

# White House questions shift of power in Egypt

By: [Brian Hughes](#) 02/10/11 8:05 PM

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Examiner Staff Writer The White House Thursday doubted President Hosni Mubarak's commitment to a "genuine" democratic government in Egypt, as the embattled leader refused to leave office despite widespread speculation he would step down.

Mubarak announced in a televised address that he would hand over authority to Vice President Omar Suleiman but maintain his post. In response, the enraged masses flashed the soles of their shoes in Mubarak's direction, unmoved by assurances that he recognized the legitimacy of the protests.

President Obama, who viewed the speech on Air Force One, remained guarded in his assessment of a situation that appeared to be on the brink of crumbling into chaos.

"Too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the government is serious about a genuine transition to democracy, and it is the responsibility of the government to speak clearly to the Egyptian people and the world," the president said in a statement calling for an immediate end to emergency law. "The Egyptian government must put forward a credible, concrete and unequivocal path toward genuine democracy, and they have not yet seized that opportunity."

In his address, Mubarak accused other countries of meddling with a peaceful transition, a not-so-veiled jab at U.S.-led efforts to force his swift departure.

"I do not find any embarrassment at all in listening to the youth of my country and to satisfying their demands," Mubarak said. "But the embarrassment would only lie in the fact -- and I would never permit -- is that I would listen to any sort of intervention that would come from outside."

Earlier in the day, CIA Director Leon Panetta, among others, said Mubarak would resign Thursday. And before the speech, Egyptian military officials assured protesters that all their demands would be met.

Mubarak vowed to eventually lift the military law that has allowed police power to go virtually unchecked "once security and stability are restored." But analysts said that concession would do little to improve the situation on the ground or change the tone coming from the White House -- where officials are reviewing \$1.5 billion in military aid slated for Egypt that would be suspended by any sort of coup.

"This won't resolve anything," said Christopher Preble, director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute. "We'll continue on down this uneasy path until he's gone. It suits [Mubarak's] interest to leave the impression that he was forced out by [other countries]."

Suleiman told those gathered in the streets to "go home and go to work so that we can build and create" and to ignore the "stations and satellites that have no goal other than sedition and to weaken Egypt's image."

But others called on the military to intervene before the situation deteriorated any further.

"The army must save the country now," said a message posted to Nobel Peace Laureate Mohamed ElBaradei's Twitter account. "I call on the Egyptian army to immediately interfere to rescue Egypt. The credibility of the army is on the line."

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