

RELEASE IN
FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2011 6:07 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Overnight Brief 06/18/I (SBU)

SAUDI WOMEN AGAIN CHALLENGE DRIVING BAN

(SBU) Dozens of Saudi women took to the roads June 17 as part of a social media campaign, media report. The Saudi Arabia desk notes no women were detained. Embassy Riyadh comments the organizers called for women to continue the campaign. The Saudi government characterizes the driving prohibition as a religious, not legal issue, and religious scholars are now debating the validity of the 1991 religious decree which formed the basis of the ban. (Ops/Saudi Arabia desk telcon, Ops/Embassy Riyadh telcon, AP, The New York Times)

From: OpsAlert
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2011 05:30 AM
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
Operations Center

Overnight Brief

Saturday, June 18, 2011
 0530 EDT

KING DECLARES MOROCCO CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

(SBU) The new constitution, put to a referendum July 1, elevates the prime minister to head of the government and ensures he is selected by the party receiving the most votes in the election, rather than chosen by the king, media report. King Mohammed VI remains commander of the army and highest religious authority. The Morocco desk comments the king would still retain a significant amount of control, and it is unclear how some of the recommendations would be implemented and enforced. Embassy Rabat comments public reaction ranged from celebration and support to skepticism and doubt.

(Ops/Morocco desk e-mail, Ops/Embassy Rabat telcon, AP)

PORTUGUESE PM-DESIGNATE NAMES NEW FINANCE MINISTER

(SBU) As a director with the European Commission, new Finance Minister Vitor Gaspar was tasked with implementing austerity measures for Portugal from the EU and the IMF, according to press. Embassy Lisbon comments Gaspar is a well-regarded, experienced economist. With this choice, Prime Minister-designate Coelho is reassuring his EU partners, the IMF, and the markets his government will move quickly to implement necessary reforms.

(Ops/Embassy Lisbon telcon and e-mail, Reuters)

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