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August 21, 1998

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

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DECL: 08/21/08

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: APPEALS REVIEW PANEL
APPEAL ACTION: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEASED
REASON(S): B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DATE/CASE ID: 26 JAN 2010 200603906

TO: The Secretary
FROM: SA - Karl F. Inderfurth *KFI*
SUBJECT: Pakistan: Reaction to Afghanistan Strikes

SUMMARY

Pakistani reaction to our strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan has been negative and is likely to become more so in the coming days. The President spoke this morning by telephone with Nawaz Sharif and said the U.S. was willing to work with Pakistan to establish the facts regarding reports that a cruise missile hit a target inside Pakistan, allegations the Pakistani government has now retracted.

Asked about upcoming talks between Deputy Secretary Talbott and Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad, Sharif said Pakistan would participate in the London discussions with a constructive approach.

DISCUSSION

the government decided to take a hard line against the strikes. Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz expressed indignation in a statement in the Senate and made it clear the Government of Pakistan in no way assisted or was notified about the U.S. strikes. The Foreign Ministry called in our Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) to protest the illegality of the U.S. action and to complain about the alleged missile that fell inside Pakistani territory. Ambassadors were called in to have the Sartaj statement read to them and were briefed on the protest to our DCM.

Public reaction has also been generally negative. Demonstrations protesting the strikes were held in Islamabad, Karachi and Peshawar. Several right-wing Islamic parties

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condemned the strikes and vowed to hold the Nawaz Sharif government responsible if the attacks originated from Pakistani territory.

The demonstrations did not result in any damage to U.S. properties but I am concerned about the vulnerability of the 70 U.S. officials who remain in Pakistan to bombing and hit-and-run attacks, despite the fact that the Pakistani government does appear to have pulled out all the stops to assure adequate physical security for our posts. I will continue to consult with Diplomatic Security.

The President's phone call to Nawaz Sharif this morning was cordial, although the Prime Minister made it clear he was very concerned about the possible errant missile and

The President reaffirmed the importance of the meeting in London next week with the Deputy Secretary and Shamshad Ahmad on nonproliferation issues and Sharif said his team would bring a "constructive approach" to the table.

I do not expect the negative Pakistani reaction to subside. This is why the Nawaz Sharif government, which operates in an environment dominated by conspiracy theories and paranoia, has taken such pains to distance itself from the strikes.

was clearly concerned that his presence here would lead his critics to conclude that he had cooperated with us on the strikes.

Finally, Embassy Islamabad suspects that the most sincere reaction of the government of Pakistan to the Bin Laden strikes is exasperation at the unneeded difficulties this event has created for them in dealing with their domestic political situation, and in particular, in keeping the religious parties happy and relatively off the street. No doubt they will hope to soldier through this, but they may find it more difficult to do business with us soon on issues such as CTBT.

Attachment:

Statement by the Pakistani Foreign Minister

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