

Ranting Against Russia, Syria at Munich Meeting

Feb. 2—A panel yesterday at the Munich Security Conference on the wars in Syria and Mali turned into a wild rant by Syrian opposition leader Sheikh Moaz al-Khatib, making his first major international public appearance, followed by an attack on Russia by Kenneth Roth, director of Human Rights Watch (HRW), for blocking UN Security Council action to topple the Assad government. Moderator David Ignatius, the *Washington Post* columnist (and former CIA agent), went a long way to building the panel up to be a pro-opposition pep rally, asking lots of questions about supposed massacres by the Syrian regime, and asking al-Khatib to lay out what he wants from the United States, and what he would ask for when he met with Vice President Joe Biden on Feb. 2.

But the show was actually stolen from the war-mongers, when a young Syrian woman stated that she opposes the Assad regime, but that the opposition was doing nothing to negotiate for peace, and was letting Syrian people die, month after month after month. She repeatedly demanded of al-Khatib to explain why he refused to negotiate peacefully with the Assad government and instead escalated the war. She spoke after UN Envoy for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi, al-Khatib, and Roth.

At that point al-Khatib exposed himself as fanatical and inept, lambasting the international community for doing nothing to stop what he described as the child-killing, torturing Assad regime from murdering “65,000 martyrs,” without any admission of the brutal tactics of the for-

eign-funded jihadi opposition which actually killed a substantial number of the victims. He accused the international press of “measuring” the length of the rebels’ beards instead of counting the number of bodies killed by Assad, and for only talking about “terrorists,” instead of the crimes of the regime.

In a bizarre part of the speech (provided through translation), al-Khatib complained that the opposition is told they cannot use “chemical weapons,” but, he said, “leaving the regime” in power is *worse* than the rebels using chemical weapons.

At the same time, al-Khatib repeatedly referred to the opposition’s “generous offer” to sit at the negotiating table with the Syrian government to work out a transitional government.

The targeting of Russia was provided via Kenneth Roth, who blamed Russia for making the UN Security Council irrelevant by using its veto, and thereby prolonging the suffering of the Syrian people. Though HRW has previously exposed terrorist actions against civilians by the Syrian opposition, Roth downplayed this, preferring to be part of the roadshow trying to ram some kind of transitional government plan for Syria through the UN Security Council.



Munich Security Conference

Syrian opposition leader Sheikh Moaz al-Khatib meets with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden at the Munich Conference on Feb. 2.