

From: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Fwd: January 23 update

Date: Thu, 23 Jan 2014 18:25:19 +0000

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Office of Terje Rod-Larsen <[REDACTED]>

Date: Thursday, January 23, 2014

Subject: January 23 update

To:

23 January, 2014

Article 1.	The Washington Post <u>On Syria, Obama administration is leading to failure</u> Editorial
Article 2.	Los Angeles Times <u>Fate of Bashar Assad is key in Syria talks</u> Patrick J. McDonnell
Article 3.	Foreign Policy <u>Supporting America's Greatest Ally in Need: Jordan</u> Kori Schake
Article 4.	The Huffington Post <u>America Is Not in Decline, Its Foreign Policy Is... But It Can (Still) Surprise the World</u> András Simonyi and Erik Brattberg
Article 5.	The Washington Post <u>An emerging market problem</u> David Ignatius
Article 6.	The American Interest

Obama's Middle East Recessional Part 1: What Instability Really Looks Like

Adam Garfinkle

[Article 1.](#)

The Washington Post

On Syria, Obama administration is leading to failure

Editorial

January 22, 2014 -- THE OUTSIDE world seems to have grown numb to reports of atrocities from Syria — “barrel bombs” dropped on schools, Scud missiles aimed at apartment houses, blockaded neighborhoods where children die of starvation. But a [report released Monday](#) by a panel of international jurists ought to prick some consciences. Based on 55,000 images smuggled out of the country, mostly by a defector from the military police, it reports the murder of some 11,000 men detained by the Syrian government between 2011 and last August. Many of the bodies in the photographs show signs of torture; some are missing eyes. More than 40 percent of the bodies show signs of emaciation, indicating that the prisoners were systematically starved.

On Wednesday, [Secretary of State John F. Kerry](#) opened the Geneva 2 peace conference on Syria by referring to this “horrific” account of “[systematic torture and execution of thousands of prisoners](#).” He called it “an appalling assault, not only on human lives but on human dignity and on every standard by which the international community tries to organize itself.” The jurists, former war-crimes prosecutors [commissioned by the government of Qatar](#), concluded that the “evidence would support findings of crimes against humanity against the current Syrian regime.”

Yet the diplomatic initiative that Mr. Kerry launched offers no means to hold the regime of Bashar al-Assad accountable for these atrocities, or even to stop them. On the contrary: It may serve to prop up the Assad government by treating it as a legitimate party to negotiations about Syria's future. Mr. Kerry insists the talks will lead to a transitional government that excludes Mr. Assad, but the Syrian delegation flatly rejects this premise, and there is no indication that its allies Russia and Iran think otherwise.

Some diplomats at the conference, such as United Nations mediator Lakhdar Brahimi, believe it could lead to palliative measures, such as local cease-fires and the opening of humanitarian corridors to besieged civilians. Mr. Brahimi's predecessor, Kofi Annan, was convinced of this as well and even obtained the Assad regime's formal agreement to a plan. But the Assad forces never respected their commitments; now they are using [offers of humanitarian supplies](#) as a means to force the surrender of rebel-held areas.

President Obama demonstrated last year that the [credible threat of force could change the regime's behavior](#). His promise of airstrikes caused Mr. Assad to surrender an [arsenal of chemical weapons](#). Yet the president seems not to have learned the lesson of that episode. Now he makes the defeatist argument that, as he put it to [David Remnick of the New Yorker](#), "It is very difficult to imagine a scenario in which our involvement in Syria would have led to a better outcome, short of us being willing to undertake an effort in size and scope similar to what we did in Iraq."

In fact, Mr. Obama probably could force the measures Mr. Brahimi is seeking by presenting Mr. Assad with the choice of accepting them or enduring U.S. airstrikes. That he refuses to consider options between Mr. Kerry's feckless diplomacy and an Iraq-style invasion only ensures that the Geneva 2 conference will fail and that the atrocities will continue.

[Article 2](#)

Los Angeles Times

Fate of Bashar Assad is key in Syria talks

Patrick J. McDonnell

January 22, 2014 -- Montreux, Switzerland — At the core of the extraordinary diplomatic push launched Wednesday to end Syria's civil war is the fate of one man: Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Assad has steadfastly maintained power during nearly three years of war and hints he may run for reelection this year. But the Obama administration and the U.S.-backed opposition have said Assad must step down in any peace deal. That strategy may have backfired, contributing to a protracted conflict, a radicalization of the armed opposition and a consolidation of Assad's support.

While Assad is at the center of the debate about Syria, his future has significance far beyond the country's borders.

Syria is one of the key pieces of a delicate reordering of the political map of the Middle East. The conflict has become a proxy war in the regional conflict between Sunni Muslims and Shiite Muslims. The U.S. effort to end decades of estrangement with Shiite Iran, starting with an interim deal to limit its nuclear program, has further angered longtime ally Saudi Arabia, Iran's Sunni archrival. The monarchy already was upset that Washington has not been more aggressive against Assad, Tehran's longtime ally.

Few expect the peace negotiations, which move to Geneva on Friday for face-to-face meetings between the government and the opposition, to reach a swift resolution.

Washington appeared to be doubling down on the demand that Assad must go.

The "only thing standing" in the way of a political solution is "the stubborn clinging to power of one man, one family," Secretary of State John F. Kerry told the conference, adding: "One man and those who have supported him can no longer hold an entire nation and a region hostage."

Assad, who was not at the conference, showed no sign of backing down.

Syrian officials and their Russian allies have indicated flexibility on a number of issues, including possible cease-fires, prisoner exchanges and bolstered humanitarian access to besieged areas. But Damascus says Assad's future is nonnegotiable.

"Syrians alone have the right to choose their government, their parliament and their constitution," Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem told diplomats who had come to Montreux from more than 30 nations, most seemingly hostile to Assad. "Everything else is just talk and has no significance."

Moallem said any deal brokered in Geneva is subject to a national referendum. Assad seems confident he could win an election — though balloting would be of questionable legitimacy amid a civil war.

During the war, the radicalization of the opposition, including the growth of Al Qaeda and other militant Islamic elements, has bolstered Assad's support in some quarters. That is especially the case among Christians and other minorities and among many secular-minded Syrians appalled at the prospect of an Islamist takeover.

Assad stands atop a dynastic power structure more than four decades in the making, set in place by former President Hafez Assad, the current leader's late father. In the 1980s, the elder Assad oversaw the military crushing of an Islamist uprising viewed by his son as an earlier incarnation of the current revolt. Bashar Assad is also the standard-bearer of Syria's Alawite minority, many of whose members view the revolt led by the Sunni Muslim majority as a matter of survival.

U.S. officials are keen to avoid both direct military involvement in a potential quagmire and a complete collapse of Syria. Diplomats fear the kind of chaos that followed the U.S.-led ouster of Saddam Hussein in neighboring Iraq in 2003.

Syria's major allies, Russia and Iran, have asserted that they are not tied to propping up Assad's rule. But many Western diplomats are skeptical. Syria is Russia's last major strategic bastion in the Middle East. And, for Tehran,

Assad's Syria is a central component of its "axis of resistance" partnership with Hezbollah, the Lebanese-based political and military group.

President Obama stated publicly in August 2011 that Assad should step down from office. Expectations in Washington and other global capitals that Assad's trajectory would mirror the relatively quick exits of Egyptian and Tunisian strongmen caught in "Arab Spring" uprisings were off base. Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, the Syrian military backed Assad and carried out his crackdown on dissent.

Despite its oft-stated antipathy toward Assad, Washington has also shown a willingness to work with his government when necessary. The deal reached last year to avert U.S. airstrikes was contingent on Assad's willingness to renounce his chemical weapons stockpiles under international supervision.

Some observers, notably Ryan Crocker, a former U.S. ambassador to a number of Mideast and South Asian countries, have said that Assad is unlikely to fall and it would be wise for Washington to engage his government as an alternative to Islamic radicals. But Kerry's comments in Montreux indicate that the Obama administration remains intent on Assad's departure.

Kerry regularly cites the "Geneva communique," a kind of peace road map hammered out in June 2012 during a United Nations-organized summit.

But the document does not explicitly call for Assad's ouster. The transitional administration "could include members of the present government and the opposition and other groups and shall be formed on the basis of mutual consent," the communique states.

Syria says it is committed to implementing the terms of the Geneva communique "as a package, without singling out" any specific terms, Bashar Jaafari, Syria's delegate to the United Nations, told reporters Wednesday.

In Damascus

--

The information contained in this communication is confidential, may be attorney-client privileged, may constitute inside information, and is intended only for the use of the addressee. It is the property of Jeffrey Epstein

Unauthorized use, disclosure or copying of this communication or any part thereof is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail or by e-mail to jeevacation@gmail.com, and destroy this communication and all copies thereof, including all attachments. copyright -all rights reserved