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CONFIDENTIAL

March 12, 2012

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Conversation with Mahmoud Jibril

This morning Cody had an extended conversation with Mahmoud Jibril of the Libran National Council. In it, Jibril discussed the negative effect of Clapper's testimony; that Jibril had been the target of an assassination attempt within the last 24 hours; how Syria is aiding Qaddafi; etc.

Cody's notes:

Early Saturday morning (1 A.M. Pacific time), I spoke for twenty minutes with Dr. Mahmoud Jibril on the telephone. He was speaking from his sister's apartment in Cairo. He seemed utterly exhausted and dejected. He began the conversation by saying that NIE director James Clapper's congressional testimony asserting that Qaddafi would win had "sent a knife through the hearts of every young Libyan risking their lives in the battle for democracy in their homeland." He asked me what motivated Clapper's behavior in saying that in a public hearing? He acknowledged that he understood Clapper's thinking—"We in the opposition cannot win so why should the U.S. lift a finger"—but insisted that his premise was incorrect: with a no-fly zone in place and some new military equipment in hand, his boys would prevail.

In terrified tones he went on to describe that Qaddafi's hitmen had attempted to kill him on his arrival in Cairo, having just landed from his successful trip to France. He reported that he and his family have been placed on a hit list by the leader in Tripoli and have been ordered to cease all activities if they want to live. He told me that he has been contacted by U.S. authorities to meet the Secretary of State in France on Tuesday. He said that he would love to meet her but he feared for his safety. When I suggested one might change the venue to Cairo he said you don't understand that we in the opposition are being labeled as CIA agents. Furthermore, he asked, "What can she possibly say to me that we don't already know? We understand the fight she is waging with the Pentagon and the White House. She is our hero. But please tell me, what are the advantages of me having a meeting with her? Are we going to receive any good news or support or just more platitudes from Washington."

Jibril continued: "My brothers and sisters are dying every hour and nothing is being done. You know, my friend, this is a lot like Hungary 1956. Back then the United States had a lot to lose. Today you have nothing to lose by helping us militarily; only your character and the principles under which the United States exists. I guarantee that if you think the United States had a poor image in the region under Bush, it will be much worse under Obama if you don't act at this precise moment in history. It will take young people in the region at least 25 years to ever respect the United States again. And who knows, maybe long."

He gave his assessment of the current situation: "The situation on the ground in Libya is growing worse by the day. We have no time to waste. A Syrian ship arrived yesterday in Tripoli with arms. Qaddafi is sending bagmen to Yemen and everywhere else in the region. The real winners in this proxy war with Iran will be the leaders in Tehran. Believe me."

He went on: "I know me and my family will be hunted down and killed unless our side receives some immediate assistance from abroad. It is that simple. I am very tired"—another phone rings in the background—"please excuse me." There was a pause and I heard Arabic being spoken. Jipreel returned to the phone and declared that he must go to a meeting.

Jibril thanked me for our conversation and said he hopes to be able to meet "the historic lady" at some point in the near future. He ended the conversation by saying, "Please thank her for everything she is doing in the fight for democracy in the Middle East. We will talk soon."