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At UN, Obama Falsely Claims America Sides with Democratic Change in Mideast

By John Glaser

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President Obama [addressed the United Nations General Assembly](#) on Tuesday to falsely claim that the sweeping democratic changes taking place in the Arab world are supported by the United States and urged governments in the Middle East to begin the “painstaking work of reform.”

In reality, the Obama administration has continued its tradition of propping up terrible dictatorships in the region and has itself worked, in a “painstaking” fashion, to suppress the protest movements pushing for democratic reforms.

Obama said America was “inspired by the Tunisian protests that toppled a dictator, because we recognized our own beliefs in the aspiration of men and women who took to the streets.” But he conveniently left out the fact that Washington had supported the Tunisian regime of Ben Ali.

“We insisted on change in Egypt,” Obama claimed, “because our support for democracy ultimately put us on the side of the people.” Again, Obama left out the fact that the dictatorial regime of Hosni Mubarak was a close American ally that had received tens of billions of money and a reliable source of weapons and tools of repression over decades.

As far as insisting on change in Egypt during the revolution last year, this claim is patently false. The US continued to support Mubarak until the very end, when it was clear the regime was going to fall anyways from the popular revolution. Immediately following the decision to drop said support, the US tried to help Mubarak’s deputy to come to power. And when that failed, the US

– up until this day – has aided the military junta in Egypt even as it cracked down on protests and tried to consolidate power and circumvent democratic reforms.

“We supported a transition of leadership in Yemen,” Obama also said, “because the interests of the people were no longer being served by a corrupt status quo.” Once again, Obama left out the fact that the outgoing dictator, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was an American client that was propped up with US money and weapons. And the change of leadership, which the US supported and continues to support, did not eliminate the “corrupt status quo,” it sustained it.

Obama also repeated slogans about supporting freedom in Libya, where the US and its NATO allies imposed regime change on a former ally, the dictatorship of Muammar Gadhafi, through an air war in support of unscrupulous rebel militias who not only committed crimes but also had at least some ties to al-Qaeda.

Obama then claimed that the US is in support of a democratic change of government in Syria, where a terrible civil war has broken out challenging the dictator Bashar al-Assad. But the US is currently cooperating with its client states in the Gulf – the undemocratic and authoritarian governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar – to fund Syria’s rebel militias which have also committed crimes, have ties to al-Qaeda, do not have the support of the majority of Syrians, and have demonstrated almost no desire for democracy.

Obama refused to mention Bahrain, where the US has tried heartily to suppress the true democratic uprising against the US-supported tyrant. Instead of supporting reform there, the US has continued its financial and military support of the regime which has responded to protests with harsh crackdowns on human rights.