

RELEASE IN PART  
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**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 6, 2012 10:00 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Egypt Update

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**From:** Jones, Beth E  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 09:54 AM  
**To:** Sherman, Wendy R; Burns, William J; Sullivan, Jacob J; Quanrud, Pamela G; Lakhdir, Kamala S  
**Subject:** Egypt Update

Interesting development. I wonder if this is a means of helping Morsi take a step back, or just a coincidence. Will get post's take.

## Egypt's top Islamic body, Al-Azhar, urges Mursi to suspend new powers

Thursday, 06 December 2012

By AL ARABIYA WITH AGENCIES

Egypt's top Islamic body on Thursday called on President Mohammed Mursi to suspend a decree in which he claimed sweeping powers and demanded an unconditional dialogue between the president and his opponents.

The Al-Azhar institution said Mursi should "suspend the latest decree and stop using it," in a statement a day after deadly protests between Mursi supporters and opponents, AFP reported.

Opponents of President Mohamed Mursi and his Islamist supporters clashed on Wednesday night and Thursday morning during rival demonstrations that were sparked by Mursi's decision last month to expand his powers.

To protest against Mursi expanding his powers, three members of his advisory team said on Wednesday they had resigned over the crisis ignited by a decree that expanded his powers, according to Reuters.

Seif Abdel Fattah, Ayman al-Sayyad and Amr al-Leithy all tendered their resignations, bringing to six the number of presidential staff who have quit in the wake of a decree that has triggered countrywide violence.

The previously announced resignations included a Christian and a woman. They were part of a presidential staff assembled by Mursi, an Islamist, in an effort to build an inclusive administration.

Five demonstrators died overnight Thursday in the worst violence since Mursi became Egypt's first Islamist president in June.

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**From:** Silverman, Lawrence R  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 8:19 AM  
**To:** Jones, Beth E; Dibble, Elizabeth L; D(B)-NEA Duty Officer3; Holtsnider, James W; P-NEA Duty  
**Cc:** ssimon [redacted]; pkumar [redacted]; Jsantucci [redacted]  
**Subject:** Egypt Update

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- Still no info on exact timing of Morsi speech.
- Demos and violence localized to area around Presidency. Rest of city relatively normal; people working, etc.
- Opposition leaders Sabbahi's spokesman just said publicly they wouldn't engage in dialogue with Morsi because he is not legitimate.
- Ambassador has asked to speak with MB leader al-Shater, but Shater's people responding that he wasn't feeling well and was not able to take the call.
- Planned demonstrations on both sides for Friday.

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