

UN Report on Gun-Running to Syria Indicts Gulf States, Implicates U.S.

by William F. Wertz, Jr.

March 17—The UN Panel of Experts released its final report to the UN Security Council on Feb. 15, on violations of the arms embargo to and from Libya. The report bears out the allegations of this news service, that not only did the Obama Administration illegally violate the UN arms embargo which was put in place with its support, but that the weapons were being sent to Syrian rebels who are dominated by al-Qaeda. The Panel's mandate had been extended after Russia, on July 5, 2013, had called on the UNSC to probe reports that arms were being shipped to Syrian rebels from Libya. LaRouchePAC released a "Memo to the U.S. Congress: Obama Gun-Running to Syria Is Already Happening" (<http://larouchepac.com/node/272049>), on July 3, which was sent to the UN at the time.

Although the Panel's movement was restricted in Libya outside of Tripoli, and it did not receive full cooperation from several member-states, its report documents the involvement of President Barack Obama's allies in violating the UN arms embargo during the period around the the overthrow of Qaddafi, and then from Libya, since his ouster.

It also reports that the U.S. firm Jeppesen, based in Colorado, made the flight plans for the Qatari Air Force which transported weapons from Libya to Syria via Turkey. The company did not provide the UN Panel with a list of flights as requested.

Jeppesen, it turns out, was one of the "torture airlines" contracted by the CIA for renditions during the Bush-Cheney Administration, as was exposed in 2006. On Oct. 30 of that year, the *New Yorker* published an article by Jane Mayer entitled "Outsourcing; the C.I.A.'S Travel Agent," in which she revealed that Jeppesen's clients included the CIA, and that among the international trips that the company planned for the Agency were "extraordinary rendition" flights for terrorism suspects.

The involvement of Jeppesen in Dirty Dick Cheney's rendition/torture program, and Jeppesen's now dis-

closed role in Obama's illegal gun-running from Libya to Syria must be investigated immediately by the Senate and the House.

The Panel also contacted the U.S. government with regard to possible U.S. involvement in the gun-running prior to the attack on the Benghazi mission and CIA complex on Sept. 11, 2012, but reports that the U.S. denied the claims.

The report stated, "Transfers from Libya of more regular and significant quantities of arms and at times fighters have developed towards three geographic areas, namely, the Syrian Arab Republic via Lebanon and Turkey, Egypt and the Sahel."

Twenty-eight such illegal flights are documented in the report.

Arming the Syrian Rebels

The following shipments from Libya to Syria were investigated and documented by the UN Panel.

"95. The Panel's investigations have focused on the very different dynamics of illicit transfers, for example, allegations of State-sponsored transfers by air to armed groups in the Syrian Arab Republic. . . .

"96. Pointing to obstruction of its investigative efforts, the Panel notes that there has been 'a notable decrease in cooperation from some Member States. . . .'

"97. The vast majority of Libyan stockpiles are under the control of non-State actors. . . . Most transfers under investigation appear to originate from stockpiles located in Benghazi, Misrata, Zintan and the area of Sebha. The size of some shipments and transfers made by air indicate that some Libyan officials may be aware of some of the transfers, or even directly involved. . . .

"165. Military materiel continues to flow from Libya to the Syrian Arab Republic with various modes of financing, transport and actors involved. . . .

"167. Many sources noted that the extremist elements of the opposition in the Syrian Arab Republic have benefitted from Libyan weapons and a significant number of

Libyan combatants were fighting alongside the groups....

“176. Some of the transfer activities are also backed with funding from rich patrons from Gulf States....

“178. The Panel was provided with several names of Libyan, Syrian, Australian and Turkish nationals allegedly involved in transfers from Libya to the Syrian Arab Republic. The Panel has not yet been able to gather sufficient evidence to confirm the allegations....

“179. Several Member States have allegedly supported transfers from Libya in a number of ways, including through the provision of funding, transportation or access to their territories. The Panel is investigating the allegations....

“181. ...representatives of the Supreme Military Council [of Syria—ed.] travelled to Libya after the creation of the Council and met members of the Government in Tripoli and possibly elsewhere. Subsequently several shipments of materiel were provided free of charge and sent to Ankara.

“Routes:

“182. The transfers under investigation allegedly involve a range of non-State and State actors and occurred by three main routes: Turkey by air and sea, Qatar by air and Lebanon by sea.”

Alleged Transfers via Turkey

“184. ... weapons from Libya arrive by air and sea. Aircraft mainly fly to Gaziantep, Ankara and Antakya and sea shipments go through Mersin and Iskenderun. The materiel then travels by truck through the border crossings at Reyhanli and Kilis.

“185. It is alleged that ‘some Turkish authorities were involved in weapons transfers through the management and oversight of weapons deliveries to some elements of the Syrian opposition.’...

“188. The Panel wrote to Turkey requesting further information following media reports of arms seizures on the Syrian border and a further report stating that, on 2 January 2014, Turkish security forces had seized a truck in the region of Hatay that was transporting arms



A report of the UN Panel of Experts documents the violation by U.S. allies of the UN arms embargo during the Libyan war that overthrew Moammar Qaddafi, and the movement of arms from Libya to Syria. Shown: Libyan rebels on a battlefield of the war in 2011.

and ammunition to the Syrian Arab Republic. Owing to a technical error, the letter did not reach the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the UN in New York before the present report.

“189. The same humanitarian organization that was allegedly involved in the second case mentioned above was also the consignee for the shipment made by the Al-Entisar in September 2012.

“190. Some media reports claimed that United States officials working in Benghazi prior to the attack on the Benghazi consulate in September 2012 might have been involved in transfers of weapons out of Libya via Turkey to the Syrian opposition. The Panel contacted the United States regarding the claims, which it denied.”

Alleged Transfers via Qatar

“191. The Panel is investigating the alleged involvement of Qatar in transfers of materiel from Libya to the Syrian Arab Republic since 2012. Multiple sources ... allege that Qatari air force flights have been transferring military materiel from Libya to Qatar and then from Qatar to Turkey for the Syrian opposition....

“194. The Panel contacted Qatar to obtain a detailed list of flights made by Qatari air force to Libya since July 2012.... Qatar ... did not provide the requested information.”

In Annex VIII, “Investigation on flights operated by Qatari aircraft,” the Panel reports that it received flight plans for several Qatari aircraft.

It then reports that the flight plans of the Qatari C17 are made by “Jeppesen, an American company based in Colorado that is a subsidiary of Boeing.” When the Panel contacted Jeppesen, the company said “it was not involved in the process of obtaining Diplomatic Clearances for the Qatar Air Force and did not know the content of the flight cargo for the flights it plans. Jeppesen did not provide the list of flights which the Panel requested.”

The Panel then cited three flights which were reported in a *New York Times* article in June 2013:

Flight 1: Mitiga Airport, Tripoli, Libya to Al Udeid Air Base, Doha, Qatar—15 January 2013

Flight 2: Mitiga Airport, Tripoli, Libya to Al Udeid Air Base with a stopover in Morocco—1 February 2013

Flight 3: Benina Airport, Benghazi, Libya to Al Udeid Air Base, Doha, Qatar—16 April 2013.

The flight plans required military diplomatic clearances. Regarding flights 1 and 3, the Panel reported that Saudi Arabia did not respond to the Panel’s letter requesting information on the clearances it issued for these flights, thus indicating that it was Saudi Arabia which gave clearances to the flights.

The UN Panel then reported that “The flight data

provided to the Panel shows that after the arrivals of each of the above-mentioned flights in Doha, the next C17 to depart from Doha flew to Ankara. Analysis of the flight plans of Qatari C17 military transport aircraft shows that between 1 January 2013 and 30 April 2013, the Qatari Air Force operated 28 flights between Doha and Ankara, and one to Gaziantep, an airport near the Turkish-Syrian border. It is also interesting to note that after the arrivals of each of the above-mentioned flights (1, 2 and 3) in Doha, the next C17 to depart from Doha flew to Ankara.”

Again the flight plan for each of these flights was arranged by a U.S. company.

In Annex X, “Update on the Letfallah II investigation,” the Panel reports on further Saudi involvement: “The document indicates that Syrian citizens based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia initiated and financed the operation.”

In Annex XIII, “Proliferation of man-portable air defense systems from Libya,” the Panel reports that “The seizure made on the Letfallah II proved that there had been attempts to transfer MANPADS to the Syrian opposition from Libya.” Again this is a shipment “initiated and financed” in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

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