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From: Anne-Marie Slaughter

Sent: Sunday, March 11, 2012 6:32 PM

To: H

Cc: Abedin, Huma; Cheryl Mills; Jacob J Sullivan (SullivanJJ@state.gov)

Subject: Sunday night reading

Attachments: HILJ-Online_53_Mallat_et_al.pdf

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I can imagine the size of your briefing books, but here are two things I think you will want to see. First, reprinted below, is a very powerful piece by two survivors of Srebrenica that was published in Turkey's "Today's Zaman." Second, attached, is a longer piece published in the on line forum of the Harvard Journal of International Law entitled "A Strategy for Syria Under International Law: How to End the Asad Dictatorship While Restoring Nonviolence to the Syrian Revolution." It has many very detailed recommendations for isolating Syria diplomatically, bolstering the opposition, and increasing military pressure, while emphasizing non-violence. I definitely think it is worth a read. The authors are Sadek Jalal al-Azm, emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Damascus and the recipient of numerous human rights awards; Ishac Diwan, director for Africa and the Middle East at the growth lab of the Center for International Development at Kennedy School of Government, Harvard; John J. Donohue, S.J. a scholar of both the classical and contemporary Middle East; Mansoor al-Jamri, editor of the Bahraini independent daily Al Wasat and recipient of CPJ's International Press Freedom Award for 2011; Yang Jianli, a prominent Chinese dissident, founder of Initiatives for China and Harvard Fellow; Chibli Mallat, a Lebanese lawyer and law professor; Jane Mansbridge, Adams Professor of Political Leadership and Democratic Values at Harvard Kennedy School and President-elect of the American Political Science Association; Sharhabeel al-Zaeem a leading Palestinian lawyer in Gaza. All are part of Right to Nonviolence, an international NGO based in the Middle East, for which the Executive Director is Trudi Hodges.

I think you might also think about giving a speech on the power of non-violent movements – to refocus attention on the larger forces at issue in the Arab spring – support for non-violence is also growing among Palestinians.

All best,
AM

The day after Homs by Emir Suljagic & Reuf Bajrovic*



Mourners pray at a mass funeral on Dec. 24, 2011 for 44 people killed in twin suicide bombings in Damascus, Syria. (PHOTO AP, Bassem Tellawi)
6 March 2012 / ,

Many Bosnians remember Turkey in the '90s as a society torn between the political elite's lack of will to act -- if necessary, unilaterally -- to help Bosnia and Herzegovina and ordinary Turkish citizens' shame at their government's unwillingness to intervene and aid a people on the brink of destruction.

One of the few to bridge that divide between the popular will and the political world was a new and young political figure who, during his bid to become the next mayor of Istanbul in 1994, passionately, with tears in his eyes, told people that if he was in power he would do everything he could to stop the killing of innocent Bosnians. The young

politician who swore to never let another Bosnia happen, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is now the prime minister of Turkey and the most influential political figure in Turkey since Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. A new Bosnia is taking place on his watch, just over Turkey's southern border.

Unlike Bosnia, Syria is Turkey's immediate neighbor. Today's Turkey is also far more powerful and influential than it was just one generation ago. It plays an important role on the global scene, with a booming economy and modern armed forces that are unequaled in the region. Today there are tens of thousands of Syrian refugees in Turkey who, like young Bosnian refugees 20 years ago, hope for external intervention to stop the killing in Syria. The Assad regime's campaign to stamp out opposition seems to be turning into wholesale butchery on the scale of the Serb ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which ended in genocide in Srebrenica in July 1995. If Turkey decides to sit back and watch the mass murder of civilians on its borders today, then Mr. Erdoğan will not have lived up to his promises. As we well know, history knows of no court of appeals.

Bashar al-Assad's brutal suppression turned a peaceful and grassroots movement into an armed conflict in which the regime is conducting a campaign of systematic terror. All the while, the regime is pitting Syria's ethnic communities against one another, stoking fears of communal warfare, which will ultimately result in a protracted civil war. The most important lesson learned from the Balkans in the '90s is that when faced with murderous dictatorships, appeasement does not work. Today it is Homs; tomorrow it will be Idlib, Hama, and Deraa -- where, as the wounded British journalist Paul Conroy noted, there are no cameras. The pattern is familiar: Encirclement of a population center, cutting off its food and basic services and carrying out a campaign of indiscriminate violence, not sparing women and children. Once overwhelmed by the armed forces, those left alive are rounded up, selected and executed en masse in total isolation. Finally, those who have committed these atrocities remove or destroy all evidence of their crimes. Baba Amr in Homs is currently undergoing this last phase. Numerous international actors, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, have been forthright in calling these actions crimes against humanity.

Such crimes are not brought to an end by diplomacy. It is time to act. The longer Turkey remains on the sidelines, the higher the cost -- to both Syrians and Turks -- further down the road. The consequences of Assad's carnage cannot be contained -- they are already being felt in Turkey and Lebanon. This is not a humanitarian disaster; it is politicide. There is a plan behind it, an intention to destroy anyone opposing the regime. People are being killed because of who and what they are. Helicopters have been employed by Assad's forces. The establishment of no-fly and no-drive zones, where those fleeing the violence could find refuge within Syria, coupled with arming the Free Syrian Army -- particularly with antitank weapons -- would not only hasten the fall of Assad's regime and allow Syrians to decide what kind of future they want for their country, but would save lives in the meantime. Turkey's influence and capabilities confer responsibility.

In addition to stopping Assad's ability to commit crimes against humanity, there must be a reckoning before the international or national judiciary for those that have already been perpetrated on his orders or under his supervision.

There is probably a boy somewhere in Syria now, a teenager like both of us were 20 years ago, huddling in a dark basement, hungry and paralyzed with fear, waiting for the fatal knock at the door before he is taken out to a football stadium or school building with hundreds of others, to be "selected" -- made to watch others being killed and in the end being killed himself. All his hopes and aspirations buried under the rubble, bulldozed together with the dreams of an entire generation of Syrians, in the same manner our friends and family had been two decades ago on the orders of Radovan Karadžić and Slobodan Milošević.

In the words of the exiled Soviet writer, Vasily Grossman, "Every epoch has its own capital city, a city that embodies its will and soul," on which the "thoughts and passions of humanity are centered." Two decades ago it was Sarajevo and Srebrenica; today it is Homs and Idlib.

**Emir Suljagic is a Srebrenica survivor and author. Reuf Bajrovic is a political consultant in Washington, D.C.*

Anne-Marie Slaughter
Bert G. Kerstetter '66 University Professor of Politics and International Affairs
Princeton University
440 Robertson Hall
Princeton, NJ 08544

Assistant: Terry Murphy
Website: www.princeton.edu/~slaughtr

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