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ACTION SCA-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DEAE-00
	DOTE-00	PERC-00	DS-00	EB-00	OIGO-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00
	NIMA-00	PM-00	GIWI-00	P-00	SCT-00	ISNE-00	DOHS-00
	FMPC-00	SSO-00	SS-00	ASDS-00	EPAE-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/000W		

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P 210630Z FEB 06  
 FM AMEMBASSY KABUL  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8423  
 INFO AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
 NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
 CJCS WASHDC PRIORITY  
 OSD WASHDC PRIORITY

~~DENIED IN FULL~~  
~~B1, 1.4(D), B5~~

~~SECRET~~ KABUL 000746

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/22/2016  
 TAGS: PREL, MOPS, PTER, SNAR, AF, PK  
 SUBJECT: POLICY ON TRACK, BUT VIOLENCE WILL RISE

REF: KABUL 611

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (S) SUMMARY: I believe violence will rise through the next several months. It will likely be directed at ISAF as well as the Coalition in addition to more traditional targets such as pro-government officials and religious figures in the Provinces. We should anticipate more suicide bombs in Kabul and other major cities. As the troop density of NATO in the south increases and we conduct aggressive operations, the total number of incidents will also rise. We need to understand it analytically in a regional context. The violence does not indicate a failing policy; on the contrary we need to persevere in what we are doing. We will, however, need to anticipate and plan for increased media scrutiny and possibly increased concern from Europe, its Parliaments and certainly its media. END SUMMARY.

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WHY THE VIOLENCE WILL RISE  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: APPEALS REVIEW PANEL  
 APPEAL ACTION: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEASED  
 REASON(S): B1, 1.4(D)  
 DATE/CASE ID: 09 JUN 2010 200700599

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN S BLODGETT  
 DATE/CASE ID: 07 SEP 2007 200700599

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2. (S) Several threads are coming together. NATO/ISAF is expanding its mandate. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Targeting of ISAF has already increased, with resulting casualties among the Germans, Poles and Swedes, and it seems likely that the enemy will do its utmost to make the ISAF deployment politically costly. The increased use of IED's and suicide bombs is as much, perhaps even more the result of the failure of the Taliban's large unit, force-on-force engagement tactics in the first part of 2005 as it is a sign of an increased threat. But the Taliban now seems to understand the propaganda value of the bomb and will use it to maximum advantage.

3. (S) Additionally, [REDACTED] the Afghan government is much more focused on narcotics eradication. [REDACTED]

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this will push them into areas of higher risk like Helmand province. Embassy and CFC-A are focusing maximum energy and attention on ensuring that the government gets the security fundamentals for these operations right; but incident levels will, nonetheless, rise. That said, the same strategic pressures will be on the Taliban; if it cannot resist in the high-threat areas it will lose some credibility and hence the Taliban may be forced to fight where it might otherwise prefer to dodge. Thus both sides may find that the narcotics and the strategic military imperatives intersect.

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THE GOVERNANCE CHALLENGE  
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4. (S) Afghanistan's notable success in the development of the elected government is apparent. Economic progress is beginning. It is very clear that the task now is to build governance in the provinces where Kabul's reach is still very limited. If this process works well over the next few years the government will be significantly stronger. But the Taliban need not be intellectual giants to understand that their long-term strategy depends on keeping the government weak in the provinces. The key will be to

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continue, aggressively, our work with the GOA to extend and deepen its reach nationwide and to counteract any Taliban strategy aimed at waiting us out while preventing NGO access to the countryside. This challenge will probably increase as the Taliban seeks to get ahead of our progress in deploying Afghan army and police in order to disrupt our programmatic and development schedules. The Taliban will also look to contest GOA progress on disarmament and rural police deployments by increasing provincial violence. We anticipate, and are considering with the GOA, how best to balance calls for army and police deployments with the need to ensure that the forces sent are fully-manned, equipped, and trained.

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THE REGIONAL CONTEXT  
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5. (S) We tend to think in terms of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

[REDACTED]

In the wake of President Karzai's recent visit to Islamabad, there is a growing potential for working with both governments within this construct. We do not see intelligence indicating vast popular support for the Taliban or a large recruiting increase. Therefore, I believe that what we are seeing is largely the result of four years that the Taliban has had to reorganize and think about their approach in a sanctuary beyond the reach of either Government. This will lead to the increasing violence this summer; it will lead to a long-term continuation of the insurgency as long as they can re-supply from their current areas; and, if left unaddressed, it will also lead to the re-emergence of the same strategic threat to the United States that prompted our OEF intervention over 4 years ago.

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6. There is more pressure - and intent - from Pakistan against the Taliban, and the Tripartite process is successfully building operational and strategic links between the Pakistan, Afghan, and US-led Coalition militaries. But there are concerns about Pakistani capabilities [REDACTED] action to date

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[REDACTED]

Better governance on the Afghan side of the border will steadily decrease the Taliban threat but achieving a cohesive government at the level required is a long term project. We will continue to do our utmost to show every-day Afghans tangible progress in their provinces to reinforce growing GOA authority.

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POLICY CONTINUITY  
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7. (S) Rising violence will spark some calls for policy evaluation. That is normal. There will certainly and always be something that can be adjusted at the margin. But we are on the right track. The combination of economic rehabilitation, narcotics confrontation, alternative livelihoods development and provincial governance support are all the correct policies. More money could drive reconstruction faster but the international community, not just the US, needs to do more. The lack of roads and energy will continue to delay our efforts and these are slow to build even when resources are available. Security and infrastructure development increasingly are two sides of the same coin here. We are building a better army and that takes time. We are reforming the police, but the comprehensive reform program was only approved and resourced six months ago. The Afghan National Security Forces will get there, but not this year.

8. (S) We are expanding PRTs, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The PRTs will make an important difference, but not one that will stem this year's violence.

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9. (S) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] To avoid appearing to be playing catch-up to the violence, we must craft and quickly deploy, for Afghans as well for the international audience, a strategic overview that accommodates expanded violence with progress the GOA is making in creating a stable and viable state and lays out a vision for what lies beyond. We should consider

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working directly with NATO on this. There are plenty of positives to draw on, from the Parliament to the London Compact.

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