

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 9, 2012 2:57 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: AFP -- Lebanon ex-minister's arrest 'linked to explosives'

Kim's email

From: Nuland, Victoria J
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 01:47 PM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Fw: AFP -- Lebanon ex-minister's arrest 'linked to explosives'

From: PA Clips [mailto:paclips@state.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 01:32 PM
To: PA-Monitoring-Group-DL
Subject: AFP -- Lebanon ex-minister's arrest 'linked to explosives'

Lebanon ex-minister's arrest 'linked to explosives'

AFP – 57 mins ago

Lebanese security forces on Thursday arrested Michel Samaha, a former information minister considered close to Syria's embattled regime, in a case linked to explosives, a senior official said.

His arrest was connected to a seizure of explosives that were to have been used mostly in northern Lebanon, a region of tensions linked to the conflict in neighbouring Syria, the official told AFP.

"The accusations against Samaha are related to explosives, which were going to be placed in several parts of the country, especially the north," he said on condition of anonymity.

The official declined to elaborate on the alleged link between the former minister and the explosives, but said the material was not seized from Samaha's home where the arrest was carried out.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati, meanwhile, told reporters there was no link between Samaha's arrest and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, set up to investigate the 2005 murder of former premier Rafiq Hariri.

The arrest of Samaha, information minister under Hariri, was made on the order of Lebanon's attorney general at his residence in Khenshara, 30 kilometres (18 miles) north of Beirut, a senior official told AFP.

Ergibe A. Boyd