

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2012 8:18 AM
To: H
Subject: FW: Dan Kurtzer on Egypt

FYI

From: Feltman, Jeffrey D
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2012 7:27 AM
To: Patterson, Anne W; Sievers, Marc J; Walles, Jacob; Dibble, Elizabeth L; Sullivan, Jacob J; Wells, Alice G; 'ssimon [redacted] Blome, Donald A; Taylor, William B; Wittes, Tamara C; Hawthorne, Amy W
Cc: Djerassi, Alexander M
Subject: Dan Kurtzer on Egypt

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(SBU) Just FYI. Dan Kurtzer came by yesterday and chatted with Alex Djerassi and me on a variety of NEA topics. But I thought a couple of his points on Egypt were particularly interesting. First, he said (what is perhaps obvious but Dan said it articulately) that all three major groups in Egypt -- the SCAF, the Islamist parties, and the liberal groups -- all distrust us. The SCAF prefers to blame us for the ousting of Mubarak than do any kind of self-examination. The Islamist parties view us with suspicion for our historic role, baggage, etc. The liberal groups see us as flirting both with the SCAF and the Islamist groups.

(SBU) At the same time, Dan gave us very high marks for what we collectively are doing. We are spending a lot of time with the SCAF, reassuring them of the strategic importance of the Egyptian-U.S. and the mil-mil relationships. We are engaging the MB in ways we never did before. And we continue to try to push for liberal, credible, democratic norms, laws, etc. In Dan's view, we have no political capital to draw on (given the distrust issue), but we are doing a good job in essentially starting from scratch in doing the hard diplomatic work of rebuilding the trust in those three groups.

(SBU) We also, inter alia, compared notes on presidential candidates. Dan sees the MB machine as being able to tip the balance toward a preferred candidate, and he does not see Amre Moussa emerging as that candidate. He raised the name of Ahmed Shafiq as a possibility (as has Anne Patterson), and he also mentioned Mansour Hassan, a name not familiar to me but probably known to the Embassy. Dan described Hassan as essentially an eminence grise who has a good reputation throughout Egypt for public service years ago. In Dan's description, he was not a Mubarak insider and did not profit from the privatization of state assets. Dan said that he has heard his name mentioned as a possibility.

(SBU) Dan is obviously just one of many observers of the Egyptian scene, but he's got good experience, of course. So I thought it worth passing on his comments that he thinks we're doing the right thing in our engagement strategy -- Dan does not hesitate to criticize the Administration when he finds fault! Dan had some tactical suggestions (nothing earth-shattering) on the NGO issue and other things that I'll incorporate in our discussions.

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SBU
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