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Mystery surrounds CIA chief Lebanon trip

Sun, 19 Oct 2008 11:15:54 GMT

CIA Director Michael Hayden sparks controversy by holding covert meetings with top Lebanese officials in a secret visit to the country.

Michael Hayden arrived in Beirut on Thursday in a visit that gained little but controversial media attention.

Hayden arrived in the Lebanese capital for talks with top Lebanese officials on security cooperation against regional and international terror, reported *As-Safir* daily, a local media outlet.

"Over the past few years prominent security officials, including the heads of Interpol and FBI, have visited the country on propaganda trips meant to enhance cooperation in security matters," claims *Elnashra.com*, a local website.

"Hayden's trip, however, does not fall under the security and intelligence category," it continues.

"According to informed sources Hayden's trip to the region is aimed at gathering the most possible amount of intelligence in the least possible amount of time, as most foreign intelligence services have an established presence in the county," the website adds.

"Lebanon's geographic position between Syria and Israel is an important factor as the US seeks to defend the security of Israel at any cost."



CIA chief Michael Hayden

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