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CNN NEWSROOM

U.S. Sources: Libya Attack Was Planned; Israel Pressure U.S. Over Iran. Drones in Libya

Aired September 12, 2012 - 12:00 ET

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SUZANNE MALVEAUX, CNN ANCHOR: Welcome to NEWSROOM INTERNATIONAL. I'm Suzanne Malveaux. We are taking you around the world in 60 minutes.

Here's what's going on right now:

Of course, the troubles in the Arab world hitting home after an angry mob kills the U.S. ambassador to Libya and three other Americans.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HILLARY CLINTON, U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE: Today many Americans are asking, indeed, I asked myself. How could this happen? How could this happen in a country in a country we helped liberate in a city we helped save from destruction?

This question reflects just how complicated and at times how confounding the world can be, but we must be clear-eyed even in our grief. This was an attack by a small and savage group. Not the people or government of Libya.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MALVEAUX: Tensions are also strained right now with one of America's closest allies. An anti-American fury is now spreading.

We're following all the angles from around the globe.

Jomana Karadsheh, she is live in Tripoli, Libya. Ian Lee, he is on the ground in Cairo, Egypt. And Sara Sidner, she is in Jerusalem.

So two U.S. missions in two different countries attacked on the same day. We're talking about the 11th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

I want to take a closer look at the security information with someone who is actually experiencing this. Nicolas Burns, he served in the Foreign Service for 27 years. He is also a former U.S. ambassador to NATO.

Nick, thanks for joining us. Obviously, earlier in your career, you had positions in Jerusalem and Cairo. So let's first talk about what went on in your mind when you thought and you heard on 9/11 that you had two separate instances in perhaps one of the most hot spots in the globe?

NICHOLAS BURNS, FORMER U.S. UNDER SECY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS: Well, Suzanne, this is obviously a tragic day for the United States and for the U.S. Foreign Service. Ambassador Stevens and his three colleagues were serving our country in the most honorable way. They were out on the front lines, and it does demonstrate that we have men and women from the U.S. Foreign Service from our State Department all over the world defending us every single day.

And so obviously the first thing we have to say today is our hearts go out to their loved ones and their families. It's a tragic day for all Americans, particularly as you say, because this attack came on September 11th, 11 years after that terrible day in American history.

MALVEAUX: Nick, how do we answer Secretary Clinton's question when she took -- takes a look at the diplomatic mission and says, you know, we put so much into Libya to turn around to have something like this happen? She clearly is trying to say that there is something that we have done that is worth all of this effort.

But when you look at what has happened, how much of that is an insult, is a slap to the U.S. people?

BURNS: Well, you know, Suzanne, I really thought that Secretary Clinton made a very powerful statement this morning and one with which I agree completely. This was obviously the work of a small terrorist group with hatred in their hearts.

And let us just hope that the Libyan authorities will apprehend the people who killed our diplomats and bring them to justice to prosecute them and to lock them behind bars. That's where they deserve to be.

But the cruel irony of this whole episode, this terrible day, is that, you know, the United States did a very great thing in Libya with our NATO allies in bringing freedom to Libyan people and relieving them of the nightmare of Moammar Gadhafi. And if you look at the public opinion polls, the Libyan people are not as a whole anti-American. This is just unfortunately an aspect of - as Secretary Clinton put it, sometimes the confounding nature of how we relate to the rest of the world and our experiences in that world.

But it doesn't mean that the United States should retreat and go home. It does mean that we have to stay during the hard work, our diplomats especially, the hard work of protecting this country overseas.

MALVEAUX: Nick, do you think we have the United States has a lot of cache in Libya considering the secretary says this is a fringe group, this is a small minority here, these are not the people that the United States tried to help liberate?

BURNS: Well, I do think the United States has considerable influence there, and it was interesting, Suzanne, to remember that in the recent Libyan elections of just a few months ago, there was a surprising result. The extremists did not win. The moderates won, and they are ruling the government of Libya today.

So I do think -- I do hope we'll see among the people of Libya opposition to the kind of hatred that this terrorist group has displayed once again in murdering our diplomats. MALVEAUX: All right. Nick Burns, thank you so much. We really appreciate it.

Rage over the film that insulted the Prophet Muhammad also sparked protest in Egypt. There were thousands of demonstrators that attacked the U.S. embassy in Cairo. They climbed the walls around the complex, tore down the American flag, and brought a black flag to replace it.

That attack was underway during our show yesterday. We actually brought you live video from the scene.

Ian Lee is joining us from Cairo to talk a little bit about this.

And, Ian, we're talking about 24 hours later we still haven't seen or heard from Egypt's President Mohamed Morsi condemning this attack. Why the silence?

IAN LEE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, Suzanne, we've heard from other government officials, but you're right. We haven't heard from the foreign ministry that received an order from President Mohamed Morsi is that he is ordering the Egyptian embassy in Washington to try legal actions against the filmmakers. But President Mohamed Morsi hasn't come out and talked about the protesters breaking in to the U.S. embassy.

His prime minister came out and did address this. He said they condemn those protesters breaking in and that they're going to try to make

sure that it can't happen again, but being at the embassy last night security forces were just standing by. They weren't engaging the protesters to make sure they don't enter the embassy.

When we talk to the ministry of interior who is tasked to stop and control crowds, they say that they were overwhelmed and under prepared. We also talked to the military who is also stationed around the embassy, and they said that their job was to protect against a Libyan style attack with people with weapons who are trying to enter the embassy, but they said crowd control is up to the police and the police failed them at their job.

MALVEAUX: So, Ian, when you talk about security that was just standing by, are you talking about Egyptian security, or are you talking about U.S. security?

LEE: This is Egyptian security -- Egyptian security outside in riot gear were the ones that were tasked with controlling the crowd and moving them away from the embassy. Eventually they were able to form a cordon between the protesters and the embassy.

And it's interesting, you mentioned the security forces inside the embassy, and just to let you know, that the Marines guarding the embassies who guard diplomatic missions around the world has one of the largest Marine contingents in the embassy. We heard from a diplomat that they are trying to show the up most restraint as not to spark more outrage.

MALVEAUX: Ian, tell us about this black flag that was taken to the embassy. It's often used by Islamic radicals as any group claims responsibility for these demonstrations?

LEE: Well, the demonstrations were initially called for by Islamic radicals. One person in many particular people might know is Mohamed al Zawahiri. His the brother of Ayman al-Zawahiri, who is the leader of al Qaeda. He said that they were calling for peaceful protests yesterday. He was joined by other Islamist groups, but there are soccer hooligans that are mixing into the crowd, and the Islamists are blaming the hooligans for breaching the wall.

But they did hoist the flag, which we know over here is commonly associated with jihad or holy war. So this is something that is associated with Islamists and not so much the soccer hooligans.

MALVEAUX: Finally, Ian, folks that you talked to, Egyptians, what do they say? Are they in support of what they've seen here, storming the U.S. embassy because of this film, or do they feel like this is really not helpful, that this unrest is dangerous?

LEE: I think there's two things to look at here. One was the size of the crowd. I have been covering Egyptian protests for a long time now, and this was a relatively small crowd to ones we've seen in the past, Tahrir, a few thousand people, a couple of thousand people. Not the big masses that is we've seen before, but definitely more enough to overwhelm security forces and break in.

But also I've talked to a person who owned a shop across from the front entrance of the embassy, and he pointed and said this is not what we want in Egypt. With this instability, we want stability. We want control from the government, and this is not right.

So just right across from the front door of the embassy, we had one person saying that this isn't what he hopes for Egypt.

MALVEAUX: All right. Ian Lee, thank you so much.

U.S. Marines, they are speeding towards Libya now. President Obama is promising justice.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The United States condemns in the strongest terms this outrageous and shocking attack. We're working with the government of Libya to secure our diplomats. I've also directed my administration to increase our security at diplomatic posts around the world.

And make no mistake: we will work with the Libyan government to bring to justice the killers who attacked our people.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MALVEAUX: The people he is talking about, four members of the U.S. foreign service who were killed overnight in Libya. Among them: U.S. ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, President Obama's appointed man to watch over Libya after the long rule of Moammar Gadhafi. Someone fired a rocket into the U.S. consulate in Benghazi during a chaotic protest. We're going to join CNN Jomana Karadsheh. She's with us.

Jomana, first of all, tell us about this tension that erupted in Benghazi. It did not actually happen in Tripoli. You are in Tripoli. How are people responding to what has taken place?

JOMANA KARADSHEH, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, the situation here in Tripoli does seem to be normal. People are on the streets. There seems to be nothing but the news that -- of what happened in Benghazi spreading slowly across Tripoli today.

Most of the people I have spoken to, people in the capital here, are shocked and saddened by this attack. They say that it does not reflect the way Libyans treat their guests. This is not the way Libyans feel about the United States, and they do appreciate and do express gratitude for the rule the United States played last year as part of the NATO alliance in helping the Libyan people in ousting Moammar Gadhafi during their revolution.

We are hearing also from government officials who are condemning this. They're also promising to bring those responsible to justice to have an investigation into what actually happened and who is responsible for this attack.

MALVEAUX: Jomana, I want to play a bit of sound here. This is from a Libyan government spokesperson about the attack, the reaction to it. Let's listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MOHAMMED AL-MAGARYEF, HEAD OF LIBYA'S GENERAL NATIONAL CONGRESS (through translator): We apologize to the U.S. and for the American people and to the government and also to the rest of the world for what happened yesterday. At the same time, we expect the world to cooperate with us in order to confront to what is meant out of this kind of cowardice, criminal act.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MALVEAUX: That is the Libyan government apologizing for that attack. We lost our reporter Jomana. We're going to try to bring her back.

But we want to talk this YouTube video, that is what's something cause this fury that killed four Americans in Libya. We're going to talk about how one movie could cause such a violent reaction.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ANNOUNCER: This is CNN breaking news.

MALVEAUX: We have some breaking news here. I'm going to read it from my BlackBerry. This is coming from several U.S. sources that are communicating with CNN. We are now learning that Tuesday's attack, yesterday's attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, was planned in advance, and the attackers used the protests outside the consulate as a diversion.

Now, this is according to U.S. sources. They say that -- the sources could not say whether the attackers instigated the protests or merely took advantage of it. Sources do not believe Ambassador Chris Stevens was actually specifically targeted.

This is significant information that we are now getting from various sources to CNN. Just the highlights once again that yesterday's attack in Benghazi, Libya, was planned in advance. You might recall yesterday was the anniversary, 11th anniversary of the September 11th attacks. The attackers used the protest that was happening outside the consulate as a diversion and that, in fact, they could not say whether these attackers instigated the protests, merely took advantage of it, and they do not believe that Ambassador Chris Stevens was specifically targeted.

I want to bring in our CNN international anchor and correspondent Michael Holmes to talk about this.

Tell us, first of all, the significance of this being a planned attack and this was not simply some sort of reaction to this YouTube video out there that was criticizing the Prophet Muhammad?

MICHAEL HOLMES, CNN INTERNATIONAL ANCHOR & CORRESPONDENT: You know, Suzanne, it's fascinating hearing that waiting to do our normal hit because this is exactly what we've been hearing from our own intelligence sources inside Libya, that al Qaeda in Libya had been planning an attack on U.S. interests there.

And remember when Ayman al Zawahiri called on Libyans specifically, it's only a day ago, to attack the crusaders in Libya. This was a plan that we had heard from our sources that was going to happen at some point. Now, we didn't know -- I don't think it was 9/11-linked necessarily, but when this video came out, this protest happened outside the embassy or the consulate in Benghazi, it did provide cover.

It gave them a cover to come in with heavy weaponry and do what they do. So it's fascinating to hear that coming from U.S. sources, because I was talking to Nic Robertson earlier and some of our own sources inside Libya that were saying the same thing. They weren't surprised. They kind of expected an attack.

MALVEAUX: So if they expected an attack here, you have the ambassador, you have the U.S. ambassador. Why would he be at that facility?

HOLMES: That's a really good question.

MALVEAUX: He is actually usually not there. He is based in Tripoli. They were getting ready for some sort of ceremony and opening of an American center in Benghazi. From what we understand, it wasn't a lot of security. It was very open. I mean, if they had any kind of intelligence or warning, you'd think they wouldn't put the ambassador there.

HOLMES: You would think so, yes. I mean, in Tripoli, they are reasonably well-protected and in Benghazi, it's a consulate. It's not an embassy. No, it doesn't have nearly the same level of protection. I mean, that's a question for the State Department.

It's so interesting hearing that coming from U.S. officials because we've been hearing the same thing today from our sources, our intelligence sources, inside the country.

MALVEAUX: Now, we don't know actually who is taking responsibility for this, and you had mentioned the role of al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda -- explain their presence inside of Libya, because that was one of the reasons I understand that the U.S. and the U.N. were so reluctant in many ways to get involved in taking down Gadhafi because they feared there would be a power vacuum and al Qaeda would rise.

HOLMES: Al Qaeda loves a vacuum, and this is something that you can talk generally about the Arab spring as well, in places like Tunisia, Egypt as well. This fear that when you got rid of dictators who oppress the people, but also oppress the extremists, that they -- these people would get oxygen, room to move. Geography as well.

That's what's happened in Libya. Al Qaeda has been in there for months now. They have their own representatives there. They've got camps there in the eastern part of the country, a camp in the western part as well, but mainly in the east.

So this is a risk of what happens when you remove dictators who are very good at keeping the lid on extremists like this, and so you are seeing it.

MALVEAUX: When you take a look at this attack, when you see those pictures and you understand what had actually taken place with the ambassador, do you think that that's a signature? Is that a signature of al Qaeda in the way that they operate, or is it too soon to tell?

HOLMES: I think it's too soon to tell.

What -- when you talk about Libya, too, you saw the protests in Egypt. They got on a wall. I mean, that was extraordinary that they got that close. I have been to that embassy. I'm sure you have too.

You can't just walk up to that place. How they got there is a whole other argument. But nobody was carrying weapons and all that sort of stuff that you see in Libya.

Libya post-civil war is awash in weaponry. We're not talking about AK-47s and handguns. We're talking about anti-aircraft guns and rocket-propelled grenades. This is a place where people can get their hands on some nasty weaponry. All those militias that join together to bring down Gadhafi are still there, and they didn't like each other before the civil war, and they don't like each other now.

So, you've got all this weaponry around. A government without a security infrastructure who can disarm them and take control of these sorts of areas where al Qaeda is and the militias are for that matter, tribal interests and all of that.

So, you know, I was also talking on to some people today in Libya who are saying they were saying that they do feel a little let down by the west. They came in, supported to get rid of Gadhafi. That's great. There's a very strong pro-Western sentiment in Iraq.

MALVEAUX: Right.

HOLMES: But they do feel that interest then waned ask that the central government there needs a lot of support. The sort of support we see in Iraq and Afghanistan, to give them that sort of security apparatus to control these sorts of elements.

MALVEAUX: Let's talk about U.S. sources saying that they don't believe this was necessarily targeting the ambassador, the U.S. ambassador, and you have intelligence sources yourself saying they had expected something.

What do you think was the purpose then of these attacks?

HOLMES: To attack U.S. interests, and as a result of drone attacks on al Qaeda, leaders in Libya and elsewhere, Yemen as well, this was an opportunity, if you like, to attack U.S. interests.

And, you know, the consulate is more of a soft target than the embassy. This gave them perfect cover to do it. So, yes, it's basically a response to drone attacks that have been taking out al Qaeda leaders very effectively. Do not be surprised to see more drone attacks in the days ahead against some of those camps that are in Libya.

MALVEAUX: All right. Michael Holmes, thank you very much. Appreciate it -- responding to the breaking news.

We're going to have more after a quick break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MALVEAUX: Besides the violence in Egypt and Libya, tensions are flaring between the U.S. and Israel over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu getting frustrated now with what he sees as a lack of clarity from the Obama administration. At the heart of the tension is the question of when to strike against Iran's nuclear program.

Sara Sidner, she's in Jerusalem, and she's joining us.

And, Sara, first of all, Prime Minister Netanyahu really pushing the U.S. right now to draw what we call -- what he called a red line that Iran cannot cross. I want you to listen to this. (BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: The world tells Israel, wait. There's still time. And I say, wait for what? Wait until when?

Those in the international community who refuse to put red lines before Iran don't have a moral right to place a red light before Israel.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MALVEAUX: Sara, I want to ask you about the timing of this, because you hear the prime minister coming out very much pressuring the United States and Obama administration to be a lot more specific when it comes to dealing with Iran, putting more pressure on them.

We know that Netanyahu and Mitt Romney have worked together. They know each other from the past. Is this political, two months before the election?

SARA SIDNER, CNN SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Well, a lot of people that look at this situation say, yes, there is politics at play here. But for more months and months and months, we have to remember that Prime Minister Netanyahu has been very strong many his condemnation of how the world and the U.S. in particular has been handling Iran. You heard him say there, why should we wait and who do you think basically you are? You do not have the moral high ground to stop us from acting because you have not given a strong directive to Tehran.

Mr. Netanyahu is asking for very clear and decisive deadlines for Iran, and if they're not met, consequences, as well as he talked about these red lines -- those are basically what he is saying lines that Iran cannot cross or it will face war. And so, that is what he has put on the table. He has had, though, the strongest words just yesterday.

And when he talks about the international community, a lot of people say, look, he is talking about and too the United States. He wants the United States to really put things in a very clear package for Iran. This is what you can do. This is what you must do or else you will have to face very severe consequences.

But the timing of it all -- the timing is interesting because, of course, you have the November election coming up, Suzanne, as you well know. There is a great friendship that they made very clear when Mr. Romney visited Mr. Netanyahu here this year, and we all know that there is a bet of an icy relationship or a cool relationship between Mr. Obama and Mr. Netanyahu -- Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: And what do we make of these stories that are being circulated essentially how the U.N. General Assembly, that's meeting in New York, New York City, in a week or so. We've got more than 100 leaders. There was an invitation -- or supposedly the two leaders, President Obama and Netanyahu to meet. That is not going to happen. They had a conversation by phone for about an hour last night, but the prime minister is now accusing the president snubbing him.

Is this now a personal thing as well?

SIDNER: Well, I think there is definitely a personal issue between Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Obama. It doesn't seem that they get along, and it seems like another crack in that relationship, but when speaking to, you know, the White House sent out a press statement saying that we were not asked for a meeting, and we did not reject a meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, and that Mr. Obama's schedule is just too tight to fit in a meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu.

However, I spoke with Prime Minister Netanyahu's spokesman Mark Freiberg today, and he said he did not deny that, but he said we had wanted to have a meeting with Mr. Obama and we were willing to go to Washington.

So it sounds like it contradicts what the White House statement said. That being said, this really does seem like there is a bigger division between Mr. Obama and Mr. Netanyahu.

And to give you some idea of how leaders here take that, you know, it's become such an issue that a special session of the Knesset has been called, and this is one of the reasons why the relationship between the United States and Israel because of that between President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu is not good, then the people here believe that that means the relationship between Israel and the United States isn't that good at this point in time.

And it's a bad time. Everyone very concerned about Iran's nuclear ambitions. Iran, of course, has long said that it is not building a nuclear weapon. It's only use it for things such as energy in the country -- Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: All right. Sara Sidner -- thank you so much, Sara. Appreciate it.

I want to go directly to Jill Dougherty at the State Department, who has new details about the attack on the U.S. embassy in Libya.

Jill, what are you learning now?

JILL DOUGHERTY, CNN FOREIGN AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: Well, Suzanne, I have been in communication with the senior U.S. official, and this official describes as very, very complex situation. Essentially what he is saying is in Benghazi, outside of that consulate and inside there were two different things going on. Very dangerous at the same time.

You had the grenade attack taking place from outside, and then that grenade attack, in turn, creating a fire inside the consulate. And then this official says folks inside were fighting with fire and then they were also fighting the grenade attack from the outside. So as this was taking place, Ambassador Chris Stevens and the others who were killed were going to the roof trying to get to the roof of the building. They were separated from the others and that is when Chris Stevens, this official says, was overcome by smoke and, as we know, he died.

There were, this official says, some valiant attempts to get to these men to try to rescue them, but ultimately they were unsuccessful. We hope to have more details, but that is some of the gripping detail of what happened. Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: Jill, do they have any more information about the kind of security that he had around him and how his security, American security, was working with Libyan security, whether or not it was actually sufficient in this kind of situation?

DOUGHERTY: You know, it's too early. We do not actually have those details and a little too early to tell. But as can you see, it was more this physical problem of trying to get to the roof as opposed to some type of, let's say, fire or something like that, that they were actually trying to get through this building that was on fire, a lot of smoke, and then were overcome. That's more what we are concentrating on right now.

MALVEAUX: Do they think this was a sophisticated attack when they talk about a grenade, or that there was something that really could have been done by protesters who were upset over a movie?

DOUGHERTY: At this point the indications are the protesters and the people who carried out the attack were two separate things. The protesters were, granted, you know, demonstrating, but there was, we understand from officials that we've been speaking with, an organized group. They did not necessarily target the ambassador, Chris Stevens, but they were using this opportunity to carry out this attack. That is something I think that has to be looked at a little bit more closely, but it appears that they in effect used the pretext of that demonstration to attack the consulate.

MALVEAUX: Jill, it might be a little bit too early to know the answer to this question, but I'm curious if -- whatever this group was that launched the grenade and the protests that gathered because of the movie, they were angry about the movie, do we know if there was any contact or communication between those two groups, or whether or not they simply operated separately with this one grenade-attacking group just taking advantage of the situation?

DOUGHERTY: I'm sorry. There was a little bit that I didn't hear. You're talking about Libya and Egypt?

MALVEAUX: Libya, just Libya. Do we know -- just Libya. Do we know if the group that launched the grenade actually coordinated with the protesters or the protesters were aware or talking with the other group, the grenade group, in this attack that happened in Libya in the consulate there?

DOUGHERTY: We do not know that, but at this stage it does appear that there was this core and, remember what Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said this morning, a small and vicious group, which was carrying out this attack. So, again, not totally confirmed, but it would appear that there is a demonstration going on and then this core uses that and attacks.

MALVEAUX: Is the State Department, is the Secretary -- are they close at all to identifying who that group might have been? Is there an investigation that is taking place with Libyan authorities to find out who did this?

DOUGHERTY: Oh, they are definitely starting that. The FBI will be involved. But at this point it's very early and nobody is definitively saying who did that.

MALVEAUX: All right. Jill Dougherty, thank you very much. Very good detail. We appreciate it.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says there is no justification for an attack like this. We are joined by former diplomat Jamie Rubin on his take on what has to happen now in Libya to find justice.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MALVEAUX: The U.S. is stepping up security at embassies around the world after an American ambassador and three others were killed in Libya. Protesters attacked the U.S. embassy in Egypt as well. Now both protests in these countries apparently set off by an on-line video considered offensive to Islam. They took place in countries where radical change is taking place following the Arab Spring revolutions.

We want to bring in Jamie Rubin, former Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs in the Clinton administration. Jamie, first of all, before we get into some of what Secretary Clinton said earlier today, I want you to react to some of the new information that we are getting. First of all, U.S. sources telling us that this was an attack that was planned in advance, that it was not the protest that evolved from this offensive movie against Islam and the prophet, and that these were two separate groups and essentially they weren't targeting the ambassador inside of Libya. What does that say to you about what took place yesterday at the U.S. consulate?

JAMIE RUBIN, FMR. ASST. SECY. OF STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Well, I think what it says is there are extremist Islamic elements, kind of an Al Qaeda of North Africa, that have used September 11, yesterday, as an opportunity to attack the symbol of the United States, our consulate there, and they've used, you know, substantial weaponry to do it, and that obviously there is a terrible tragedy as a result of it.

I think in the investigation that is going to take place, the crucial question is the one that you've been asking, which is what is the connection, if any, between that organized group that we had advanced intelligence of some kind about, which is why they're able to

make this judgment right now -- what is the connection between that group and these broader protests against the United States in Benghazi and in Egypt? Is there a connection or was it just a moment of opportunity exploited by this group to attack our embassy?

MALVEAUX: What do we know about Al Qaeda's presence in Libya? RUBIN: Well, we do know that there have been reports in recent weeks that in North Africa, in this particular part of Libya, eastern Libya, there are - have been indications that Islamic extremists, the so-called Al Qaeda of North Africa, have begun to emerge in the vacuum of the fall of Gadhafi. With the fall of Gadhafi, the huge land of Libya is now not under the tight extreme control it used to be under, and this is one of the terrible consequences of that.

MALVEAUX: If there was advance intelligence, if there was any inkling at all that there could be, on the anniversary of September 11, an attack that was planned in advance, why would it be that the ambassador, who's normally located in Tripoli, be in Benghazi in the consulate where there isn't the same kind of security?

RUBIN: Well, again, I don't know the nature of the intelligence. I'm just drawing a conclusion based on the fact that they said this was an organized, planned attack from a group and they may have had information that there may be an attack on a U.S. post in the region on September 11, without specifying that it was Benghazi or Libya. But obviously the question you're asking - you know, was there sufficient protection for the American ambassador? -- is something that will be asked, but the consulate is a level of protection and it is the Libyan government's responsibility to prevent these kinds of, you know, armed attacks on U.S. territory.

MALVEAUX: As someone who was in the State Department, does it sound like he had an adequate level of security, that there were the proper people and layers in place?

RUBIN: Well, I really hesitate for the following reason. This Libya and this ambassador in particular creates a unique situation. Where we had essentially been seen as the saviors of the Libyan people, this particular ambassador was deemed a hero by the Libyan people, particularly in Benghazi, and so wherever he went, he was, you know, treated that way. Often that can create a situation where you're unaware of those pockets of hatred that yield this attack. So in other words, this wasn't a normal embassy with a normal security situation; this was a post-war zone and I just don't know how many diplomatic security agents were with him, what they knew about Al Qaeda in eastern Libya, and I think we're going to learn all that in the investigation.

MALVEAUX: Sure. Jamie, I want to play a quick bite - sound bite from Secretary Hillary Clinton that -- she posed a question, a very important question, just a little while ago.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HILLARY CLINTON, U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE: Today many Americans are asking, indeed, I asked myself: How could this happen? How could this happen in a country we helped liberate, in a city we helped save from destruction? This question reflects just how complicated and at times how confounding the world can be, but we must be clear-eyed even in our grief.

(END VIDEO CLIP) MALVEAUX: Jamie, can you try to answer that question? How do you explain the United States, our role, in actually helping liberate Libya and this is what happens?

RUBIN: First of all, it's a very profound question and I think Secretary Clinton felt it so strongly because within the administration I suspect she was probably one of the stronger advocates of American action in Libya. And so the State Department and Secretary Clinton being at the forefront of those urging the U.S. to act to save Benghazi, to save the Libyan people, and to support the overthrow of Gadhafi -- for them to suffer such a loss, this hasn't happened in decades where an American ambassador has been killed in the line of duty like this.

And I think if there is an answer to the question, and I don't really know the final answer, but part of the answer is that that Libya was a country that was ruled by a dictator for 40 years and its basic institutions were destroyed and its tribal culture was what was left, and now it is really, really hard to rebuild on top of that. And people knew that and that's why people like Ambassador Stevens, who were so brave and so determined, wanted to help them.

MALVEAUX: All right, Jamie Rubin, thank you so much. Appreciate your perspective, as always.

Who is responsible for defending a U.S. consulate? And what does the American response look like? We're going to have a live report.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MALVEAUX: Want to get to breaking news now on the U.S. response to the attack in Libya. Let's go to the Pentagon correspondent, Barbara Starr, who has a little bit more information.

I understand that we now are learning that the U.S. will be using drones. Can you explain what's going on?

BARBARA STARR, CNN PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Suzanne, in fact, CNN has learned that the U.S. is now expecting to begin flying unmanned drones over eastern Libya looking for targets, looking for who was responsible for this attack.

Let me explain a little bit more. These unmanned drones will be conducting surveillance operations over eastern Libya looking for jihadi sites known to be there. Encampments, training sites, operational sites of jihadi militants that they believe were behind this attack. The expectation is that that intelligence that is gathered by the U.S. drones will then be turned over to Libyan security forces to go after these people.

But -- and it's a very important but -- in eastern Libya, east of Benghazi. This is an area the Libyan government simply does not control. Very much run by tribes out in this remote region. And so it will be likely the practicality will be, can they convince the tribes to go after these militant elements they believe responsible for the attack? Very complicated, but a very focused intelligence operation. The U.S. has flown drones by all accounts in Libya before. They've been able to collect intelligence. That's the plan now.

Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: Do we know -- I -- previously you had the United States cooperation with Britain and France prior to Gadhafi's fall. Do we have other countries that are going to be involved, or is that something that the White House is reaching out to others?

STARR: You know, at this point, we don't know. Certainly reaching out. Everybody discussing it because all of these countries have diplomatic installations in Libya, all facing the possibility -- the possibility of violence against their installations and their people. So all of the allies, if you will, are sharing intelligence, trying to figure out what happened, how it happened, and whether -- you know, to what extent there's a continuing threat. If their -- the continuing threat part of this is why the U.S. is sending 50 Marines to reinforce the embassy in Tripoli. We will see what emerges from other capitals.

Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: And, Barbara, do we know how soon they could actually approve of sending these drones?

STARR: Well, this is very interesting that you ask because back in June my colleague, Nic Robertson had reported -- and Tim Lister had reported that U.S. drones were already flying over eastern Libya. The U.S. never confirmed it. That came from Libyan officials. So there is a track record here perhaps of this type of intelligence gathering over Libya in eastern Libya to gather intelligence on al Qaeda and on militant groups. The Libyan government is going to want to see this intelligence. It's going to be very important to them if they expect to really establish a security environment in that country either by -- within their own organization or working with the Libyan tribes. It remains to be seen how much the Libyan government can do to go after these people.

Suzanne.

MALVEAUX: And, Barbara, final question here. Is this the kind of information that the United States could gather and use and would be shared with the Libyan government? That this would be kind of a coordinated effort? Or is it the kind of information where feeling burned, the U.S. might just keep it to itself?

STARR: Well, perhaps it remains to be seen. Perhaps it will be a bit of both. If they can identify -- and I don't know the answer. But if they can identify a specific target, a militant encampment, a militant site that they believe was directly responsible for the attack on the U.S. personnel, that will be a decision perhaps all the way to the president. Do U.S. assets go after it? Do they turn it over to the Libyans and hope that they go after it?

MALVEAUX: Right.

STARR: You know, that will be very specific.

MALVEAUX: OK.

STARR: But one of the things that's going on here, they want the Libyans to step up and take care of this security problem.

MALVEAUX: All right. Barbara Starr at the Pentagon. Thank you, Barbara.

STARR: You're welcome.

MALVEAUX: These fires have already killed 300 people in Pakistan. We're going to have more on that story after a quick break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MALVEAUX: Want to get a quick check of the markets right now. We're looking at the big board here. Check out the Dow. Now up 15 points right now. We're going to have more NEWSROOM INTERNATIONAL after a quick break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MALVEAUX: Almost 300 people are dead in a fire at a garment factory in Karachi, Pakistan. Officials say the death toll is probably going to rise. The fire broke out overnight and continues to burn.

(VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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