

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2009 6:11 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Micheletti Step-Aside?

From: Kelly, Craig A
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Abedin, Huma; Mills, Cheryl D; Steinberg, James B; Burns, William J
Sent: Thu Nov 19 16:32:14 2009
Subject: Micheletti Step-Aside?

To All:

Yesterday, when I left Tegucigalpa, we used the departure to put more pressure on M. I called a top M aide and said I was leaving, and that if my message in Washington was that M refused to help us help him, we would have to take our own steps to make clear our position on Honduras. (They assume that means visas stay revoked and more could be pulled.) We preferred to achieve our objectives through a patriotic gesture on M's part (a step-aside) but we have to protect our principles and our interests in the region. Washington would be very disappointed that M refused to cooperate with the country that has done the most to promote support for the October 30 Accord and promote support for elections in his country. Moreover, M would be passing up a chance to go down in history as a statesman as opposed the man who launched a coup.

Last night the aide called Hugo to say that M had considered this again and was sensitive to our arguments. He had decided to make a speech today (November 19) to announce that he as "absenting himself" for the days preceding the election through December 2 – the date of the vote on Z's restitution in the Congress. The latter is a significant date, because if Z wins the vote, M is gone, and if Z loses the vote, M has no reason to stay to keep Z out. M will leave the country in the control of a sort of executive council.

This afternoon M's staff shared with us the draft of a speech that M plans to make tonight at 7:00 pm EST (6:00 pm in Honduras). We have been suggesting edits to the text, which M has accepted.

This is Honduras, so we will wait to see what happens at 7:00 pm. If M goes through with it, we will launch calls to key countries to urged them to recognize that the situation on the ground has changed enough to allow more vigorous support for elections. Zelaya and ALBA will say this is not enough, but we will work on countries that matter.

Best,

ck

SBU
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.