorable Madam Clinton, for those kind words, and thank you for the warm welcome and generous hospitality that you have extended to myself and my delegation during this important visit. It's always a pleasure to be in D.C., especially during this year, cherry blossom season.

And it's an honor also to be here with you, Honorable Madam Secretary, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council. Thank you for inviting me to participate in this important event. Let me just underline once again that our commitment to the right of the

Afghan women is solid and will continue in accordance with our constitution and Afghanistan international obligations.

Thank you also for being outstanding friend of Afghanistan. As Madam Secretary pointed out, we spoke about a number of important topics. And as you mentioned, we spoke about the recent tragic event in Afghanistan of the – from the burning of the Holy Qu'ran to the killing of Afghan civilian in Kandahar. We appreciate very much the statement that President Obama and you, Madam Secretary, and other government congressional leaders in this town have made and condemned this event. We know we are awaiting for the swift and transparent investigation of this case and the punishment of anyone involved. That will greatly reinforce the Afghan people's confidence and the existence of strong friendship and partnership with the United States.

Indeed, the great shared sacrifices in blood and treasure to the American and Afghan people have given in Afghanistan in the past decade in the fight against terrorism and for the country's peace development and young democracy have created solid foundation for a close, long-term friendship and partnership between our two governments, our two nations. I have no doubt about that.

We have also discussed about the transition issues. We know that we are starting the third phase of transition and we'll continue to commit to that. We have discussed the issue of Strategic Partnership. We have made lot of progress recently on two issues of detainees and special forces action, and we are very hopeful that we'll be able to sign the Strategic Partnership as soon as possible, hopefully before the Chicago conference.

We have discussed, as Madam Secretary mentioned, the peace process, and we are happy to see that you fully support an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process and we are going to continue despite the difficulties in this path.

We have also discussed the regional issues, the economy, political and security, our relation with our neighbors in the region, upcoming conferences in the month to come on the RECCA conference in Dushanbe and the conference of Kabul conference, Chicago conference, and Tokyo conference.

Thank you very much again, Madam Secretary, for your friendship

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

MS. NULAND: We'll take one question from each side today. We'll start with Jill Dougherty of CNN.

QUESTION: Thank you. Madam Secretary, I just wanted to follow up quickly on your Syria statement. You did call it strong and positive. But is it really workable? Who will enforce that, especially pulling back and the humanitarian two-hour break?

And then on Afghanistan, you mentioned reconciliation. The Taliban are saying that they don't want to talk essentially, so where do you go from there? Is there any prospect of that reconciliation continuing?

And Foreign Minister Rassoul, just wanted to ask you – President Karzai says that the U.S. is not cooperating on this investigation of the shooting. Is that still – is that – do you share that opinion? Is that the official opinion still of the Afghan Government, that the U.S. is not cooperating?

And if I could just – you mentioned the security agreement. Night raids are a big issue right now. It looks like there might be some progress on having a warrant system for the night raids. Are you – is that – is there some progress? Are you – is that hurdle over?

Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, those are, I think, four questions. (Laughter.)

Let me start with Syria. The Joint Special Envoy Kofi Annan's team is in Damascus discussing implementation of his plan which has now been endorsed by the Security Council. He will be, obviously, meeting with the government – or his team will be meeting with the government but also with community and opposition leaders as well. The unanimous support by the Security Council for this plan will add quite significant import to the discussions.

In the meantime, we are coordinating with the United Nations on the delivery of humanitarian aid. We're working with the Syrian opposition to strengthen its preparation to participate in the Syrian-led transition process that the council has endorsed. Obviously, we're doing a lot of work in preparation for the upcoming meeting of the Friends of Syria in Istanbul, and we are also calling on the Syrian military to refuse orders to fire on their fellow citizens. And we're also calling on members of the business community who still support the regime to work on behalf of implementing the Security Council statement and Kofi Annan's mission. So we are moving on multiple fronts, but we think it is quite significant that we are now all united behind Kofi Annan's mission, and I will continue to be in close touch with my colleagues from the Security Council and the United Nations as we go forward.

I think with respect to reconciliation, this is going to be a very long-term process. There's nothing quick or easy about it. And I think both the minister and I know that you are going to have bumps in the road, but as I said at the outset, our role is to support the Afghans. It's Afghan-led, it's Afghan-owned. And so after consultations with President Karzai, we articulated several steps that the Taliban must take in order to advance such an Afghan peace process, including opening a political office in Qatar, where everyone could test their presence and commitment. They have to make clear statements distancing themselves from international terrorism. That's not just an Afghan request. It is a request of the international community. And they have to support a political process.

Now, what the Taliban do is up to them. We have been clear we are prepared to continue discussions, and our goal is to open the door so that Afghans can be negotiating among and

between themselves. And as I've said from the very beginning, if there are Taliban insurgents who have no interest in reconciliation, they will continue to face military pressure. We are not stopping our efforts to support the security of Afghanistan while we try to see whether there is an opportunity for negotiations. So, really, at this point, Jill, the choice is up to them.

FOREIGN MINISTER RASSOUL: On your first question, I believe in the first stage of the incident, it was not clear if there is a full cooperation or not. As I mentioned to you, the Afghan Government and the Afghan people expect to see an investigation which is credible and be informed. So the real investigation is starting now, and we hope that we'll be informed on the fallout of this investigation.

On your second question, we have made progress on the framework of a special operation at night. The next meeting will happen tomorrow in Kabul, and I'm confident that we'll reach soon a conclusion, but it's premature to give you details of the content of that agreement.

MS. NULAND: Last question, Lalit Jha, Pajhwok Afghan News Agency.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mister Minister. Thank you, Madam Secretary. As you mentioned about the recent tragic events in Afghanistan, burning of Qu'ran and killing of 16 civilians there, can you give us a sense of where do we stand on the progress on the strategic partnership document? And what should the people of Afghanistan expect out of it? Do you expect this to be signed before the Chicago summit?

And secondly, on Pakistan, there are a few conditions that Pakistan is asking U.S. to fulfill after this November 26th incident. Is U.S. willing to accept those conditions? And Mister Minister, what kind of impact Afghanistan is having on because of the strained relations between the U.S. and of Pakistan?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first with respect to the strategic partnership agreement, I agree with Minister Rassoul that we are making progress. The United States is committed to a long-term relationship with the Government and people of Afghanistan. We're continuing our discussions to negotiate an agreement that is in the best interests of our countries and reflects the commitment we have to an enduring relationship. We've made good progress the last few weeks resolving some of the few outstanding issues. The recent memorandum of understanding on detention operations was signed.

As you heard the Minister, we are looking forward to finalizing the so-called night raids agreement. These are complicated issues, but we are resolving them. We're clearing the way toward a strategic partnership agreement. We would very much like to be in a position to sign such an agreement at – either before or at the Chicago summit, and I think we are on track to do so.

With regard to your question concerning Pakistan, we have made it clear we respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Pakistan. We also respect the democratic process that Pakistan is engaged in. We think it is actually quite significant that the democratically elected government, the democratically elected parliament, is engaging in these matters. We want an

honest, constructive, mutually beneficial relationship with Pakistan. We remain committed, through the recent ups and downs. We've been working through these difficulties and challenges. We believe we have shared interests. We believe we have the same enemies. We believe that it's important to support counterterrorism against the insurgents who kill and maim tens of thousands of Pakistani people, who send teams across the border to kill and maim people in Afghanistan and to kill and maim our soldiers and others.

So we actually think we have a very strong security interest and mutually shared objectives with Pakistan, but we also think supporting democracy and prosperity in Pakistan and stability in the region is good for Pakistan, it's good for Afghanistan, and it's good for the United States. So we're waiting to see the results of the parliament's debate, their recommendations to the government. Since it is ongoing, I think it would be not appropriate for me to comment at this time. They should be able to engage in their debate. But we stand ready to continue our work with the government and people of Pakistan.

FOREIGN MINISTER RASSOUL: I think Madam Secretary responded to your question from my side too. United States is a friend and allies of Afghanistan, and Pakistan is a neighbor of Afghanistan and a brotherly neighbor. So as Madam Secretary mentioned, at the end of the day, you have the same interest. A peaceful, stable, democratic Afghanistan is definitely the interest of Pakistan. And a destabilized Pakistan is not the interest of Afghanistan, neither United States. So we need to work together to come out with a full understanding that we have a common enemy, and we are linked to each other, and the stability and prosperity of one is the interest of other.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you all very much.

###

Remarks With Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

RELEASE IN FULL

Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

March 31, 2012

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you very much, Your Highness. It's wonderful to be back here in Riyadh. And I thank you for your warm hospitality, and I also wish to thank the secretary general and the GCC for the work that went into preparing this meeting and the hospitality you have provided us.

I was delighted yesterday to have the opportunity to visit with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty, King Abdullah. And I want to thank him again, publicly and personally, for his leadership and hospitality.

The partnership between our two countries goes back more than six decades, and today we are working together on a wide range of common concerns, both bilaterally and multilaterally. For example, both the United States and Saudi Arabia share an interest in ensuring that energy markets foster economic growth. And we recognize and appreciate the leadership shown by the kingdom. We are working together to promote prosperity in both our countries and globally.

In today's inaugural session of the Strategic Cooperation Forum, I underscored the rock-solid commitment of the United States to the people and nations of the Gulf. And I thanked my colleagues for the GCC's many positive contributions to regional and global security, particularly the GCC's leadership in bringing about a peaceful transition within Yemen. We hope this forum will become a permanent addition to our ongoing bilateral discussions that exist between the United States and each nation that is a member of the GCC. We believe this forum offers opportunities to deepen and further our multilateral cooperation on shared challenges, including terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and piracy, as well as broader economic and strategic ties.

Among other things, it should help the American and GCC militaries pursue in concert a set of practical steps, such as improving interoperability, cooperating on maritime security, furthering ballistic missile defense for the region, and coordinating responses to crises. Let me turn to a few of the specific challenges facing the region that we discussed.

I will start with Iran, which continues to threaten its neighbors and undermine regional security, including through its support for the Assad regime's murderous campaign in Syria, threats against the freedom of navigation in the region, and interference in Yemen. The entire world was outraged by reports that Iran was plotting to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

States and by allegations of Iranian involvement in recent terrorist attacks in India, Georgia, and Thailand.

Of course, the most pressing concern is over Iran's nuclear activities. The international community's dual-track approach has dramatically increased pressure on Iran through crippling sanctions and isolation, while at the same time leaving open the door if Iran can show it is serious about responding to these legitimate international concerns. It soon will be clear whether Iran's leaders are prepared to have a serious, credible discussion about their nuclear program, whether they are ready to start building the basis of a resolution to this very serious problem. It is up to Iran's leaders to make the right choice. We will see whether they will intend to do so starting with the P-5+1 negotiations in Istanbul, April 13th-14th. What is certain, however, is that Iran's window to seek and obtain a peaceful resolution will not remain open forever.

Turning to Syria, tomorrow leaders from more than 60 nations will gather in Istanbul for the second meeting of the Friends of the Syrian People. We heard this week from Kofi Annan, the special representative of both the United Nations and the Arab League, that the Assad regime had accepted his initial six-point plan, which calls for the regime to immediately pull back its forces and silence its heavy weapons, respect daily humanitarian ceasefires, and stop interfering with peaceful demonstrations and international monitoring.

But the Syrian Government is staying true to form, unfortunately, making a deal and then refusing to implement it. As of today, regime forces continue to shell civilians, lay siege to neighborhoods, and even target places of worship. So today, my fellow ministers and I agreed on the need for the killing to stop immediately and urged the joint special envoy to set a timeline for next steps. We look forward to hearing his views on the way forward when he addresses the Security Council on Monday.

Meanwhile, in Istanbul, the international community will be discussing additional measures to increase pressure on the regime, provide humanitarian assistance, despite the obstacles by the regime, and look for ways to advance an inclusive, democratic, orderly transition that addresses the aspirations of the Syrian people and preserves the integrity and institutions of the Syrian state. I'll have much more to say about this tomorrow, but I want to acknowledge the leadership of Saudi Arabia and the other members of the GCC during this crisis. They have been strong advocates for the Syrian people, and I applaud their efforts.

Finally, I want to emphasize a security concern that is one that is reflected in the great movements for change across this region. We have to continue working people-to-people. We have to continue finding ways to respond to the legitimate aspirations that civil society represents. And the United States will be reaching out to all of the member nations and the people of these nations to find ways that peacefully recognize those aspirations.

So again, let me thank the foreign minister for his hospitality and his partnership and our continuing close and important consultations. Thank you, sir.

QUESTION: Your Highness, Ms. Clinton, welcome to Riyadh. We're expecting that --

PARTICIPANT: (Inaudible.)

QUESTION: What?

PARTICIPANT: (Inaudible.)

MODERATOR: We'll start with Jill Dougherty of CNN. Jill.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. Thank you. I would like to ask a question of both of you about this issue of arming the Syrian opposition. Mr. Foreign Minister, the – Saudi Arabia has said that it does support this idea. We have not heard as much of it in recent days, so I wanted to ask you again: Does Saudi Arabia still support the idea of arming the opposition? And how do you guarantee that those weapons will not get into the hands of terrorists or al-Qaida?

Secretary Clinton, is there any type of flexibility in the U.S. approach to that issue of arming? And just one other question: In terms of this political solution, ultimately, should President Assad decide – if he decides to accept some type political transition, is there any possibility or would it be acceptable to the United States or to Saudi Arabia that he remain in control or power in some fashion or another, or must he completely leave the scene? Thank you.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: Well, I think the first part of the question was terrorism. If we believe the propaganda of Syria, there is no real war in Syria. It's only terrorists making trouble there, and they're fighting terrorists. Today, they announced that they had finished the uprising in Syria, and yet the cannons continue to fire and tanks continue to move. We are living in a world where truth and falsehood have become mixed. But (inaudible) tell you that what is happening in Syria is a tragedy of tremendous consequence.

So – and this is happening because the Syrians (inaudible). The Syrian Government in Syria have decided that they can resolve everything and control the demonstrations and keep everybody contained by military force. And unless the world, instead of taking decisions to (inaudible) help the Syrians themselves – we didn't start the fight for them, (inaudible) telling them to fight. But they are fighting because they don't see any way out. And the killing goes on. So do we let the killing go on, or do we help them at least to get – to defend themselves? Nobody is looking for harmings here.

I think the administration there is doing all it can to do that, and they don't need any help. The people that need help are the Syrian people who are fighting for their livelihood and for their freedom. And that – yes, indeed, we support the arming of the nationalists.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Jill, we had a good exchange on Syria, both in a pre-meeting with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, and during the GCC Strategic Cooperation Forum in preparation for the meeting tomorrow in Istanbul. And, as you just heard from the foreign minister, King Abdullah has been an outspoken critic of the Assad rule by bloodshed and is committed to assisting the Syrian people. We want to see the Syrian regime fulfill the obligations that it has already made, most recently to Kofi Annan, to end the violence and implement the Annan plan and allow a democratic transition.

Our focus tomorrow will be on four points. First, to intensify the pressure we bring through sanctions. Several of the Gulf countries have been quite advanced in imposing sanctions. We want to see broader international enforced sanctions. Second, getting the humanitarian assistance to those in need. Third, we have to continue working to strengthen the opposition's unity and democratic vision so that it can represent an alternative to the Assad regime and participate fully in a transition process. They, frankly, have a lot of trouble communicating with one another and communicating from outside Syria into Syria. So we're all working very hard to assist them. And fourth, we want to discuss how to help the Syrian people prepare to hold those responsible who have been committing these terrible acts of violence.

How we help the Syrian opposition is something we are focused on. We are moving to consider all of our options, and we are talking seriously about providing non-lethal support. We think it's important to coordinate with our partners in the GCC and beyond. So discussions will continue in Istanbul, and we'll have more to say after the meeting tomorrow.

QUESTION: I'm sorry. Assad's staying in power?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We're going to have more to say tomorrow. But our position is he has to go, that there would be unlikely to be any kind of negotiations with him still in place. But at this point, we want to hear from the opposition, what they're willing to do, what kinds of steps they would be supportive of.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: I doubt that we are going to really (inaudible).

QUESTION: (Inaudible) from (inaudible). My question will be for both of you. And once again, welcome to Riyadh.

You mentioned Iran so many times in your word, and we know the effect of it. They are supporting Syria; they're supporting Houthis in Yemen. We know (inaudible) in Iraq, et cetera. Is that going to – or would that impact (inaudible) the missile defense system project for the Gulf – is it going to be (inaudible)? And also, you mentioned helping Yemen or supporting Yemen. How would that be? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we believe strongly that, in addition to our bilateral military cooperation between the United States and every member nation of the GCC, we can do even more to defend the Gulf through cooperation on ballistic missile defense. We began that conversation in this forum today. Admiral Fox, the commander of the Fifth Fleet, made a presentation outlining some of the challenges that we face when it comes to ballistic missile defense. But we are committed to defending the Gulf nations and we want it to be as effective as possible.

So just – without getting into a lot of technical discussion, sometimes to defend one nation effectively you might need a radar system in a neighboring nation, because of the – everything from the curvature of the earth to wind patterns, so that were a missile to be launched, you might get a better view more quickly from a neighboring nation, even though the missile could be

headed toward a second nation. So we want to begin expert discussions with our friends about what we can do to enhance ballistic missile defense. There are some aspects of a ballistic missile defense system that are already available, some of which have already been deployed in the Gulf. But it's the cooperation – it's what they call interoperability that we now need to really roll up our sleeves and get to work on.

With respect to Yemen, the leadership of the GCC has been commendable. Saudi Arabia and its partners in the GCC laid the groundwork for the peaceful transition of power. And we now think that Yemen has a chance to unite around a different leadership. The road ahead is a long one, but I know that Saudi Arabia and other members, the United States, we are all committed to assisting. And it's not just on the political front. We want to help the people of Yemen. They are in great need of development assistance and other forms of help so that they can begin to realize the benefits of a new government that wishes to try to help them.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (Inaudible) for me? Well, you can see how the diplomacy has not moved as fast as American diplomacy. American diplomacy now can speak military lingo when we do not. We don't understand. We're going to request your experts. (Laughter.) But for (inaudible), I think it's a country that need help. It's a country – and old country of long civilization. And it has the (inaudible) power and the ability if they can stop the fighting that happened between (inaudible) fighting that (inaudible), a fact of life in Yemen. And they have agreed to appoint a new president, with 75 percent, I believe. I may be mistaken in the number. (Inaudible), which means that most civilians support it.

This fact alone makes this incumbent on the leadership in Yemen to come up with a program (inaudible) for the Yemeni people to unite them, to bring them together, (inaudible) military, and have the people support the program of the government. If that happens, I think we are very free to talk about development projects and development of Yemen. I haven't visited any country (inaudible) are not willing to assist in that field. And so in that case, I think the resources (inaudible) for development are there for the taking, if they can establish stability in Yemen.

MODERATOR: Next question, Brad Clapper, AP, please.

QUESTION: Yes. Madam Secretary, given the deep skepticism you and many other international leaders have about Iran's intentions, what steps would you talk about today with your Arab allies in the event that the talks in two weeks time aren't successful?

And secondly, if I may, you talked about the good cooperation the U.S. and the Gulf countries have, but only just recently one of the countries present here today essentially delivered a slap in the face to U.S. democracy-building efforts. What does that say about the limits of U.S. cooperation? And are you disappointed by that step?

SECRETARY CLINTON: With respect to Iran, we had an opportunity to discuss the P-5+1 negotiations – what we expect, what we are intending to present when the meetings begin. We're going in with one objective: to resolve the international community's concerns about Iran's nuclear program. And I had a chance to talk with our friends here about how we are approaching

these talks. I also reiterated what the President has said, that our policy is one of prevention, not containment.

We are determined to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. The President has made clear there is still time for diplomacy to work, provided Iran comes to the talks prepared for serious negotiations. And we enter into these talks with a sober perspective on Iran's intentions and its behavior. It is incumbent upon Iran to demonstrate, by its actions, that it is a willing partner and to participate in these negotiations with an effort to obtain concrete results. We will know more when the discussions begin. But I want to underscore that there is not an open-ended opportunity for Iran. These discussions have to be viewed with great seriousness from their very beginning.

With regard to your second questions, we obviously had numerous discussions on every issue with our friends in the Gulf – sometimes we agree, sometimes we disagree. But our overriding interests to cooperate, particularly in the security arena, the anti-terrorism arena, are ones that are paramount. And so when we have questions about decisions that are made, we raise them, we discuss them, and often times we can resolve them.

QUESTION: But do you have no direct comment about the NDI?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, you didn't ask me a direct question. (Laughter.) You were beating around the bush, so I beat around the bush. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: Fair enough.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Look, I think that we very much regret it. The foreign minister and I discussed it today. We are, as you know, anyone who's visited the United States, strong believers in a vibrant civil society, and both NDI and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Office play a key role in supporting NGOs and civil society across the region, and I expect our discussions on this issue to continue.

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

PARTICIPANT: Okay. We'll have more question then.

QUESTION: (In Arabic.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: With respect to your last question, I want to just amplify Prince Saud's remarks. We are all unified on our goal. Our goal is to see the end of the bloodshed and the end of the Assad regime, which has perpetrated this bloodshed. In order to achieve that goal, it is not enough just for a few countries to be involved. We need many more countries to work with us. And some will be able to do certain things, and others will do other things.

So when we talk about assistance, we are talking about a broad range of assistance. Not every country will do the same. The meeting tomorrow in Istanbul will be focused on what countries are able to do, and we will be exploring that further. But our goals are exactly the same, and we are committed to those goals, but we have to be united. And we also need a united opposition, which has been difficult to achieve. They're making progress. Many countries, including my own, have been trying to help them. But until they are unified, it is hard to provide the kind of assistance that they need in order to be successful.

So we are all on the same path together, and it may not go as fast as we would like, because every day that goes by where innocent people are murdered is a terrible indictment of this regime. But we are committed and we will make progress together.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUD: (In Arabic.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Onto Istanbul. (Laughter.) I think you'll get there before I go.

Remarks With Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski After Their Meeting**Remarks****Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

March 7, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, hello, everyone. And it's a delight once again to see my counterpart and friend, and to welcome Minister Sikorski here to the State Department. Poland is a very good friend and a trusted ally. We have deep historical and cultural ties that we cherish. Poland has just completed its tenure as the president of the European Union, where, once again, it demonstrated its leadership. It's a model and a mentor for emerging democracies; a force for peace, progress, and prosperity around the globe. And the foreign minister and I had a great deal to talk about, but these conversations will continue in our Strategic Dialogue among our officials later this week.

I just want to touch on a few highlights. Before I begin, let me once again offer our sincere condolences on behalf of the United States for Saturday's tragic rail accident. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones who lost their lives. And as we have already offered, we stand ready to assist in any way.

We are also deeply concerned about the people of Syria, who continue to endure a brutal and relentless assault at the hands of the Assad regime. The minister and I discussed the latest developments, and I expressed our deep appreciation for Poland's diplomatic role representing the United States in Damascus. And I want especially, Minister, to express our appreciation for the personal efforts of your ambassador in assisting U.S. citizens.

The regime's refusal to allow humanitarian workers to help feed the hungry, tend to the injured, bury the dead marks a new low. Tons of food and medicine are standing by while more civilians die and the regime launches new assaults. This is unacceptable, and we agree completely with the great majority of the international community. The regime must, as it promised last November, withdraw its forces, release political prisoners, permit peaceful protests, and allow international journalists to do their job, which is to tell the truth.

Through the Friends of the Syrian People group and other avenues, we are working to increase our pressure on the regime to end its attacks on civilians and to allow humanitarian access everywhere, as well as for it to meet its commitments under the Arab League Plan. It is past time for all Syrians to break with Assad and stand against this bloodshed and for a better future. It is also past time for those nations that continue to arm and support the regime to bring an end to the bloodshed. We urge all nations to work together to support the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people.

Given its own history, Poland understands better than many how important and difficult it is to stand up to tyranny. Poles remember the difficult choices they had to make, and they value their

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

hard-won freedom. And I want to applaud the leadership of Poland during this tumultuous last year. They've shared their experience and their wisdom with representatives from many countries that are struggling on the path toward democracy. And I want also to acknowledge that through the leadership of Poland at the Community of Democracies, they have provided tangible support for civil society, connecting activists and officials with veterans of previous transitions. We will continue to work closely with Poland to see what more we can do.

We also discussed a wide range of common concerns from Iran to Belarus. We are working closely with Poland on many security matters. And once again, let me thank the Polish people, and particularly their troops serving in Afghanistan, for their service and sacrifice. We also agree that the new missile interceptor that Poland will host, as well as a new American aviation detachment to be stationed in Poland, will be cornerstones of our mutual security commitments. And we look forward to the Chicago summit.

So we covered a lot of ground, and I thank you for your leadership and your thoughtful analysis of the issues before us, Minister, and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

FOREIGN MINISTER SIKORSKI: Thank you. Thank you, Hillary for those words and for having me here. Always a pleasure. And I hope next time we'll see each other in Warsaw. Thank you for the condolences. Likewise, we regret the death of the American journalist Marie Colvin, and I am pleased that our diplomats were able to be helpful in taking her body out of Syria. I agree with you that the democratization agenda is something that Poland and the United States can most effectively and fruitfully do together, because promotion of democracy is something that both of our nations feel in their bones. It's not our policy, it's what we are. And we are doing it in both the southern and the eastern neighborhood of the European Union.

As you mentioned, we discussed Belarus, and we've drawn plans to collaborate even more closely on monitoring developments in Belarus. We are also following the development of the situation in the Ukraine very closely. And we hope that Ukraine creates political conditions for a bigger and more intimate relationship with Europe and the West as a whole.

We're coming up to the Chicago NATO summit, and we've exchanged ideas on smart defense and on what we can do together to maintain the security of Europe even while the United States cuts its defense budget and cuts its troops – troop commitment to Europe. And there are things that we can usefully do like activating the NATO response force and exercising in Poland. And we are looking forward to your air detachment coming for the first time to Poland on a permanent basis later this year.

We also have a great deal of business in common, and we are looking forward to the Polish American business summit. And it's not just the energy field; there are other fields where more can be done. And of course, we follow the recent election and the future of our relations with Russia, an important neighbor of Poland's.

So again, thank you for a good conversation which shows that our alliance is strong and has a great future.

MODERATOR: We'll take two questions from the American side and two questions from the Polish side today. We'll start with Scott Stearns at VOA.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, Vladimir Putin looks to be returning to the presidency. You had some critical comments about the first round of voting. Can you tell us what you thought about the second round of voting in Russia and any hopes that the completion of that process might lead to some movement on Russia's position regarding Syria?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think as the OSCE made clear, there were a number of concerns about this latest electoral process that should be investigated and addressed. And we also remain concerned about the arrests of peaceful protesters, which occurred again on Monday. But the election had a clear winner and we are ready to work with President-elect Putin as he is sworn in and assumes the responsibilities of the presidency.

We are going to be looking for ways to enhance cooperation on a range of difficult issues. You mentioned one of them, Syria. I talked with Foreign Minister Lavrov yesterday; I will be seeing him in New York on Monday. We continue to believe that Russia should join the international community and play a positive role in trying to end the bloodshed and help create the conditions for a peaceful democratic transition. And we will continue to speak out where we think appropriate, because as Radek said, this is not what we do, it's who we are. We believe in democracy, we believe in human rights, we believe in the values that should underpin any great society in the 21st century, and that means for us that we recognize there has to be a lot of internal dialogue within Russia going forward so that the Russian people's aspirations can be fully realized as well.

MODERATOR: Marcin Firlej from Polish Public TV.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, Minister Sikorski, I'm pretty sure it wasn't the main topic of your discussion, but President Barack Obama in 2010, during official trip of President Bronislaw Komorowski to Washington, promised to include Poland into Visa Waiver Program by the end of his presidency. I would like to ask, what concrete steps have you taken to fulfill this promise? And Madam Secretary, can you assure Poles that they will be able to travel to the United States without visas by the end of this year?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, first, let me say we know this is an issue of tremendous importance to the Polish people, but it's also very important to the American people because of our close ties and the many family relations. Later this year, the minister and I will be joining our presidents in Chicago, which I think has the largest Polish population outside Warsaw in the world.

So this is a matter of great concern and commitment. And as you rightly said, President Obama has expressed his support for the pending legislation in the Congress that would create broader participation in the Visa Waiver Program. We are working very hard with Congress to try to get that legislation through. I will be very honest with you. We have strong support and we have strong opposition, and so we need to work together to redouble our efforts. And we have to make sure that Poland can do more right now to move toward what the existing standards are, and then

hopefully, if the legislation is passed, to be able to get in position and take advantage of it, including an agreement on data sharing, which we have with 20 other EU countries.

So I know the President pledged that this would be done before the end of his presidency, and probably that will be a little longer than the end of this year. But we are going to continue to work very hard to see that it is accomplished.

MODERATOR: CNN, Elise Labott, please.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. You talked about Syria and increasing the pressure on the regime. Beyond just increasing the pressure, can you talk about tangible ways that you're working on to help the opposition? Specifically, Secretary Panetta had just told a congressional panel that you're looking to provide technical assistance and humanitarian assistance. If you could flesh that out a little bit? And there has been a call by many senators to arm the opposition and get militarily involved. I'm wondering if you could – do you feel a lot of pressure on the Hill to do that? And if you could speak to whether you feel that that's in the offing. Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Elise, we have pressure coming from all directions, not only one direction. But what we're trying to do, and I think the President was very clear on that in his press conference yesterday, is to do everything we can to support the opposition, which is not yet as unified and focused either inside or outside Syria as we hope it could become.

We are working to build a stronger international coalition of support for taking action on the humanitarian level, on the political transition that needs to come in Syria. And we believe that it is a matter of time – we can't put an exact timeframe on when – but we think that Assad and his regime will not be able to survive. So we do think it's appropriate to help the opposition, but where we're focused on is how we help them be more unified, communicate more clearly, have a message to all their Syrian counterparts who are not yet convinced that it's in their interests for Assad to go. And I think that it's – we recognize it's a challenging situation. But I don't know that it's useful for me to go into any greater detail than what the President said yesterday and what Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey are testifying to publicly today.

MODERATOR: The last question is for –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Can Minister Sikorski say something?

FOREIGN MINISTER SIKORSKI: Just at the end, I'd like to give a couple of sentences in Polish.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Okay. Good, good, good. Okay.

MODERATOR: So the last question for (inaudible).

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, there are opinions that after recent Vladimir Putin's win in the Russian presidential elections, Russia might even harden its line on anti-missile – American anti-

missile defense in Europe. Would the United States be willing to make any concessions to accommodate possible Russian concerns in this matter?

SECRETARY CLINTON: We have been very clear that missile defense is a matter for NATO. NATO has made a decision. We believe that it is in all of our interest to carry forward and implement that decision. Poland, as you know, was the first country to commit to hosting an element of the European missile defense architecture. It was the first to bring into force a basing agreement. Poland's support for the Phased Adaptive Approach is a strong pillar within the NATO collective security commitment, and we are going full speed ahead. We have every intention and we've taken every action to demonstrate our seriousness.

Now, we've also made it clear that we would love to cooperate on missile defense against mutual threats with Russia. That is not only a U.S. position, that is also through NATO that we have sought to discuss this at the NATO-Russia Council. Thus far, we've not seen a lot of movement, but we are going to continue to press that with the Russians and hope that there will be an agreement at some point that could be in both of our interests. But Russia has no veto over what we do in NATO. Our commitment is to our NATO allies, to our Article 5 collective security obligations, and missile defense is an integral part of that.

And then I think Radek wants to also say a few words in Polish.

FOREIGN MINISTER SIKORSKI: (In Polish.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

Remarks With Prime Minister Elkeib After Their Meeting**Remarks****RELEASE IN FULL****Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Secretary of State

Treaty Room**Washington, DC****March 8, 2012**

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good morning, everyone. I just have to express that it is not only an honor, but a personal pleasure to welcome the prime minister of a free Libya on his visit to Washington, where he's had excellent consultations in the White House meeting with, among others, the President, and an excellent presentation before the UN Security Council yesterday in New York. Just think, this time last year, the United States was working to build an international coalition of support for the Libyan people, and today we are proud to continue that support as the people of Libya build a new democracy that will bring about peace and prosperity and protect the rights and dignity of every citizen.

The prime minister and I had a very productive, comprehensive discussion about the many issues Libya is facing. We do not underestimate how challenging the road ahead will be. We are aware of that. We've been on the path to democracy for more than 235 years, and we know that there are potholes and pitfalls along the way. Qadhafi spent 42 years hollowing out Libya's institutions, ruling through intimidation and division, but after his defeat, over the last four months, the prime minister and this interim government have provided essential and effective leadership and they've begun the hard work of putting Libya back together. We've seen progress in each of the three key areas of democratic society – building an accountable, effective government; promoting a strong private sector; and developing a vibrant civil society. And we will stand with the people of Libya as it continues this important work.

On the governance front, the interim leadership has established an inclusive election law and set up a supreme elections commission with the goal of holding constitutional assembly elections this June. This is a critical first step that will pave the way for a new constitution grounded in democratic principles. We fully support the elections commission as it works to meet its deadlines and ultimately elect a fully democratic parliament that can begin delivering results for the Libyan people. We're also encouraged by the prime minister's and the government's commitment to promoting human rights and the rule of law, and we are offering help to the government as they continue investigating allegations of human rights violations. They realize and we applaud their commitment to ending this kind of violence in the new free Libya.

We also know there are problems with border security, with integrating militias, with working toward national reconciliation, and on all of these and more, we are working with our Libyan partners. At the same time, on the economic front, business is picking up. Libya has exceeded everyone's expectations in resuming oil production. The United States and the UN have removed almost all restrictions on doing business, and we are encouraging American companies to look for opportunities inside Libya. We also are supporting the booming new civil society that is developing in Libya. I was delighted when I visited Tripoli to go to the university, to talk with

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

young people, to meet with others who are fighting for women's rights and human rights in their country.

Our Middle East Partnership Initiative and USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives are working with many civil society groups. And the UN support mission in Libya is playing a valuable role. We're exploring ways to promote partnerships and exchanges in the health field with a particular emphasis on continuing to assist the war wounded. We're looking at establishing a U.S.-Libya higher education task force with the goal of expanding academic and student exchanges. And I am pleased that we will begin providing visa services at Embassy Tripoli for Libyan Government officials. We want to get permanent facilities, but obviously in the short term, we want to set up shop and begin to reach out in the most important way – on a people-to-people basis to the Libyans.

So Mr. Prime Minister, I and our government look forward to working with you and the Libyan people as you continue to make progress on behalf of a new, free, democratic Libya.

PRIME MINISTER ELKEIB: Madam Secretary of State, thank you very much for your kind words and for hosting me today and my team. On behalf of the Libyan people, I extend our deepest appreciation to the American people and leadership and say, simply and deeply, thank you. I also thank Dr. – President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Ambassador Rice for having been a tremendous support and for their strong leadership in supporting the Libyan revolution, which has been so successful that it did indeed impress everybody. We Libyans are very proud of our young men and women who brought freedom to our country after 42 years of a brutal regime that nobody felt would disappear in eight months. So we do thank our friends and partners so much for having been there when we needed them.

We have come here today to find ways on how we can work and how we can better work together. One of the things that I did request help with from Madam Secretary was the remnant of the past regime. They have been a nuisance and have been – they have been causing problems and we need them back to give them proper justice. And we also need the funds they have stolen from the Libyan people to come back to Libya. So we look forward to help in that area from the U.S. and from everybody else who can help us here. It's very important to us.

During the revolution, the Libyan people demonstrated time and time again great courage and resilience. Our citizen army of teachers and mechanics, lawyers, students, professors, our sons and daughters suffered great losses along with the civilian population, but with great bravery and unfortunately too much in terms of losses. But however, in the end, we succeeded in making the dream of a free Libya a reality, and we'll keep it that way.

We also, in a direct fashion and I hope Madam Secretary would forgive me for having done that, requested help with our wounded young men with very difficult cases. And the response was very positive, and we cannot thank you enough for that. Libyans are putting the same energy and determination that fueled the revolution into establishing a new Libya that has a positive contribution, maybe in a small way, at least, to the environment around it and to the world around it. And we are determined to do that. Libya needed the facelift and the revolution has given it to her. We are looking for a new Libya founded on the principles of democratic

governance and rule of law and dedicated to improving the quality of life for the Libyan citizens. And we call on our friends and partners who helped us to become free to also help us meet the aspirations of our people.

We had a very productive meeting today that focused on a number of areas of mutual interest and future opportunities for cooperation between our two countries. The Libyan Government is fully committed to holding free, fair, and transparent elections in June, and we look for continued support from the U.S. and our partners in that area. Now that the war of liberation of Libya is almost over – after we get those remnants of the past regime, it will be over – now that we are – the war is almost over, the U.S. private sector can help play an important role in rebuilding Libya and enabling us to meet our aspirations for peace, prosperity, and high quality of life. And we are determined to do that.

In the past year, the dynamics between the U.S. and Libya has been dramatically transformed for the better. We look forward to the continued strengthening of this relationship as Libya moves forward with its democratic transition and rebuilding its economy.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you, sir.

MS. NULAND: We have time to take two questions today. We'll start with Reuters, Andy Quinn.

QUESTION: Good morning. My questions will focus on Libya, if I may. Mr. Prime Minister, first for you, at the United Nations yesterday, the Russian Ambassador to the Security Council accused Libya of running camps to arm and train Syrian rebels. I'm hoping you can respond directly to this accusation. And also to discussion of these calls for autonomy in Benghazi and concern that this is going to threaten the future of the Libyan revolution, can you address that, please?

And for Madam Secretary, I'm wondering if you can tell us if you received any new assurances on the Megrahi case in your discussions today.

And both of you, if you could discuss what lessons Syria's rebels should take from the Libyan experience. Thank you.

MS. NULAND: That was four questions.

SECRETARY CLINTON: It was four questions. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRIME MINISTER ELKEIB: Excuse me. On the Syrian issue, we, I believe, were the first country to recognize the Syrian Transitional Council, and we did it because we felt that the Syrian cause is a good cause. It's people who are voicing their voice, raising their voice, asking for freedom. As far as training camps, unless this is something that is done without government permission, which I doubt, I'm not aware of any.

Concerning the East, the issue of a group of not more than few thousand trying to create a state, I can tell you this is democracy in practice; that is simply that. I know the person who is appointed by this small group. I know him very well, he's actually a friend, and I have respect for him as a result of his past. I disagree with the approach not because it's an opinion that people are sharing with others but because it has to be toward a constitution that we are about to create, that this issue should be raised.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Andy, I, of course, raised the Megrahi Pan Am 103 issue as I do whenever I meet with Libyan officials. You know where I stand. I believe that Megrahi should still be behind bars. And we know that Libya faces a multitude of challenges, but at the same time they have assured us that they understand the sensitivities of this case, and they will give the matter the consideration it deserves. We will continue to fight for justice for all the victims of Qadhafi and his regime. And in this particular case, the U.S. Department of Justice has an open case, and it will remain open while we work together on it.

Finally, with respect to Syria, I think what we saw coming out of Libya with the unity and the vision that the Transitional National Council presented to the world with the close linkage between the civilian representatives and the fighters for freedom, they presented a unified presence that created an address as to where to go to help them, a lot of confidence in their capacities on the ground, their commitment to the kind of inclusive democracy that Libya is now building. And we are working closely with the Syrian opposition to try to assist them to be able to present that kind of unified front and resolve that I know they feel in their own – on their behalf is essential in this struggle against the brutal Assad regime.

MS. NULAND: Last question is (inaudible) Lachlan.

QUESTION: Good morning to both of you. Madam Secretary, if I may on Iran, the P-5+1 issued at the IAEA a statement calling for Iran to open up the facility at Parchin. Do you consider that a condition for the talks to go ahead? And how confident are you that Iran will come to these talks seriously discussing the nuclear concerns you have?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Lachlan, I think that what we have demonstrated consistently through the P-5+1 is that the international community is united. We are united in our concerns and condemnation of Iran's actions that violate their international obligations, and we are united in continuing to press the Iranian regime to come to the diplomatic forum that the P-5+1 offers. So as the president made clear in his remarks just a few days ago, we continue to believe we have space for diplomacy. It is obviously coupled with very strong pressure in the form of the toughest sanctions that the international community's ever imposed.

We want to begin discussions with Iran. They insist that their nuclear program is purely peaceful and if that's the case, then openness and transparency, not only with the P-5+1 but also with the IAEA and the Security Council and the international community, is essential. That's why we want to respond as we did, positively, to the letter that came from the Iranians. I would also draw your attention to the statement that China released today in Vienna on behalf of the P-5+1 with regard to our expectations that access to Parchin and other Iranian sites will be provided. So we

are hoping that the Iranians will come to the table prepared to have the kind of serious and sincere discussion we have been looking for, for several years. We think it is even more pressing and imperative today than it has been in the past and we would like to see diplomatic progress, which we support.

Thank you all very much.

Interview With Andrea Mitchell of NBC News

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul Congress Center

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, you have said that there will be serious consequences if Assad does not stop killing his people, but this is the moment of truth. The time for excuses is over. But short of military intervention, what is going to stop this man?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Andrea, I see it as a progression that is too slow and it's very painful to watch the terrible killing continue by the Assad regime. But out of this meeting today, we have agreed on not only more sanctions, but a means of enforcing them. We now have a sanctions committee. That was quite an accomplishment because this group consists of a lot of countries that are really the mainstays of the Syrian economy. We have more humanitarian aid going in. We have an accountability project underway to catalog all of the atrocities that have been done. And we are increasing the various forms of assistance for the Syrian opposition. In addition, we are supporting Kofi Annan's process, but we wanted to have a timeline because we don't want to give Assad the excuse of being able to negotiate with no end.

QUESTION: Isn't he playing Kofi Annan for time? He says he's accepting the ceasefire, and more killings take place.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we are worried about that, but we know Kofi Annan will be reporting to the Security Council tomorrow. I want to hear firsthand from him. But we do want to support him by making it clear that he does have a timeline that has to be respected.

QUESTION: What about Saudi Arabia and the others who are calling for lethal aid – for weapons to the rebels – and also now creating a multimillion dollar fund which, we are told by conference participants, will be an inducement; they will give the money to the rebel soldiers and that will be an inducement to try to get more defections from Assad's army. Is that going to work?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think it's a significant step by a number of nations that are trying to support the opposition in one of the numerous ways that we are all helping. We're looking at technical assistance, communications assistance. I met with a group of the Syrian National Council opposition, including a young woman who just got out of Homs and told us in wrenching terms what it was like being under bombardment by the Assad regime. And she made it clear communications is a huge problem. The United States has a lot of expertise in that.

QUESTION: You're providing gear now?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: We are going to be working to provide that, and we know that that will be able to get into Syria, which will permit better communications inside Syria and between Syria and supporters outside.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, Iran. You seem very skeptical that they are serious about diplomacy. As these talks are going to resume in two weeks, do you really think that they are serious, or are they also playing for time and secretly working on their suspected weapons program while these negotiations then drag on?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that's what we're going to find out. We did welcome their outreach to return to the P5+1 negotiations.

QUESTION: The group of Western allies?

SECRETARY CLINTON: That's right, the group of – the five permanent members of the Security Council, including the European Union and Germany, but also including China and Russia. And in this arena, China and Russia have been quite productive. They too are quite concerned about Iran continuing a nuclear program and acquiring nuclear weapons. I think President Obama's policy is absolutely clear. It's prevention, not containment. We're going to do everything we can. But we want to pursue a diplomatic resolution. I think that's the sensible approach to take.

QUESTION: Many women during this period and – or campaign feel that their basic rights are under attack. Women really feel besieged on all sides. They call me, they write to me, you see it yourself. And I was at the Women in the World Conference when you said this: "They want to control how we act. They even want to control the decisions we make about our own health and our own bodies. Yes, it is hard to believe that even here at home, we have to stand up for women's rights and we have to reject efforts to marginalize any one of us because America has to set an example for the entire world."

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right.

QUESTION: What is happening in this political campaign?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I see it now from the perspective of having traveled so extensively, and we know that where women are marginalized, where they're demeaned, where their rights are denied, there is the likelihood you will have less democracy, more poverty, greater extremism. The United States is the model. There's been no place better to be a woman than in 21st century America. So we cannot allow any voices to be given credibility that would undermine the advances that women have made in our country. And I wanted to point out that it's not only about American women, which of course is our first and foremost concern, but it's about the example we set, the message we send to women around the world.

QUESTION: When Meryl Streep introduced you at that same conference, she said of you, "It is not a simple job to be a role model; it's an enormous burden. But that's what we ask of her." Are you willing to take that on?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I don't think of myself that way, but I know that I am considered that in the eyes of many people, and it's a great honor. It is a burden.

QUESTION: The most popular woman in the world for 10 years in a row.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, that – it is a great honor, but it also carries with it a lot of responsibility, which I take very seriously. I feel such a great privilege representing my country, and in the role of Secretary of State, dealing with all of the front burner issues like the two we just talked about, Syria and Iran, but also continuing to advocate for the long-term changes like the fulfillment of women's rights as unfinished business in this century, which is good for America and good for the world.

QUESTION: There is a lot of unfinished business. You deserve a rest after this journey's over.

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.)

QUESTION: Everyone knows that, and a lot of thanks, but there will come a time and there is a growing expectation that you will run for president and complete the goals that you have for men and women?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Andrea, that is –

QUESTION: Why not?

SECRETARY CLINTON: It's very flattering, but I'm not at all planning to do that. I have no desire or intention. I want to do the best job I can as the Secretary of State for this President. I want to then take some time to get reconnected to the stuff that makes life worth living – family, friends, the sort of activities that I enjoy. And I'll do some writing and some speaking and I'm sure I'll be continuing to advocate on these issues.

QUESTION: And then? Rush Limbaugh, in this campaign, did he go beyond anything that we have previously experienced in the way he attacked a civilian, a young woman who had just spoken up?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I try very hard to stay out of the politics, so let me put the campaign and the implications to one side. That is for others to comment on.

QUESTION: As a woman's leader?

SECRETARY CLINTON: But as a woman and as someone who can vaguely remember being a young woman –

QUESTION: And as a mother.

SECRETARY CLINTON: -- and as a mother of a young woman of that age and generation, I thought the response was very encouraging -- the response from the public, the response in particular from women cutting across all kinds of categories, the response from advertisers. So I'll let that speak for itself. We as a nation have every right -- and in fact, I welcome it -- to engage in the kind of debate and dialogue that is at the root of who we are as Americans. But let's not turn it into personal attacks and insults. We're beyond that. We're better than that. And people in the public eye have a particular responsibility to avoid it.

QUESTION: Chelsea was on a panel with Sandra Fluke at the 92nd Street Y and she said, "Rush Limbaugh attacked you when you were 30. He attacked me when I was 13."

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.) I read that she said that. Well, I think we need to call people out when they go over the line. They're entitled to their opinion, but no one is entitled to engage in that kind of verbal assault. Let's keep it on the issues. If you disagree on the issues, let's have a vigorous debate -- hopefully evidence-based. I would like that to be part of the debate. But that's fair game. But whether it comes from the right, the left, up, down, wherever it comes from, let's all ask for a return to civility and the kind of debate that really enables citizens to make better decisions.

STAFF: Andrea, last question.

QUESTION: Madame, Secretary --

STAFF: Sorry.

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.) You broke her chain of concentration.

QUESTION: Yeah, I just wanted to thank you very much for the interview.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

QUESTION: Thank you for being with us today.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Always good to see you, Andrea. You are an inspiration, believe me.

QUESTION: Hardly, but thank you for saying that.

Interview With Clarissa Ward of CBS News

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul Congress Center

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you so much for –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you.

QUESTION: -- taking the time to talk with us. I wanted to begin by talking about former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's six-point plan. During the week since Bashar al-Assad claimed to accept the plan, there's been no let-up in the violence, and I just wanted to ask you, at what point do we say that this plan has been a failure? What is the deadline?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Clarissa – excuse me, let me start over again – Clarissa, let me say that the plan is a good plan. It's getting it implemented, as you point out, which is the real challenge. And we're going to hear from Kofi Annan to the Security Council tomorrow, so we'll get a firsthand report. But as you saw coming out of this conference, there does need to be a timeline. We cannot permit Assad and his regime and his allies to allow what is a good faith negotiating process by a very expert, experienced negotiator to be used as an excuse for continuing the killing. We think Assad must go. The killing must stop. The sooner we get into a process that ends up there, the better. And I think former Secretary General Annan understands that.

QUESTION: But how do you enforce that timeline?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think it's self-enforced. I think he has to be the one who says, within a relatively short period of time, we're not getting any results, I was given promises, they're not kept. Because then we would go back to the Security Council. Now, what will Russia and China say? Kofi Annan has gone to Moscow, he's gone to Beijing, he's met with them. They support his plan. They have urged publicly that Assad follow the plan. So if we have to go back to the Security Council to get authority that would enable us to do more to help the Syrians really withstand this kind of terrible assault and get the aid that they need to get the humanitarian assistance they require, I think we'll be in a stronger position than we would if he hadn't had a chance to go and try to negotiate.

QUESTION: So one of the primary functions of the Friends of Syria is to provide support for the opposition, but up to this point, we still don't see any real coordination and communication among the different both armed and political opposition groups inside Syria. How much of a frustration is that for you as you go through this process?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'm encouraged by what we heard today, and I met privately with representatives of the Syrian National Council. They are making progress. They have unified around a compact, a national pact, about what they want to see in a new Syria, which is important, because then that sets the parameters for the kind of opposition that will be under their umbrella. They have reached out and included a much more diverse group of Syrians than when I met with them in Tunis or the first time in Geneva. They're making progress. This is quite difficult, but I am encouraged.

What they need is what we are now offering. We are offering assistance to them, and it's a variety of different sorts of assistance. The United States will be offering – in addition to significant humanitarian aid – will be offering technical and logistical support. You mentioned communications. They have a great deal of difficulty communicating inside Syria. You were there. You know how hard it is. We think we have some assets that we can get in there which we would try to do that will enable them to have better communication. So everyone's looking to see what they can provide that is value-added for the opposition.

QUESTION: But no clear leader has emerged who can articulate what the opposition's political vision for their country is.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think that leaders have emerged who have played a very important role, and I thought the presentation by Professor Ghalioun was good today in how he set forth what their objectives were. But in this kind of fast-moving event, more people will come to the forefront. I met a very impressive young woman who just left Homs who is now active in the Syrian National Council. She looks to me to be an up-and-coming leader. So I don't think we can sit here today and say who is the leader, but by assisting the Syrian National Council, we are assisting the leadership, and there will be leaders within the civilian side of that, and there will be leaders within the military side.

QUESTION: We were recently inside Syria in the north in the city of Idlib, and the rebels who we were staying with now tell us that they have no ammunition left, they have no money left, and that their only recourse for self defense is to build IEDs or bombs. Obviously, there is a host of very complex issues associated with arming the opposition, or rebel groups specifically, but are you not concerned that if no support comes from the outside, that this could really devolve into a very bloody, ugly insurgency, and that if we aren't the ones to provide that help, other non-state actors like extremist groups such as al-Qaida might be the ones to fill that void?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think that's why you heard today that a group of nations will be providing assistance for the fighters, and that is a decision that is being welcomed by the Syrian National Council. The United States will be doing other kinds of assistance. Other countries will as well. So we have evolved from trying to get our arms around what is an incredibly complex issue with a just nascent opposition that has now become much more solidified with a lot of doubts inside Syria itself from people who were either afraid of the Assad regime or afraid of what might come after to a much clearer picture, where we are now, I think, proceeding on a path that is going to have some positive returns.

QUESTION: Do you see any signs that Bashar al-Assad is starting to crack, that his regime is starting to feel the pressure, that conferences like this one are really having some kind of an impact?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, today, we heard from a deputy oil minister who defected, and certainly, his presentation to the large group suggested that, because the pressure that is being put on those who are still allied with the regime from outside and inside is increasing – the sanctions, the travel bans, the kinds of reputational loss, the fears that people are having, because as you are engaged in this kind of terrible authoritarian crackdown, people get paranoid and they start worrying about the guy sitting next to them. We do see those kinds of cracks. We think that the defections from the military are in the thousands. We know that there are perhaps two dozen high officers –

QUESTION: But there haven't been more defections in the way that we saw in Libya from Assad's inner circle.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, partly because when there were a couple of defections, the regime has cracked down and was basically holding families hostage. In fact, the man who spoke to us today, his family had gotten out ahead in Jordan, so he was free to leave. But that is an unsustainable position. You cannot turn the whole country into a giant prison. People are not going to put up with that after a while. So we think that there are cracks. I can't put a timeframe on it, but we think that that is beginning to happen.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, thank you so much for your time.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Thank you. Great to talk to you.

QUESTION: Likewise.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Be safe.

Interview With Reena Ninan of ABC

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Secretary Clinton, does the U.S. approval for Kofi Annan's plan mean that it's okay for President Assad to remain in power?

SECRETARY CLINTON: No. Not at all. We think Assad must go, the sooner, the better for everyone concerned. But we also know that we require a multipronged approach to this problem. Kofi Annan and his efforts to try to broker some kind of ceasefire and then a political process is part of it, but there has to be a timeline. It can't go on indefinitely. And we're not standing still, as you saw coming out of the meeting here in Istanbul. We are moving forward on sanctions, we're moving forward on accountability by documenting a lot of the atrocities, we're moving forward on humanitarian aid, and we're moving forward on direct assistance to the Syrian National Council.

QUESTION: What are the red lines when military action in Syria becomes a necessity?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think, Reena, what we're looking at is trying to help support both the civilian presence outside and inside Iraq – in Syria, and part of the challenge is different people have different ideas of what might work. So the United States, I can only speak for myself. Others will have to speak for them. We're going to providing technical assistance in the form of such things as communication capacity because we heard directly from the Syrian National Council representatives today they can't communicate inside of Syria. They certainly can't communicate from inside to outside as well as they need. So there are certain assets we have that can be provided in the form of technical, logistical support.

QUESTION: With the talks on Iran known as the P5+1 to begin next month, what are the benchmarks for diplomacy, and when do you know if suddenly Iran starts to seem like they're just running out the clock? When do you walk away?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, again, I think we have to make it clear from the very beginning that we're not entering into these talks for the sake of talks. We are entering into them because we really believe in giving diplomacy a chance, perhaps a last chance to demonstrate a way forward that can satisfy the international community's concerns and have Iran come forward and accept limitations on what they are able to do. They are entitled to civilian nuclear power. They are not entitled to a nuclear weapons program. If they will work with the international community to separate those two out and to have verifiable, enforceable inspections that really do make it clear they're not pursuing nuclear weapons, then I think there is a path forward.

QUESTION: How successful has the U.S. been in getting and preventing Israel from taking unilateral action against Iran?

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well we've worked very hard with Israel on all levels from the military, intelligence, strategic, diplomatic level to make sure we were sharing information, that we knew what each other was assessing. And it's our very strong belief, as President Obama conveyed to the Israelis, that it is not in anyone's interest for them to take unilateral action. It is in everyone's interest for us to seriously pursue at this time the diplomatic path.

QUESTION: There were some leaked reports this week that Israel has now received approval to fly into Kazakhstan air force base if they want to take military action against Iran. Is that something that's definite that they've received?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I have no direct information on that and would not comment even if I did. I think that that is something that you'd have to ask the Israelis.

QUESTION: And on the P5+1 talks, if the P5+1 talks fail, what's plan B at that point?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I don't want to think about it that way, because I want to give this the very best effort we can. So I don't want to go into it with the attitude of, well, it's going to fail, and I don't want the Iranians to go into it with the attitude of that we can just keep it open and never have to come to any outcome. I want us to come together in Istanbul in a few weeks and really talk honestly about what we need to do to remove the cloud of the Iranian nuclear program and remove all of the suspicion that could possibly lead to confrontation from the international community.

QUESTION: You look at U.S. intervention in the Middle East just over the decades, and so much has over the years gone wrong. For people who don't at home understand what it's like to be involved in the diplomatic efforts, why is it so difficult when foreign intervention happens in the Middle East to try and get it right even if your intentions are so good?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think I would take issue with the premise of the question, because certainly from the United States' perspective, we just finished an international effort in Libya and saw the Libyan people rise up against a dictator who had taken American lives and the lives of other innocent people inside and outside of Libya. We're working very hard to make sure that Iraq become a democratic, effective country. The Arab League just held their summit there. So it's been a difficult 10 years, there's no doubt about that, but we are committed to working with the Iraqis and giving them a chance at the future they deserve.

It is a complicated area. There's no doubt about that. But I think most people really want the U.S. involved. We have to be careful about how we define that involvement. We don't want to raise expectations that would be unmet. On the other hand, we don't want to walk away from opportunities and responsibilities. We believe in freedom. We believe in democracy. Therefore, we are looked to by people all over the world to give them not only encouragement but tangible support. And certainly when it comes to Syria, what we're trying to do is very carefully calibrate what the U.S. role would be. Others have different roles to play, and we are certainly supportive of that. But what can the U.S. bring that is unique in terms of the assets that we have.

But it would be quite hard for us to say, well, the Syrian people are fighting against a dictator who has had a lot to do with the deaths of Americans in Iraq, who's had a lot to do with destabilizing Lebanon and causing other problems in the region, who's becoming more and more of a proxy for Iran. So we do have a stake in what happens in Syria. We just have to be thoughtful about how we pursue our role.

QUESTION: You see intelligence reports. You talk to these diplomats and foreign ministers behind closed doors. Of all the situations throughout the world, what worries you the most?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I worry about weapons of mass destruction. I worry about nuclear weapons in the hands of rogue states or terrorists, because then we're not talking about a hundred people dying a day in Syria, which is the case now; we're talking about possibly tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people dying. So we are very focused on that. President Obama just attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, Korea, which is aimed at securing nuclear material. That's why this Iranian challenge is so important. It is not just about Iran. It is about the suspicions and the concerns that Iran or any country defying the international community, defying Security Council resolutions, defying the obligations they undertook under the Nuclear Proliferation – Nonproliferation Treaty. So it raises suspicions, and then it gets us back into the terrible dilemma of trying to keep the world safe from nuclear weapons.

QUESTION: There has been talk within Syria about the growing reach of al-Qaida. President Obama has worked very hard to stamp that out with the killing of Osama bin Ladin. Can you tell us about what we're seeing as far as rogue elements, terrorism within Syria that doesn't come from Assad's forces?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think we have start from the premise that Assad is the one who turned peaceful protests into instances of armed resistance. And that's deeply unfortunate. He likes to blame everything on terrorists and foreigners, but in fact, these are Syrians trying to exercise the rights that others in the Arab Spring are exercising. So the vast majority of the people who are standing up against the horrific assaults of the military machine in Syria are ordinary citizens defending themselves and their homes.

Now, are there opportunists? Well, there are in any conflict. We know that. There are people who see, oh, there's a conflict; what can I get out of it? Or maybe I can try to convince people to come over to my point of view. But that is such a minority. We don't want it to grow. One of the reasons why we want to send a very clear message to the people inside Syria, particularly those who are fighting to protect themselves and their families, is that the international community stands with you, and we want to see an inclusive, democratic Syria where members of every ethnic group, every religion, are given a chance to be full citizens.

QUESTION: What are the chances in 2013 we see Hillary Clinton go from Secretary of State to grandma?

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.) Well, that's really not up to me, but I would like to have that title. I will certainly tell you that's a title I would be proud to have.

QUESTION: I think this might be your best role yet. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: I think I'd be pretty good, but I won't know till I try.

QUESTION: From chasing after world leaders, getting them all on the same page, to diaper duty? Is that –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Oh, my goodness. Well, you're making it seem like there are certain characteristics – (laughter) – in common with both enterprises, but I am looking forward to a return to private life.

QUESTION: Thank you so much.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And good luck to you.

QUESTION: Thank you. I'll need it. Two in 18 months. I don't know what I'm doing.

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, it looks like you can handle it.

QUESTION: Thank you so much. I really appreciate it.

Interview With Wendell Goler of FOX News

Interview

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul Congress Center

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: Thank you for talking with us, Madam Secretary.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Always a pleasure.

QUESTION: The U.S. is apparently going beyond providing just humanitarian aid, strictly humanitarian aid, for the Syrian opposition forces. Tell me what we're providing and why.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we are going to be providing what you might call technical or logistical equipment – not arms, not military equipment, but communications equipment. We've learned that there's a great deal of difficulty for the opposition to communicate with one another inside Syria, and from inside to outside to their counterparts who are along the border of Turkey or elsewhere. That will facilitate the safety as well as the movements of the people who are on the inside.

We have some intelligence capacity that we might be able to usefully offer. Now other countries are going to choose to provide different kinds of aid. Today, a group of countries announced that they were going to be funding some of the Free Syrian Army. That's their choice, but what we think is appropriate for us is to try to facilitate the ability to communicate and to be protected and to know what is happening inside Syria to minimize civilian casualties.

QUESTION: On providing money to basically try and encourage members of the Syrian army to defect, that seems very close to arming the opposition, something the United States didn't want to do for fear of raising the number of civilian casualties.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Right.

QUESTION: Why is it better to encourage defection? It seems like it's another increase in violence.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think what you'll find is that many thousands – the numbers vary, some it's from, like, 10,000 to 40,000 of the soldiers have defected. If you really study the Syrian military movements, they have five brigades. They use two of them because they can't trust the other three of them. And there have been a number of defections at senior officer levels, generals and colonels, many of whom are now across the border in Turkey kind of setting up headquarters.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

So clearly, there needs to be a greater reassurance to those soldiers who defect that if they take their weapons and turn them against the military that continues to ruthlessly assault civilian targets, they're going to – their family is going to be provided for, there is some safety net for them. I think that's a sensible approach for those countries that are willing to do that.

QUESTION: Syria's government says with recent gains by the Syrian army that the battle to overthrow Bashar al-Assad is done and that now it's a battle to regain stability. Tell me why you think they're wrong.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think they're wrong because what they have done is to create enemies of the regime. Where before, they had peaceful protestors and demonstrators who, inspired by the Arab Spring, wanted the chance to choose their own leaders and participate in their society. The resistance that has been put up by poorly armed fighters who often ran out of ammunition, who had nothing but a AK-47 or some other automatic weapon against tanks and mortars, demonstrates that this is a very long-term conflict.

And I also think that from within, the effect of the sanctions – the travel bans, the other kind of pressure that we're putting on members of the regime, the accountability project that the United States has begun to catalog the atrocities so that people on the inside can look around and think, "Man, I better get out of here before I end up at the International Criminal Court," because remember, it sometimes takes years. It takes years. But we do end up with a lot of the criminals who committed crimes against humanity or even war crimes eventually having to face justice. So our reading is that this is not the end of anything. It may not even be the beginning of the end. It's just the very start of a long-term process that will lead eventually to the removal of Assad.

QUESTION: Thank you, Madam Prime Minister.

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.)

QUESTION: Let me ask you a couple questions about another subject. On Iran, the President says all options are on the table to keep Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. Do you feel like it's your job to make sure it doesn't come to having to use military action?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I'm a diplomat. My job is to try to see if there are peaceful ways to resolve difficult problems, and this is a really difficult problem. When the President says all options are on the table, he means it. When he says that our policy is prevention, not containment, he means it. But there are a number of different paths that can get us to the outcome we're seeking, which is a peaceful resolution of this very difficult challenge. And we appreciate the fact that Iran will return to negotiations with what's called the P5+1, the five permanent members of the Security Council, plus the European Union and Germany. And we will enter into those negotiations with the hope that there can be a positive resolution, but without any illusions and without any patience for talk without progress.

So there has to be a plan going forward, and we think that we could arrive at an acceptable resolution that would give the Iranians the right to peaceful nuclear power under verifiable certain conditions, but remove the threat that they are developing nuclear weapons. But we'll

see. The proof is in the pudding, as they say, and we'll start cooking that pudding in a few weeks.

QUESTION: The U.S. and Israel clearly disagree how much time is left before military force would be necessary to keep the Iranians from developing a bomb, but they also disagree on what the effects of using military force would be.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I don't want to get into the kind of very analytical expert discussions that we've been having at the highest levels with the Israelis. I will say this – that I think there is agreement about the status of the Iranian program. I think that, as Prime Minister Netanyahu has said on numerous occasions, Israel reserves the right to defend itself. So they have a view that they have to have great certainty as soon as possible that they will not be threatened. Our position is that we have increased sanctions and pressure on the regime. We've kept together the international community. It's quite remarkable that people are reducing their crude oil imports and going to great lengths to try to comply with American and European sanctions because they want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

So we think that the array of evidence points to the importance of pursuing the diplomatic path at this time.

QUESTION: Did you force Iran's hand yesterday when you announced that the talks would be held in a couple – few weeks in Istanbul? It's my understanding they hadn't actually committed to the talks yet, at least publicly.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we've gotten lots of private messages from a number of different sources that they were going to go to the talks, and I think we need to start planning for them. I certainly hope that they will follow through on what they've told a number of people about their intentions to be serious participants.

QUESTION: I think that's a yes. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

SECRETARY CLINTON: (Laughter.) Thanks. Good to see you.

QUESTION: And you.

Remarks at Press Availability
Press Availability
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Istanbul, Turkey
April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good afternoon, everyone. Today, the international community sent a clear and unified message that we will increase pressure on the Assad regime in Syria and assistance to the opposition. Nearly a week has gone by since the regime pledged to implement Kofi Annan's plan. But rather than pulling back, Assad's troops have launched new assaults. Rather than allowing access for humanitarian aid, they have tightened their siege. And rather than beginning a political transition, the regime has crushed dozens of peaceful protests. We can only conclude that Assad has decided to add to his long list of broken promises.

So today, we called for an immediate end to the killing in Syria, and we urged the Joint Special Envoy Kofi Annan to set a timetable for next steps. The world will not waiver. Assad must go. And the Syrian people must be free to choose their own path forward.

Today, I also detailed measures that the United States is taking, along with international partners, to ratchet up the pressure on the regime. We will be providing greater humanitarian relief to people in need, and we will support the opposition as it works toward an inclusive democratic transition that preserves the integrity and institutions of the Syrian state. What does that include? It includes additional sanctions on senior regime officials, a new accountability clearinghouse to train Syrian citizens to document atrocities and abuses and to identify perpetrators, and more than \$12 million in new humanitarian aid, bringing our total to nearly 25 million.

But the United States is also going beyond humanitarian aid and providing support to the civilian opposition, including (inaudible) and connect to the outside world. And we are discussing with other nations how best to expand this support.

We heard today from the Syrian National Congress about their efforts to unite a wide range of opposition groups around a common vision for a free, democratic, and pluralist Syria that protects the rights and dignity of all citizens. This is a homegrown Syrian vision, and it reflects the values and priorities of the Syrian people. It is a roadmap for saving the state and its institutions from Assad's death spiral. And it is worthy of support from the international community and from Syrians of every background.

Now, turning this vision into reality will not be easy. We know that. But despite the dangers, the next step has to be to translate it into a political action plan that will win support among all of Syria's communities, that will help lead a national conversation about how to achieve the future that Syrians want and deserve. That's how the opposition will build momentum, strip away Assad's remaining support, and expose the regime's hypocrisy. Today, the international community reaffirmed our commitment to hasten the day that peace and freedom can come to Syria. It cannot come fast enough, and we grieve for every lost life.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer 1

Kofi Annan has given us a plan to begin resolving this crisis. Bashar al-Assad has, so far, refused to honor his pledge. There is no more time for excuses or delays. This is a moment of truth. And the United States is committed to this effort. We think the communique coming out of the meeting today is a very important document, and we commend it to all of you. It represents a considerable advance forward by the international community as represented by the more than 80 nations that attended here today.

The United States is confident that the people of Syria will take control of their own destiny. That's where we stand. There will be more to say from Kofi Annan in New York tomorrow, but I want to thank Prime Minister Erdogan and the foreign minister, my friend, and the people of Turkey, not only for hosting us, but for being such strong stalwarts in the fight on behalf of the Syrian people.

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet both with the prime minister and the foreign minister. We not only discussed Syria; we discussed the full range of our other shared interests. And I commended Turkey's leadership throughout this crisis and its generosity to the Syrians who have fled across the border seeking refuge from the violence. We also discussed Iran and the threat it poses to regional and global security, and I was encouraged to hear Turkey's announcement that it will significantly reduce crude oil imports from Iran.

Before I take your questions, I'd like to say a few words about Burma. I've been following today's parliamentary bi-elections with great interest. While the results have not yet been announced, the United States congratulates the people who participated, many for the first time, in the campaign and election process. We are committed to supporting these reform efforts. Going forward, it will be critical for authorities to continue working toward an electoral system that meets international standards, that includes transparency, and expeditiously addresses concerns about intimidation and irregularities.

It is too early to know what the progress of recent months means and whether it will be sustained. There are no guarantees about what lies ahead for the people of Burma. But after a day spent responding to a brutal dictator in Syria who would rather destroy his own country than let it move toward freedom, it is heartening to be reminded that even the most repressive regimes can reform and even the most closed societies can open. Our hope for the people of Burma is the same as our hope for the people of Syria and for all people – peace, freedom, justice, and the opportunity to live up to their God-given potential.

And with that, let me thank you and open the floor for questions.

MS. NULAND: (Inaudible) Andrea Mitchell of NBC.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, you said that there is no more time, that this is a moment of truth. How much time are you prepared to give Kofi Annan, given the fact that there seems to be a widespread belief here in Istanbul, among you and the other leaders, that Assad is playing this for time, ignoring this diplomacy, and making a mockery of it by continuing the brutality?

And what more does the Syrian National Council have to do to persuade you that they should actually be a recognized opposition group rather than just a group that is trying to reach out to others and be more inclusive?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Andrea, first, it's been nearly a week since Assad made his promise to Kofi Annan. We will hear firsthand from former Secretary General Annan tomorrow. I don't want to prejudge it. I want to hear for myself. He's not only been to Damascus but also to Moscow, Beijing, Tehran, other places, and has reached out and heard from a number of voices. But it is important – and he understands this, he's an experienced negotiator – that there cannot be process for the sake of process. There has to be a timeline. And if Assad continues, as he has, to fail to end the violence, to institute a ceasefire, to withdraw his troops from the areas that he has been battering, to begin a political transition, to allow humanitarian aid in at least for two hours a day, then it's unlikely he is going to ever agree, because it is a clear signal that he wants to wait to see whether he has totally suppressed the opposition.

I think he would be mistaken to believe that. My reading is that the opposition is gaining intensity, not losing it. So the timeline is not only for Kofi Annan's negotiations, but it's also for Assad, that eventually he has to recognize that he has lost legitimacy and he will not be able to avoid the kind of continuing efforts by the opposition to strike a blow for freedom. And he can either permit his country to descend into civil war, which would be dreadful for everyone, not only inside Syria but in the region, or he can make a different set of decisions. So we want to watch this. But with the announcements of the various actions taken today, I don't see how those around Assad believe that they are moving away from pressure, because the pressure is actually intensifying.

MS. NULAND: Next –

SECRETARY CLINTON: Oh, quickly on the SNC, I've been meeting with them for several months, starting in Geneva, in Tunis, again today in Istanbul. My high-level officials have been in daily contact, meeting with the SNC. I think that they are – as we heard today in their presentation – not only becoming better focused and better organized, but more broadly based, more inclusive.

I met with a young woman who had just escaped from Homs who was bearing witness to the horrible experience that she and others had endured in the siege of Homs, and you could not listen to her without being upset by the story that she had to tell. But the fact that she is part of the Syrian National Congress speaks volumes, because clearly those who could organize it at first were those free to do so, who were on the outside. Now as more people are leaving Syria, escaping to freedom, they are joining the SNC. So the variety and the base of the SNC is broadening, which gives it added legitimacy.

And of course, as you heard today, we are going to be supporting the SNC with direct assistance in areas such as communications. Others are going to be supporting fighters associated with the SNC. So countries are making their own decisions, but the net result is that the SNC is being treated as the umbrella organization representing the opposition, and we think that demonstrates

a lot of hard work, not only by the Syrians themselves but by many of us who have been working with them over the last several months.

MS. NULAND: Next question, *Hurriyet*, (Inaudible).

QUESTION: Secretary Clinton, we know that you had bilateral meetings with your Turkish counterpart Davutoglu and Prime Minister Erdogan today here in Istanbul. And we understand you also exchanged information on their recent visit to Tehran. Davutoglu – Foreign Minister Davutoglu in a public statement said that they take Khamenei's statements as not developing nuclear weapons as a guarantee, this should be taken as a guarantee in Shia tradition. How do you perceive these kind of statements, and are you by any means close to taking them seriously and find them – finding them satisfactory? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I was very interested in what both the foreign minister and the prime minister told me about their visit. They had lengthy discussions with the supreme leader, the president, and other Iranian officials. They were told, as you just repeated, that the supreme leader viewed weapons of mass destruction as religiously prohibited, against Islam, and that he asked the Turkish leaders to really take that into account, take it seriously.

We, of course, would welcome that. Yet, I think it's important that it be operationalized. That's what the P-5+1 talks are about. We will be meeting with the Iranians to discuss how you translate what is a stated belief into a plan of action. And if the Iranians are truly committed to that statement of belief as conveyed to the prime minister and the foreign minister, then they should be open to reassuring the international community that it's not an abstract belief but it is a government policy. And that government policy can be demonstrated in a number of ways, by ending the enrichment of highly enriched uranium to 20 percent, by shipping out such highly enriched uranium out of the country, by opening up to constant inspections and verifications. So we are certainly open to believing that this is the position, but of course the international community now wants to see actions associated with that statement of belief. And we would welcome that.

But I think the Iranians also have to know that this is not an open-ended discussion. This has to be a very serious action-oriented negotiation, where both sides are highly engaged on a sustainable basis to reach a decision that can be translated into policy that is verified as soon as possible. So if the statement by the supreme leader to the prime minister and the foreign minister provides the context in which the discussions occur, that would be a good starting point.

MS. NULAND: Last question, *Wall Street Journal*, Jay Solomon.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, just on Iran again, did Prime Minister Erdogan provide any sort of concrete or did the Iranians through him pass on any concrete kind of agenda as for what the talks would be? And is there any thought of the talks broadening a bit to discuss – I know your concerns that the Iranians are helping the Assad regime crack down on the protestors inside Syria.

And just additionally, in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood now says it is going to seek the presidency in the upcoming elections. Is this something you welcome? Is it a concern? Because it's something that initially they said they were not going to seek. Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Jay, I was having a little bit of trouble hearing you, but I think your first question concerned Turkey's actions regarding crude oil products from Iran. And we welcomed the announcement that one of the very large private refiners would be cutting their imports 20 percent. We will be consulting between Turkish and American experts as to how that can be operationalized, because it's a complicated matter. The oil markets are complicated. Having a refinery make that change requires other supplies, and different refineries have different kinds of equipment that has to be taken into account. But we will be consulting with the – with Turkey's ambassador to the United States, and then we will send a team of experts to follow up. But we certainly welcome that announcement.

With respect to the role that Iran is playing inside Syria, it's deeply troubling. And I think it's important to underscore that when I travel in the region – I was in Riyadh yesterday meeting with the Gulf countries, but it goes beyond that into a much broader regional, even global, context – there are three concerns that countries have about Iran.

The first, we've discussed, the pursuit of nuclear weapons, which would be incredibly destabilizing and it would intimidate and cause reactions of many kinds by countries that would feel threatened. Secondly, the interference by Iran in the internal affairs of its neighbors, and certainly the role that Iran seems to be playing inside Syria is an example of that. Sometimes it is done directly by Iran, sometimes by proxies for Iran. And thirdly, the export of terrorism. I mean, just think, in the last six, eight months we've had Iranian plots disrupted from Thailand to India to Georgia to Mexico and many places in between. This is a country, not a terrorist group. It's a country, a great civilization. It's an ancient culture. The people deserve better than to be living under a regime that exports terrorism.

So we are very conscious of the role they're playing inside Iran; we're conscious of the role they're playing in other countries. And this will certainly be a matter for discussion, but our first priority is the nuclear program, because people ask me all the time what keeps me up at night. It's nuclear weapons, it's weapons of mass destruction that fall into the hands of irresponsible state actors or terrorist groups. So we have to deal with that, but it's not only that which concerns the neighbors and others.

And finally, we're going to watch what the political actors in Egypt do. We're going to watch their commitment to the rights and the dignity of every Egyptian. We want to see Egypt move forward in a democratic transition. And what that means is that you do not and cannot discriminate against religious minorities, women, political opponents. There has to be a process, starting in an election, that lies down certain principles that will be followed by whoever wins the election. And that is what we hope for the Egyptian people. They've sacrificed a lot for their freedom and their democracy, so we will watch what all of the political actors do and hold them accountable for their actions. And we really hope the Egyptian people get what they demonstrated for in Tahrir Square, which is the kind of open, inclusive, pluralistic democracy that really respects the rights and dignity of every single Egyptian.

Thank you.

MS. NULAND: Thank you very much.

Remarks During Camera Spray Following Meeting with Syrian National Council

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

QUESTION: (Via translator) I have three questions and three comments to make.

First of all, there is a feeling of despair, because people -- Syrian people feel that they are long in this battle. And they seem as if they are the only ones who want to change the regime and no one else is -- wants to change the regime. That is one point.

The second point is, is the Syrian regime that important and that -- a necessity regionally, that -- a necessity regionally, and the Syrian regime is more worth it than the blood of those martyrs who fell in the events in Syria?

And the third point is that we have 13 youths that were the killed and died while -- 3 journalists working there, and were (inaudible) that situation. So, what is going on here?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, I think what you should know is that people have been working very hard to try to figure out ways to help those inside Syria who are bearing the brunt of the brutality of the Assad regime. We are painfully aware of how brutal the actions by the regime have been. And the Syrian National Council has been working hard to organize different Syrians behind a unified approach because, until recently, it was hard to know how to help. There was not the kind of organized effort, and there was no place within Syria that the opposition controlled, which makes it very difficult to assist.

But there is a lot of progress being made in bringing the international community together. I think you will see in the communiqué today that there are concrete steps that are being taken. And it is in, really, honor and memory of the sacrifices of those who have been fighting and dying for their freedom, which is something that certainly the United States deeply honors.

There is going to be a lot of work ahead, however. And so we have to have a close coordination, which is what we have been working toward. But I really believe that, with the announcements coming from the meeting today, there will be greater pressure on the regime, there will be more assistance of all kinds for the Syrian National Council, there will be more humanitarian assistance, that the people inside Syria should know they are not alone.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

Intervention to the Friends of the Syrian People

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

As Prepared

Istanbul, Turkey

April 1, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

I want to thank Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Davutoglu and the people of Turkey for hosting us today. Turkey has shown steadfast leadership throughout this crisis. I also want to recognize the continuing contributions of the Arab League and in particular the work of Secretary General Elaraby and the chair of the Syria committee, Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassim. To all my colleagues, and to all our friends and partners around the world, thank you for standing by the Syrian people.

We meet at an urgent moment for Syria and the region. Faced with a united international community and persistent popular opposition, Bashar al-Assad pledged to implement Joint Special Envoy Kofi Annan's initial six point plan. He promised to pull his regime's forces back and silence its heavy weapons, allow peaceful demonstrations and access for humanitarian aid and journalists, and begin a political transition.

Nearly a week has gone by, and we have to conclude that the regime is adding to its long list of broken promises.

Rather than pull back, Assad's troops have launched new assaults on Syrian cities and towns, including in the Idlib and Aleppo provinces. Rather than allowing access for humanitarian aid, security forces have tightened their siege of residential neighborhoods in Homs and elsewhere. And rather than beginning a political transition, the regime has crushed dozens of peaceful protests.

The world must judge Assad by what he does, not by what he says. And we cannot sit back and wait any longer. Yesterday in Riyadh, I joined with the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council to call for an immediate end to the killing in Syria and to urge Joint Special Envoy Annan to set a timeline for next steps. We look forward to hearing his views on the way forward when he addresses the United Nations Security Council tomorrow.

Here in Istanbul, we must take steps of our own to ratchet up pressure on the regime, provide humanitarian relief to people in need, and support the opposition as it works toward an inclusive, democratic and orderly transition that preserves the integrity and institutions of the Syrian state. First, pressure. On Friday, the United States announced new sanctions against three more senior regime officials: Minister of Defense Rajiha, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army Adanov and Head of Presidential Security Shalish. A growing list of Syria's worst human rights offenders are learning that they cannot escape the consequences of their actions. I am pleased that the Friends of the Syrian People have agreed to form a sanctions working group, to coordinate and expand

our national sanctions and strengthen enforcement. Together we must further isolate this regime, cut off its funds, and squeeze its ability to wage war on its own people.

The United States will also work with international partners to establish an accountability clearinghouse to support and train Syrian citizens working to document atrocities, identify perpetrators, and safeguard evidence for future investigations and prosecutions.

Our message must be clear to those who give the orders and those who carry them out: Stop killing your fellow citizens or you will face serious consequences. Your countrymen will not forget, and neither will the international community.

Turning to the humanitarian effort, the United States is expanding our commitment to help the people of Syria. This week in Washington, I met with the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross and we discussed the urgent needs, especially in the communities suffering under relentless shelling.

In Tunis, I pledged \$10 million to fund makeshift field hospitals, train emergency medical staff, and get clean water, food, blankets, heaters, and hygiene kits to civilians who desperately need them, including displaced people. Despite the regime's efforts to deny access, that aid is starting to get through. So in March we added \$2 million to our commitment, and today I am announcing more than \$12 million for the Syrian people – for a total of nearly \$25 million.

But we know that no amount of aid will be enough if the regime continues its military campaign, targets relief workers, blocks supplies, restricts freedom of movement, and disrupts medical services. So the United States fully supports the UN's diplomatic effort to secure safe and unfettered access for humanitarian workers and supplies, including a daily, two-hour ceasefire -- beginning immediately -- to allow aid to get in and wounded civilians to get out. And I want to thank the governments of Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq for keeping their borders open and serving as generous hosts to Syrians in great need.

The third track is supporting the opposition as it plans for an inclusive, democratic transition. Here in Istanbul, the Syrian National Council and a wide range of opposition groups are uniting around a common vision for a free, democratic and pluralist Syria that protects the rights of all citizens and all communities. It is a roadmap for saving the state and its institutions from Assad's death spiral. And it is worthy of support from the international community and Syrians from every background.

Turning this vision into reality will not be easy, but it is essential. Assad must go and Syrians must choose their own path. Citizens across the country are already laying the groundwork. Peaceful protests continue to swell, with citizens marching in the streets of Syrian cities and towns, demanding dignity and freedom. The regime has done everything it can to prevent peaceful political organizing, and activists and opposition members have been jailed, tortured, and killed. And yet, local councils have emerged all across the country. They are organizing civil resistance and providing basic governance, services and humanitarian relief, even as the shells rain down around them.

To support civil opposition groups as they walk this difficult path, the United States is going beyond humanitarian aid and providing additional assistance, including communications equipment that will help activists organize, evade attacks by the regime, and connect to the outside world – and we are discussing with our international partners how best to expand this support.

In the unlikely event that the Assad regime reverses course and begins to implement the six-point plan, then Kofi Annan will work with the opposition to take steps of its own. But in the meantime, Syrians will continue to defend themselves. And they must continue building momentum toward a new Syria: free, unified, and at peace.

Now that they have a unified vision for transition, it will be crucial for the opposition to translate it into a political action plan to win support among all of Syria's communities. We've seen here in Istanbul that disparate opposition factions can come together. Despite the dangers they face, the next step is to take their case across Syria, to lead a national conversation about how to achieve the future Syrians want and deserve. That's how the opposition will demonstrate beyond any doubt that they hold the moral high ground, strip away Assad's remaining support, and expose the regime's hypocrisy.

So this is where we find ourselves today: Kofi Annan has given us a plan to begin resolving this crisis. Bashar al-Assad has so far refused to honor his pledge to implement it. The time for excuses is over.

President Medvedev calls this the "last chance" for Syria. I call it a moment of truth. Together we must hasten the day that peace and freedom come to Syria. That solution cannot come fast enough, and we grieve for every lost day and every lost life.

We are committed to this effort and we are confident that the people of Syria will take control of their own destiny. Let us be worthy of this challenge and move ahead with clear eyes and firm determination.

Thank you.

Remarks With Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta

Remarks

RELEASE IN FULL

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

NATO Headquarters

Brussels, Belgium

April 18, 2012

SECRETARY CLINTON: Good afternoon. I'm very pleased to join Secretary Panetta and our defense and foreign minister colleagues here in Brussels for this meeting, the joint ministerial of NATO, to prepare for the upcoming NATO summit in my birthplace, Chicago. The main focus of our conversations today was Afghanistan, which I will focus on tomorrow at the meeting of our ISAF partners. But let me say how grateful the United States is for the solidarity and steadfastness of our NATO allies and ISAF partners.

As difficult a week as this has been in Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan, the big picture is clear. The transition is on track, the Afghans are increasingly standing up for their own security and future, and NATO remains united in our support for the Lisbon timetable, and an enduring commitment to Afghanistan. The attacks in Kabul this week show us that while the threat remains real, the transition can work. The response by the Afghan National Security forces were fast and effective, and the attacks failed. Not long ago, this kind of response by Afghans themselves would not have been possible. So the Afghans are proving themselves increasingly ready to take control of their own future.

Now by their nature, transitions of any kind are challenging. There will be setbacks and hard days. But clear progress is happening, and today, NATO reaffirmed our commitment to stand with the Afghans to defend stability and security, to protect the gains of the last decade, and to prevent there ever being a return of al-Qaida or other extremists operating out of the Afghan territory.

Both Secretary Panetta and I were impressed by how united the NATO allies are in supporting the Lisbon timetable. We are on track to meet the December 2014 deadline for completing the security transition. Already 50 percent of the Afghan people are secured primarily by Afghan forces, and by this spring, it will be 75 percent. Today, we worked on the three initiatives for the Chicago summit next month.

First, we will agree on the next phase of transition to support our 2014 goals. Second, we want to be ready to define NATO's enduring relationship with Afghanistan after 2014. And third, we are prepared to work with the Afghans to ensure that the Afghan National Security force is fully funded. NATO is united behind all these goals, so we are looking forward to a very productive summit in Chicago.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior
Reviewer

But let's keep in mind that the transition and NATO's mission are part of a larger enterprise, one that also has political and economic dimensions. Afghanistan's neighbors have a central role to play in that larger enterprise along with the international community. Our common approach was

sharpened when the international community met in Istanbul and Bonn last year, and will be carried forward when we meet again in Chicago, Kabul, and Tokyo this year.

So beyond NATO, many nations are invested in Afghanistan's future and are providing support for the Afghans to attain self reliance, stability, and further their democratic future. They have to protect, however, as they go through this transition, their hard-fought political and economic and human rights progress. Incidents like the one we heard of yesterday when 150 Afghan girls became sick after the water at their school was poisoned, reminds us that there are people who would destroy Afghanistan's long-term future in order to restrict the rights of women and girls. Human rights protections for religious and ethnic minorities are also still fragile. Universal human rights are critical to Afghanistan's security and prosperity, and we will continue to make them a priority.

While NATO has worked very hard to assist the people of Afghanistan, NATO has also been changed by this experience. The alliance is now a leading force for security, not just in the Atlantic region, but globally. We are steadily deepening and broadening the partnerships NATO has with dozens of countries around the world, and our partners are adding valuable capability, legitimacy, and political support to NATO's operations and missions from the Mediterranean and Libya to Kosovo and Afghanistan.

So we believe we are building a stronger, more flexible, more dynamic alliance enriched by partners from every continent and prepared to meet the security challenges of our time. With that, let me turn the floor to Secretary Panetta.

SECRETARY PANETTA: Thank you. Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to join Secretary Clinton here in Brussels. We had a very good series of meetings today with our NATO defense and foreign minister counterparts. Much of our discussion focused on our shared effort in Afghanistan, and what came out of these meetings was a strong commitment to sticking to the plan and the strategy that has been laid out by General Allen, and finishing the job in Afghanistan. Allies and partners have a very clear vision and a very clear message. Our strategy is right, our strategy is working, and if we stick to it, we can achieve the mission of establishing an Afghanistan that can secure and govern itself, and never again become a safe haven for terrorists to plan attacks on our country or any other country.

All of us are committed to the goals that were set out in the Lisbon framework, including continuing the transition to full Afghan security leadership by the end of 2014. We know there will be continuing challenges, and we saw some of those challenges over this last weekend. This is a war. There will be losses, there will be casualties, there will be incidents of the kind that we have seen in the last few days. But we must not allow any of that to undermine our commitment to our strategy.

The fact is, with regards to the events that took place over the weekend, we saw Afghan security forces do what we have trained them to do. They responded quickly, professionally, and with great courage, rendering ineffective those largely symbolic attacks that we saw in and around Kabul.

General Allen said he visited an Afghan special operations commando who had been wounded in the insurgent attacks and asked him if he could do anything for him. The Afghan commando's response was, and I quote, "I just want to get back out there with my brother soldiers," unquote. That short phrase speaks volumes. As General Allen has made clear, history proves that insurgencies are best and ultimately defeated not by foreign troops but by indigenous security forces, forces that know the ground, that know the territory, that know the culture, that know the neighborhood. When the Afghans do their job, we are doing our job. When the Afghans win, we win.

And the Afghans are making progress. They are in the lead now in areas that encompass more than 50 percent of the population in Afghanistan. When the third tranche of areas are transferred, we will have 75 percent of the population under Afghan governance and security. They have been in the lead for counterterrorism night operations since December. And now, thanks to a memorandum of understanding that was recently signed, all of these operations will fall under the authority of Afghan law. In less than six months' time, Afghan security forces will take full leadership of detention operations, thanks again to another agreement that was signed recognizing Afghan sovereignty.

As I've said, 2011 was a real turning point. It was the first time in five years that we saw a drop in the number of enemy attacks. Over the past 12 weeks, enemy attacks continue to decrease compared to the same period in 2011. Taliban has been weakened, Afghan army operations are progressing, and the reality is that the transition to Afghan security and governance is continuing and progressing.

We see other signs that we are seriously degrading the insurgency. By January 2011, 600 Taliban had integrated into the society. This month, that number topped 4,000. We intend to build on this success. We're committed to an enduring presence in Afghanistan post-2014 and a continuing effort to train, advise, and assist the ANSF in protecting the Afghan people and denying terrorists a safe haven. We cannot and we will not abandon Afghanistan. The key to our enduring partnership is continued international support. We cannot shortchange the security that must be provided by the Afghan forces now and in the future.

Today, I will also discuss with my NATO counterparts the steps needed to ensure that the alliance has the right military capabilities for the future. Across the board, allies are making important commitments to smart defense, with opportunities for new capabilities in ISR, missile defense, and air-to-air refueling. While significant progress has been made, important work lies ahead. The NATO we build is not only the force of today; it must be the force of 2020.

I'm pleased to announce that earlier today, along with Czech Defense Minister Vondra, I signed the Reciprocal Defense Procurement Agreement with the Czech Republic. The agreement reaffirms the importance and vitality of the U.S.-Czech defense relationship and enhances our cooperative security relationship. And as you know, this is the last high-level meeting before the Chicago summit in May. I think Secretary Clinton and I will take back to President Obama the results of these discussions. And I believe we have helped lay the groundwork for a very successful summit, and most importantly, for a strong and enduring NATO alliance.

MS. NULAND: We'll take three today. Let's start with Reuters. Arshad Mohammed, please.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, I'm sure that you will have seen that the violence – the government violence continues in Syria. Homs continues to be shelled, I think almost every day since the ceasefire ostensibly took effect. And the Syrian foreign minister has pushed back against the kind of mission that Kofi Annan would like to insert, saying that it should be no more than 250 monitors, they don't need their own helicopters and mobility, and they should be from friendly countries.

Given this, is it now time for the United States to look harder at whatever kinds of pressure can be brought to bear against the Assad government? And specifically, are you giving any more thought to rethinking your previous opposition to others arming the rebels? And are you giving any more thought to trying to get the Arabs to impose a more forceful sanctions regime on Syria?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Arshad, first of all, Syria was a subject of conversation among many of our allies today. Every country in NATO is watching the situation with concern. I don't want to prejudge what does or does not happen with the observers. The first tranche of the UN monitors is just beginning to deploy. It is, obviously, quite concerning that while we are deploying these monitors pursuant to a Security Council resolution that confirms our commitment to Kofi Annan's six-point plan, the guns of the Assad regime are once again firing in Homs, Idlib, and elsewhere, and Syrians continue to die. So we are certainly cognizant of the very challenging road ahead. We are all here, united in favor of Kofi Annan's plan and his urgent call for a robust monitoring force.

But we are at a crucial turning point. Either we succeed in pushing forward with Kofi Annan's plan in accordance with the Security Council direction, with the help of monitors steadily broadening and deepening a zone of non-conflict and peace, or we see Assad squandering his last chance before additional measures have to be considered.

Now, we will continue to increase the pressure on Assad. I spoke with several ministers about the need to tighten sanctions, tighten pressure on the regime, on those who support the regime. And we also are going to continue pressing for a political solution, which remains the goal of Kofi Annan's plan and the understandable goal of anyone who wants to see a peaceful transition occur in Syria.

I also would add that I've only spoken for the United States. The United States is not providing lethal arms, but as I've said before, the United States is providing communications and logistics and other support for the opposition. And we will continue to do everything we can to assist the opposition to be perceived as – and in reality become – the alternative voice for the Syrian people's future.

And make no mistake about it; this conflict is taking place right on NATO's border. We saw, just last week, the shelling across the borders into Turkey and into Lebanon. Our NATO ally, Turkey, has already suffered the effects of not only the influx of refugees that it is very generously housing, but also having two people killed on their side of the border because of Syrian artillery.

So we will remain in very close touch as events unfold. I look forward to continuing our consultations tomorrow at the ad-hoc group meeting that will be hosted by Foreign Minister Juppe in Paris.

But as I have reiterated, we will judge the Assad regime by their actions, not their words. We have been working to try to reach consensus in the Security Council, which we did in support of Kofi Annan's six-point plan. The burden has shifted, not only to the Assad regime, but to those who support it to be forced to explain why, after time and time again stating that they will end the violence, the violence continues. So obviously, this is going to be a very high priority for all of us going forward.

QUESTION: Is it okay for others to arm any rebels?

SECRETARY CLINTON: I'm not speaking for anyone but the United States of America.

MODERATOR: The next question will be from Anne Gearan of the Associated Press.

QUESTION: Yes. To both of you, please, could I ask you to comment on publication today of photos purportedly showing U.S. troops posing with the corpses of Taliban militants? What did you think when you heard about this? What did you think when you saw the photos? And doesn't this sort of undermine all the progress that you claim and the strategy you laid out just a moment ago?

Secondly, if I could ask each of you to respond to President Karzai's remark yesterday that he would like a firm written commitment of 2 billion a year from the United States for security forces. Should he be concerned that you're going to renege on that promise? And why doesn't he just take your word for it?

SECRETARY PANETTA: With regards to the photos, I strongly condemned what we see in those photos, as has General Allen. That behavior that was depicted in those photos absolutely violates both our regulations, and more importantly, our core values. This is not who we are, and it's certainly not who we represent when it comes to the great majority of men and women in uniform who are serving there.

I expect that the matter will be fully investigated. That investigation has already begun. This is a matter that goes back, I believe, to 2010, but it needs to be fully investigated, and that investigation, as I understand, is already underway. And wherever those facts lead, we will take the appropriate action. If rules and regulations were found to have been violated, then those individuals will be held accountable.

Let me also say this: This is war. And I know that war is ugly and it's violent. And I know that young people sometimes caught up in the moment make some very foolish decisions. I am not excusing that. That's - I'm not excusing that behavior. But neither do I want these images to bring further injury to our people or to our relationship with the Afghan people. We had urged the *L.A. Times* not to run those photos, and the reason for that is those kinds of photos are used

by the enemy to incite violence, and lives have been lost as a result of the publication of similar photos in the past, so we regret that they were published. But having said that, again, that behavior is unacceptable, and it will be fully investigated.

With regards to President Karzai's comment, we – as both the Secretary of State and I know from our own experience, you have to deal with Congress when it comes to what funds are going to be provided. And we don't, nor do – we do not have the power to lock in money for the Afghans or anybody else.

QUESTION: Did you apologize on behalf of the United States for those photos or the actions depicted in them in your meetings today?

SECRETARY PANETTA: I was not asked about it, but obviously, my apology is on behalf of the Department of Defense and the U.S. Government.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MODERATOR: And the final question will come from Petro Dekurning of *NRC Handelsblad*, a Dutch newspaper.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, the secretary general told us that some allies already came up with contributions for the Afghan army after 2014. Are you satisfied with this? And while this was not a pledging conference, what do you expect? What amounts do you expect from the allies to come up with? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, we were very encouraged by the commitment from the NATO allies to the funding of the Afghan National Security Forces. We believe that we are on the path to ensuring that these security forces, which, as Leon has just said, made such progress because of our training and mentoring over the last few years, will have the resources necessary to protect the Afghan state and the Afghan people. So I'm going to let individual countries make their own announcements.

But as we move forward toward the NATO summit, one of the goals is to ensure that NATO has an enduring relationship with Afghanistan, and in many ways, not just in terms of financial commitments, but in other ways as well. A lot of the member countries are stepping up and talking about what they intend to do. And similarly, tomorrow, we expect to hear from a number of our ISAF partners about their continuing commitment as well. So I think both Leon and I were encouraged and believe we're making progress.

MS. NULAND: Thank you very much.

Remarks at the Ad Hoc Ministerial Meeting on Syria

Remarks

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Secretary of State

Paris, France

April 19, 2012

RELEASE IN FULL

Well, Alain, thank you for convening us and hosting us. I think we are all here out of a sense of great frustration and outrage over what we see occurring in Syria. We also are hopeful that, despite the evidence thus far, the mission of Kofi Annan can begin to take root, starting with monitors being sent, but remembering that it's a six-point plan and that it's not a menu of options. It has to be a complete acceptance by the Syrian Government of all six points.

Let me just make a few comments. First, we continue to support the monitoring mission, even though we are aware that the increased violence could jeopardize the deployment of the monitors and put their lives at risk. So we're in a dilemma. We think it's important to get independent sources of observation and reporting on the ground, but we do not want to create a situation where those who are sent in to do this mission themselves are subjected to violence. So we need to continue to work and move toward a Security Council authorization so that we have the authority to proceed when the times are right.

Secondly, I think we have to do more to take tougher actions against the Assad regime. We need to start moving very vigorously in the Security Council for a Chapter 7 sanctions resolution, including travel, financial sanctions, an arms embargo, and the pressure that that will give us on the regime to push for compliance with Kofi Annan's six-point plan.

Now, I'm well aware that at this point such an effort is still likely to be vetoed, but we need to look for a way to keep pressing forward. I met at length with Sergey Lavrov earlier today in Brussels. He was, as usual, very intent upon laying responsibility on all sides, and in particular on the opposition, but he also has recognized that we are not in a static situation but a deteriorating one.

Next, we have to keep Assad off balance by leaving options on the table. And Turkey already has discussed with NATO during our ministerial over the last two days the burden of Syrian refugees on Turkey, the outrageous shelling across the border from Syria into Turkey a week ago, and that Turkey is considering formally invoking Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which triggers consultations in NATO whenever the territorial integrity, political independence, or security of any of the parties is threatened.

I also believe we have to increase our support for the opposition. I can only speak for the United States. I know that others are pursuing different types of support. But we are expanding our communications, logistics, and other support for the Syrian opposition. And in cooperation with Turkey, we are considering establishing an assistance hub that will try to co-locate Syrian activists and help them coordinate the collection and distribution of assistance to opposition

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Sharon Ahmad, Senior Reviewer

groups inside Syria. And we do have continuing dialogue among our high-level officials with the Syrian National Council.

Next, I want to thank you, Alain, and your team for hosting the Sanctions Working Group in Paris here two days ago. About 50 countries attended. They agreed to expand the coalition of countries imposing financial sanctions, expand the scope of the sanctions, and improve the effectiveness of the existing measures by reaching out to the private sector. The next meeting will be co-chaired by the United States and hosted in Washington, likely in mid May.

We also need to strengthen our humanitarian assistance. We've done more over the last month than we had before, but it is still not adequate. And we have to stay in very close touch with Turkey and Jordan about their humanitarian needs because they're bearing the burden of caring for the refugees, and the rest of us need to help them. I think it's also important to hear from both Turkey and Jordan about how they see the situation. I was very pleased that Ahmet was able to brief the G-8 ministers at the meeting I hosted last week and then brief the NATO ministers at our dinner last night.

And finally, we are working to establish an accountability clearinghouse in order to keep track of all of the terrible stories of abuses and crimes against humanity that are coming out of Syria. We think collecting that information can be a useful means of not only keeping track for future purposes but also sending a message to those in the regime and those in the military that they are being watched and a record is being kept.

So I think, Alain, this is a timely moment, because the Security Council is meeting as we speak. And we should, I hope, come to some resolution about what further action we wish out of the Security Council, despite even the fact that the first time around it might not be successful. But we should be, as we say, laying down markers about what is expected.