

RELEASE IN PART B5

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**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 18, 2009 11:46 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Changing Political Situation in Pakistan

FYI

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Silson, John H  
**To:** Sullivan, Jacob J  
**Cc:** Holbrooke, Richard; Nasr, S Vali R  
**Sent:** Fri Dec 18 17:01:43 2009  
**Subject:** Changing Political Situation in Pakistan

Jake

In the past 48 hours, the political situation in Pakistan has entered a new phase. The Supreme Court ruled the NRO illegal and paved the way for prosecution of several government officials, most notably Interior Minister Rehman Malik. Malik has been summoned before the Court and the Defense Minister (along with 247 other officials) was barred from traveling to China on an official visit. Vali Nasr has been following the fast-moving and still unclear developments closely.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] In addition, the Supreme Court has opened the door to new petitions to be filed, questioning Zardari's eligibility to have run for president in the first place. The Court could use those petitions to force Zardari from office in the near future. It is clear that Zardari's fate will be decided by the military, which has been gaining prominence and will be in an even stronger position after this shake-up.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] In the past two days Gilani has come to Zardari's defense, suggesting the two have reached an agreement over transfer of power from president to prime minister.

[Redacted]

Richard

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