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Johnnie Carson 8/22 Calls with AU Chairperson Ping and PSC Commissioner Lamamra

On August 22, Assistant Secretary Carson spoke separately with African Union (AU) Chairperson Jean Ping and Chairperson of the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Ramtane Lamamra to urge the AU to press the South African Government to support lifting immediately the freeze on \$1.5 billion in Libyan assets, to be used for humanitarian purposes.

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Key Points

- [Redacted]
- Ping and Lamamra indicated that the AU supports democratic transition in Libya
- Lamamra warned of Islamist influence in the TNC military units spearheading the assault on Tripoli

Ping [Redacted] Looks to Future

Urging the AU Chairperson to use his good offices to push South Africa to support lifting the asset freeze, A/S Carson underscored to Ping that the assets would be used for much needed fuel, food and other humanitarian assistance for the Libyan people, and that delays in releasing this assistance could cause serious harm. The Assistant Secretary highlighted that the changed circumstances of the past 48 in Libya present an opportunity for the AU to join international consensus, assist the Libyan people, and hasten Qadhafi's departure.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] A/S Carson reiterated that Ping should nonetheless advise the South Africans before the AU meetings to address the asset freeze immediately, [Redacted]

Ping sounded eager to move to discussions beyond the asset freeze and Qadhafi's imminent departure, insisting "The main issue is now solved. We had wanted to convince Qadhafi to leave quietly but now its over, and we have to deal with the future." On Libya's post-Qadhafi transition, Ping strongly suggested that the AU would find a great deal of common ground with the international community. Ping said "Everything the AU proposed in our roadmap is consistent with what the Transitional National Council (TNC) is saying, including reconciliation, constitutional reform and democratic elections." A/S Carson underscored that the AU use this opportunity to issue a strong, positive statement that it stands by the Libyan people in their democratic transition, and that Qadhafi's time has passed. The AU should work with the UN and the international community and should not get caught on the wrong side of history on this issue again.

Lamamra Also Looks to Future, Warns of Islamist Influence in Transition

The A/S underscored with Lamamra the importance of immediate action by South Africa in lifting the asset freeze, and repeated that the AU should reach out to South Africa now. The A/S pressed for positive statements from the AU and a cooperative and collaborative approach with the TNC, the international community and international organizations to ensure democratic transition and stability in Libya. The A/S noted emphasized that democratic progress in Africa continues to move forward, the era of strongmen is in decline

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Speaking of the post-Qadhafi era, Lamamra said "we are reading from the same book." Lamamra added that the AU all along has wanted to see peaceful democratic transition in Libya, and noted the need for an inclusive process that avoids chaos and civil war. Lamamra cautioned that "Islamist" brigades were the first TNC elements into Tripoli, and that that international community should be forewarned that some of these elements may intend to "derail the democratic project." A/S Carson underscored that the AU must help head off internal fissures in Libya and the TNC and assist the Libyan people in achieving their aspirations for openness and democracy.