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	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-01
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	IM-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	INSE-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00
	NEA-01	DCP-01	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	SP-00
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 FOR POL/RAVELING

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 TAGS: PGOV, PTER, KISL, AF, PK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
 CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
 DECLASSIFY AFTER: 8 SEP 2013
 DATE/CASE ID: 21 JUL 2006 200500832

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SUBJ: AFGHANISTAN: REPORTED ACTIVITIES OF EXTREMIST ARABS AND PAKISTANIS SINCE AUGUST 20 U.S. STRIKE ON KHOST TERRORIST CAMPS

REFS: (A) ISLAMABAD 6709
- (B) ISLAMABAD 6360
- (C) ISLAMABAD 5964

(U) CLASSIFIED BY JOHN R. SCHMIDT, POLITICAL COUNSELOR.
REASONS: 1.5 (C) (D).

- 1. (U) THIS MESSAGE WAS COORDINATED WITH CONSULATE PESHAWAR.
- 2. (C) SUMMARY: A NUMBER OF SOURCES REPORT THAT MANY ARAB AND PAKISTANI EXTREMISTS HAVE LEFT KHOST PROVINCE IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE AUGUST 20 U.S. STRIKES. IN THE MEANTIME, TERRORIST MASTERMIND USAMA BIN LADIN REPORTEDLY IS STAYING IN THE KANDAHAR AREA, WHERE THE TALIBAN CAN KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON HIM. SOURCES ALSO ASSERT
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THAT PAKISTANI EXTREMIST GROUPS WERE INVOLVED IN THE PURPORTED EXECUTION OF ELEVEN "MISSING" IRANIANS IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF AND THE KILLING OF A UN EXPATRIATE IN KABUL. AMID A REPORT THAT EIGHT WERE KILLED IN THE WAR AND THEIR BODIES RECENTLY RETURNED TO PAKISTAN, PAKISTANI EXTREMISTS REPORTEDLY CONTINUE TO FLOW OVER THE BORDER TO JOIN THE TALIBAN. END SUMMARY.

TERRORISTS SAID TO MOVE OUT OF KHOST

- 3. (C) SEVERAL SOURCES HAVE TOLD POLOFF THAT THEY HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT EXTREMIST ARABS WHO HAD BEEN TRAINING AT THE KHOST TERRORIST CAMPS THAT WERE HEAVILY DAMAGED IN THE AUGUST 20 U.S. MISSILE STRIKE HAVE BEEN MOVING TO THE KABUL AREA. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF SEPTEMBER 7 THAT AFGHAN UN EMPLOYEES BASED IN KABUL HAVE NOTICED MORE ARABS IN THE CITY IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS. THE RUMOR THAT THE AFGHAN UN EMPLOYEES HAVE HEARD IS THAT THESE ARABS HAVE COME TO KABUL AFTER THEIR FACILITIES IN KHOST WERE DESTROYED. IN A SEPTEMBER 9 MEETING WITH POLOFF, [REDACTED] OF THE ANTI-TALIBAN NATIONAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN, RELATED THAT HE HAD ALSO HEARD THAT ARABS HAVE BEEN TRAVELLING FROM KHOST TO KABUL. SOME OF THESE ARABS MAY BE TRANSITING KABUL IN ORDER TO JOIN TALIBAN FORCES ON FRONTS IN THE NORTH OF THE COUNTRY, ZEKI SAID.

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- 4. (C) IN ANOTHER REPORT ABOUT THE CURRENT WHEREABOUTS OF THE KHOST TERRORISTS, [REDACTED] A CORRESPONDENT WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE TALIBAN, WROTE AN ARTICLE [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] ABOUT HIS RECENT POST-STRIKE VISIT TO THE AREA IN KHOST

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WHERE THE CAMPS WERE LOCATED. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] HE WAS TOLD
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THAT THE PREVIOUS OCCUPANTS OF THE CAMPS, INCLUDING ARABS AND PAKISTANIS, HAD EITHER BEEN KILLED IN THE U.S. STRIKES OR HAD MOVED TO "DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN." (NOTE: ESTIMATES VARY WIDELY, BUT IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT AT LEAST 50 PEOPLE WERE KILLED IN THE MISSILE STRIKES, INCLUDING APPROXIMATELY 20 PAKISTANIS AND 15 ARABS -- SEE REF B.) [REDACTED] QUOTED TALIBAN GOVERNOR OF KHOST SYED ABDULLAH AS STATING THAT THOSE WHO HAD BEEN USING THE CAMPS "HAD BEEN MOVED TO COMPARATIVELY SAFER PLACES."

BIN LADIN REPORTED TO BE IN KANDAHAR AREA

5. (C) IN TERMS OF THE LOCATION OF USAMA BIN LADIN, THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THE EAST AFRICA BOMBINGS, POLOFF'S SOURCES SAY THAT HE HAS BEEN KEEPING A VERY LOW-PROFILE AND IT IS NOT CLEAR WHERE HE MIGHT BE HIDING. MOST SOURCES POLOFF HAS SPOKEN TO, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT BIN LADIN PROBABLY IS SPENDING MOST OF HIS TIME IN THE AREA OF KANDAHAR CITY. [REDACTED] A RESISTANCE COMMANDER WHO KNOWS MANY TALIBAN LEADERS, TOLD POLOFF SEPTEMBER 9 THAT BIN LADIN HAS PROBABLY BEEN ORDERED TO STAY IN KANDAHAR CITY BY TALIBAN LEADER MULLAH OMAR WHO CAN MORE EASILY KEEP A WATCH ON HIM THERE. IN ADDITION, UNLIKE OTHER PARTS OF AFGHANISTAN WHICH ARE UNSTABLE, KANDAHAR AREA REMAINS RELATIVELY QUIET AND EASY FOR THE TALIBAN TO CONTROL. WHEN IN KANDAHAR, [REDACTED] SAID BIN LADIN WAS KNOWN TO STAY AT MULLAH OMAR'S RESIDENCE, WHICH IS ADJACENT TO THE KANDAHAR

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GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, OR AT A COMPLEX NEAR KANDAHAR AIRPORT.

SIPAH-I-SAHABA IMPLICATED IN KILLING OF IRANIANS

6. (C) [REDACTED] ADDED THAT HE HAD HEARD UNCONFIRMED REPORTS
THAT MEMBERS OF THE PAKISTANI EXTREMIST GROUP SIPAH-I-SAHABA (SSP)
EXECUTED THE ELEVEN "MISSING" MAZAR-I-SHARIF-BASED IRANIAN
OFFICIALS. (NOTE: IRAN HAS ACCUSED THE TALIBAN OF CAPTURING THE
IRANIANS WHEN THEY TOOK MAZAR-I-SHARIF ON AUGUST 8 -- SEE REF A.)
ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] A TEAM OF PRO-TALIBAN SSP VOLUNTEERS, ALL OF
WHOM WERE PAKISTANI NATIONALS, ENTERED MAZAR-I-SHARIF ON AUGUST 8

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JUST AFTER IT HAD FALLEN TO THE TALIBAN. THE SSP TEAM PURPORTEDLY

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WENT DIRECTLY TO THE IRANIAN CONSULATE, CAPTURED THE IRANIANS, AND THEN EXECUTED THEM IN COLD BLOOD. QUERIED ABOUT HIS SOURCES,

[REDACTED] SAID THEY WERE GOOD, BUT EVEN THEY HAD STRESSED THAT THE REPORT WAS UNCONFIRMED.

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7. (C) IN A SEPTEMBER 4 MEETING WITH PESHAWAR PO, [REDACTED] A WELL-KNOWN MODERATE AFGHAN, MADE SIMILAR ALLEGATIONS ABOUT THE SSP'S PURPORTED INVOLVEMENT IN THE KILLING OF THE IRANIANS.

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[REDACTED] ADDED THE TWIST THAT THE SSP TEAM HAD NOT ONLY KILLED THE IRANIANS, BUT ALSO THE CONSULATE'S AFGHAN STAFF AND DOZENS OF NEIGHBORS WHO HAD WITNESSED THE ATTACK. IN TOTAL, SOME 60 PERSONS WERE KILLED. QUERIED ABOUT HIS SOURCES, [REDACTED] SAID HE HAD PICKED UP THE INFORMATION FROM A TRADER WHO HAD RECENTLY RETURNED TO PESHAWAR FROM MAZAR-I-SHARIF.

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A KASHMIRI MILITANT CONNECTION TO UN KILLING?

8. (C) POLOFF HAS ALSO HEARD REPORTS THAT THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ATTACK ON TWO UN EXPATRIATES IN KABUL ON AUGUST 21 WERE MEMBERS OF THE KASHMIRI MILITANT GROUP HARKAT-UL-MUJAHIDEEN (HUM). (NOTE: HUM'S PREDECESSOR ORGANIZATION WAS CALLED HAKAKAT-UL-ANSAR, WHICH IN 1997 WAS LISTED AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION BY THE U.S.) [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] OF THE UN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ATTACK, WHICH LEFT ONE ITALIAN NATIONAL UN EMPLOYEE DEAD FROM GUNSHOT WOUNDS, TOLD POLOFF SEPTEMBER 8 THAT HE COULD NOT CONFIRM THE HUM CONNECTION, ALTHOUGH HE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE ALLEGATION FROM SEVERAL SOURCES. THE TALIBAN HAD NOT CONFIRMED THE INFORMATION DURING MEETINGS WITH THE UN ON THE TALIBAN'S INVESTIGATION INTO THE ATTACK. THE TALIBAN,

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HOWEVER, HAD ALREADY ANNOUNCED THAT THE TWO PERPETRATORS OF THE ATTACK WERE UNDER ARREST IN KANDAHAR AND WERE OF PAKISTANI NATIONALITY. BECAUSE OF THE TALIBAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE MEN WERE PAKISTANI, [REDACTED] TOOK VERY SERIOUSLY THE CLAIM THAT THE ASSAILANTS COULD HAVE HUM CONNECTIONS SINCE HUM MEMBERS ARE INVARIABLY PAKISTANI.

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FLOW OF PAKISTANIS TO AFGHANISTAN CONTINUES

9. (C) MEANWHILE, A NUMBER OF SOURCES HAVE TOLD POLOFF THAT LARGE

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NUMBERS OF PAKISTANI NATIONALS CONTINUE TO FLOW OVER THE PAKISTANI BORDER WITH AFGHANISTAN TO JOIN THE TALIBAN. (NOTE: SOME SOURCES ESTIMATE THAT 20-40 PERCENT OF THE TALIBAN MILITARY FORCE IS MADE UP PAKISTANI NATIONALS -- SEE REF C.)

B1

[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF SEPTEMBER 2 THAT HIS SOURCES IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP) AND IN BALUCHISTAN CONTINUE TO REPORT THAT BUSES FULL OF PAKISTANI VOLUNTEERS FOR THE TALIBAN CAUSE ARE CROSSING THE MAJOR BORDER POINTS AT TORKHAM (NWFP) AND CHAMAN (BALUCHISTAN). IN A SEPTEMBER 1 MEETING, [REDACTED]

B6

[REDACTED] A CONTACT WITH PRO-TALIBAN LEANINGS, SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT PRO-TALIBAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAVE HAD SOME SUCCESS IN RECENT EFFORTS TO LURE PAKISTANI MADRASSA STUDENTS TO VOLUNTEER TO FIGHT FOR THE TALIBAN.

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DEAD PAKISTANIS RETURN HOME

10. (C) IN A CLEAR INDICATION OF THE DEGREE OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF
PAKISTANIS IN THE WAR, THE PAKISTANI ISLAMIST NEWSPAPER "THE
MUSLIM" REPORTED ON SEPTEMBER 7 THAT THE BODIES OF EIGHT PAKISTANI
NATIONALS WHO HAD BEEN KILLED IN FIGHTING HAD BEEN RETURNED TO
PAKISTAN FOR BURIAL. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, ALL EIGHT OF THE
PAKISTANIS WERE SAID TO BE MEMBERS OF THE PAKISTANI EXTREMIST GROUP
JAMIAT-I-ULEMA ISLAM (JUI-F). ASKED ABOUT THE ARTICLE, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SAID IT WAS RARE THAT ARTICLES APPEAR IN THE NEWSPAPERS
ABOUT PAKISTANIS WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN. HOWEVER,
THERE ARE REPORTS SPREAD WORD-OF-MOUTH THAT MANY PAKISTANIS HAVE

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BEEN BURIED IN THE NWFP AND BALUCHISTAN IN THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

COMMENT

11. (C) BASED ON WHAT WE ARE HEARING, IT APPEARS THAT THE U.S.
STRIKES HAVE FLUSHED THE ARAB AND PAKISTANI MILITANTS OUT OF KHOST
AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING. THE PRESENCE OF SO MANY ARABS AND
PAKISTANIS IN AFGHANISTAN IS OF GREAT CONCERN TO THE UN, WHICH IS
WEIGHING WHETHER IT IS SAFE TO SEND SOME OF ITS EXPATRIATES BACK
THERE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE KHOST STRIKES. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] ADMITTED TO POLOFF THAT THE UN JUST DOES NOT

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HAVE A HANDLE ON WHETHER THE TALIBAN ARE WILLING TO CONTROL THEIR EXTREMIST ALLIES, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE SHOOTING INCIDENT WHICH TOOK THE LIFE OF THE UN OFFICIAL IN KABUL. THE REPORTS THAT PAKISTANIS CONTINUE TO CROSS THE BORDER SERVE TO HIGHLIGHT THE EXTENT THAT THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN HAS BECOME A CRUSADE FOR SUNNI EXTREMISTS IN PAKISTAN AS WELL AS THE TALIBAN. AS NOTED BY THE REPORT ON THE DEAD JUI (F) MEMBERS, IT IS A WAR IN WHICH PAKISTANI EXTREMISTS ARE WILLING TO MAKE THE HIGHEST SACRIFICE FOR THEIR ISLAMIST CAUSE.

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