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Subject: Fw: The Media Line MidEast Daily

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Subject: The Media Line MidEast Daily



### Hizbullah Chief Rejects STL Indictments, Reiterates Tribunal is Israeli Plot

Hizbullah chief Sheikh Hasan Na'srallah appeared on the terrorist organization's television channel on Saturday to reject the indictments of four of his members handed down by the United Nations tribunal (STL) investigating the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Al-Hariri. He defended the four as having a "proud legacy of fighting the Israeli occupation in Lebanon" and proclaimed that authorities "will not be able to arrest them in one year, two years, nor in 60 or 600 years." Lebanon, which now has 30 days to carry out the arrest warrants, faces a government crisis. The previous government was brought down by Hizbullah over the issue of cooperating with the international tribunal and became the power broker behind the new government with influence or control over 21 of 30 cabinet seats. Na'srallah is on-record threatening a violent response to any attempts to arrest his loyalists. On Saturday, a minister in the new government headed by Prime Minister Najib Mikati came out in support of Lebanon's obligations toward the STL as set forth in Security Council resolution 1757. But State Minister Ahmad Karami also warned that there must be a consensus among the nation's political parties in order to continue uncovering the truth behind Al-Hariri's death.

### Al-Asad Responds to Mass Demonstration in Hama by Firing its Governor

Syrian President Bashar Al-Asad responded to the largest demonstration against his regime so far, tens of thousands in the streets of Hama, by firing Hama's governor. Rights groups reported the total number of Syrians demanding Al-Asad's ouster nation-wide in the hundreds of thousands. At least 24 more protestors were killed, bringing the death toll to 1,350 civilians

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since March. Hama is where Al-Asad's father and predecessor, Hafez, killed tens of thousands of citizens in 1982. Protests this weekend continued in Damascus, Aleppo, Latakia and Homs. A statement on Friday by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admonishing that "time is running out" for Al-Asad to allow reforms was disparaged by many as being "too little too late."

### **Greeks Arrest Captain of Flotilla Vessel for "Endangering" 36 Passengers**

Greek authorities halted a ship bound for the Gaza Strip on Saturday and arrested its captain. The vessel, "The Audacity of Hope," which was part of the flotilla aiming to break the Israeli blockade on Gaza, carried 36 passengers. The captain of the ship was taken into custody on charges of endangering the lives of his passengers and for leaving the port without permission. Eight vessels were prepared to leave Greek ports on Friday when the government issued an order preventing their departure. The move caused left-wing politicians to accuse the government of caving-in to Israeli pressure. Organizers told reporters that the flotilla plans to sail on Monday regardless of the Greek order. Since relations between Israel and Turkey soured, the Greek government has exerted strong efforts to build its own ties to the Jewish state. In Jerusalem, a government spokesman denied that Israel is responsible for sabotaging Gaza-bound ships that have developed mechanical problems in recent days.

### **Iran's Revolutionary Guard Supplies Arms to Afghanistan, Iraq**

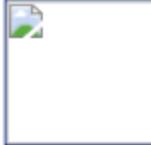
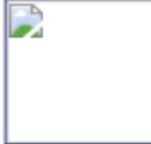
Iran's Revolutionary Guard has been supplying lethal arms to its allies fighting American forces in Afghanistan and Iraq according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*. The newspaper, citing defense officials, alleges that rocket-assisted exploding projectiles supplied by the Guard have already cost American lives Iraq and that long-range rockets have been sent to the Taliban in Afghanistan. The report speaks of fierce competition between the U.S. and Iran for influence in the region, particularly the governments of Iraq and Afghanistan where American forces are scheduled to leave. The report indicates that Shiite militias trained by the Revolutionary Guard are now responsible for most deaths of U.S. troops, replacing Al-Qa'ida and others as the most deadly foes in Iraq.

### **OECD: Israel Best to Get Venture Capital but Too Many Bureaucratic Obstacles**

A report issued over the weekend by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) lists Israel as the best-bet for entrepreneurs to find venture capital (listed first in venture capital investments as a percentage of GDP), but is critical of the bureaucratic obstacles ventures must maneuver. Start-ups must contend with bureaucracy that OECD lists as 29<sup>th</sup> worst out of the 37 countries listed. The report also found that Israel was not as supportive to mature technology companies.

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TML's mission is to provide credible, unbiased content, background and context to local media outlets throughout the Middle East and around the world. The Media Line has a mandate for education and supports scholarly endeavors at all levels. TML is "The Mideast News Source."

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