

US sends warning message to Syria

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"A clear message has been delivered to Damascus stating that Washington will not tolerate a Syrian military intervention in Lebanon," Rice told in an interview with al-Arabiya news channel.

Rice: Washington Would Never Allow Syria to Intervene Militarily in Lebanon

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Friday pledged that Washington would "never permit Syria to intervene militarily in Lebanon."

Rice, in an interview with the Arabiya television network, said the message has been "clearly" relayed to the Syrians.

The recent military attacks in Tripoli and Damascus should not be used as a pretext to justify Syrian military intervention in Lebanon, she said.

Lebanon, Rice added, would not be able to "tolerate" such an intervention in light of "signals" by Syria that it is interested in a "different" relationship with Beirut.

The chief of U.S. diplomacy said she had discussed with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem the topics of border demarcation and border control with Lebanon.

She also discussed with Muallem the need to halt the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq.

"Syria should clarify to us on which side it stands," she stressed.

Beirut, 17 Oct 08, 13:40

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&336EB62A4DE6F874C22574E5003A0212>

Rice: US will never permit Syrian military intervention in Lebanon
 DEBKAFfile Special Report

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In an interview with the Arabiya TV, US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice pledged Friday, Oct. 17, that Washington would "never permit Syria to intervene militarily in Lebanon." She said the message had been clearly relayed to the Syrians. They were told that the recent attacks in Tripoli and Damascus should not be used as a pretext to justify such intervention.

US Undersecretary of Defense Eric Edelman flew to Beirut Friday.

DEBKAFfile's military sources add: From Sept. 14, 6-8,000 Syrian troops have been massed on the North Lebanese border, as this site was first to disclose, causing great concern in Beirut and Jerusalem. Our military sources reported the deployment consisted of two commando brigades of the Syrian 4th Mechanized Division with tanks, artillery and armored vehicles.

Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora sent an SOS to Washington for help against a possible Syrian invasion. Two senior US officials arrived in Beirut with pledges of aid for the Lebanese army including Cobra military helicopters

On Oct. 7, a second deployment of the 12th Mechanized Division took up positions further south, opposite the Lebanese Beqaa Valley, encircling half of Lebanon with Syrian troops. Last week, Israeli defense minister Ehud Barak traveled north to inspect the readiness of IDF positions guarding the Syrian and Lebanese borders

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