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Document Number: 1996ISLAMA09508

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PTQ4828

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INR-00 L-01 ADS-00 M-00 NEA-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00 P-00 CIA-00
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O 120945Z NOV 96
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3094
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JEDDAH
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
USIA WASHDC 6179
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ALMATY
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
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WILL CONTINUE IF THE FACTIONS CONTINUE TO TRY TO
IMPOSE THEIR VIEWS ON OTHERS. HE URGED GAUSA TO
REJECT A "WINNER-TAKE-ALL" APPROACH TO THE CONFLICT,
AND FIRMLY SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE UN TO REACH A
NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. GHAUS ENDED THE MEETING WITH REQUESTS FOR USG RECOGNITION OF THE TALIBAN AND A MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF VISITS TO DISCUSS ISSUES OF BILATERAL INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

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GHAUS ON THE SOURCES OF TALIBAN CONDUCT

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3. (C) AMBASSADOR SIMONS MET WITH TALIBAN "ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER" MULLAH MOHAMMED GHAUS ON NOVEMBER 8. TALIBAN ACTING RECONSTRUCTION MINISTER ATTIQULLAH, AFGHAN EMBASSY CHARGE ABDUL WAHAB, POLOFF (NOTETAKER), AND THE ASSISTANT ARMY ATTACHE ALSO ATTENDED THE MEETING. MULLAH GHAUS BEGAN BY STATING THAT THANKS TO GOD AND HELP FROM ITS FRIENDS--INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES--THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS ALLIES. AFGHANS AS WELL AS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THOUGHT THAT PEACE WOULD RESULT AFTER THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL. HOWEVER, "DUE TO A CONSPIRACY OF THE COMMUNISTS, THE SELFISHNESS OF RESISTANCE LEADERS, AND FOREIGN INTERFERENCE THIS EXPECTATION WAS NOT REALIZED, AND THE WAR HAS CONTINUED." GHAUS EXPLAINED THAT THE DISASTROUS EFFECTS OF THE WAR WERE FELT EVEN AT THE VILLAGE-LEVEL, WHERE "NO ONE WAS SECURE BECAUSE EVERYONE WAS ARMED." TO REMEDY THESE

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PAGE 04  ISLAMA  09508  01 OF 05  121002Z PROBLEMS, THE TALIBAN (MUSLIM STUDENTS) HAD DECIDED TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN POLITICS IN ORDER "TO FORM A STRONG, EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT, WHICH COULD CONTROL ITS BORDERS, PREVENT Outside INTERFERENCE, AND PROVIDE SECURITY TO THE PEOPLE," HE ASSERTED.

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RUSSIAN, IRANIAN INTERFERENCE MAIN CAUSE FOR WAR

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4. (C) GHAUS SAID THE MAIN CAUSE FOR THE ONGOING WAR WAS "INTERFERENCE BY RUSSIA, IRAN, AND INDIA" IN THE AFFAIRS OF AFGHANISTAN. TO PROVE THIS, HE NOTED THAT THE TALIBAN HAD FORCED DOWN AN AIRCRAFT WITH A RUSSIAN AIRCREW IN AUGUST 1995; THE PLANE WAS LOADED WITH AMMUNITION BOUND FOR THE FORMER KABUL REGIME OF OUSTED PRESIDENT BURHANUDDIN RABBANI. (NOTE: THE RUSSIAN AIRCREW WAS DETAINED IN KANDAHAR UNTIL AUGUST 1996, WHEN IT ELUDED ITS CAPTORS, AND ESCAPED TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.) IN ADDITION, GHAUS AVERRED, THE TALIBAN HAVE EVIDENCE THAT WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION CONTINUE TO FLOW TO AFGHAN UZBEK LEADER ABDUL RASHID
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JEDDAH
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
USIA WASHDC 6180
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
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AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
USCINC PAC HONOLULU HI//FPA JS//

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USUN FOR SA A/S RAPHEL; DEPT FOR SA/PAB AND EUR/CEN;
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FOR POL/NDEMPSEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/11/06
TAGS: PRL, PGOV, UN, AF, IR, RS
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS TALIBAN: WE ARE THE PEOPLE

DOSTAM AND JAMIAT-I-ISLAMI COMMANDER AHMED SHAH

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL
MASOOD FROM RUSSIA AND IRAN. TO THE TALIBAN, HE CONCLUDED, "THE MOST IMPORTANT CONDITION FOR PEACE IS TO STOP THIS INTERFERENCE." GAUS ALSO COMPLAINED THAT IRAN AND RUSSIA CONTINUE TO "RECOGNIZE THE RABBANI REGIME AS AFGHANISTAN'S LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT." "THIS," HE SAID, "IS A CLEAR VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW BECAUSE A GOVERNMENT THAT CONTROLS A COUNTRY'S TERRITORY IS THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT. THUS, THE TALIBAN, WHICH CONTROL OVER TWO-THIRDS OF THE COUNTRY, SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT."

A REQUEST FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

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5. (C) GAUS EMPHASIZED THAT THE TALIBAN DID NOT SEEK "MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM ANY OTHER COUNTRY."

AMBASSADOR URGES A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT

6. (C) AFTER THANKING GAUS FOR HIS COMMENTS, THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WISHED TO SAY SOME THINGS ABOUT AMERICA, SO THAT WHEN TALIBAN DEALT WITH AMERICANS THEY COULD BETTER UNDERSTAND WHERE THE AMERICANS WERE COMING FROM. THE AMERICANS ARE THE MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE IN THE WESTERN WORLD, THE AMBASSADOR SAID. THEY HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR ISLAM, WHICH IS NOW THE

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FASTEST GROWING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY IN AMERICA; THERE ARE IN FACT NOW MORE AMERICAN MUSLIMS THAN AMERICAN JEWS. AND THEY ARE ALL PEOPLE OF THE BOOK.

7. (C) AT THE SAME TIME, THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED, AMERICANS HAVE THEIR ORIGINS ALL OVER THE WORLD, AND HAVE LIVED TOGETHER FOR 220 YEARS NOW. THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO DISCERN THE WILL OF GOD. THEIR EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT THEM THAT IT IS DANGEROUS FOR ONE GROUP TO TRY TO IMPOSE ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERPRETATION OF THE WILL OF GOD ON OTHERS, AND ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS TO TRY TO DO SO BY FORCE OF ARMS. THAT WAS THE REASON, THE AMBASSADOR SAID, WHY THE AMERICAN STATE IS NOT RELIGIOUS. HE RECOGNIZED THAT THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE ISLAMIC TRADITION; HE WAS SIMPLY TRYING TO EXPLAIN THE AMERICANS FOR TALIBAN.

8. (C) AMERICANS HAVE FOUGHT MANY WARS, THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED. THEIR BLOODIEST WAR WAS THEIR CIVIL WAR, FOUGHT MAINLY OVER THE ISSUE OF HUMAN SLAVERY. IN THAT WAR THEY LOST 500,000 KILLED IN A NATION OF 30 MILLION; BY WAY OF COMPARISON, IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR, WHEN THEY WERE FIGHTING HITLER AND THE JAPANESE, THEY LOST 250,000, IN A NATION OF 150 MILLION. BUT THEY FOUGHT ALL THESE WARS TO PREVENT OTHERS FROM IMPOSING THEIR INTERPRETATION OF WHAT WAS RIGHT, OF GOD’S WILL, ON OTHER HUMAN BEINGS.

9. (C) THAT WAS WHY THE AMERICANS HAD SUPPORTED THE AFGHAN STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION, THE AMBASSADOR SAID. WE DISAGREED FUNDAMENTALLY WITH THE SOVIETS ON BELIEF, ON IDEOLOGY. BUT WE HAD NEVER
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AMEMBASSY ALMATY

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USUN FOR SA A/S RAPHEL; DEPT FOR SA/PAB AND EUR/CEN;
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FOR POL/NDEMPSEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/11/06
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Pursued this disagreement with them by force of arms;
rather we had negotiated with them. At the same
time, we had helped others to resist Soviet attempts
to impose their ideology outside their borders. That
was what we had done in Afghanistan. We admired the
Afghans' freedom struggle, and were proud of our role
in its success. We had hoped that after that success
Afghans would be able to come together to determine
their own destiny together.

10. (C) Unfortunately, the Ambassador continued,
that had not happened. Afghans continued to fight
among themselves. Americans found it hard to
understand this, he said. Mullah Ghaus had said that
outside interference was the whole problem. It
seemed to us that part of the problem was that all
the groups in Afghanistan believe they know what

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GOD'S WILL IS, AND WISH TO TRY TO IMPOSE THEIR INTERPRETATION ON ALL OTHER GROUPS. THIS LED THEM TO IMPOSE RULES ON WHETHER AND WHICH WOMEN CAN WORK, OR GO TO SCHOOL, ON BEARDS FOR MEN. IT LED THEM IN TURN TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE FOR THEIR CAUSE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES.

11. (C) THE AMBASSADOR COMMENTED THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT THE SOLUTION TO THE AFGHAN CRISIS HAD TO LEAD THROUGH GREATER "MODESTY" AND RENUNCIATION OF THE "WINNER-TAKE-ALL" APPROACH TO THE CONFLICT. THAT WAS WHY WE WERE URGING TALIBAN AND ALL THE OTHER GROUPS TO WORK AND NEGOTIATE WITH EACH OTHER, RECOGNIZING THAT ONE GROUP CANNOT CONTROL THE WHOLE COUNTRY. WE BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED NATIONS IS BEST PLACED TO HELP THEM DO SO, AND THAT WAS WHY WE ENCOURAGE ALL THE GROUPS TO WORK WITH DR. HOLL FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

GHAUS: WE REPRESENT "WILL OF GOD AND PEOPLE"

12. (C) GHAUS HAD LISTENED CAREFULLY, AND NOTED IN RESPONSE THAT WHAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD SAID WAS FRUSTRATING TO HIM. EVERYONE WAS SAYING THAT PAKISTAN AND THE U.S. SUPPORTED TALIBAN, AND YET IT WAS NOT TRUE. THE AMBASSADOR SAID WE TOO ARE FRUSTRATED BY SUCH STATEMENTS: WE DO NOT SUPPORT ANY AFGHAN GROUP, BECAUSE WE DO NOT BELIEVE THERE CAN BE A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE AFGHAN CRISIS, AND CONFIDENTIAL
Therefore believe that peace can only come through good-faith negotiation among them.

13. (C) GHAUS SAID THE EFFECT OF THAT WAS THAT THE U.S. SUPPORTED IRANIAN, RUSSIAN, AND INDIAN ARMS SUPPLIES TO TALIBAN'S OPPONENTS. THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT THAT WAS ALSO NOT TRUE.

MULLAH GHAUS HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE SOLUTION WAS TO CUT OFF SUPPLIES TO TALIBAN'S OPPONENTS; OTHERS TOLD US THE SOLUTION WAS TO CUT OFF TALIBAN'S OUTSIDE SUPPLIES. THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE OUTSIDE SUPPLIES WERE THE DETERMINING REASON WHY AFGHAN GROUPS KEPT FIGHTING EACH OTHER; THE REASON WAS THAT THEY HOPED TO WIN EVERYTHING THROUGH MILITARY MEANS. THE WAY TO CUT OFF MILITARY SUPPLIES WAS FOR THE AFGHANS TO NEGOTIATE PEACE; SO LONG AS GROUPS WERE NOT PREPARED
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AMCONSUL JEDDAH
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14. (C) THE PROBLEM WAS MASSIVE ASSISTANCE TO OTHER GROUPS FROM RUSSIA AND IRAN. THIS REFERRED TO THE MONEY RUSSIA WAS PRINTING FOR RABBANI, BUT ESPECIALLY TO HEAVY WEAPONS, PLANES AND TANKS. CUTTING THAT OFF WAS THE KEY TO PEACE, HE INSISTED; AT LEAST TALIBAN HAD THE RIGHT TO ASK THE U.S. TO WORK FOR THAT. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO, BUT OUR MAIN POINT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE NEED FOR GENUINE NEGOTIATION OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH RESPECTED THE RIGHTS OF ALL AFGHANS, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 09508 04 OF 05 121004Z INCLUDING MINORITIES AND WOMEN.

15. (C) GHAUS SAID THAT THE TALIBAN SUPPORTS A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO THE CONFLICT. HIS PARTICIPATION IN A UN-SPONSORED MEETING WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUPREME DEFENSE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 7 (REFTEL) SHOWED THIS. HOWEVER, HE CLAIMED, THE TALIBAN ARE FACING OPPONENTS, IN GENERAL

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DOSTAM AND COMMANDER MASOOD, WHO WANT TO INCREASE
THEIR MILITARY ADVANTAGE THROUGH WAR. THERE ARE TOO
MANY ARMS IN AFGHANISTAN; THE WAR WOULD NOT END UNTIL
THEY WERE DISARMED. TALIBAN WOULD CONTINUE TO FIGHT
UNTIL ALL AFGHANS WERE DISARMED AND THE COUNTRY
SECURE.

16. (C) THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT
FOR HIM TO SEE HOW PEACE CAN BE ESTABLISHED WHEN THE
TALIBAN WERE ESSENTIALLY DEMANDING THAT THE OTHER
SIDE GIVE UP ITS ARMS TO THE TALIBAN AND THUS,
SURRENDER ON THEIR TERMS. WHEN MULLAH GAUSA SPOKE OF
NEGOTIATION, HE SEEMED TO BE SPEAKING OF NEGOTIATED
SURRENDER. GAUSA SHOT BACK THAT "DOSTAM AND MASOOD
WILL HAVE SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF GOD AND THE WILL OF
THE PEOPLE, WHICH ARE MANIFESTED IN THE TALIBAN
MOVEMENT." WE ARE THE MAJORITY, HE CONTINUED, AND IN
DEMOCRACIES MINORITIES MUST ALWAYS SUBMIT TO THE WILL
OF THE MAJORITY. HE WANTED THE AMBASSADOR TO
UNDERSTAND THAT TALIBAN DOES NOT REPRESENT JUST
PUSHTUNS; IT ALSO INCLUDES UZBEKS, TAJIKS, IN FACT
ALL AFGHANS. THE AMBASSADOR REJOINED THAT
DEMOCRACIES WORKED ONLY IF THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES
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WERE PROTECTED AND IF THERE WERE RULES TO ASSURE
PEACEFUL WORKING OUT OF CONFLICT OVER INTERESTS. HE
CONCLUDED THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO PROVIDE OTHER
AFGHANS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SURRENDER THROUGH
NEGOTIATIONS; SO LONG AS THE TALIBAN BELIEVE THEY CAN
WIN EVERYTHING AND CONTROL ALL OF AFGHANISTAN, THE
WAR WILL CONTINUE.

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THE TALIBAN REQUESTS RECOGNITION AND ENGAGEMENT
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17. (C) GAUSA CONCLUDED THAT WHEN THE PEOPLE RULE ALL
OF AFGHANISTAN, BY THE WILL OF GOD, HE HOPED IT WOULD

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL
HAVE REASON TO BE GRATEFUL TO THE UNITED STATES FOR
ITS HELP, AND PRESENTED THREE REQUESTS:

-- WE WANT THE USG TO RECOGNIZE THE TALIBAN’S INTERIM
GOVERNMENT;

-- WE WANT TO SEND A DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES
TO DISCUSS ISSUES OF BILATERAL INTEREST WITH THE USG;

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AND,

-- WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING ANY DELEGATIONS THE
USG WANTS TO SEND TO AFGHANISTAN.

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL
THE AMBASSADOR ASSURED GHAUS THAT HE WOULD CONVEY THESE REQUESTS TO WASHINGTON.

18. THE MEETING WAS COURTEOUS AND CIVIL THROUGHOUT.
SIMONS

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