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PTQ4199

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(C), 1.4(D)

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ACTION SA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	AMAD-01	A-00
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	CTME-00	INL-01	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	EB-00	EUR-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	L-01	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00
	NEA-01	DCP-01	NRCE-00	NRRRC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03
	OES-01	OIC-02	OIS-01	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00
	PRS-00	P-00	CIO-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00
	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	FMP-00	SNRO-00	SNIS-00
	NISC-00	SSD-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRME-01	DRL-04	G-00
	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/037W				

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O 091353Z MAR 98
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4705
INFO AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
AMEMBASSY ALMATY
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/CCJ3/CCJ5/POLAD//
AMEMBASSY DHAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 001805

DEPT FOR SA/PAB, EUR/CACEN, S/CT, AND NEA/NGA; PARIS FOR
POL/RAVELING; LONDON FOR POL/TUELLER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/9/08
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, KISL, PARM, PTER, UN, AF, PK, IR
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: [] DESCRIBES PAKISTAN'S CURRENT
THINKING

B1

REFS: (A) ISLAMABAD 1573
- (B) PESHAWAR 169
- (C) ISLAMABAD 1489

(U) CLASSIFIED BY ALAN EASTHAM, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION. REASONS:
1.5 (C) (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: IN A MARCH 9 MEETING WITH PAKISTANI MFA
[], DCM REVIEWED U.S.
CONCERNS ABOUT SAUDI TERRORIST FINANCIER BIN LADIN'S RECENT "FATWA"
AND A REPORTED PAKISTANI LINK TO BIN LADIN'S STATEMENT. MURSHED
EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE UN "SIX-PLUS-TWO" PROCESS AND SKEPTICISM
ABOUT A PROPOSED MEETING OF "ULEMA" (RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS) FROM THE
TALIBAN AND THE NORTH. [] ASSERTED THAT IRAN WAS EXERTING
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STRONG INFLUENCE ON THE NORTH, WHICH HAD RECENTLY AGREED TO FOCUS
MILITARILY ON DEFEATING THE TALIBAN POSITION IN KUNDUZ. BY WAY OF
DOWNPLAYING PAKISTANI LEVERAGE ON THE TALIBAN, [] SAID THE GOP

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HAD NOT PROVIDED ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO THE TALIBAN "SINCE THREE OR FOUR MONTHS." END SUMMARY.

RAISING TERRORISM POINTS

2. (C) DURING A MARCH 9 MEETING WITH [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], DCM

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BRIEFLY REVIEWED HIS RECENT VISIT TO KABUL AND MEETINGS WITH TALIBAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING HARD-LINER KHAIRULLAH KHARKHWAH, THE "ACTING INTERIOR MINISTER" (SEE REF C). DCM ADDED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY REVIEWED U.S. CONCERNS ABOUT BOTH SAUDI TERRORIST FINANCIER USAMA BIN LADIN AND EGYPTIAN MILITANTS WITH SHAHABUDDIN DILAWAR, THE TALIBAN "AMBASSADOR" TO PAKISTAN (REF A). HE NOTED THAT BIN LADIN'S RECENT "FATWA" WAS A PROBLEM ASSOCIATED WITH PAKISTAN BECAUSE FAZLUR RAHMAN KHALIL, A LEADER OF HARAKAT-UL-ANSAR, HAD SIGNED THE STATEMENT ALONG WITH BIN LADIN, ALTHOUGH THERE HAD SOME CONFUSION WHETHER FAZLUR RAHMAN, THE LEADER OF A FACTION OF JAMIAT ULEMA-I-ISLAM, HAD SIGNED IT. [REDACTED] LISTENED CAREFULLY TO DCM'S POINTS, BUT HAD NO SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE. (NOTE: DCM PROVIDED [REDACTED] A COPY OF U.S. TALKING POINTS ON BIN LADIN AND THE EGYPTIAN MILITANTS AS WELL AS A TEXT OF THE "FATWA.")

UN SIX-PLUS-TWO PROCESS

3. (C) DCM NOTED THAT THE MARCH 3 "SIX-PLUS-TWO" MEETING CHAIRED BY UN ENVOY BRAHIMI APPEARED TO HAVE RESULTED IN A SOLID EXCHANGE
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OF VIEWS. THE U.S. IS ENCOURAGED THAT THE MEETING RESULTED IN THE APPROVAL OF THE JOINT BASE TALKING POINTS FOR USE WITH THE FACTIONS. THE U.S. CONTINUES TO HOPE THAT SOME MOVEMENT WILL BE SHOWN BY AFGHANS TOWARD PEACE SO THAT THE SIX-PLUS-TWO PROCESS, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY AN EXTERNAL PROCESS, COULD INTERFACE WITH AN INTERNAL PROCESS. IN THIS CONNECTION, DCM ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE PROPOSED "ULEMA" MEETING.

DOUBTS ABOUT "ULEMA" PROPOSAL

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4. (C) [] EXPRESSED THE GOP'S SUPPORT FOR THE SIX-PLUS-TWO PROCESS AND SATISFACTION WITH THE MARCH 3 MEETING. ON THE ULEMA IDEA, HE REPLIED THAT THE TALIBAN HAD TOLD THE GOP THAT THEY COULD NOT CONFIRM WHETHER THE ULEMA LIST SUBMITTED BY THE NORTHERN COALITION WAS LEGITIMATE: THERE WERE NO SIGNATURES; IT WAS NOT ON LETTERHEAD; AND IT WAS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE LIST HAD BEEN APPROVED BY ALL NORTHERN LEADERS. IN ADDITION, THE TALIBAN FELT THAT THE LIST WAS A BIT OF A JOKE BECAUSE SOME OF THE NAMES ON THE LIST WERE NOT MULLAHS, BUT ANTI-TALIBAN FIELD COMMANDERS. ON A MORE POSITIVE NOTE, ON MARCH 7, MULLAH RABBANI, THE TALIBAN DEPUTY LEADER, HAD TOLD AZIZ KHAN, THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR TO AFGHANISTAN, THAT HE (RABBANI) WANTS THE TALIBAN TO PRODUCE A TALIBAN ULEMA LIST. RABBANI HAD NOTED THAT SUCH A LIST WOULD HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY TALIBAN AUTHORITIES IN KANDAHAR. NONETHELESS, [] ADMITTED THAT HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED THAT THE ULEMA PROPOSAL WOULD LEAD TO A FULL-FLEDGED DIALOGUE THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING.

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P-00	CIO-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00	T-00
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EVENTS IN THE NORTH

5. (C) ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE FIGHTING COME SPRING, [] TOLD DCM THAT THE GOP HAS INDICATIONS THAT THE NORTH ENGAGED IN SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF MAJOR MILITARY OPERATIONS IN RECENT MEETINGS IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF AND IN MEETINGS LAST MONTH IN KULYAB (TAJIKISTAN). IRAN HAS A GREAT DEAL OF INFLUENCE ON NORTHERN PRIORITIES. IN FACT, IRAN HAD SUCCESSFULLY URGED (HEZB-I-ISLAMI LEADER) GULBUDDIN HEKMATYAR TO RETURN TO MAZAR-I-SHARIF FROM IRAN LAST WEEK SO THAT HEKMATYAR COULD USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH KUNDUZ PASHTUNS AND HIS FORMER COMMANDERS WHO ARE NOW WITH THE TALIBAN (REF B). ONE OF THE REASONS THAT IRAN IS PUSHING FOR SUCH AN ATTACK IS TO DEFLECT

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 NORTHERN ATTENTION FROM ITS ALLY HEZB-I-WAHDAT'S DOMINANT POSITION IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF. MASOOD HAD ACQUIESCED IN HEKMATYAR'S RETURN BECAUSE MASOOD WANTS ASSISTANCE TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE JAMIAT-I-ISLAMI POSITIONS ARE UNDER IN TAKHAR PROVINCE FROM THE TALIBAN. MASOOD HAD DISCUSSED MILITARY PLANNING WHEN HE MET HEKMATYAR TWICE DURING HIS (MASOOD'S) RECENT VISIT TO TEHRAN, WHICH, [] ARCHLY COMMENTED, WAS "ONE OF MASOOD'S FIRST VISITS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN IN YEARS." NORTHERN LEADERS ARE ALSO PLANNING TO DECLARE THE NORTH INDEPENDENT AND ARE DEBATING AN ATTACK ON KABUL.

6. (C) RETURNING TO THE RESULTS OF THE MAZAR-I-SHARIF MEETINGS, [] SAID IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT JAMIAT LEADER RABBANI WOULD CONTINUE ON AS "PRESIDENT." GENERAL DOSTAM (THE LEADER OF THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN) WOULD BE A "VICE PRESIDENT" AND MASOOD WOULD BE "DEFENSE MINISTER." HEKMATYAR HAD BEEN CHOSEN TO BE "PRIME MINISTER," BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER HE HAD ACCEPTED THE SLOT. [] ADDED THAT HE "KEEPS IN TOUCH BY PHONE WITH RABBANI EVERY DAY AND HE (RABBANI) IS INCREASINGLY UNHAPPY WITH THE IRANIANS."

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ADMITTING TO ARMS AND AMMUNITION SUPPLIES TO THE TALIBAN

7. (C) [] ASSERTED THAT PAKISTAN IS GETTING "FED UP" WITH EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. MAYBE IF PAKISTAN HAD A "THREE" (ON A SCALE OF TEN) AND IRAN A "TWO" IN TERMS OF TOTAL INFLUENCE, THE TOTAL OF "FIVE" COULD PROVE TO BE ENOUGH INFLUENCE ON THE FACTIONS. HOWEVER, PAKISTAN HAS "IN REALITY LITTLE LEVERAGE OVER THE TALIBAN." FOR EXAMPLE, IF PAKISTAN CHOOSES TO "DERECOGNIZE" THE TALIBAN, THE TALIBAN WOULD SAY THEY DO NOT CARE. IF PAKISTAN HELD UP WHEAT CONSIGNMENTS TO THE TALIBAN, THE TALIBAN WOULD SAY "WHAT
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THE HELL! WE CAN SMUGGLE ENOUGH WHEAT INTO AFGHANISTAN TO FEED OURSELVES." PAKISTAN ALSO HAS NO LEVERAGE TO USE IN TERMS OF MILITARY SUPPLIES "SINCE NO ARMS AND AMMUNITION FROM THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT HAS GONE OVER THE BORDER IN THE PAST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS." IN ANY CASE, THE TALIBAN HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH AMMUNITION. FINALLY, PAKISTAN COULD REFUSE TO PROVIDE THE TALIBAN FUEL SINCE THE TALIBAN LOAD UP THEIR PLANES IN PAKISTAN. HOWEVER, THE GOP WILL NOT DO SO ON THE BASIS OF ITS HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES. IN ADDITION, FUEL SHIPMENTS WERE NEVER HALTED EVEN TO THE RABBANI REGIME, ALTHOUGH THAT REGIME BURNED DOWN THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY IN KABUL (IN NOVEMBER 1995).

8. (C) CONTINUING, [] RELATED THAT THE GOP HAD HELD INTER-AGENCY MEETINGS LAST WEEK TO LOOK INTO WAYS TO APPLY LEVERAGE ON THE TALIBAN. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE BEST WAY TO DO THIS IS TO CONTROL PAKISTAN'S BORDER WITH AFGHANISTAN. PAKISTAN, IN THE PAST, HAS SHOWN THAT IT CAN CONTROL THIS BORDER. IN FACT, THERE ARE ONLY JUST OVER 40 "JEEPABLE" BORDER CROSSING POINTS. THESE POINTS COULD BE MONITORED IF THE BALUCHISTAN AND THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS GOT SERIOUS ABOUT THE ISSUE OF SMUGGLING. HOWEVER, BOTH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS ARE "RIDDLED WITH CORRUPTION" FROM SMUGGLING, DESPITE THEIR PROFESSED DESIRE TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN AFGHAN POLICY-MAKING.

COMMENT

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9. (C) [REDACTED] SEEMED MORE SUPPORTIVE THAN BEFORE OF THE SIX-PLUS-TWO PROCESS; IN PAST MEETINGS, HE WAS SOMEWHAT CRITICAL OF THE UN. STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE UN AND U.S. TO SUPPORT THE PROCESS ALMOST CERTAINLY HELPED PROVOKE THIS CHANGE OF HEART. [REDACTED]'S COMMENTS ON PAKISTANI ARMS AND AMMUNITION SUPPLIES TO THE TALIBAN WERE INTRIGUINGLY FRANK. IN OUR EXPERIENCE, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT [REDACTED] HAS ADMITTED THAT PAKISTAN WAS IN THE BUSINESS OF PROVIDING ARMS-RELATED SUPPLIES TO THE TALIBAN. [REDACTED] WAS OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO ACCENTUATE WHAT HE SAID WAS PAKISTAN'S CURRENT LACK OF LEVERAGE ON THE TALIBAN.
SIMONS

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