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ACTION SS-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W  
-----8D8EAF 090601Z /38

O R 090557Z JAN 97  
FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0863  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
AMCONSUL JEDDAH  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMCONSUL KARACHI

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 02 PESHAWAR 00021

EXDIS DECAPTIONED

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/09/07

TAGS: PTER, PGOV, PINR, AF, US

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN AGREE TO VISITS OF MILITANT  
TRAINING CAMPS, ADMIT BIN LADIN IS THEIR GUEST

REFS: A) 96 ISLAMABAD 10596; B) 96 ISLAMABAD 10300;  
C) 96 ISLAMABAD 10298; D) 96 PESHAWAR 1246

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY: BRAD HANSON, PRINCIPAL OFFICER,  
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR. REASON(S): 1.5(D).

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SUMMARY  
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2. (S) IN A MEETING WITH DCM/ISLAMABAD ON JAN 6 IN KANDAHAR,  
SENIOR TALIBAN LEADER MULLAH MOHAMMAD RABBANI AGREED THE USG,  
THROUGH THE TALIBAN AMBASSADOR IN ISLAMABAD, SHOULD PROPOSE NAMES  
OF DELEGATION AND DATES TO FOLLOW UP ACTING FM MULLAH GHASUS'  
OFFER TO VISIT MILITANT TRAINING CAMPS, WHICH THE TALIBAN CLAIM  
HAVE BEEN CLOSED. RABBANI AND MULLAH MOHAMMAD HASSAN (ACTING  
HEAD OF THE INTERIM SHURA IN KABUL) ACKNOWLEDGED THAT USAMA BIN  
LADIN IS THEIR "GUEST," ADDING THAT HE HAS BEEN ASKED NOT TO  
CARRY OUT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES. POST  
SUGGESTS USG URGE SAUDI AND EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES TO TAKE MORE  
ACTIVE APPROACH WITH THE TALIBAN ON BIN LADIN. END SUMMARY.

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VISITING THE MILITANT TRAINING CAMPS  
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3. (S) IN SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH SENIOR TALIBAN LEADERS ON JAN 5 AND 6, DCM ACCEPTED ACTING FM MULLAH GHASUS' OFFER THAT US OFFICERS VISIT MILITANT TRAINING CAMPS WHICH THE TALIBAN CLAIM THEY HAVE CLOSED (REFTELS). HE RAISED THE MECHANICS OF DOING SO. KANDAHAR GOVERNOR MULLAH MOHAMMAD HASSAN, AFTER ASKING WHO ARE THE TERRORISTS AND BEING TOLD ONE OF THE GROUPS TRAINING IN THE CAMPS IS THE HARAKAT UL-ANSAR (HUA), SAID THERE IS A TALIBAN COUNCIL IN KABUL WITH WHOM THE MATTER SHOULD BE DISCUSSED. HE ADDED THAT THE TALIBAN DO NOT PERMIT ANYONE WITH THE NAME TERRORIST TO TRAIN IN THEIR TERRITORY TO CARRY OUT TERRORIST ACTS IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD. DEPUTY FM ABDUL JALIL REPLIED SIMILARLY, STATING THAT THE TALIBAN DID NOT ESTABLISH THESE TRAINING CAMPS. THEY HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED DURING THE JIHAD, ADDING KASHMIRIS HAD  
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BEEN TRAINED THERE. HE CONTINUED THAT WHEN THE TALIBAN CAME TO POWER IN THOSE AREAS, THEY HAD TOLD THE PERSONS THERE THEY COULD LIVE AS REFUGEES BUT THEY COULD NOT ENGAGE IN "HOSTILITIES." JALIL REITERATED THAT USG OFFICERS COULD VISIT THE CAMPS BUT THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE RAISED IN KABUL, AS TALIBAN AUTHORITIES THERE ARE CLOSE TO THE CAMPS. DCM LEFT WITH JALIL A NON-PAPER DESCRIBING THE THREE AREAS OF CAMPS (ALONG THE KABUL/JALALABAD/TORKHAM ROAD, IN NORTHERN PAKTIA PROVINCE, AND IN SOUTHEASTERN PAKTIA PROVINCE (NOTE: BETTER DESCRIBED IN KHOST PROVINCE) AND GIVING COORDINATES WHERE KNOWN.)

4. (S) THE NEXT MORNING DCM RAISED THE MATTER WITH MULLAH MOHAMMAD RABBANI (DESCRIBED VARIOUSLY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERIM CARETAKER GOVERNMENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERIM SHURA IN KABUL, BUT THEN SITTING IN KANDAHAR). RABBANI, WITH WHOM MULLAHS HASSAN AND JALIL HAD PROBABLY SPOKEN BEFORE THE MEETING, ASKED MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LOCATIONS OF THE CAMPS USG OFFICERS WISH TO VISIT. HE NOTED THE THIRD COMPLEX OF CAMPS ARE IN KHOST PROVINCE NOT PAKTIA PROVINCE. LIKE JALIL, RABBANI NOTED THAT THE CAMPS WERE ESTABLISHED DURING THE JIHAD, WHEN THE MUJAHEDIN RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM ISLAMIC AND NON-ISLAMIC STATES, FOR WHICH THEY WERE MOST GRATEFUL. NOW, HOWEVER, THE TALIBAN'S OPPONENTS -- NAMING HEKMATYAR, MASOOD, DOSTAM, AND RABBANI -- BECAUSE THEY HAD SUFFERED DEFEATS AT THE HANDS OF THE TALIBAN, WERE SPREADING PROPAGANDA TO DEFAME THE TALIBAN. RABBANI SAID "GOVERNMENT POLICY" WAS NOT TO PERMIT OTHERS TO USE ITS TERRITORY TO USE TERRORISM AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES.

5. (S) RABBANI SAID USG OFFICERS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO VISIT THE AREAS AND SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING. IF THEY FIND SOMETHING, THEY

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SHOULD TELL THE TALIBAN; IF NOT, THEY WILL KNOW THAT IT IS  
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PROPAGANDA. RABBANI AGREED THAT THE US EMBASSY IN ISLAMABAD  
SHOULD INFORM THE TALIBAN AMBASSADOR IN ISLAMABAD WITH PROPOSED  
NAMES OF OFFICERS AND DATES FOR VISITING THE CAMPS. RABBANI ALSO  
AGREED TO INFORM THE TALIBAN AMBASSADOR IN ISLAMABAD OF EMBASSY  
ISLAMABAD'S UPCOMING APPROACH, WHICH DCM ASSURED WOULD BE MADE  
THE WEEK OF JAN 13. DCM ALSO INFORMED DEPUTY FM STANAKZAI AND  
MULLAH MOHAMMAD HASSAN, ACTING HEAD OF THE INTERIM SHURA IN  
KABUL, IN HIS JAN 7 SEPARATE MORNING MEETINGS WITH THEM IN KABUL,  
OF THE ARRANGEMENT WORKED OUT WITH RABBANI. NEITHER STANAKZAI  
NOR MULLAH HASSAN HAD ANY COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

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INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W  
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O R 090557Z JAN 97  
FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0864  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
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TAGS: PTER, PGOV, PINR, AF, US  
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN AGREE TO VISITS OF MILITANT  
TRAINING CAMPS, ADMIT BIN LADIN IS THEIR GUEST

USAMA BIN LADIN, TALIBAN GUEST, WARNED AGAINST TERRORISM  
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6. (S) WITH RABBANI IN KANDAHAR JAN 6, DCM PRESSED HARD ON THE  
PRESENCE OF USAMA BIN LADIN IN TALIBAN TERRITORY. HE NOTED THAT  
THE US CONTINUES TO RECEIVE REPORTS THAT BIN LADIN, WHO HAS BEEN

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LINKED TO A NUMBER OF TERRORIST ATTACKS, IS PLANNING TERRORIST  
ATTACKS AGAINST COUNTRIES LIKE SAUDI ARABIA, WHICH ARE FRIENDS OF  
THE TALIBAN. IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF THE TALIBAN COULD TELL US  
WHERE HE IS LOCATED AND ENSURE THAT HE IS NOT ABLE TO CARRY OUT  
THESE ATTACKS.

7. (S) RABBANI RESPONDED THAT BIN LADIN CAME TO AFGHANISTAN WHEN  
HAJI QADIR CONTROLLED NANGARHAR PROVINCE. THE TALIBAN DID NOT  
CONTROL THAT AREA THEN. THE TALIBAN WOULD NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO  
USE THEIR TERRITORY FOR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. RABBANI  
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BIN LADIN WAS IN THE JALALABAD AREA, ADDING HE  
WAS LIVING THERE AS "A GUEST, AS A REFUGEE." WHILE THE TALIBAN  
CAN ARREST ANYONE IN AREAS THEY CONTROL, BIN LADIN IS LIVING LIKE  
AN ORDINARY MAN, "LIKE AN AFGHAN REFUGEE IN THE UNITED STATES."  
RABBANI VOLUNTEERED THAT THE TALIBAN HAD TALKED TO BIN LADIN,  
TELLING HIM NOT TO CARRY OUT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. HE TOLD THE  
TALIBAN HE WOULD NOT, RABBANI STATED.

8. (S) DCM AGAIN STATED THAT THE US HAD INFORMATION THAT HE IS  
PLANNING TERRORIST ACTS. RABBANI RETORTED THAT BIN LADIN HAD  
PROMISED THE TALIBAN HE WOULD NOT, ADDING THAT "OTHERS" MIGHT BE  
TELLING THE US OTHERWISE. MULLAH ABDUL JALIL, WHO ALSO ATTENDED  
THE MEETING WITH RABBANI, INTERJECTED THAT BIN LADIN HAD LIVED IN  
CAVES SOUTH OF JALALABAD IN TORA BORA AND THE TALIBAN HAD BECOME  
SUSPICIOUS. THEY TOLD HIM TO MOVE OUT, TO LIVE IN AN ORDINARY  
HOUSE.

9. (S) DCM TRIED ANOTHER TACK; IF, FOR EXAMPLE, SAUDI ARABIA OR  
EGYPT CAME TO THE TALIBAN WITH INFORMATION THAT BIN LADIN HAD  
COMMITTED TERRORIST ACTS AGAINST THEIR COUNTRIES, WOULD THE  
TALIBAN TAKE ACTION AGAINST BIN LADIN? RABBANI RESPONDED THAT IF

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SOMETHING HAPPENED IN THE PAST DURING THE PRE-TALIBAN PERIOD,  
THAT WAS NOT THE TALIBAN'S CONCERN. HOWEVER, IF BIN LADIN DID  
SOMETHING NOW IN THE TALIBAN PERIOD, THE TALIBAN COULD DO  
SOMETHING. RABBANI AGAIN STRESSED THAT IN THE PAST THE TALIBAN  
DID NOT HAVE CONTROL OVER THE AREAS IN WHICH BIN LADIN LIVED.  
DCM EXPLAINED THAT BIN LADIN WAS INVOLVED IN CRIMES BEFORE HE  
CAME TO AFGHANISTAN, THAT HE WAS NOW USING AFGHANISTAN BY SEEKING  
REFUGE, MAKING AFGHANISTAN APPEAR ASSOCIATED WITH HIS PAST  
TERRORIST CRIMES. RABBANI REITERATED THAT WHILE BIN LADIN MIGHT  
HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES EARLIER, HE HAD PROMISED THE TALIBAN HE  
WOULD NOT COMMIT THEM NOW. "BIN LADIN IS WITH US AS A GUEST, A  
REFUGEE."

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10. (S) DCM CONTINUED THAT BIN LADIN IS IDENTIFIED WITH TERRORISM WITH GOOD REASON. ALL COUNTRIES, EVEN AS BIG AND POWERFUL AS THE US NEED FRIENDS. AFGHANISTAN, ESPECIALLY, NEEDS FRIENDS -- THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES, THE US, OTHERS. FOR AFGHANISTAN AND THE TALIBAN TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH BIN LADIN HURTS. THE TALIBAN DO NOT OWE BIN LADIN ANYTHING. HE IS USING AFGHANISTAN FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES, NOT FOR THE TALIBAN'S PURPOSES. BIN LADIN IS THE TALIBAN'S PROBLEM NOW, A PROBLEM WHICH WILL HURT THE TALIBAN. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, BIN LADIN CARRIED OUT TERRORIST ACTS AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA AND IT BECAME KNOWN HE PLANNED THE OPERATION IN AFGHANISTAN, IT WOULD BE A TERRIBLE BLOW TO AFGHANISTAN AND THE TALIBAN. WHILE HE RESPECTED THE TALIBAN'S NEED TO TREAT A GUEST WITH RESPECT AND HOSPITALITY, THIS MAN IS POISON. RABBANI RETURNED TO HIS THEME OF PASHTUN HOSPITALITY AND PROVISION OF REFUGE. "IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD THERE IS A LAW THAT WHEN SOMEONE SEEKS REFUGE, HE SHOULD BE GRANTED ASYLUM, BUT IF THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARRY OUT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES, THEN YOU CAN POINT THESE OUT; WE HAVE OUR SENSES AND WILL NOT PERMIT ANYONE TO CARRY

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OUT THESE FILTHY ACTIVITIES."

11. (S) IN KABUL JAN 7, DCM ALSO RAISED THE PRESENCE OF BIN LADIN WITH MULLAH MOHAMMAD HASSAN, ACTING HEAD OF THE INTERIM SHURA THERE. HASSAN REPLIED THAT "THIS PERSON WAS ALREADY TOLD HE SHOULD NOT CARRY OUT ACTIVITIES AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES. THE TALIBAN CANNOT EXPEL THEM (NOTE: APPARENTLY REFERRING TO BIN LADIN AND HIS ENTOURAGE), BECAUSE THEY ARE STRANGERS AND AS MUSLIMS, THEY CAN LIVE IN THIS COUNTRY."

COMMENT  
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12. (S) EMBASSY ISLAMABAD WILL PROPOSE TO THE TALIBAN AMBASSADOR IN ISLAMABAD SOON DETAILS OF THE VISIT TO TEST THE TALIBAN'S OFFER FOR USG OFFICERS TO VISIT MILITANT TRAINING CAMPS. AS FOR BIN LADIN, THE TALIBAN APPEAR TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST TO GIVE HIM REFUGE. HOW HARD THEY MAY HAVE PRESSED HIM NOT TO COMMIT TERRORIST ACTS IS UNKNOWN. REPORTING IN OTHER CHANNELS SUGGESTS BIN LADIN IS PAYING OFF SOME INDIVIDUAL TALIBAN. POST SUGGESTS FURTHER APPROACHES TO THE SAUDIS AND EGYPTIANS TO INTENSIFY THEIR APPROACHES WITH THE TALIBAN ON BIN LADIN. CO-RELIGIONISTS MAY HAVE A BETTER CHANCE CONVINCING THE TALIBAN BIN LADIN IS POISON TO THEM.

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