

RELEASE IN PART
1.4(B),B1,1.4(D),B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 4, 2012 11:17 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Baghdad and Erbil

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Fyi

----- Original Message -----

From: Jones, Beth E
Sent: Tuesday, September 04, 2012 06:23 PM
To: Burns, William J; Sherman, Wendy R; Sullivan, Jacob J; Dibble, Elizabeth L; Leaf, Barbara A; Gordon, Philip H; Rubin, Eric S; 'ABlinker' [redacted] Desrocher, John P; Pascual, Carlos; Ford, Robert S
Cc: Zeya, Uzra S; Blair, Oni K; Lakhdhir, Kamala S; Beecroft, Robert S (Baghdad); Sutphin, Paul R; Miller, James N
Subject: Baghdad and Erbil

B6

During a sobering series of conversations in Baghdad, I clarified our position and activities in Syria, pushed hard against overflights and urged rapid progress on internal reforms. [redacted]

[redacted] 1.4(B)
Iraqi relations with Turkey remain troubled, but we pressed for continued engagement. There is still hope for progress 1.4(D)
with Kuwait. B1

[redacted]

Here are some highlights from Baghdad:

IRAQI VIEW ON SYRIA

PM Maliki, NSA Fayyad, FM Zebari, COR Dep Speaker Hammoudi and other Shia Parliamentarians [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] They also argued that we (the U.S. and our allies) must engage with the Asad regime directly in order to end the violence; Maliki passed me his NAM proposal for dialogue, [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] No one challenged these points. Nor did anyone deny my points about the Asad regime's appalling behavior and the need for it to go -- and nor did any claim to back the Asad regime, in light of Asad's past support for [redacted] They cited a list of actions and votes in line with international consensus in the Arab League and the UNGA. Only FinMin Issawi (Sunni) offered a different perspective, urging us to establish a no fly zone asap.

IRAQ-TURKEY

[redacted]

[Redacted]

IRAQ-KUWAIT

1.4(B)

1.4(D)

Zebari expressed disappointment with [Redacted] on next steps to move Iraq out of Ch. 7, but Maliki was surprisingly understanding about the [Redacted] Steve and I pushed the Iraqis to be prepared to move very quickly as soon as the Kuwaitis are ready to reciprocate. B1

POLITICAL REFORM

I stressed repeatedly the importance of advancing internal reforms as a means to counter external threats and interference. In order for local and provincial elections to take place next year -- a crucial sign of Iraq's steady progress -- the COR needs to decide asap on the composition of the Iraqi Higher Electoral Commission (IHEC). Disappointing postponement of the IHEC vote. Several discussed in some detail the work underway to name a Defense or Interior Minister, saying this would take only a few more days. Most talked as though they are fully engaged in the Jaafari-led reform process, and passing a hydrocarbons law, but all conceded at the same time that these are difficult to resolve. See the note on the Erbil meetings for a [Redacted] on where the reforms stand.

Bottom line: Steve's advice on the need to keep pressing all players to engage constantly on each of these points seems quite right. The expression of U.S. Interest that comes from Steve's active engagement and from a regular stream of visitors from Washington conveys the correct message that the [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Beth