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Officials: Obama Close to Arming Syrian Rebels

By Jason Ditz

June 9, 2013

Citing the Syrian government's capture of the border town of Qusayr, officials inside the Obama Administration say that they believe the president is likely to approve a decision to start sending weapons to Syrian rebels later this week.

The White House has been threatening to do so for a long time, and with growing calls from hawks to get directly involved militarily, imposing "no-fly zones" and rebel buffer areas inside Syria, officials say throwing weapons at the rebels is being spun as a compromise decision at least a little short of direct acts of war.

But while the Obama Administration seems desperate to do "something" in Syria, the timing seems about as bad as possible, with officials going on the record favoring peace talks then watching as nominally pro-US rebels spurned the talks and started holding out for more guns.

Indeed, the State Department is so frustrated with the quality (or lack thereof) of the Syrian rebel leadership they've been stalling on sending them the huge amounts of cash they promised. If they are uncomfortable sending money, the problem of sending them guns seems even greater.