

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: Afternoon Brief 12/27/II (SBU Version)

Pipeline item is interesting.

From: OpsAlert
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
Operations Center

Afternoon Brief
 Tuesday, December 27, 2011
 1500 EST

ARAB MONITORS END FIRST DAY OF OBSERVATION IN SYRIA

(U) Amidst reports Syrian forces dispersed large numbers of protesters with tear gas, the head of the Arab League said the team's first day in Homs was "very good" with all sides being responsive to the monitors. *(Reuters)*

SUPPORTERS OF PAKISTANI PRESIDENT RALLY AT BHUTTO'S GRAVE

(SBU) President Zardari used the fourth anniversary of his wife's death to assure a crowd of 70,000 supporters he would not resign, according to press. The Pakistan desk comments Zardari sidestepped criticizing the military, but confronted the Supreme Court on insufficient progress in Bhutto's assassination case. *(Ops/Pakistan desk telcon, Reuters)*

EGYPT BANS VIRGINITY TESTS FOR FEMALE DETAINEES

(SBU) An administrative court issued the ruling after a woman sued Egypt's military-led government after being subjected to such a test in March, media report. Embassy Cairo comments the ruling comes as Egyptian women are increasingly calling for the prosecution of those responsible for recent assaults on women in Tahrir Square.

(Ops/Embassy Cairo e-mail, CNN)

TURKEY, AZERBAIJAN SIGN PROPOSAL TO TRANSIT GAS TO EUROPE

(SBU) The Office of the Special Envoy for Eurasian Energy comments the proposed \$5 billion natural gas pipeline could serve as a building block for a larger volume pipeline system to bring gas to southeastern and central Europe. Embassy Ankara comments the agreement signals the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan is serious about moving expeditiously to set up the southern gas corridor, an initiative of the European Commission to supply gas to Europe. The Bureau of European Affairs adds the agreement could provide the basis for a scalable Nabucco pipeline, the previously proposed natural gas pipeline backed by the EU.

(Ops/Embassy Ankara e-mail, Ops/S/EEE e-mail, Ops/EUR e-mail)

CHINA JAILS PROMINENT ACTIVIST FOR 10 YEARS

(U) Writer Chen Xi was charged with subversion of state power in the second sentencing of a prominent dissident in four days, according to press. (*Al Jazeera*)

Additional updates on events in CHINA are available through our classified website at <http://ses.state.sgov.gov>

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