State of the Insurgency
Trends, Intentions and Objectives

Classification of this briefing:
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Provide an overview of the current capacity, capabilities and intentions of the insurgency in Afghanistan and Pakistan
We face a TB dominated insurgency -- Two groups emerging; Afghanistan and Pakistan Taliban

Overarching strategy and plans remain unclear, but strategic goals are clear and coming into alignment

Operational level coordination occurs across the country; most frequent observed at the tactical level

AQ provides facilitation, training and some funding while relying on insurgent safe havens in Pakistan
Overall insurgent strategy going into 2010  
(despite increases in ISAF troop strength)

- Increase base of support (continue to expand into West and North)  
- Counter ISAF expansion and cause casualties, esp., Coalition partners  
- Undermine efforts of good governance  
- Consolidate Command and Control, especially in the South  
- Strengthen leadership and unity of effort throughout the country  
- Maintain momentum in the winter and increase aggressiveness  
- Increase influence around urban centers of Kandahar and Kabul  

**Mid year adjustment of Taliban strategy**  
- Leverage tribal influence to gain popular support  
- Improve command and control and operational security  
- Delegitimize participation in GIRoA  
- Expand operations in the West and North

**Taliban overarching goals:**  
- Expel foreign forces from Afghanistan  
- Undermine GIRoA’s authority and perceptions of security  
- Establish a Sunni state under Taliban Supreme Leader Mullah Omar
• Insurgency is loosely organized, increasingly effective...but growing more cohesive

• Insurgent strength is enabled by GIRoA weakness

• International support for development has not met population’s expectations

• Security force capacity has lagged behind a growing insurgency

• Perceived insurgent success will draw foreign fighters

In COIN, catch up ball does not work
Taliban Code of Conduct published by Taliban leadership, Mid July 2009
(Mullah Omar’s COIN guidance – a population centric strategy)

• “This is our mission: to keep people and their property safe. Do not let those people that love money take our local people’s property and cause them problems.”
• “Keep good relationships with your friends and the local people, and do not let the enemy divide / separate you.”

**Intentions**

- We don’t have to beat ISAF militarily, just outlast international will to remain in Afghanistan
- Continue population outreach and protection programs
- Continue successful asymmetric operations
- Expand lethal IED and high-profile attacks to deny ISAF freedom of movement
- Emphasize increasing violence in RC North and RC West
- Demonstrate Taliban reach and perceived control of all Afghanistan
- Make the main enemy the United States

**Directives**

- Reiterated prohibitions on the following:
  - Mistreating population
  - Forcibly taking personal weapons
  - Taking children to conduct jihad
  - Punishment by maiming
  - Forcing people to pay donations
  - Searching homes
  - Kidnapping people for money

Use the winter months to build on perceived successes
**Taliban Governance**

**Traditional ministries:**
- Minister of Defense
- Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Minister of Education
- Minister of Finance
- Minister of Prevention of Vice and Promotion of Virtue

**Greater Shura**
- Several hundred members

**Inner Shura**
- Mullah Omar and 10-15 members
  - Ministries, Committees, Councils

**Central Shura**
- 20-60 members

**Ministries, Committees, Councils**

**Regional Commander**
- Regional Shuras
  - ~15-20 members
  - Ad hoc shuras or committees

**Inner Shura committees:**
- Military
- Finance
- Ideology
- Administrative
- Political
- Propaganda
- Intelligence

- Mullah Omar and ~18 members organized in committees

Although largely recreated, the Taliban senior structure in 2009 is more consolidated likely due to lack of freedom of movement and operational commander losses

**Regional Shuras / Committees:**
- Direct and oversee policy; limited decision-making authority

**Provincial Shuras / Governors:**
- Enforces and implements directives; represents local concerns

* Decision delays as fighters require guidance from smaller core of TBBL decision-makers

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**TB Structure (pre-2001)**

- **Inner Shura:** Supreme Ruling body; makes decisions within Omar's guidance
- **Greater Shura / Committees:** Rule on local issues that Shura leaders take to a national-level Shura
- **Local Shura:** Based on functional requirements, meeting needs of the Inner or Central Shura

**TB Structure 2009**

- **Inner Shura:** Supreme ruling body; decisions based on consensus and within Omar's guidance
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Security Rollup

Threat Assessment:
Attack trends are expected to continue with levels of security incidents projected to be higher in 2010. Spike in attacks during Provincial elections not expected to be as high as National elections.

Sources: Afghanistan JOLIS NATO SIGACTS data as of 15 December 2009 reporting.
2007 – 2009
Increasing use of Homemade Explosives (HME)
(80 to 90 percent from Ammonium Nitrate)
Casualties: (07 – 2293), (08 – 3308)

2003 – 2006
Predominantly Military Ordnance
Casualties: (04 – 16), (05 – 279), (06 – 1473)
* No IED related casualty data available for 2003
- AN based explosives, found in approx. 85 percent of all main charge IEDs, are most common form of explosives.
- AN fertilizer accounts for as little as five percent of all legitimate fertilizer use in Afghan Theater of Operations. Banning would have a minimal effect on agriculture.
- AN is explosive in its raw state, but more powerful when mixed with diesel fuel, aluminum powder, sugar and fuel oil are often used.
- Pakistan is the principle source of AN entering ATO. China and Iran are also significant suppliers.
- Percentage of IEDs with charge weights over 25 lbs has dramatically increased

- Trend of increasing charge size is an effort by INS to provide a low-cost method of attempting to defeat friendly force armor technology

- The IED is the weapon of choice for the Taleban (akin to the surface to air missile system for the mujahideen)
The Afghan insurgency can sustain itself indefinitely

- **Weapons and Ammunition:**
  - Small arms weapons and ammunition readily available throughout the region
  - Increased availability of IED and HME materials and technology

- **Funding:** External funding is top-down, while internal funding is bottom-up, providing Taliban a consistent stream of money to sufficiently fund operations:
  - **Internal:** Significant amount from opiate trade
    - Most reliable, accessible source of funds
    - Taxes; narcotics nexus; corruption
  - **External:** Originate in Islamic states
    - Delivered via couriers and hawalas

- **Recruits:**
  - Retain the religious high-ground
  - Able to recruit from frustrated population
  - Exploit poverty, tribal friction, and lack of governance
OVERALL TRENDS:
- 2009 perceived as most successful year of the war for INS
- Expanded violence viewed as INS victory
- Elections viewed as INS success; low turnout; fraud

COMMAND AND CONTROL:
- INS attempting to solidify command structure
- Directed leadership replacement causing friction with local elements
- TBSL reestablishing strategic vision; wants TB seen as fair, uncrupt
- View Al Qaeda as a handicap - view that is increasingly prevalent

POLITICS:
- Renewed focus on becoming a legitimate government
- Expand shadow governance

MOTIVATIONS:
- U.S. seen as desiring permanent presence in Afghanistan
- Promised infrastructure projects incomplete, ineffective
- Karzai government universally seen as corrupt and ineffective
- Crime and corruption pervasive amongst security forces

DIIRS By Category

- Atmospheric
- Training
- Corruption
- Facilitation
- INS Biographies
- Anti-Election
- Threat to population
- Propaganda
- Financing
- INS Capabilities
- INS Attack
- Threat to CF

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The Taliban retains required partnerships to sustain support, fuel legitimacy and bolster capacity

• Domestic
  - Leverage Omar's Islamic credentials to transcend tribal issues
  - Exploit corruption to generate funds, gain access, and secure protection

• Regional / International – State
  - Known State relationships create tension
  - Current AFG TB vision if they return to power is to re-establish good relations with Islamic and Regional States
  - Careful not to antagonize Islamabad or Tehran in order to mitigate against crackdown on safe havens or support systems

• Regional / International – Non-state
  - Manage relationship with AQ to avoid alienating Afghan population, but encourage support from global jihad network
  - Manage relationship with Pakistani militant groups to encourage reduced attacks in Pakistan, but encourage support for efforts in Afghanistan
  - Mutually supportive relationship with Chechen and Central Asian fighters
The insurgency is confident ...

**Most Likely**

- **Goal**: Maintain pressure, enable ISAF withdrawal, population centric approach

- **Operations**:
  - Contest ISAF presence, create opportunity for ISAF withdrawal of forces
  - Steadily increase violence, sustain high profile attacks in urban areas
  - Contest ISAF / GIRoA in north and west
  - Consolidate influence in areas they dominate, accommodate ISAF supporters who shift sides

- **Impact**:
  - ISAF/ANSF able to secure population centers
  - Reduced international support for Afghanistan
  - Growing popular apathy toward GIRoA
  - Reduced support for ANSF
  - Ethnic fissures exacerbated, but militia remain focused on the insurgency

**Most Dangerous**

- **Goal**: Increase pressure, seek to destroy ISAF, punish population

- **Operations**:
  - More aggressively contest ISAF, inflict casualties if forces withdraw
  - Significantly increase high profile attacks in urban areas
  - Foster ethnic rivalries in north and west
  - Impose TB Sharia in areas they dominate, punish ISAF supporters

- **Impact**:
  - Reduced security in population centers
  - Significant loss of international support
  - Open popular frustration with GIRoA
  - Popular enmity toward ANSF
  - Open fighting between ethnic groups, drawing in regional benefactors

... looking toward post-ISAF Afghanistan.
**Strengths**

- Organizational capabilities and operational reach are qualitatively and geographically expanding
- Strength and ability of shadow governance increasing
- Much greater frequency of attacks and varied locations
- IED use is increasing in numbers and complexity; as much a tactic and process as it is a weapon
- Speed and decisiveness of their information operations and media campaign -- this is their main effort

**Weaknesses and Vulnerabilities**

- Comprised of multiple locally-based tribal networks
- Persistent fissures among insurgent leadership at local levels
- Dependent on many marginalized / threatened segments of Pashtun population
- Over-reliance on external support
• Pakistan is as or more complex than Afghanistan
  – Tribal and religion overtones, yet strong national identity, multiple ethnicities, most desire some form of democracy, a worsening economy but a nuclear weapons state

• Foreign intervention resented in most of the country
  – Predominantly an Indian issue, but strong resentment against the US and UK; appears to be growing against Taliban

• Tribal values and traditional core beliefs still dominate large parts of the country
  – "Outsiders" trying to impose new ideas and beliefs create tension; nature of tribal traditions can supersede Islam

• Army is perceived to be more capable (and dependable) than the government
  – Regarded as a positive influence in the FATA and NWFP because they are locally recruited and able to work within local systems

• Large numbers of internally displaced people from years of fighting, a poor economy and natural disasters
  – Potential breeding ground for the Taliban…but offers opportunities for counter-radicalization programs

• Violations of Pakistan sovereignty may contribute to radicalizing the population and diminishes credibility of the GoP
  – Demonstrates an inability of the government; perception they cannot protect their own; exacerbates anti-western sentiment

Staying the course in Pakistan as important as staying the course in Afghanistan
- The Taliban-led insurgency has the momentum...but additional effective counterinsurgency forces and operations will challenge them in select districts and provinces.

- Kinetic events are up 300% since 2007 and an additional 60% since 2008.

- Taliban influence expanding; contesting and controlling additional areas.

- The Taliban now has "Shadow Governors" in 33 of 34 provinces (as of DEC 09).
The situation is serious -- significant change is required.

- We have a key advantage – Taliban is not a popular movement (yet); population is frustrated by GIRoA, we must make them believe ISAF / GIRoA can succeed

- Taliban represents an existential threat -- only they have sufficient organizational capability and support to pose a threat to GIRoA’s viability (they are most coherent in the south)

- Regional instability is rapidly increasing and getting worse

- New strategy will incur risks -- not properly executing the strategy has greater risk
  - Longer war
  - Greater casualties
  - Higher overall costs
  - Loss of political support

  - Taliban strength is the perception that its victory is inevitable; reversing momentum requires protecting the population and changing perceptions

- Under-resourcing significantly elevates risk, increases lag time, and is likely to cause failure

- Success requires operating / thinking, in a fundamentally new way
Questions / Discussion
An IED cell needs the following: financing, access to munitions/explosives, an IED architect/maker, someone to survey an attack site, someone to emplace the IED, and someone to initiate the IED.

Although no two cells are likely to be the same and one person may fulfill multiple roles in a given cell, below is a potential diagram of an IED cell.
The Population is the Center of Gravity - not the IED

- IED Components
- Materials / Networks
- Insurgent
- Propaganda
- Casualties

Event
Location
Ultimately, we win by doing COIN better.