

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 5, 2012 8:58 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Second night of N.Irish riots ahead of Clinton visit (Reuters)

From: Abedin, Huma
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2012 08:16 PM
To: Jenkinson, Kelli C; Sullivan, Jacob J; Burton, Gregory S (Belfast)
Subject: Fw: Second night of N.Irish riots ahead of Clinton visit (Reuters)

So I guess this wasn't a one-off event?

From: OpsNewsTicker@state.gov [mailto:OpsNewsTicker@state.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2012 06:56 PM
To: NEWS-EUR; NEWS-Mahogany
Subject: Second night of N.Irish riots ahead of Clinton visit (Reuters)

BELFAST (Reuters) - A number of police officers were injured in Northern Ireland on Wednesday in a second night of rioting this week, just two days before U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visits to lend support to the province's fragile peace.

Up to 1,600 pro-British loyalists, enraged at a decision by nationalist councillors to remove the Union Jack flag from above the entrance of Belfast City Council, battled again with police, 15 of whom were injured after the council decision on Monday.

Police fired plastic bullets when they came under attack with bricks, bottles and other missiles in Carrickfergus, county Antrim, a few miles outside Belfast. Four people were arrested, a police spokesman said and police officers were injured, though he declined to give a number.

An office belonging to the centrist, non-sectarian Alliance Party, whose support enabled nationalists vote to bring down the British flag, was also ransacked and set on fire during the rioting, according to a spokesman for the fire services.

One of the party's members of parliament for Belfast, Naomi Long, said earlier on Wednesday that she had received death threats over the council's decision.

The violence was condemned by pro-British unionists, whose loss of their Belfast City Council majority last year prompted the vote to remove the flag on all but 17 days of the year after it had flown continuously for more than 100 years.

"People are entitled to peacefully protest but there is absolutely no justification for the carnage which has been caused in Carrickfergus this evening," said Sammy Wilson of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which shares power with pro-Irish Sinn Fein.

NewsTickers alert senior Department officials to breaking news. This item appears as it did in its original publication and does not contain analysis or commentary by Department sources.