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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: Egypt sees Clinton remarks as "interference"-agency (Reuters)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 09:57 AM
To: NEWS-Egypt; NEWS-Mahogany
Subject: Egypt sees Clinton remarks as "interference"-agency (Reuters)

CAIRO (Reuters) - The Egyptian foreign minister said on Wednesday that Egypt would not accept any interference in its internal affairs, in response to criticism by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on the way security forces dealt with women protesters.

In a speech on Monday, Clinton criticised the actions of Egyptian security forces as showing the "systematic degradation" of women that "disgraces the state", some of the strongest U.S. language used against Egypt's new rulers.

Footage showed Egyptian soldiers beating protesters with batons, often after they had fallen to the ground, in what activists described as a forcible attempt to clear a sit-in demanding a swifter transfer to civilian rule. The clashes since Friday have left at least 13 dead and hundreds wounded.

"Egypt does not accept any interference in its internal affairs and conducts communications and clarifications concerning statements made by foreign officials," the state news agency quoted Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr as saying.

"Matters like that are not taken lightly," he was quoted as saying, in his response to a question about Clinton's remarks.

A video of Egyptian soldiers dragging a woman protester on the ground by her black full-body veil, exposing her bra, then clubbing and kicking her has sparked outrage. Thousands marched on Tahrir square on Tuesday to condemn the attacks.

Activists have called for a major protest on Friday to demand an apology for the attacks on women.

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