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PTQ2624

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ACTION SSO-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	AID-00	A-00	ACQ-01	CA-02
	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-01	EB-00	EUR-01	E-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	FSI-00	H-01	IMMC-01	IM-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	INSE-00	IO-00	L-01	MCO-01	ADS-00	M-00	NEA-01
	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02	OIS-01	OMB-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00
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 FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9496
 INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
 USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
 AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE
 AMCONSUL PESHAWAR IMMEDIATE
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 AMEMBASSY ALMATY

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 8/24/08
TAGS: PGOV, ASEC, MOPS, PTER, PK, AF
SUBJECT: TFXX01: SITREP 5: PAKISTAN/AFGHANISTAN REACTION TO U.S. STRIKES

REFS: (A) ISLAMABAD 6360 (D) ISLAMABAD 6351
- (B) ISLAMABAD 6353 (E) ISLAMABAD 6350
- (C) PESHAWAR 638 (F) ISLAMABAD 6329 (ALL NOTAL)

(U) CLASSIFIED BY ALAN EASTHAM, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES. REASON 1.5(D).

1. (U) THIS MESSAGE WAS COORDINATED WITH CONSULATES KARACHI, LAHORE, AND PESHAWAR.

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2. (C) THE FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY'S FIFTH SITUATION REPORT (7:15 P.M. LOCAL; 10:15 A.M. EST) ON PAKISTANI/AFGHAN REACTION TO THE AUGUST 20 U.S. STRIKES ON THE TERRORIST NETWORK OF USAMA BIN LADEN. (NOTE: SEE REFTELS FOR PREVIOUS SITREPS.)

SECURITY SITUATION

3. (C) PAKISTAN: THE SITUATION IN PAKISTAN APPEARS BASICALLY CALM ON AUGUST 24. BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CONSULATES, THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS OF LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS OR VIOLENCE OF ANY SORT, THUS FAR. CONSULATE KARACHI HAS SPOKEN TO PAKISTANI SOURCES IN QUETTA, BALUCHISTAN, WHO CONFIRM THAT THE SITUATION IS QUIET THERE (THERE ARE ABOUT 40 AMCITS IN THE QUETTA AREA; SOME AMCITS WORKING OUTSIDE OF QUETTA REQUESTED INFORMATION 8/24 FROM RSO ON CHARTER FLIGHTS TO ISLAMABAD; RSO HAS PROVIDED THEM THIS INFORMATION). (NOTE: BECAUSE OF ITS PROXIMITY TO THE TALIBAN'S HOME AREA OF KANDAHAR, QUETTA IS OF SPECIAL CONCERN FOR SECURITY REASONS.) PESHAWAR IS QUIET AS IS ISLAMABAD AND LAHORE.

4. (C) IN LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE, THE PERIOD FOLLOWING FRIDAY PRAYERS PROVIDES ANOTHER OCCASION FOR ANTI-U.S. MULLAHS TO TRY TO PUT PEOPLE OUT ON TO THE STREETS. ALSO, IN ISLAMABAD ON THURSDAY, STUDENTS AND MULLAHS AT THE LOCAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ARE PLANNING A MARCH TO THE PARLIAMENT. SO FAR, HOWEVER, (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PESHAWAR) WE HAVE SEEN NOTHING APPROACHING A LARGE-SCALE DEMONSTRATION, EVEN IN THE EMOTIONAL IMMEDIATE

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AFTERMATH OF THE STRIKES, WHICH COINCIDED WITH LAST FRIDAY'S PRAYERS. PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO TAKE THE POTENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ISLAMA 06398 01 OF 03 241511Z THREAT SERIOUSLY AND ARE PROVIDING HEAVY SECURITY IN AN ONGOING EFFORT TO PREVENT ANY PROBLEMS FROM DEVELOPING. (NOTE: FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON LAHORE SECURITY SITUATION SEE LAHORE SEPTTEL.)

5. (C) CONCERNS ABOUT NORTH, TRIBAL AREAS: CONSULATE PESHAWAR REPORTS THAT PAK OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED THAT A WARNING HAS BEEN GIVEN TO EXPATRIATES TO DEPART NORTHERN PAKISTAN, WHERE MUCH OF PAKISTAN'S TOURIST ASSETS ARE LOCATED. EXPATRIATES WHO DECIDE TO LEAVE ARE BEING PROVIDED ESCORTS. THE GOP IS ALSO PROMISING THAT IT WILL PROTECT AMCITS WORKING IN THE NORTHERN AREAS. SOME RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN MALAKAND DIVISION OF THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP), WHICH INCLUDES THE SWAT AREA, HAVE REPORTEDLY THREATENED TO KILL FOREIGNERS THERE. ISLAMABAD CG SPOKE TO THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (DC) OF GILGIT IN THE NORTH. THE DC PROMISED TO LOOK OUT FOR AMCITS IN THAT AREA, INCLUDING TWO AMCITS TREKKERS NAMED [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] (NOTE: ALL AMCITS THAT ARE KNOWN BY CONSULATE PESHAWAR AND EMBASSY HAVE BEEN EVACUATED FROM AFGHANISTAN -- SEE PESHAWAR SEPTTEL.) THE PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES ARE REFUSING TO GIVE PERMISSION TO ANY FOREIGNER TO ENTER THE TRIBAL TERRITORIES ADJACENT TO AFGHANISTAN (WHICH AFFECTS MAINLY JOURNALISTS TRYING TO GET TO KHOST TO FILM BATTLE DAMAGE). THE GOP IS ALSO BEING HELPFUL IN PROVIDING

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PROTECTION TO THE DWINDLING NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS IN THE NWFP.

6. (C) KABUL EMBASSY SUFFERS DAMAGE IN AUGUST 21 ATTACK: IN
8/24 SATPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY AND CONSULATE PESHAWAR,

REPORTED THAT THE EMBASSY'S PREMISES WERE INVADED BY A MOB
ON AUGUST 21. (NOTE: MONDAY WAS THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY KABUL
EMBASSY HAD TO CONTACT CONSULATE PESHAWAR AND EMBASSY SINCE A
PHONE CALL EARLY ON 8/21.) APPARENTLY, THE MOB PUSHED THROUGH

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SOME TALIBAN GUARDING THE EMBASSY AND SCALED THE FRONT GATE. THE FSN'S WERE NOT PRESENT AT THE TIME AND NONE WERE HURT. HOWEVER, THERE WAS SOME PROPERTY DAMAGE, INCLUDING SOME BROKEN WINDOWS ON EMBASSY VEHICLES AND PLYWOOD WAS RIPPED FROM CHANCERY WINDOWS. A PHOTOCOPIER AND SOME OTHER EQUIPMENT WERE DESTROYED. THE CHANCERY WAS APPARENTLY NOT ENTERED. SMALL DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY, REPORTEDLY INSTIGATED BY THE TALIBAN, AND SOMETIMES ROCKS HAVE BEEN THROWN, BUT [REDACTED] FELT THAT THE SITUATION WAS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE HAVE REITERATED THAT FSN'S SHOULD STAY HOME AT THE SLIGHTEST THREAT TO THEIR SAFETY.

PAKISTAN

7. (C) THE PAKISTANI PRESS CONTINUES TO DEVOTE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO THE U.S. STRIKES, ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL VOLUME IS CONSIDERABLY REDUCED IN COMPARISON TO OVER THE WEEKEND. ONE NEW STORY THAT IS MAKING THE ROUND OF THE DAILY PAPERS IS A REPORT THAT AN UNEXPLODED CRUISE MISSILE WAS FOUND IN THE DESERT OF KHARAN IN BALOCHISTAN. POLCOUNS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE PUNDIT REACTIONS ON MONDAY WITH LTG (R) NISHAT AHMED, HEAD OF THE INSTITUTE OF REGIONAL STUDIES, THE LEADING [REDACTED] [REDACTED] THINK TANK IN ISLAMABAD. NISHAT IS A GENUINE MODERATE, CLOSE TO CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF GEN. JEHANGIR KARAMAT, AND A COMMITTED DEMOCRAT. HE SAID HIS CONTACTS AMONG THE PAKISTANI FOREIGN POLICY COMMUNITY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE UNITED STATES FACED A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM FROM TERRORISM AND NEEDED TO TAKE ADEQUATE STEPS TO PROTECT ITSELF. THE SENSE, HOWEVER, WAS THAT THE U.S. HAD MOVED TOO QUICKLY TO RETALIATE AGAINST BIN LADIN WITHOUT

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TAKING WELL-PUBLICIZED INTERMEDIATE STEPS AGAINST HIM, SUCH AS PREPARING INDICTMENTS AND LAUNCHING A LEGAL CASE. THIS WOULD HAVE HELPED PREPARE THE GROUND WITH PUBLIC OPINION, PARTICULARLY IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD. VIEWED FROM THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE, THERE WERE SIMPLY ALLEGATIONS ABOUT BIN LADIN FOLLOWED BY AIR STRIKES.

AFGHANISTAN

8. (C) OMAR REPORTEDLY DISTURBED AT BIN LADIN: THE PAKISTANI NEWSPAPER "THE NEWS" RAN A REPORT IN ITS AUGUST 24 EDITION STATING THAT TALIBAN LEADER MULLAH OMAR HAS "EXPRESSED

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DISPLEASURE" WITH TERRORIST USAMA BIN LADIN BECAUSE OF BIN LADIN'S THREATS TO AVENGE THE U.S. STRIKES. (NOTE: THE THREAT BEING MENTIONED WAS APPARENTLY THAT PASSED AUGUST 21 BY EGYPTIAN MILITANT DR. ZAWAHIRI ON BEHALF OF BIN LADIN -- SEE REF B.) THE ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN BY RAHIMULLAH YUSUFZAI, A PESHAWAR-BASED JOURNALIST WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE TALIBAN, WHO REPORTEDLY SPOKE TO OMAR BY PHONE ON AUGUST 23. YUSUFZAI QUOTES OMAR AS STATING: "THERE CANNOT BE TWO DIFFERENT AND PARALLEL EMIRATES IN AFGHANISTAN. WE HAVE A CENTRAL TALIBAN-LED AUTHORITY RULING THE COUNTRY AND IT OUGHT TO BE OBEYED." ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE,

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OMAR WAS SAID TO BE SENDING AN EMISSARY TO BIN LADIN TO CONVINCING
HIM "TO SHOW RESTRAINT AND LEAVE IT TO THE ISLAMIC EMIRATE OF
AFGHANISTAN TO TAKE THE REQUIRED MEASURES TO DEFEND ITSELF AND
GIVE AN APPROPRIATE ANSWER TO THE U.S. ATTACK ON ITS SOIL."
(NOTE: SEE FBIS BANGKOK 240603Z AUG 98 FOR MORE ON THE ARTICLE.)
(NOTE: ANOTHER AUGUST 24 "NEWS" STORY QUOTED MULLAH ABDULLAH, A
TALIBAN SPOKESMAN, AS SAYING THAT BIN LADIN'S MOVEMENTS HAVE BEEN
RESTRICTED AND HE IS BEING PROTECTED BY TALIBAN FORCES.)

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9. (C) AFGHAN CONTACTS SAY MULLAH OMAR UNDER PRESSURE: IN AN
AUGUST 24 MEETING, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A FORMER RESISTANCE COMMANDER AND
[REDACTED] TRIBAL LEADER, TOLD POLOFF THAT THEY HAD SEEN THE ARTICLE
DISCUSSED IN PARA EIGHT. THEY SAID THEY BELIEVE THAT THE
ARTICLE IS ACCURATE. THEY SAID THE REPORTS THAT OMAR IS
DISTURBED AT BIN LADIN TEND TO REINFORCE WHAT AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN
ARE HEARING, I.E., THAT OMAR IS COMING UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE
FROM OTHER TALIBAN LEADERS CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF BIN LADIN
IN AFGHANISTAN. FOR EXAMPLE, [REDACTED] SAID HE HAD SPOKEN TO TAYYAB
HUSSEINI, AN EMBOFF AT THE TALIBAN EMBASSY IN ISLAMABAD, WHO
COMMENTED THAT THE TALIBAN SHOULD NOT BE PROTECTING BIN LADIN
WHEN IT IS CLEARLY ANTAGONIZING THE U.S. AND OTHER COUNTRIES.
[REDACTED] SAID THE TALIBAN'S MULLAH HASSAN, THE GOVERNOR
OF KANDAHAR, WAS TAKING THE LEAD IN PRESSURING OMAR ON THE ISSUE.

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[REDACTED] ADMITTED HE WAS NOT SURE WHAT MULLAH HASSAN HAD TOLD OMAR, BUT A MEETING OF THE TALIBAN "INNER SHURA" HAD TAKEN PLACE OVER THE AUGUST 22-3 WEEKEND IN WHICH CONCERNS WERE PURPORTEDLY EXPRESSED.

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10. (C) RUMORS THAT NANGARHAR SITE HIT IN U.S. STRIKE: THE TALIBAN CONTINUE TO SPREAD REPORTS THAT A SITE NEAR JALALABAD IN NANGARHAR PROVINCE IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN WAS ALSO HIT BY MISSILES DURING THE U.S. STRIKE. THIS WOULD BE IN ADDITION TO THE STRIKES ON KHOST. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY THE TALIBAN ARE SPREADING THIS INACCURATE REPORT, EXCEPT MAYBE TO MAKE IT SEEM THAT THE U.S. STRIKES WERE WIDESPREAD. MEANWHILE, SOME OF THOSE REPORTEDLY INJURED IN THE U.S. STRIKES HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED BY PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS AND QUOTED AS STATING THAT U.S. AIRCRAFT WERE SEEN IN KHOST DURING THE RAID. THIS REPORT IS ALSO INACCURATE.

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