

RELEASE IN  
PART B6

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**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 13, 2012 7:55 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Heads up

FYI

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**From:** Rhodes, Benjamin J. [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 13, 2012 07:30 PM  
**To:** Nuland, Victoria J; Hammer, Michael A; Smith, Dana S (PA); Sullivan, Jacob J; [ ]  
[ ]  
[ ] NSC Deputy Press Secretary; Pelton, Erin [ ] Carney, Jay  
[ ] Hayden, Caitlin [ ]  
**Subject:** Heads up

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Likely within the hour, AFP will run a story that puts out the information below. This information is not classified and we can confirm that it is true. Please wait till after the AFP story posts to deploy via confirmation. Thx.

Iran is standing behind the al-Asad regime and continues to provide support to suppress the Syrian people. A number of senior Iranian officials have visited Syria to coordinate with Syrian officials the repression of Syrian citizens. In addition, Iran has provided security-related equipment – including munitions – to the Syrian security services that is being used against the Syrian people.

Moreover, it has come to our attention that the Commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force, Ghasem Soleimani, was in Damascus, Syria in early January 2012. Given Soleimani’s rank within the Iranian government, we are confident that he was received at the highest levels of the Syrian government, including Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Moreover, the visit was likely related to further Iranian support to Syria’s efforts to suppress its people.