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JUL - 8 2014

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

ACTION

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Note to the Secretary-General
(Through the Chef de Cabinet)

STAFF SECURITY IN LIBYA

1. In light of the prevailing security situation in Libya, and following several days of heavy clashes in the vicinity of the compound of UNSMIL, USG Drennan approved on 7 July the Mission's request to put 69 international staff members on evacuation status, leaving 44 international staff (excluding security personnel) in Tripoli. These numbers are based on UNSMIL's assessment of the numbers required to ensure business continuity at the Programme Criticality level 2. While this decision concerns UNSMIL only, agencies funds and programmes, which had already reduced staff numbers significantly, are meeting in Tripoli to discuss further measures.
2. The area west of Tripoli, where UNSMIL's compound (OEA Village) is located, is controlled by brigades that fall into the "Islamist" camp. It has been the site of frequent clashes between rival brigades over several months. An incident over the weekend between these Islamist brigades and elements from the so called "Liberal" camp featured intense fighting and the use of heavy weaponry. While fighting subsided on 6 July, it is expected to continue. A compound ("the Regatta") to the west of OEA was also attacked, and Italian military trainers based there were forced to relocate. The fear is that UN personnel are at risk of collateral damage, as well as possibly being directly targeted.
3. While these clashes are serious and pose a direct threat to the UN, their significance on the national scale remains unclear at this point. There is a pervasive fear among Libyans that the fighting in Benghazi and the east, between retired General Haftar and extremist brigades, could spread to the capital. It remains to be seen whether the weekend clashes in Tripoli are an indication of this phenomenon or just another exchange between rival brigades stationed in close proximity to one another. However, the polarisation emanating from General Haftar's operation, the recent elections and an outgoing and discredited Government create a different context where small incidents could spiral out of control.
4. Other diplomatic presences in the area, which have already enhanced security and reduced personnel levels over the past six to eight months, are also taking additional precautions. Still, the UK Mission contacted the Secretariat on 7 July to express a degree of concern over how the Libyans might interpret the UN's decision to evacuate some staff. They suggested that great care be given to any public messaging over this decision and urged discretion to the degree possible. While public messaging is a serious matter, it should be emphasised that this decision was based on security concerns only and that the Mission will remain with a significant number of staff to continue to perform the most critical aspects of the Security Council's mandate. Moreover, the partial evacuation is temporary, pending a review of security on the ground. DPA will continue to ensure close coordination between UNSMIL, DSS and DFS, with the objective of maintaining critical mission functions as safely as possible, and to keep you apprised of developments as they unfold.



Jeffrey Feltman
8 July 2014

cc: Mr. Drennan
Ms. Haq

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ROUTING SLIP FICHE DE TRANSMISSION		<input type="checkbox"/> Routine	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Most Immediate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unclassified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confidential	<input type="checkbox"/> Strictly Confidential
TO/A: Ms. Susana Malcorra, Chef de Cabinet				
FROM/DE: Jeffrey Feltman, USG, DPA				
Date: 8 July 2014		Ext: 3-5055		Room No. – No de bureau: S-3516
FOR ACTION			POUR SUITE A DONNER	
FOR YOUR ATTENTION		X	FOR VOTRE ATTENTION	
FOR INFORMATION			POUR INFORMATION	
FOR APPROVAL / SIGNATURE		X	POUR APPROBATION / SIGNATURE	
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DIVISIONS CONSULTED				
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SUBJECT/MESSAGE: STAFF SECURITY IN LIBYA

I attach, for the Secretary-General's consideration, a note on the above-mentioned topic.



Fw: CONFIDENTIAL - Staff Security in Libya

SGCentral to: Hazel Foster

Sent by: Hazel Foster

08/07/2014 11:29 AM

----- Forwarded by Hazel Foster/NY/UNO on 08/07/2014 11:29 AM -----

From: Alicia Austin/NY/UNO
To: SGCentral/NY/UNO@UNHQ, Dora Przybylek/NY/UNO@UNHQ, Maria Zaroui/NY/UNO@UNHQ, Silva Armani/NY/UNO@UNHQ,
Cc: DPA-OUSG Correspondence, Bertrand Njanja-Fassu/NY/UNO@UNHQ
Date: 08/07/2014 11:24 AM
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL - Staff Security in Libya

Good morning,

Please find attached the above mentioned document as approved by OUSG.



Staff Security in Libya.pdf

Best regards



Alicia Austin

Office of the Under Secretary-General

Department of Political Affairs

United Nations

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