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Subject: Fw: The Media Line MidEast Daily

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Subject: The Media Line MidEast Daily



US suspends arms aid to Lebanon

Very quietly, Washington recently ceased providing weapons to Lebanon out of fear that the rudderless government would allow the arms to fall into Hizbullah's hands. The Daily Star in Beirut reported that US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates was behind the orders, but had wanted to keep them from being made public over concerns the disclosure could interfere with delicate internal negotiations in Lebanon over a new government's makeup and policies. The Wall Street Journal said that the US had provided Lebanon with \$720 million in military aid, including transfers last year of anti-tank missiles and launchers to the Lebanese Armed Forces. Previous concerns of weapons transfers voiced by Congress following the fall of Saad Hariri's government led overtures from Iran to fill the void. Lawmakers in Washington have expressed disquiet over the appointment as prime minister designate of Najib Mikati, who is backed by Hibullah. An American embassy spokesman in Beirut was quoted by the Daily Star as saying the US was weighing its military cooperation with Lebanon based on the formation of the new Mikati-led government.

White House adviser: US against PA Search for statehood in UN

President Obama's top Middle East Adviser Dennis Ross said the US was firmly against attempts by the Palestinian Authority to seek unilateral statehood through the United Nations. "We have consistently made it clear that the way to produce a Palestinian state is through negotiations, not through unilateral declarations, not by through going to the UN. We have approached countries and said this is not the way to do it. This does not make an outcome more likely and this doesn't make it more likely that there'll be a Palestinian state," Ross said at a

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conference in Washington. Ross pushed for direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and the need for the Palestinians the "occupation is receding" to believe an independent state was a possibility.

Nineteen Dead in Yemen clashes

Bloodshed is continuing in Yemen where security forces loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh have reportedly killed 19 protestors in the past day. Witnesses reportedly said snipers and plainclothes gunmen had opened fire on a crowd charging a governors headquarters in the city of Taz killing 17. Similar protest in another city left two dead. At least 100 people have been killed in the crackdown by Saleh against protestors demanding he step down after 32 years in power.

Israeli actor, peace activist, shot dead in Jenin

An Israeli actor and peace activists who once starred as a Mossad spy in Hollywood's production of John Le Carre novel The Little Drummer Girl was gunned down next to a theatre he founded in a Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin. The actor, Juliano Mer-Khamis, a former Israeli paratrooper, was the son of a Christian father and Jewish mother. Mer-Kahmis had reportedly been threatened for his work in Jenin, which some conservative Palestinians objected since it brought European and Israeli culture to the town, including mixing of young men and women at his Freedom Theatre. Palestinian police launched an investigation into the attack, which Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad condemned as an "ugly crime."

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